

A Review with ChatGPT – date: 05July2025

<Q> **What is the founding legal framework the USA has had since 1789**

ChatGPT <A> The **founding legal framework** of the United States since **1789** is the **United States Constitution**.

Overview of the Founding Legal Framework

1. [The U.S. Constitution](#) (1789 – Present)

- **Adopted in 1787**, ratified by the required 9 states in 1788, and **went into effect in 1789**.
- Established the foundational structure of the U.S. federal government:
 - **Legislative Branch** (Congress – Article I)
 - **Executive Branch** (President – Article II)
 - **Judicial Branch** (Supreme Court and lower courts – Article III)
- Created a **federal system** dividing powers between the federal government and the states.
- Included provisions for:
 - **Checks and balances**
 - **Separation of powers**
 - **Supremacy Clause** (Article VI – federal law is the “supreme Law of the Land”)

2. [The Bill of Rights](#) (1791)

- The first **10 amendments** to the Constitution, ratified in **1791**, were added to protect individual liberties and limit government power.
- Examples:
 - **1st Amendment** – Freedom of speech, religion, press, assembly
 - **4th Amendment** – Protection against unreasonable search and seizure
 - **5th Amendment** – Due process, protection from self-incrimination

Additional Components Over Time:

- **Subsequent Amendments** (27 total as of today), such as:
 - **13th Amendment** (abolished slavery)
 - **14th Amendment** (equal protection under the law)
 - **19th Amendment** (women's suffrage)
 - **Federal laws, judicial interpretations, and state constitutions** operate under this constitutional framework, but do not replace it.
-

Pre-1789 Framework (Brief Context)

Period	Framework
1776–1781	State constitutions and the Declaration of Independence served as guiding documents.
1781–1789	Articles of Confederation – the first national government structure, but it was weak (no strong executive, no power to tax, etc.).
1789 onward	U.S. Constitution replaced the Articles and remains in effect to this day.

Summary

Year	Legal Framework
1781–1789	Articles of Confederation (limited power)
Since 1789	U.S. Constitution – the supreme law of the land

The **U.S. Constitution, adopted in 1789**, has served as the nation's **founding and enduring legal framework**, defining the structure of government, the division of powers, and the rights of the people.