

## Comparison of U.S. and Canadian Political Systems

	Canada	The United States
System	<p>Constitutional Monarchy Parliamentary Democracy Federal System (with powers shared by Parliament and the provincial governments).</p>	<p>Presidential Democracy Federal System (with powers shared by the Central government and the State governments).</p>
Executive	<p><b>Monarch:</b> The Monarchy is hereditary.</p> <p><b>Governor General:</b> Appointed by the Prime Minister (acting in the name of the Monarch). This is a ceremonial position.</p> <p><b>Prime Minister:</b> Regionally elected leader of the ruling party in the House of Commons.</p> <p><b>Cabinet:</b> Appointed by the Prime Minister (acting in the name of the Governor General).</p>	<p><b>President:</b> Nationally elected by the Electoral College (who are elected directly from each state).</p> <p><b>Cabinet:</b> Appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate</p>
Legislative	<p><b>House of Commons:</b> 308 members elected by a plurality vote. (Plurality means more votes than any other candidate, not necessarily a majority of all votes cast.)</p> <p><b>Senate:</b> 105 Senators (unequally distributed among Provinces and Territories) appointed by the Prime Minister (acting in the name of the Governor General). Canadian Senators keep their positions until age 75. For the most part, the Senate conducts investigations and makes recommendations on government policies.</p>	<p><b>House of Representatives:</b> 435 Congressmen elected by a plurality vote.</p> <p><b>Senate:</b> 100 Senators (two from each state) elected by a plurality vote.</p>
Judicial	<p><b>Supreme Court:</b> Nine justices appointed by the Prime Minister (acting in the name of the Governor General). Their term ends at 75 years of age, but may be removed by the Prime Minister on address of Parliament.</p>	<p><b>Supreme Court:</b> Nine justices appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate. They have a life term, but may be impeached by Congress.</p>

	All other federal judges are appointed and removed through the same process.	
<b>Elections</b>	<p>No elections are held for the Monarch, Governor General, or Senators. (Votes for Members of Parliament decide who will be Prime Minister.)</p> <p>Members of Parliament (MPs) are elected on the date of the Prime Minister's choosing, within a five-year limit (acting in the name of the Governor General).</p>	Fixed elections are held every second year in November. The term of office is two years for a member of the House of Representatives and six years for a Senator. The Presidential term of office is 4 years with a two-term (or 10-year) limit.
<b>Checks on Powers</b>	<p>The Crown's authority is absolute and unreviewable by any other body.</p> <p>The Prime Minister can be overruled by the Monarch or his/her appointed Governor General. Members of the ruling party can choose a new Prime Minister at any time.</p> <p>Parliamentary legislation must be passed by both houses of Parliament and can be vetoed by the Governor General or declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. Members of Parliament can be removed by the Crown. Parliament can put up motion of "no confidence" to bring a change in government.</p> <p>Supreme Court Justices can be removed by the Prime Minister on address of Parliament. The Prime Minister has the power to appoint Justices.</p> <p>The Constitution can be amended with a majority of both houses of Parliament, with the approval of at least seven provinces which represent greater than fifty percent of the population, and consent by the Crown.</p>	<p>The President can be impeached by Congress. A Presidential veto can be overruled by a two-thirds majority vote in both houses of Congress. Presidential acts can be declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. Presidential nominees and treaties must be approved by the Senate.</p> <p>Congressional legislation must be passed by both houses of Congress and can be vetoed by the President or declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. Congressmen can be removed by a two-thirds majority vote in their respective houses of Congress.</p> <p>Supreme Court Justices can be impeached by Congress. The President has the power to appoint Justices on confirmation of the Senate.</p> <p>The Constitution can be amended with two-thirds vote of both houses of Congress and approval of three-quarters of the States, or through a Constitutional Convention.</p>

The United States

Canada

