

# Knowledge organiser - The President

**US President – ‘The executive Power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America.’**



## Powers of the President

Proposing legislation	Annual budget	Signing legislation
The President has the power to propose legislation to the Congress. The President can use the State of the Union address to propose legislation, or can make an announcement at a public event. Donald Trump’s tax cuts bill is an example of legislation proposed from the Oval Office.	The annual budget is a crucial piece of legislation that requires congressional approval. In recent times, arguments over the annual budget have caused gridlock and parts of the Federal Government to temporarily shut down. This happened to both Obama and Trump and highlights the increased partisanship in the Federal Government.	A presidential signature is the final stage in the passage of congressional legislation. Often, a president will host a signing ceremony to draw attention to a notable piece of legislation.
Vetoing legislation	Acting as Chief Executive	Nominating executive branch officials
A president can choose to veto a piece of legislation. There are two types of veto – a regular veto or a pocket veto which can be used when a congressional term is drawing to an end. Obama used 12 vetoes in his time as President and Trump used 8. It is possible for the Congress to override a presidential veto with super-majorities in both chambers.	The President is head of the executive branch and is therefore in charge of the federal branch of the executive. Modern presidents have developed and used their own bureaucracy (EXOP). Within this umbrella term are contained agencies such as the Office of Budget and Management, the White House Office, and the National Security Council.	The President has to appoint a cabinet to head the 15 executive departments such as Treasury, State and Education. There are also hundreds of further appointments to lower-level positions in these departments. The Senate is responsible for confirming all appointments by a simple majority vote.

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Nominating all federal judges	Commander-in-chief	Negotiating treaties
<p>The President nominates judges to the Supreme Court as well as to the lower courts. Trump nominated three judges to the Supreme Court during his time as President, with each one confirmed by a narrow, partisan majority in the Senate.</p>	<p>Presidential power in foreign affairs is difficult for Congress to check. Despite the Constitution giving Congress the power to declare war, it has not done so since 1941. The President will tend to ask Congress to 'authorise' his use of foreign troops. Trump acted in an increasingly unilateral fashion in foreign affairs, thus demonstrating the force of being Commander-in-chief.</p>	<p>All foreign treaties negotiated by the President require Senate approval. Bill Clinton's Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty was resoundingly rejected by the Senate in 1999, as was Woodrow Wilson's negotiation of the Treaty of Versailles in 1920.</p>
Presidential pardons	Head of State	Other powers
<p>Presidents have the power to pardon individuals for federal crimes. This has proven an increasingly controversial power, with presidents tending to issue a rush of pardons in their final days of office. Obama pardoned 142 people in his last month in office, and Trump's recent pardon of former National Security Adviser Michael Flynn again showed the controversial nature of this power.</p>	<p>At times of a national crisis, it is the President who speaks for the nation. After events like 9/11, the devastation of Hurricane Sandy or the tragedy of Sandy Hook, the President speaks and seeks to unite the nation.</p>	<p>Recent presidents have used a range of other means to develop presidential powers. The use of executive orders, executive agreements, recess appointments and signing statements have all been attempts by presidents to develop their power and bypass congressional checks and balances. Such strategies have often animated the forces that limit the powers of the US President (Congress, the Supreme Court, the Constitution, public opinion) and presidential power remains a concept that is far from fixed.</p>

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