

AP GOV STUDY GUIDE PART 1

The AP U.S. Government and Politics exam will test your knowledge of material typically covered in a one-semester college introductory-level course about U.S. government and politics. The 3-hour exam is comprised of 55 multiple-choice questions (50% of the exam) and 4 free-response questions (50% of the exam).

The exam covers the following topics:

- **Foundations of American Democracy:** 15–22% of test questions
- **Civil Liberties and Civil Rights:** 13–18% of test questions
- **Interactions Between Branches of Government:** 25–36% of test questions
- **Political Participation:** 20–27% of test questions
- **American Political Beliefs and Ideologies:** 10–15% of test questions

This guide will give you a review of all major exam topics, with an emphasis on the terms covered in each exam section. Following every topic overview are sample AP multiple-choice questions so you can get a sense of how information will be presented on test day.

Foundations of American Democracy

About 15–22% of the questions on your AP exam will cover the topic Foundations of American Democracy.

Types of Democracy

Let's take a look at the various types of democracy that exist in political theory.

Direct democracy allows citizens to directly govern and make laws. It is considered a chaotic and inefficient system, especially in societies with large populations. It also has significant risks like the majority violating the rights of the minority.

Participatory democracy values broad based public participation in governing. In theory, it keeps government closest to the people and their opinions.

Representative democracy/republicanism is a theoretically more efficient system that allows citizens to elect representatives who then govern for them. It allows a smaller and more manageable group to make decisions more quickly. Republicanism retains important elements

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