

Our Constitution

1. The country needed new laws !
2. Once the Revolutionary War was over, they realized that the Articles of Confederation were not working.
3. Rather than "fix" the Articles, the Constitutional Convention met to make new laws for the nation .
4. They decided to use the basic definition of a federal system of government. It is a system that divides governmental powers between the national government and the government of the states.
5. James Madison, and others like him, wrote government plans and brought them to the Constitutional Convention in 1787. James Madison's plan was called the "Virginia Plan." It is what our Constitution is based on today!
6. The "Virginia Plan" called for **three** separate branches of government: The Legislative, Executive, and Judicial.
7. Each branch can **check** the power of the other two branches . These "checks" keep any one branch of the government from gaining too much power. This is called **CHECKS and BALANCES**.