

The Role of Political Parties

- Build Stable Legislative and Electoral Alliances
- Mobilize Voters
- Use Party Labels to Enforce Collective Responsibility
 - Party labels help distinguish the candidates

Party Differences

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ■ Democrats | ■ Republicans |
| ■ Pro-choice | ■ Pro-life |
| ■ Gun control | ■ Anti-gun control |
| ■ Liberal | ■ Conservative |
| ■ Government involvement | ■ Limit Government involvement |

U.S. Parties vs. European Parties

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|--|---------------------------------------|
| ■ United States | ■ Europe |
| ■ Primaries, party has less role | ■ Party selects candidates |
| ■ Candidate runs campaign | ■ Party runs campaign |
| ■ Elected officials often vote against party line | ■ Elected officials vote party line |
| ■ Citizens vote more on issues & candidate personality | ■ Citizens vote based on party labels |

Basic Features of the U.S. Party System

- Two-Party Competition
 - Originated in the first Congress
- Wasted Vote Syndrome
- Consume Third Party Issues
 - Proportional Representation
- Decentralized, Fragmented Party Coalitions
 - Party supports President, divisions at local level
- Professional Politicians
- Plurality/Winner-take-all

DEVELOPMENT & EVOLUTION OF THE PARTY SYSTEMS

First Party System: The Founding (1789 – 1824)

- Two Party System
- First Two Parties
 - Federalists (Hamilton)
 - Democratic-Republicans (Jefferson & Madison)
- Local Influence
- End of the Federalist Party

Second Party System: Jacksonians
(1828-1854)

- Rise of the Democratic Party
- Party Organization
 - Organized the party at local levels
- Rise of the Whig Party

Third Party System: Civil War and
Sectionalism (1856-1896)

- Rise of the Republican Party
 - Made up of old Whigs and Democrats who opposed slavery
 - Dominated politics for next 2 decades
- Party Machinery
 - Gave favors in exchange for votes

Fourth Party System: Era of Reform
(1896-1932)

- Progressive Era Reforms – ended the party machine
 - Civil Service Exam
 - Australian Ballot – secret ballot
 - Primary Elections

Fifth Party System: (1932-Present)

- Party line voting declined, and ticket splitting increased
 - Rise in **Divided Government** – When one party holds the Presidency and the other party holds power in Congress
- Voters become more indifferent to the parties
- Electorate became more volatile
 - Caused by rapid migration in the society
- Increase in third parties

National Party Structure

- National Convention
 - Every 4 years
 - Purpose
 - Select presidential nominee
 - Write party platform
- National Committee
 - Purpose
 - Run general operations of the party
 - Raise money
 - Help candidates

National Party Structure, continued

- National Chairperson
 - Purpose
 - Run day-to-day operations

Local Level Organization

- The Machine
 - Party Machine
- Ideological Parties
 - Parties based around values
- Solidarity Groups
 - People participate in politics for the social elements

Local Level Organization, continued

- Sponsored Parties
 - A group sponsors a party
 - Example: UAW
- Personal Following
 - A candidate's personal characteristics
