

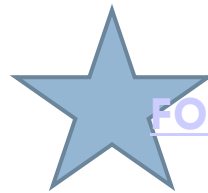
Government

- **A:** The organization, machinery, or agency through which a political unit exercises authority and performs functions and which is usually classified according to the distribution of power within it **B:** the complex of political institutions, laws, and customs through which the function of governing is carried out

[Merriam Webster Online Dictionary](#)

Forms of Government

- It has been suggested that every government which has ever existed has been a prime example of *kakistocracy*, or the rule of the worst, but this list of 169 different types of leadership suggests that that might be a bit too simplistic. Each of the following words indicates a type of government by a certain kind of person or institution. Everyone seems to want to get in on this rulership gig, from saints and mothers to beggars. Etymologically-minded folks should note the difference between the suffix 'archy', meaning 'rulership', and 'cracy', meaning 'power', which both come from Greek roots.



VOTE Democracy



- In a democracy, the government is elected by the people. Everyone who is eligible to vote has a chance to have their say over who runs the country. It is distinct from governments controlled by a particular social class or group (aristocracy; oligarchy) or by a single person (despotism; dictatorship; monarchy).
- A democracy is determined either directly or through elected representatives.

Autocracy

- Government by a single person having unlimited power; despotism (domination through threat of punishment and violence) .



Oligarchy

- A government in which a few people such as a dominant clan or clique have power.



Monarchy



- A monarchy has a king, queen, emperor or empress.
- The ruling position can be passed on to the ruler's heirs.
- In some traditional monarchies, the monarch has absolute power.
- But a constitutional monarchy, like the UK, also has a democratic government that limits the monarch's control.

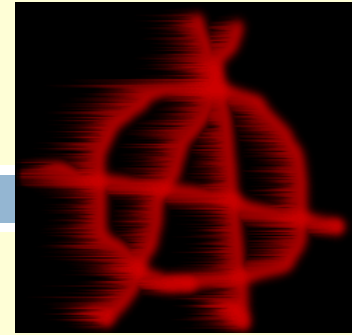
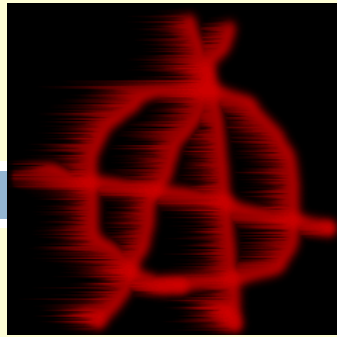
Dictatorship

- A country ruled by a single leader. The leader has not been elected and may use force to keep control.
- In a military dictatorship, the army is in control.



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Anarchy



- Anarchy is a situation where there is no government. This can happen after a civil war in a country, when a government has been destroyed and rival groups are fighting to take its place.
- Anarchists are people who believe that government is a bad thing in that it stops people organizing their own lives.

Republic

- A republic is a country that has no monarch.
- The head of the country is usually an elected president.



Revolutionary

- If a government is overthrown by force, the new ruling group is sometimes called a revolutionary government.



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Totalitarian

- This is a country with only one political party.
- People are forced to do what the government tells them and may also be prevented from leaving the country.



Types of Government in General

- [Monarchy](#) - Rule by an individual who has inherited the role and expects to bequeath it to their heir.^[5]
- [Despotism](#) - Rule by a single leader, all his or her subjects are considered his or her slaves.
- [Dictatorship](#) - Rule by an individual who has full power over the country.^[6] See also [Autocracy](#) and [Stratocracy](#).
- [Oligarchy](#) - Rule by a small group of people who share similar interests or family relations.^[7]
- [Plutocracy](#) - A government composed of the wealthy class.
- [Democracy](#) - Rule by a government where the [people](#) as a whole hold the power. It may be exercised by them ([direct democracy](#)), or through representatives chosen by them ([representative democracy](#)).^{[8][9][10]}
- [Theocracy](#) - Rule by a religious elite.^[11]
- [Anarchy](#) - Absence, or lack of government.^{[12][13]}
- Some countries have hybrid forms of Government such as modern [Iran](#) with its combination of democratic and theocratic institutions, and constitutional monarchies such as [The Netherlands](#) combine elements of monarchy and democracy.^{[14][15]}

Types of Government in the World

Today You Should Know

- **1. Democracy** The word "democracy" literally means "rule by the people." In a democracy, the people govern.
- **2. Republic** A literal democracy is impossible in a political system containing more than a few people. All "democracies" are really republics. In a republic, the people elect representatives to make and enforce laws.
- **3. Monarchy** A monarchy consists of rule by a king or queen. Sometimes a king is called an "emperor," especially if there is a large empire, such as China before 1911. There are no large monarchies today. The United Kingdom, which has a queen, is really a republic because the queen has virtually no political power.
- **4. Aristocracy** An aristocracy is rule by the aristocrats. Aristocrats are typically wealthy, educated people. Many monarchies have really been ruled by aristocrats. Today, typically, the term "aristocracy" is used negatively to accuse a republic of being dominated by rich people, such as saying, "The United States has become an aristocracy."
- **5. Dictatorship** A dictatorship consists of rule by one person or a group of people. Very few dictators admit they are dictators; they almost always claim to be leaders of democracies. The dictator may be one person, such as Castro in Cuba or Hitler in Germany, or a group of people, such as the Communist Party in China.
- **6. Democratic Republic** Usually, a "democratic republic" is not democratic and is not a republic. A government that officially calls itself a "democratic republic" is usually a dictatorship. Communist dictatorships have been especially prone to use this term. For example, the official name of North Vietnam was "The Democratic Republic of Vietnam." China uses a variant, "The People's Republic of China."