

WISCONSIN STATE
CONSTITUTION
1848

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Preamble
We, the people of Wisconsin, grateful to Almighty God for our freedom, to secure its blessings, form a more perfect government, insure domestic tranquility and promote the general welfare, do establish this constitution.
—*Wisconsin Constitution, preamble*

•Sound familiar?

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Article I – Declaration of Rights

- Prohibits
 - Slavery
 - Imprisonment for debt
- Guarantees
 - Property rights for resident aliens and citizens
- Affirms
 - Bill of Rights
 - Subordinate Military
 - Rights to hunt and fish

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- Article II – Defines state’s boundaries
- Article III – Defines who can vote & residency

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Article IV – Legislative Branch

- Assembly
 - 2-year term, 54-100 members (99)
- Senate
 - 4-year term, members = 1/4 to 1/3 of assembly (33)
- Both can originate and amend bills
- 2/3 can override Governor's veto
- Can't legalize gambling
 - Except charity bingo
 - And state lottery

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Article V – Executive Branch

- Governor and Lieutenant Governor
 - Elected as ticket, 4-year term
- Commander of National Guard
- Can pardon state convictions
- Veto Power
 - Line Item
- Yearly State of the State Address

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Article VI – Administrative

- Secretary of State
 - Record of official acts
 - Other duties as assigned
- State Treasurer
 - *Administer* state finances
 - Other duties as assigned
- Attorney General
 - Chief law enforcement officer of the state
 - Other duties as assigned
- County officials

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Article VII – Judicial Branch

- State Supreme Court
 - 7 Justices, 10-year term, elected in statewide vote
 - Last court of appeals in the state
 - State Court of Appeals
 - State Circuit Courts
- Impeachment of state officials
- Mandatory retirement age?

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- Article VIII – defines how taxes are raised, government debt is incurred, and public money is spent
- Article IX – Defines what constitutes public land

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Article X – Education

- State Superintendent of Schools
 - 4-year term, elected in statewide vote
 - “Supervise public instruction”
- School funding
- State University
- Forbids “sectarian” education

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Article XI

- Corporations, banks, state acquisition of land

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Article XII – Amending the Constitution

1. Passes both Assembly and Senate by a simple majority
2. General Election
3. Passes both Assembly and Senate by a simple majority (no changes)
4. Citizens vote in general election

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Article XIII – Miscellaneous

- Literally... that's the title in the Constitution

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Article XIV – Ratification

- Fun Fact: Original copy has been lost since it was sent to the printer in 1848...

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