



# Political Parties

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Chapter Twelve

# Important Questions

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- Why does a nation as diverse as the United States sustain only two major parties?
- If the first generation of leaders elected under the Constitution rejected political parties on principle, why did they create them anyway?
- Today national party conventions merely certify the winners of primary elections instead of choosing the presidential nominees, as they did in the past. So why do the parties continue to hold these gatherings?
- Ninety percent of Americans claim they always vote for the person best suited for the job, regardless of party. How can it be, then, that political parties are as healthy as ever?



# Nature of Parties

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- Do parties matter to voters?
- Recently elections demonstrate increased party line voting.
  - even though voters may say negative things about parties, they still act like partisans
- Parties remain healthy and competitive organizations.
- Parties remain the central organizing instrument of government.
- Parties have contributed to democratic politics in many ways.

