

Political Parties in the United States

Political parties in our country take different stands on various issues, as do citizens. The political spectrum diagram shows the general range of political opinions that people hold. The charts show the major agendas of the Democratic and Republican parties, as well as information about major third parties.

- How do the Democratic and Republican parties differ on the role of the government in the nation's economy?
- Based on the information in the diagram and charts, where do you think the Democratic Party falls on the political spectrum? The Republican Party? The Constitutional Party? Explain your reasoning.



Democratic Party

- favors government regulation of the economy; supports organized labor
- favors higher taxes for high-income earners and a redistribution of tax revenue to programs for the poor
- favors keeping welfare in place for the poor and disadvantaged
- favors school-funding initiatives that create competitive public schools



Republican Party

- favors less governmental intervention in the economy; supports restricting organized labor
- favors lower taxes and breaks for high-income earners to encourage business investment and economic growth
- favors cutting back welfare benefits in order to foster initiative for welfare recipients to find work
- favors school funding initiatives that allow for parental choice, including school vouchers for private schools

Major Third Parties

Party	Issues
Constitutional Party (1992–present)	anti-gun control; anti-tax; protectionist
Green Party (1985–present)	environmental protection
Labor Party (1996–present)	protecting the rights of workers
Libertarian Party (1971–present)	individual liberty; economic freedom
Reform Party (1995–present)	campaign reform; balanced budgets

The Political Spectrum

