

AP U.S GOV LANDMARK CASES SUPREME COURT CASES

Updated 4/2016

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Case/Year	Topic/Issue	Supreme Court Decision
Marbury v. Madison (1803)	Checks and balances	Established the power of judicial review in finding that a congressional statute extending the Court's original jurisdiction was unconstitutional (Marshall Court)
McCulloch v. Maryland (1819)	Federalism	Allowed Congress to establish a national bank via its implied powers and stopped Maryland from taxing the national bank as violation of Supremacy Clause (Marshall Court)
Gibbons v. Ogden (1824)	Federalism	Ferry boat case; only Congress is granted the power to regulate interstate commerce by the Commerce Clause of the Constitution (Marshall Court)
Dred Scott v. Sanford (1857)	Federalism, slavery	Ruled slaves were not citizens under the Constitution; struck down Missouri Compromise (Taney Court)
Reynolds v. United States (1879)	1 st Amend – Religion	Upheld federal ban on polygamy because it is not protected by the free exercise clause; government can punish criminal activity without regard to religious belief (Waite Court)
Plessy v. Ferguson (1896)	Federalism, segregation	Upheld state-imposed racial segregation; "separate but equal" doctrine (Fuller Court)
Schenck v. United States (1919)	1 st Amend – Speech	Upheld the Espionage Act; declared that 1st Amendment right to freedom of speech was not absolute; free speech could be limited if its exercise presented a "clear and present danger" (White Court)
Gitlow v. New York (1925)	Federalism, 1 st Amend	Established the selective incorporation of the Bill of rights (a.k.a. incorporation doctrine) through the 14th amendment; Bill of Rights can limit the states as well as the federal government (Taft Court)
W.Va. Board of Education v. Barnett (1943)	1 st Amend – Speech, Religion	Ruled public school children (Jehovah's witnesses) cannot be compelled to salute the flag or recite the Pledge; violates 1st Amendment freedom of speech (Stone Court)
Korematsu v. United States (1944)	Rights of the Accused	Upheld the U.S. government's decision to put Japanese-Americans in internment camps during World War II due to a clear and present danger (Stone Court)
Brown v. Board of Education (1954)	Civil Rights	School segregation unconstitutional; segregation psychologically damaging to blacks; overturned separate but equal; use of 14th Amendment (Warren Court)
Mapp v. Ohio (1961)	Rights of the Accused	Established the exclusionary rule; illegally obtained evidence cannot be used in court (Warren Court)
Baker v. Carr (1962)	Voting rights, apportionment	Court set aside "political question" doctrine and ruled that it can decide a voting rights question; first important voting rights case (Warren Court)
Engel v. Vitale (1962)	1 st Amend – Religion	Prohibited state-sponsored recitation of prayer in public schools by virtue of 1st Amendment's establishment clause and the 14th Amendment's due process clause (Warren Court)
Abington School District v. Schempp (1963)	1 st Amend – Religion	Prohibited school-sponsored devotional Bible reading in public schools because it violated the establishment clause and due process clause (Warren Court)
Gideon v. Wainwright (1963)	Rights of the Accused	Extended to the defendant the right of counsel in all state and federal criminal trials regardless of their ability to pay (Warren Court)
Wesberry v. Sanders (1963)	Voting rights, apportionment	Established "one man, one vote;" ordered House districts to be as near equal in population as possible during reapportionment process (Warren Court)
Heart of Atlanta Motel v. United States (1964)	Civil Rights	Upheld the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Congress can ban segregation in public accommodations via the commerce clause (Warren Court)
New York Times v. Sullivan (1964)	1 st Amend – Press	Ruled the 1st Amendment protects even false statements about public figures unless they can prove statements were made with malice and disregard for the truth (Warren Court)
Griswold v. Connecticut (1965)	Right to Privacy	Established right of privacy for married couples using birth control through 4th and 9th Amendments; set privacy precedent for Roe v. Wade (Warren Court)
Miranda v. Arizona (1966)	Rights of the Accused	Criminal suspects must be informed of their right to consult with an attorney and of their right against self-incrimination prior to questioning by police; established Miranda warnings of counsel and silence (Warren Court)
Loving v. Virginia (1967)	Civil Rights	Struck down state's law banning interracial marriage as violation of the 14th Amendment equal protection clause (Warren Court)
Brandenburg v. Ohio (1969)	1 st Amend – Speech	1st and 14th Amendments protected speech advocating violence at KKK rally unless it calls for "imminent lawless action" (Warren Court)

Tinker v. Des Moines (1969)	1 st Amend - Speech	Upheld student's speech rights; wearing black arm bands in protest of Vietnam War is protected symbolic speech under the 1st Amendment (Warren Court)
Lemon v. Kurtzman (1971)	1 st Amend – Religion	Established the "Lemon Test" to determine if a government law or action is constitutional under the Establishment Clause of the 1st Amendment: 1) the law must have a legitimate secular purpose, 2) must neither advance nor inhibit religion, 3) and must not result in an excessive entanglement of government and religion (Burger Court)
New York Times v. United States (1971)	1 st Amend – Press	"Pentagon Papers;" government must prove actual harm to national security if it seeks prior restraint to censor the press (Burger Court)
Roe v. Wade (1973)	Right to privacy	Abortion rights fall within the privacy implied in the 14th amendment; women have total autonomy over pregnancy in the first trimester (Burger Court)
United States v. Nixon (1974)	Checks and balances	The President has no absolute constitutional executive privilege to refuse to comply with a court order to produce information needed in a criminal trial (Burger Court)
Buckley v. Valeo (1976)	Campaign finance, 1 st Amendment	1st Amendment protects campaign spending; legislatures can limit contributions, but candidates can spend an unlimited amount of their own or family's money in campaigns (Burger Court)
Gregg v. Georgia (1976)	Rights of the accused	Death penalty is not "cruel and unusual punishment" in cases of murder (Burger Court)
Regents of the University of California v. Bakke (1978)	Affirmative action	Upheld affirmative action, but ruled that racial quotas in college admissions are unconstitutional because they violate the equal protection clause of the 14th amendment (Burger Court)
Texas v. Johnson (1989)	1 st Amend – Speech	Flag-burning is symbolic speech with a political purpose and is protected by 1st Amendment (Rehnquist Court)
Oregon Employment Division v. Smith (1990)	1 st Amend – Religion	The state could deny unemployment benefits to a person fired for violating a state prohibition on the use of peyote, even though the use of the drug was part of a religious ritual (Rehnquist Court)
Planned Parenthood v. Casey (1992)	Abortion rights	Struck down law requiring spousal notification prior to obtaining an abortion ; law invalid under the 14th Amendment because it created an undue burden on married women seeking an abortion; upheld requirements for parental consent, informed consent, and 24-hour waiting period were constitutionally valid regulations (Rehnquist Court)
United States v. Lopez (1995)	Federalism	Gun Free School Zones Act exceeded Congress' authority to regulate interstate commerce; important federalism case (Rehnquist Court)
Bush v. Gore (2000)	Political Process	Resolved 2000 presidential election by halting the Florida vote recount (Rehnquist Court)
Gratz v. Bollinger (2003)	Affirmative Action	Struck down use of "bonus points" for race in undergraduate admissions at University of Michigan (Rehnquist Court)
District of Columbia v. Heller (2008)	2 nd Amend – gun rights	Ruled the 2nd Amendment protects an individual's right to possess a firearm for lawful, private use (Roberts Court)
Citizens United v. Federal Elections Commission (2010)	Campaign finance, 1 st Amendment	Ruled that corporations and unions cannot be banned from spending money on a political campaign under the 1st Amendment; corporations and unions have the same free speech rights as individuals (Roberts Court)
National Federation of Independent Business v. Sebelius (2012)	Federalism	Upheld most of the Affordable Care Act ("Obamacare") including individual mandate under Congress's taxing power (Roberts Court)
Shelby County v. Holder (2013)	Voting rights	Struck down provision of Voting Rights Act of 1965 requiring states engaged in past discrimination to get federal preclearance before instituting changes in voting laws or practices; allowed restrictive state voter ID laws to go forward (Roberts Court)
United States v. Windsor (2013)	Gay rights	Struck down the federal Defense of Marriage Act's (DOMA) restrictions of marriage rights to only heterosexual couples as unconstitutional violation of the 5th amendment due process clause; same sex married couples now receive federal benefits (Roberts Court)
Obergefell v. Hodges (2015)	Marriage Equality, Federalism	Struck down state bans on same sex marriage based on 14th Amendment; States must recognize a marriage between two people of the same sex when their marriage was lawfully licensed and performed out-of-State. (Roberts Court)