



# What is the **SECOND** AMENDMENT

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# What is the Second Amendment?

The Second Amendment to the United States Constitution protects the right of Americans to keep and bear arms for the protection of themselves, their rights, and their property. It was added to the Constitution on December 15th, 1791, as part of the Bill of Rights. The original text says:

*“A well-regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.”*

The Second Amendment has two main ideas;

1. **Militias:** In the 1700s, communities often relied on local militias. Militias were groups of ordinary citizens who could be called to defend their towns or states.
2. **Right to Bear Arms:** The Amendment also protects the right of the people to keep and bear arms.

At the time, many Americans believed that large, permanent armies could threaten individual freedom. They saw militias as the best way to protect both the nation and personal freedom. Others believed that the right to self-defense was a natural right for everyone, not just for those serving in a militia. In 2008, a court ruled that the Second Amendment should include everyone, and not be limited to the purposes of a militia.

Sources: [constitutioncenter.org](http://constitutioncenter.org)  
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