



# Convention Rules

The delegates wanted to ensure that the Constitutional Convention was a civil and deliberative body rather than one divided by political ideologies. The convention delegates established a set of rules to conduct business and work toward compromise.

Examine the convention rules and add your evaluation of each using the Annotation Station strategies.

## Annotation Station

Highlight in **YELLOW** phrases that confuse you. Use context clues to try and figure out their meaning.

Highlight in **RED** rules with which you do not agree.

Highlight in **GREEN** the rules with which you do agree.

☆ Star the rule that you find most important.

## Convention Rules

- Delegates from at least 7 states (out of 13) had to be present for the convention to do business each day.
- If a delegate's absence would leave a state without representation, then he had to get permission to be absent.
- When rising to speak, a delegate had to address the president.
- While he was speaking, other members could not pass notes, hold conversations with other delegates, or read a book, pamphlet, or paper.
- A member was not allowed to speak more than twice on the same question. He could not speak the second time until every other member had had a first opportunity to speak on a subject.
- Committees could be appointed as necessary (to tackle particularly challenging topics).
- Any decision made by the convention was subject to reconsideration and change. No decision had to be final until the entire plan was completed.
- The convention's proceedings were to remain secret. No delegate could disclose the substance of the debates, although they were allowed to take notes.

**How might these rules have helped civil discourse and decision-making at the convention?**

**How might these rules have been controversial at the convention?**