

The Presidency

Article II, Section 1 of the Constitution requires that the president of the United States be at least thirty-five years old. He or she must also be a natural-born citizen who has lived in the United States for at least fourteen years. The president's term in office is set at four years.

The president is actually chosen by the Electoral College. When citizens vote for a president and vice president, they are voting for the group of electors that has pledged to vote for their chosen candidate. Each state has a number of electors equal to its combined number of senators and representatives. A candidate who carries, or wins, a particular state receives all of that state's electoral votes. The candidate with the most electoral votes becomes president. Originally, the person who became vice president was the candidate with the second highest number of electoral votes. This was changed in 1804 by the Twelfth Amendment. Since that time, electors have voted separately for a president and a vice president.

On the lines provided, explain why each of the following people cannot be president of the United States.

1. Boris Strukov, a man who emigrated from the former Soviet Union to the United States in 1975 _____

2. Christine Brown, a 30-year-old state representative from Raleigh, North Carolina

3. Jonathan Blakely, a natural-born U.S. citizen who has lived in France since he was five years old _____

4. What problems might arise from making the runner-up in the presidential election the vice president? _____

The White House



THE EXECUTIVE MANSION, as Pierre L'Enfant called the White House, is the official residence and office of the President of the United States. It is where the President and his staff conduct daily business and make decisions that affect the lives of all Americans. Every President, with the exception of George Washington, has lived there. It is located northwest of the Capitol Building at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. The house stands on a landscaped area bound on the north by Lafayette Square and on the south by a circular park called the Ellipse. The park and the grounds of the White House are often referred to as the President's Square.

The main building, constructed of white sandstone, is 175 feet long and has two columned porches: the square north portico, which is the main entrance, and the curved south portico. Two long galleries extend from the east and west sides. Press facilities are under the west terrace and a family theater is under the east terrace. The east and west wings are at the end of the terraces. The west wing is the executive wing and contains the offices of the President and the presidential staff and the cabinet room. The east wing includes the offices of the military aides.

There are 132 rooms in the White House, which have been enlarged and redecorated many times. Tourists are invited to visit the rooms on the first floor of the building. These include:

The State Dining Room This is the site of the official banquets. It accommodates 140 people. Words written by President John Adams in 1800 are inscribed on the mantle below the fireplace: "I pray Heaven to Bestow the Best of Blessings on

This House and on All that shall hereafter inhabit it. May none but Honest and Wise Men ever rule under this roof."

The Red Room This room serves as a parlor and is furnished in the American Empire style, a style that was popular between 1810 and 1830. It is called the Red Room because the walls are decorated with red silk trimmed with gold.

The Blue Room This is the main reception room where the President's guests are brought after their welcome on the South lawn. It is an oval drawing room and is still furnished with pieces ordered by President James Monroe during the years 1817-1825.

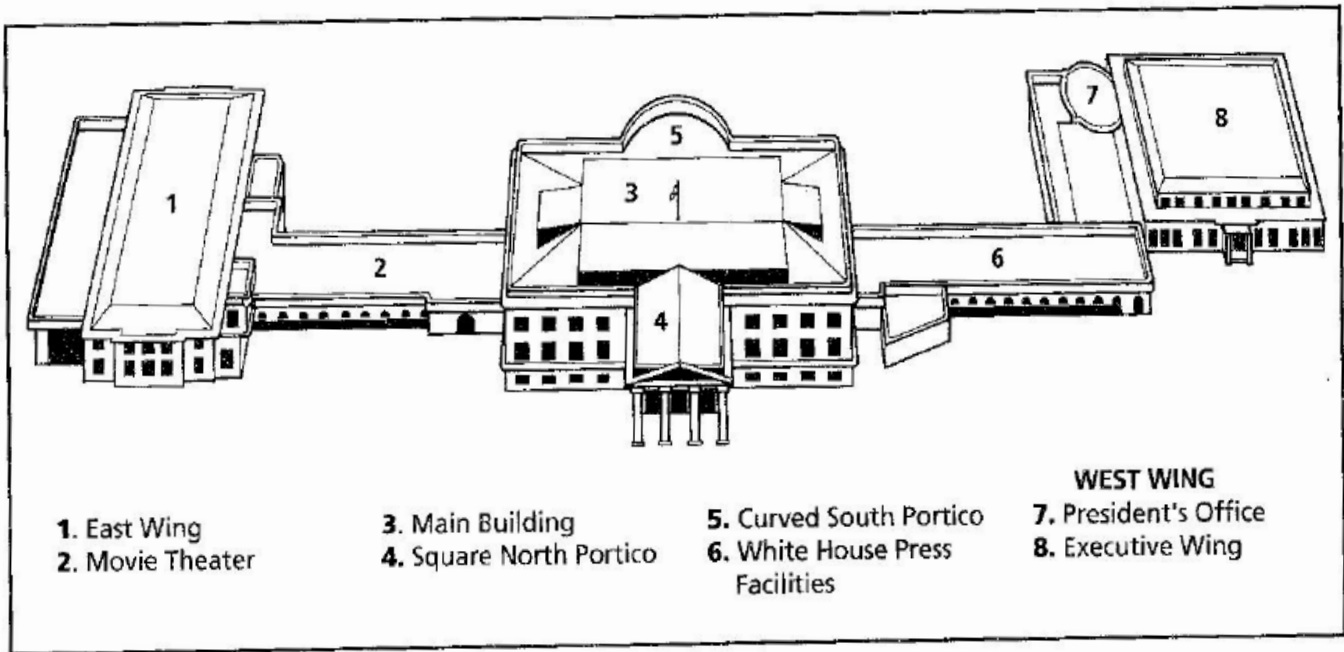
The Green Room This was Thomas Jefferson's dining room but has since become a parlor for small receptions. It gets its name from the light green silk that covers the wall. It has been decorated with

various shades of green since James Monroe refurnished the White House after the fire of 1814.

The East Room This is the largest room in the White House and is the site of presidential press conferences. It is also used for entertaining guests after formal dinners. The portrait of George Washington displayed in this room was saved by Dolley Madison in 1814, hours before the British

Do You Know?

1. Who was the only President who did not live in the White House?
2. What President was the first to occupy the White House?
3. The White House was first called the President's Palace and then the Executive Mansion. What President induced Congress to change its official name to White House?
4. Who was President during the Civil War?
5. What President called the White House "the big white jail on Pennsylvania Avenue?"
6. What President was portrayed by a cartoonist as a prisoner marking off the days on the wall?
7. What President entered the competition for the design of the White House under the false initials A.Z.?
8. What President left the White House saying, "I enjoyed every . . . moment!"?



burned everything inside the house.

The private rooms, which are not open to the public, include the diplomatic reception room, used as an entrance for formal functions, the kitchen, the library, and offices of the White House physician and curator. The second floor serves as the living quarters for the President's family. The third floor includes rooms for staff and guests.

John Adams, the first President to live in the White House, found it habitable, if not comfortable. The next resident, Thomas Jefferson, felt it was too grand for the chief executive of a new country. His exact words were: "Big enough for two emperors, one Pope, and the grand Lama." Nevertheless, he saw fit to add the service wings on either side of the main block of the house. Actually, he was the first in a long line of Presidents to add, alter, repair, or redecorate the beautiful executive mansion.



QuestionsQuestionsQuestions

1. How many rooms are there in the White House?
2. In what room are the official banquets held?
3. What is the largest room in the White House?
4. What President furnished the Blue Room?
5. Who refurnished the entire White House after the British set the house on fire in 1814?
6. How did the beautiful portrait of George Washington escape the fire?
7. Where are the presidential press conferences held?
8. What is the Green Room used for today?