

Parliament and Government: who does what?



Parliament and Government: who does what?

Parliament

Parliament is the name given to the **House of Lords** and the **House of Commons**, both of which are large **chambers** in the **Palace of Westminster**.

Members of Parliament come from different political parties and their role is to **represent** the people and to **scrutinise** the work of the Government. Both houses must **approve** a new law before it can be **passed**.

Government

Government is the name given to a smaller group of politicians from the party with a **majority** in the **general election**.

Typically just one party has the majority, but at the moment we have a **coalition government** of Conservatives and Liberal Democrats.

The government is responsible for **amending laws**, making new ones and **abolishing** old ones; they **set the rate of taxes**, plan the **budget** and pursue the **policies** they talked about during their **election campaign**.

Cabinet

The most important **committee** in government is called the Cabinet. The prime minister selects its members and chairs their meetings.

Parliament and Government: who does what?

These are the members of the current Cabinet:

David Cameron	Nick Clegg	William Hague	George Osborne
Danny Alexander	Theresa May	Philip Hammond	Vincent Cable
Iain Duncan Smith	Chris Grayling	Michael Gove	Eric Pickles
Jeremy Hunt	Lord Hill of Oareford	Owen Paterson	
Justine Greening	Michael Moore	Edward Davey	Patrick McLoughlin
Maria Miller	Theresa Villiers	David Jones	

Copy the following table and see how much of it you can complete:

Cabinet member I have heard of	Current job title	Recent news stories involving this person

Parliament and Government: who does what?

Constitutional monarchy

A constitutional monarchy is a form of government in which a king or queen is the **Head of State** (the official head of the country), but an elected government has most of the real power.

The **constitution** is the set of rules limiting the monarch's power. In the UK, these rules are based on unwritten convention rather than a written document, but they are **binding** (have legal force) nonetheless.