

# Class 11 Political Science Notes Chapter 3 Election and Representation

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- The modern period is considered as the age of democracy where participation of people ensured at every level of government. In the words of Abraham Lincoln. “Democracy the government of the people, for the people and by the people”.
- Democracy can be classified into two types, i.e. Direct Democracy and Indirect Democracy.
- In ancient times, the direct democracy was prominent due to small sizes of kingdoms but, now the states are vast along with higher population.
- In an indirect democracy, the people do not participate directly but they participate indirectly through their elected representatives who act in accordance with the wishes of the people.
- Indian Electoral System experiences some unique features as Universal Adult Franchise, Joint Electorate, Combination of direct and indirect elections, secret Ballot system, Election petition, etc.
- By Universal Adult Franchise, we mean every person above the age of maturity (18 years and above) is entitled to enjoy the right to vote in elections irrespective of caste, creed, colour, race, language, religion, etc.
- The age of attaining maturity is fixed by the state. In India, England and Russia, it is 18 years, in Switzerland 20 years and in America 21 years and in Norway it is 23 years.
- Adult franchise has many merits. It provides political training and education as well as creates the feelings of self-respect among the people. It ensures participation of people in governance.
- The constitution of India appoints our Election Commission also to perform election related activities, i.e. to prepare voters’ list, provide recognition to political parties, declares constituencies and control over the machinery of election.
- The election process begins with the election notification issued by the president under section 14 of the People’s Representation Act, 1951, which is followed by the announcement of election dates by the Election Commission.
- Though Election Commission performs its duties very well, despite the following discrepancies have been observed during elections:
  - Use of money and use of power by candidates has become dominant.
  - In actual, voters do not create much interest in the elections.
  - Misuse of public funds and facilities.
  - Even the candidate less than majority of votes becomes victorious.

- The following suggestions might be there to remove the drawbacks mentioned above:
  - To control money and muscle power
  - The participation of women should be encouraged.
  - The persons from criminal background should be prohibited.
  - During election campaign, the candidates should not use words related to any caste, religion, language, etc.

**Important terms:**

- First Past the Post System (FPTP): In this system whoever has more votes than all other candidates is declared elected.
- Proportional Representation (PR): Large geographical areas are demarcated as constituencies.
- Universal Adult Franchise: Every person above the age of maturity enjoys the right to vote without any discrimination.
- Democracy: A rule or government of the people, for the people and by the people.