

Compromises at the Convention

When the **delegates** began meeting at the **Constitutional Convention**, **debates** soon started. Many **representatives** disagreed about the way our government should work. After these arguments, the men were able to make **compromises**. A compromise is when groups of people settle their differences by giving up some of what they want to meet somewhere in the middle.

Here are some of the major compromises achieved during the Constitutional Convention. Without these, the **United States Constitution** could not have been approved!

Strong States or Strong Nation?



Debate: Many people felt that the national government was too weak. Many were afraid that by making it stronger the states would lose their power.

Compromise: The delegates agreed to create the **federal system** of government. This means the national government and the state governments would share **authority**, or power. States would control areas that only affected them and the national government would control areas that affected the whole country.

The Great Compromise



Debate: Delegates from large states wanted to have more representatives in Congress because they had bigger populations (called the **Virginia Plan**). The smaller states wanted the representatives to be equal because they were afraid of the larger states having too much authority (called the **New Jersey Plan**).

Compromise: After arguing for weeks, they decided that Congress would be divided into two parts. In one part, the **House of Representatives**, representatives would be chosen based on a state's population. In the other part, the **Senate**, representatives would be equal for every state.

The Three-Fifths Compromise



Debate: This was an argument between southern and northern states. The southern states wanted slaves to be counted in their population so they could have more representatives under the Virginia Plan. Northern states did not want slaves counted in the population since they were not considered citizens of our country. The North did want slaves counted if it meant their home state had to pay more taxes. The southern states were against slaves being counted for tax reasons.

Compromise: The delegates decided that instead of counting all of the slaves or none of the slaves, they would count three out of every five slaves for population and taxes.