

Mayflower Compact

Historical Background	<p>The Mayflower Compact, one of the earliest governing documents in colonial America, written and signed by pilgrims on the English ship <i>Mayflower</i> in 1620. The Pilgrims – English Separatists, seeking religious freedom from the Church of England, sailed to North America, landed in Plymouth, Massachusetts. Before disembarking, they drafted and signed the Mayflower Compact to establish a social contract and form a government for the new colony. The compact has been interpreted as an important step in the evolution of democratic government in America.</p>
Main ideas	<p>This short document outlined the pilgrims’ right to govern themselves, to create a civilized society for the greater good of the colony with majority rule and the concept of the public good, not elites.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Self-governance: The document asserted the settlers’ commitment to self-governance and the establishment of a fair and just civil body. It aimed to create laws and regulations for the general good and the preservation of order.2. Majority Rule: The Compact asserted the principle of majority rule, stating that laws and policies would be enacted based on the consent of the majority of the settlers.3. Covenant and Consent: The document highlighted the idea of a voluntary agreement among the settlers, stating their commitment to form a civil body and follow the laws and regulations created by the government.
Worldwide Impact	<p>The Mayflower Compact helped unify the travelers in the new world by giving the common man a political voice. The purpose of the Mayflower Compact was to establish basic law and order in the colony. The document was intended to be not just a contract between the colonists but also between themselves and God.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Democratic Principles: It served as a model for later colonial charters and influenced the development of self-governing institutions in the New World.2. Influence on American Government: The ideas of the Mayflower Compact, particularly the principles of self-governance and consent of the governed, helped shape subsequent American political institutions, including the development of representative government.
Criticism	<p>The Mayflower Compact has faced some criticism, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Exclusionary Nature: Critics argue that the Mayflower Compact had exclusionary elements, as it only applied to the male settlers aboard the Mayflower. It did not include the voices or participation of women, indigenous peoples, or other non-Puritan colonists.2. Theocratic Tendencies: The Compact had theocratic tendencies since it was influenced by the Pilgrims’ religious beliefs. It limited religious freedom and the rights of non-Puritan colonists.3. Limited Legal Authority: The Mayflower Compact was a self-created document without legal recognition from any higher authority. This limited its authority and legitimacy under English law.