

The Federal Court System

The Supreme Court

Chapter 18 The Federal Court System

The Judicial Branch - Courts

Originally thought to strengthen the new federal government which was weak under the Articles of Confederation

New government needed a high court to interpret and apply the law.

Dual Court System

Article III created the Supreme Court

-Congress created the lower federal courts (Judiciary Act of 1789)

Two types of Federal Courts

a) **Constitutional Courts**- federal courts created under Article III, Supreme Court, Court of Appeals, Court of International Trade, District Courts

b) **Special Courts**- do not exercise broad judicial power of the United States. They are a narrower range. Court of Military Appeals, Claims Court, Tax Court, Territorial Courts, Courts of District of Columbia

Constitutional Courts

Jurisdiction-the power to say the law

Subject matter

- a) any federal statute or provision of the Constitution
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Federal Courts hear cases involving

- 1) the U.S. or an official
- 2) Ambassador or consul to foreign government or its representative
- 3) State v State (11th Amendment)
- 4) citizens of one state suing another
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exclusive jurisdiction- cases can only be heard in a Federal Court

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eg. cases that can be tried on state level.

District Courts

563 judges handle 300,000 cases per year (90% case load)

91 District Courts were created by Congress in 1789.

Today

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- 1 court in D.C.

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