

How a Bill is Passed in Indian Parliament

Knowing how a bill is passed in the Indian Parliament is important information that should be known to all citizens as basic general knowledge, especially for those preparing for the UPSC exam. Whenever there is a need for a new law to be formulated or a new system to be introduced, a bill must be passed in the house of parliament, which goes through a step-by-step process until the final bill is passed.

- A bill can not become a law unless approved by both houses of the parliament, including the approval of the President of India.
- The introduction of a new bill can be done in either house of the Indian parliament (Lok Sabha or Rajya Sabha) by a Minister or any other member other than a Minister.
- If a Minister introduces a bill, it is known as a Government Bill, and if it is introduced by any member other than the Minister, it is called a Private Member's bill.
- A Bill goes through 'three readings' in each house of the Parliament before it is sent to the President of India for approval.
- If the Bill is approved by the President, it finally becomes a law for everyone to be followed throughout the country.

Types of Bills in Parliament

The law-making process begins with the introduction of a Bill in either house of the Parliament by a Minister or a member of the parliament (MP). Four main types of bills are passed or introduced for various reasons in both houses of parliament. These are as follows:

Money Bill

The money bill is mentioned in Article 110 of the Indian Constitution. The above-mentioned article mentions all the provisions specific to this bill.

- A Money Bill primarily concerns financial matters like public expenditures, taxation, borrowing of money by the government, etc.
- It can only be represented in Lok Sabha by a Minister.
- It can move forward once passed by Lok Sabha, only after it is given a recommendation by the President of India.
- The Rajya Sabha does not hold any right to reject or make amends to the Money Bill. It can only detain it for 14 days.
- The President himself can not return the bill for any kind of reconsideration. He can only approve or disapprove of it.
- There is no such provision for joint sitting in the case of a Money Bill, as there is no chance of a disagreement.

Ordinary Bill

Any matters apart from the financial ones concern the 'Ordinary Bill', as per Articles 107 & 108 of the Indian Constitution. The Ordinary Bill can be introduced in either house of the parliament by either a Minister or a Member of the Parliament (MP).

- The President's recommendation is not required to pass an Ordinary Bill.
- The Rajya Sabha holds the right to approve or disapprove this bill and can also be detained for six months.
- An Ordinary Bill is sent for President's approval only after it is passed by both houses of Parliament.
- The Ordinary Bill can be approved, disapproved, or sent for reconsideration by the President.
- There is also a provision for a joint sitting in case of a dead-end or stand-off.

You can read more about these bills individually to get a strong hold on the topic and better understand the difference between a Money Bill and an Ordinary Bill.

Financial Bill

A Financial Bill deals with all financial matters but differs from the Money Bill according to Article 117 of the Indian Constitution. Financial Bills also deal with matters relating to taxation and expenditure. These are further classified into Category A and Category B.

- Financial Bills coming under Category A deal with matters mentioned in sub-clause 'a' to 'f' of Clause 1 of Article 110 of the Indian Constitution.
- The Financial Bills under Category B deal with matters related to expenditures from the Consolidated Fund of India.
- All Money bills can be classified as financial bills, but all financial bills can not be called money bills.

You can also learn in detail about the difference between a Money Bill and a Financial Bill to better understand the distinction between these bills.

Constitutional Amendment Bill

The Constitutional Amendment Bill deals with the amendments in the provisions of the Indian Constitution. This bill is defined per Article 368 of the Indian Constitution.

Process of Passing a Bill in Indian Parliament

A Bill, irrespective of the type, goes through three readings in each House of Parliament, i.e. Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha. Once the three readings in both Houses are accomplished, and the Bill has been passed by both the Houses of Parliament, it is sent to the President of India for approval.

There are slightly different procedures adopted for each type of Bill passed. In detail, let us discuss the **process of passing a Bill in the Indian parliament**.

How is an Ordinary Bill Passed?

As discussed above, an Ordinary Bill can be passed by a Minister or a Member of Parliament (MP) in either House of Parliament. Let us look into the detailed process of how is an Ordinary Bill passed in the Indian Parliament.

First Reading:

The first step includes the introduction of the Bill in Parliament, which is accomplished by a Minister or another member of the Parliament. He/she asks for leave before introducing the Bill. They read the title and objective of the Bill, thereafter, it is published in the Gazette of India.

No discussion is held at this stage, and if the Bill is published in the Indian Gazette before the introduction, then the Minister or MP doesn't have to seek leave from the respective House.

Second Reading of Ordinary Bill:

The second reading of the Ordinary Bill is concerned with three stages such as the Discussion stage, the Committee stage, and finally, the Consideration Stage. Four options open to the House that it can take on the proposed Ordinary Bill in the first stage of discussion are as follows:

Discussion Stage	Committee Stage	Consideration Stage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Ordinary Bill can be taken into consideration immediately. - It can be referred to as a Select Committee from the House Standing Committees where the Bill was initially introduced. - It can also be referred to the Joint Committee of both Houses. - The Bill can also be circulated for a general opinion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Bill is considered clause by clause in this second stage. - Certain changes or amendments can be made at this stage if required. - Once the whole observation and inquiry are made, the committee returns the Bill to the House. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Once the House receives the critically observed Bill by the Committee, it reconsiders the provisions and carefully reviews each clause. - Each clause of the Bill is considered and voted on separately. - The members, if they like, can also suggest changes or amendments to the Bill, which, if accepted, can become part of the Bill.

Third Reading of Passing an Ordinary Bill in Parliament:

Unlike the first two readings of the legislative procedure in Parliament of passing a bill, the third stage or third reading consists of two simple steps:

- Ordinary Bill is accepted - this happens in the case of the presence of the majority of voting members in the Parliament who accept the bill.
- Ordinary Bill is rejected

A bill is only considered passed by the Parliament if both Houses have agreed to it. No changes or amendments are allowed in the Bill later on.

Passing a Bill in the Second House

After these three readings in the first house, the same legislative procedure in parliament is also followed in the Second House. The three readings again take place in the second House, in light of which the second house can take any of the following actions:

- The second house can pass on the Bill as it receives from the first house without any changes.
- If the second house feels the need, it may pass the bill with some changes and then return it to the first house for a second consideration.
- It can completely reject the bill.
- It can also hold the bill and keep it pending without taking action.

If the second house doesn't take any action for 6 months, a stand-off may happen, and a Joint Sitting may be called by the President of India.

Approval of the President of India:

Once the Bill is passed on to the President for his approval, he can take one of the following actions:

- The President of India gives his approval to the Bill, which then makes it an act and is placed in the statute book.
- The Bill can be returned to the Houses for reconsideration. It is upto the Houses if they wish to make any amends or return it as it is for the President's approval.
- The President may retain the bill, which ceases the Bill from becoming an act.

How is the Money Bill passed in Parliament?

The procedure of passing a Money Bill in India slightly differs from how an Ordinary Bill is passed here. A Money Bill can be introduced only in the Lok Sabha and necessarily on the recommendation of the President of India. Let's look at the steps followed further in the procedure of passing Money Bill in India.

- Lok Sabha passes on the bill to Rajya Sabha, which has to take action further. Having said that, Rajya Sabha here possesses minimal powers. It can not reject the Money Bill or make any amendments but only suggest them.
- It is up to Rajya Sabha to suggest amendments or recommendations, but it needs to send back the bill within 14 days.
- If Rajya Sabha fails to return the bill or take any action in 14 days, the Money Bill is considered as passed.
- Now, it is up to Lok Sabha to accept or reject the amendments or recommendations made by the Rajya Sabha.
- Once the Money Bill is passed by both the Houses of Parliament, it requires the President's approval. It is up to the President to either give his approval or outright reject it. There is no such provision for returning the bill for reconsideration.

After the Money bill has been given the President's approval, it becomes **an act** and is further made to publish in the Indian Statute Book.

Passing a Constitutional Amendment Bill in India

The Constitutional Amendment Bill can be introduced in either house of the parliament, either by a Minister or by a member of parliament. Still, it cannot be introduced in the state legislature.

- The passing of the Constitutional Bill does not require the permission of the President of India.
- There is no such facility for joint sitting in a tie situation.
- The Constitutional Amendment Bill needs to be passed in each house by a special majority that is more than 50%.
- The President has to give his approval to the Bill as he is not in a position to return or retain the bill as in the case of ordinary bills.
- Once the President approves, the bill becomes a Constitutional Amendment Act, and the required amendments are made in the Constitution following the terms of the act.

Votes required to Pass a Bill in Parliament

To pass a bill and make it a law, each House of Parliament (Lok Sabha/Rajya Sabha) requires a certain majority of votes. Four majority votes are required to pass the various bills in the Parliament of India.

Type of Majority	Meaning of the Votes
Simple Majority	More than 50 percent of members are in the House and voting.
Absolute Majority	More than 50 percent of the total strength of the House

Special Majority	$\frac{2}{3}$ rd of the total strength or $\frac{2}{3}$ rd of those present in the House and voting
Effective Majority	50 percent of the effective strength of the House, i.e. the number of seats that are currently filled in the House.

