

Rajya Sabha

Rajya Sabha is the Parliament's second chamber and represents India's union territories and states. The Rajya Sabha, along with the Lok Sabha and President, forms the parliament of India. The elected members of state legislative assemblies elect the Rajya Sabha members. The Rajya Sabha was first constituted on 3 April 1952.

The origin of the Rajya Sabha can be drawn from the Montague-Chelmsford Report of 1919. The report introduced the idea of a bicameral legislature, i.e., the legislature with two houses - Council of State or Upper House and Central Legislative Assembly or Lower House.

- The [Government of India Act, 1919](#) made provisions for the establishment of 'The Council of State' as a second chamber, which finally came into existence in 1921.
- The [Government of India Act 1935](#) did not make any changes in the composition and structure of the 'Council of State'.
- After independence in 1947, the [Constituent Assembly](#) (Legislative), which became the Provisional Parliament at a later stage, worked in a unicameral structure till the conduct of the first general elections in 1952.
- As the directly elected single house was not sufficient to meet the aspirations of free India, a dire need was felt for a second chamber as the 'Council of States'.
- Hence, after a long debate, the 'Council of States', later known as Rajya Sabha, was created in 1954 with an almost entirely different composition and structure.

Overview of Rajya Sabha

Rajya Sabha, or the upper house, is called the permanent house that safeguards the interests of the states. The basic overview of the Rajya Sabha is given under the table-

Rajya Sabha Highlights for UPSC Exam	
Rajya Sabha is also called	The upper house or the council of states. The Rajya Sabha is also known as the Second Chamber or House of Elders.
Rajya Sabha Members	250 members
Total Seats In Rajya Sabha	229 seats for states, 4 seats for UT and 12 nominated members.
Chairman of Rajya Sabha	Vice-president of India
Tenure Of Rajya Sabha	No fixed term. 1/3rd members retire every 2 years. As per RPA, 1951 , the term of the Rajya Sabha is 6 years.

Composition of Rajya Sabha

Article 80 of the Constitution of India deals with the composition of the Rajya Sabha. According to the Indian Constitution, the following are the total number of seats in the Rajya Sabha.

- Maximum Rajya Sabha members cannot exceed 250. Out of these 250 members, 12 members are directly nominated by the Indian President, while 238 members represent the Union Territories and the States of India. The allocation of the Rajya Sabha Seats is done as per the 4th Schedule of the Constitution of India.
- Currently, the Rajya Sabha has 239 members with 6 vacant seats. Of these 239, 12 members are nominated by the Indian Parliament, 8 represent the Union Territories, and 225 represent the Indian State.

Rajya Sabha Seats

The maximum number of Rajya Sabha seats are represented by Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Tamil Nadu. At the same time, Puducherry and Delhi (NCR) are the only Union Territories representing Rajya Sabha. The state-wise division of the total Rajya Sabha Seats is as follows-

Name of the States/ UTs	Rajya Sabha Seats
Andhra Pradesh	11
Arunachal Pradesh	1
Assam	7
Bihar	16
Chhattisgarh	5
Goa	1
Gujarat	11
Haryana	5
Himachal Pradesh	3
Jammu and Kashmir	4
Jharkhand	6

Karnataka	12
Kerala	9
Madhya Pradesh	11
Maharashtra	19
Manipur	1
Meghalaya	1
Mizoram	1
Nagaland	1
Odisha	10
Punjab	7
Rajasthan	10
Sikkim	1
Tamil Nadu	18
Telangana	7
Tripura	1
Uttar Pradesh	31
Uttarakhand	3
West Bengal	16

Andaman and Nicobar	0
Chandigarh	0
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	0
Daman and Diu	0
NCR, Delhi	3

Rajya Sabha Members

All the Rajya Sabha members are elected for a period of six years and are replaced by newly elected members. Out of all these members, one-third of the members retire every second year.

It also comprises the following positions-

- **Senior Minister** - The Senior Minister is the leader of the Rajya Sabha, appointed by the Indian Prime Minister.
- **Deputy Chairman** - The deputy chairman is elected by the house among its members. Along with this, the house also holds a Vice-Chairman's panel.
- **Vice-President** - Rajya Sabha's ex-officio Chairman is the Vice-President of India.

Rajya Sabha Tenure - Term of Office

- The term of every member of Rajya Sabha is six years. However, one-third of the seats are to be vacated after every two years.
- Unlike the Lok Sabha, the Rajya Sabha meets continuously and is not subject to dissolution.
- However, the President of India can prorogate the Rajya Sabha.

How are the Rajya Sabha Members Elected?

The [members of the Rajya Sabha are elected by](#) the State Legislative Assembly's elected members by using the Proportional representation method. According to Article 84 of the Constitution of India, an individual needs to fulfill the following criteria to become a Rajya Sabha Member-

- He/she must be an Indian citizen.
- He/she must be 30 years of age.
- By means of single transferable votes through proportional representation, he/she must be elected by the State' or UT's Legislative Assembly.

Rajya Sabha Election Process

There are three types of representation in Rajya Sabha, which are as follows-

- **Representation of Nominated Members in Rajya Sabha-** Twelve of the Rajya Sabha Members are nominated by the Indian President among the people who are expertise in Art, Social Services, Science, and Literature field.
- **Representation of Union Territories in Rajya Sabha-** The Rajya Sabha members from the UTs are elected by the electoral college members indirectly. The Election is conducted utilizing a Single transferable vote using proportional representation.
- **Representation of States in Rajya Sabha-** The elected members of the Legislative Assembly of the State elect the Rajya Sabha members, and the elections are conducted using proportional representation. Representation of states in Rajya Sabha is decided by the State's population.

Chairman of Rajya Sabha

The Vice-President of India acts as the ex-officio Chairman of Rajya Sabha.

- The Presiding Officer of the House is responsible for the conduct of the proceedings of the House as per the procedure.
- Amongst the members of the Rajya Sabha, a Deputy Chairman is chosen.
- A panel of Vice-Chairmen also chosen from amongst the members of the Rajya Sabha.
- One of the members of the Panel of Vice-Chairmen gets the responsibility of presiding officer in case of the absence of the Chairman and Deputy Chairmen.

Powers of Rajya Sabha

The Constitution of India empowers the Indian Parliament to make laws on matters reserved for States. This is only possible if Rajya Sabha passes a resolution by a two-third special majority granting such a power to the Union Parliament. This is one of the most important [functions of Rajya Sabha](#) as it provides a balance of power.

- Without authorization from the Rajya Sabha, the government at Union can't make a law on a matter reserved for the state list. For a better understanding of the functions of the Rajya Sabha and its comparison with the Lok Sabha, read about [How is Lok Sabha More Powerful than the Rajya Sabha?](#)

Functions of Rajya Sabha

The Rajya Sabha has the power to authorize the parliament to legislate on any matter enumerated in the State List by passing a resolution with a two-thirds majority. Such a resolution remains valid for one year from the date of the passing resolution.

- The Rajya Sabha can authorize the parliament to create new all-India services by passing a resolution to that effect with not less than two-thirds of the majority.
- If the proclamation of emergency has been issued and the Lok Sabha gets dissolved before the approval of the proclamation, the Rajya Sabha has special powers in this regard, and it can approve the proclamation of emergency provisions by passing a resolution in this regard with a two-thirds majority.

Role of Rajya Sabha in Financial Matters

- A [Money Bill](#) cannot be introduced in Rajya Sabha. A Money bill must be introduced only in the lower house (means Lok Sabha). After the passing of the Money Bill from Lok Sabha, it is sent to Rajya Sabha for concurrence.
- However, Rajya Sabha has limited powers with respect to Money Bills. Rajya Sabha cannot amend the original bill; it can only make recommendations that can be accepted or rejected by the Lok Sabha.
- The Rajya Sabha needs to pass the Money Bill within fourteen days, or it will be deemed to have been passed after that period.
- Apart from a Money Bill, many other Financial Bills cannot be introduced in Rajya Sabha.
- From the above, it can be understood that the Rajya Sabha plays a very limited role in the financial matters of the government.

[Rajya Sabha is called a Permanent House](#) because every 2 years, only 1/3rd of members resign, and by-elections are held. Thus, the complete house never gets dissolved.