Congratulations! You’ve made it through your AP U.S. Government course and are now ready to prepare for the AP Exam. These tips and strategies should help you in the final days or weeks before taking the exam. Remember that preparing for the Exam is a bit like training for a marathon—you won’t do as well if you wait and cram a lot of training into the day before the Exam. Working at a reasonable pace from now until test day will pay off in the end.

**The Format of the Exam:** Let’s begin by looking at a breakdown of how the AP US Government Exam is structured:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Time allowed</th>
<th>Percentage of grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>55 multiple choice</td>
<td>1 hour &amp; 20 minutes</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 free response</td>
<td>1 hour &amp; 40 minutes</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The questions on the test will cover topics from the whole course. However, in the multiple-choice section, you’ll find that certain subjects come up more often:

**Subject**                       **Percentage of the Test**
Government Institutions   (Congress, presidency, courts, bureaucracy)  
Political Behavior of Individuals (political culture, public opinion, voting)  
Political Behavior of Groups (political parties, elections, interest groups, PACs, and mass media)  
Constitutional Foundations (federalism, checks & balances, separation of powers, theories of democracy)  
Civil Liberties and Civil Rights

**There are 15 Required Supreme Court Cases:**
- Marbury v. Madison
- McCulloch v. Maryland
- Schenck v. US
- Brown v. Board of Ed (1954)
- Baker v. Carr
- Engel v. Vitale
- Gideon v. Wainright
- Tinker v. DesMoines
- NY Times Co. v. US
- Wisconsin v. Yoder
- Roe v. Wade
- Shaw v. Reno
- US. v. Lopez
- McDonald v. Chicago
- Citizens United v. FEC

**Required Documents:**
- The Declaration of Independence
- The Articles of Confederation
- The Constitution of the United States
- Federalist #10
- Brutus #1
- Federalist #51
- Federalist #70
- Federalist #78
- Letter from a Birmingham Jail
Top 10 Acts of Congress

1. Civil Rights Act of 1964
2. The Voting Rights Act of 1965
3. The Clean Air Act (1970)
4. The War Powers Resolution (1973)
5. The Budget & Impoundment Control Act of 1974
7. Americans with Disabilities Act (1990)
8. Welfare Reform Act (1976)
9. No Child Left Behind Act (2001)
10. USA Patriot Act (2001)

This Versus That

1. Nomination vs. General Election
2. Primary vs. Caucus
3. Closed Primary vs. Open Primary
4. Liberal vs. Conservative
5. Democrat vs. Republican
6. Major Party vs. Third Party (not the same as Independent)
7. Realignment vs. Dealignment
8. Reapportionment vs. Redistricting
9. Political Parties vs. Interest Groups
10. Judicial Restraint vs. Judicial Activism
11. Original Intent vs. “Living” Constitution
12. District Courts vs. Supreme Court
13. Appellate Jurisdiction vs. Original Jurisdiction
14. National Government vs. States’ Rights
15. Dual Federalism vs. Cooperative Federalism
16. Block Grants vs. Categorical Grants
17. Full Faith & Credit vs. Privileges & Immunities
18. Writ of Certiorari vs. Writ of Habeas Corpus
19. Civil Liberties vs. Civil Rights
20. Equal Protection Clause vs. Due Process Clause
21. Establishment Clause vs. Free Exercise Clause
22. Separation of Powers vs. Checks and Balances
23. Nomination vs. Confirmation
24. Impeachment vs. Conviction (Removal)
25. Formal Amendment vs. Informal Amendment
26. Proposing an Amendment vs. Ratification of an Amendment
27. Necessary & Proper Clause vs. Commerce Clause
28. Delegated Powers vs. Reserved Powers
29. Delegated Powers vs. Implied Powers
30. Enumerated Powers vs. Inherent Powers
31. Formal Powers vs. Informal Powers
32. Executive Agreement vs. Executive Order
33. Office of Management and Budget vs. Congressional Budget Office
34. White House Staff vs. Executive Office of POTUS
35. Congressional Caucus vs. Nominating Caucus
36. Congressional Caucus vs. Congressional Committee
37. Majority Leader vs. Majority Whip
38. President of Senate vs. Senate President Pro Tem
39. Casework vs. Pork Barrel
40. Standing Committee vs. Conference Committee