

THE PERIODIC TABLE OF THE PRESIDENTS™

The Twenty-Sixth Amendment

Introduction:

The Twenty-Sixth Amendment lowered the voting age from twenty-one to eighteen. Some states allowed 18-year-olds to vote as early as World War II when the draft age was lowered to eighteen. But it wasn't until the Vietnam War that a constitutional amendment gained nationwide support. In 1971, the Twenty-Sixth Amendment ensured that the soldiers who were drafted to fight would also be able to vote.

The text of this amendment begins, "The right of citizens of the United States, who are eighteen years of age or older, to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of age."

Questions:

1. What does the Twenty-Sixth Amendment grant?
2. What year was the Twenty-Sixth Amendment ratified?
3. What was the voting age in most states before the Twenty-Sixth Amendment?
4. When was the minimum draft age changed to 18 years old?
5. What was the Voting Rights Act of 1970?
6. What was the Supreme Court's ruling in *Oregon v. Mitchell* (1970)?
7. How many months did it take to ratify the Twenty-Sixth Amendment?
8. What was one reason the Senate gave for extending the vote to 18-year-olds?
9. What was the first election in which 18-year-olds could vote?
10. Why might it be important for all members of the military to have the right to vote?