<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Government Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An absolute monarchy</td>
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<tr>
<td>A constitutional monarchy</td>
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<tr>
<td>A theocracy</td>
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<td>Totalitarianism</td>
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<td>A dictatorship</td>
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<td>A democracy</td>
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<td>A republic</td>
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Questions to Ask About Government

1. Who is in charge?
   When examining a country or area, it is important to determine who is making the rules of the government. Also, you can examine how much power decision makers have and whether or not it is restricted.

2. How many people are in charge?
   There are many different forms of government throughout the world. Sometimes one person has all of the power [autocracy]. Sometimes a small group of people share power [oligarchy]. Finally, some governments are run by the population [democracy].

3. How did the ruler(s) gain power?
   In some nations, power is handed down from one generation to the next such as a king to his son/daughter. Some people gain power through military means often hostilely taking power away from a ruler. In other nations, people either vote for their leaders.

4. How is power distributed?
   In some countries, all power is held at the national, or central, level and are known as unitary systems. In other countries, power is shared between the national and state/province levels and are known as federal systems.

5. What freedoms are given to the people?
   Some countries severely limit the amount of freedoms given to the people. Typically, lack of freedoms can be found in totalitarian countries. On the other side of the spectrum, some countries allow freedoms which protect people from abuses of government.
Investigation: Different Types of Governments

Government 1 - Absolute Monarchy

Absolute monarchy is a monarchical form of government in which the monarch [king or queen] exercises ultimate governing authority as head of state and head of government. His or her powers are not limited by a constitution or by the law. An absolute monarch wields unrestricted political power over the sovereign state [nation] and its people. Absolute monarchies are often hereditary but other means of transmission of power are attested.

In theory, the absolute monarch exercises total power over the land and its subject people, yet in practice the monarchy is counterbalanced by political groups from among the social classes and castes of the realm. Also, rights and freedoms are typically restricted at the will of the monarch, sometimes only reserved for the upper social classes and ethnic majority.

Some absolute monarchies have weak or symbolic parliaments and other governmental bodies that the monarch can alter or dissolve at will.

Investigation: Different Types of Governments

Government 2 - Constitutional Monarchy

Constitutional monarchy (or limited monarchy) is a form of government in which a monarch acts as head of state within the guidelines of a constitution. A constitution is a frame of government that defines and limits the power of a government. While limited in power, the title of monarch is handed down from one generation to the next.

Most constitutional monarchies employ a parliamentary system in which the monarch may have strictly ceremonial duties [no influence on governmental decisions at all] or may have reserve powers, depending on the constitution. Under most modern constitutional monarchies there is also a prime minister who is the head of government and exercises effective political power. There also exist today several federal constitutional monarchies. In these countries, each subdivision has a distinct government and head of government, but all subdivisions share a monarch who is head of state of the federation as a united whole.

Personal freedoms in a constitutional monarchy differs from country to country depending on the constitution.
Investigation: Different Types of Governments

Government 3 - Theocracy

Theocracy is a form of government in which a deity is officially recognized as the civil Ruler and official policy is governed by officials regarded as divinely guided, or is pursuant to the doctrine of a particular religion or religious group. In a pure theocracy, the civil leader is believed to have a direct personal connection with God. For example, a prophet like Moses led the Israelites, and the prophet Muhammad ruled the early Muslims. Law proclaimed by the ruler is also considered a divine revelation, and hence the law of God. An ecclesiocracy, on the other hand, is a situation where the religious leaders assume a leading role in the state, but do not claim that they are instruments of divine revelation.

Personal freedoms and rights can differ from country to country. Most modern theocracies have legal systems based on religious law and freedoms and liberties are either granted or restricted based on how the religion of that nation is interpreted.

Investigation: Different Types of Governments

Government 4 - Totalitarianism

Totalitarianism (or totalitarian rule) is a political system where the state holds total authority over the society and seeks to control all aspects of public and private life wherever necessary. Common to most totalitarian systems is the one-political party system, thus only allowing voters, if elections are allowed, only one choice for political offices.

Freedoms and liberties are typically greatly restricted by the national government.
Investigation: Different Types of Governments

Government 5 - Dictatorship

A dictatorship is defined as an autocratic [single ruler] form of government in which the government is ruled by an individual: a dictator. A dictator has the supreme power to create all laws, make all executive decisions, and create national courts to decide legal issues and judgements that agree with his or her own opinions.

A dictatorship is a form of government that has the power to govern without consent of those being governed. Therefore, liberties and freedoms are severely restricted in a dictatorship.

Investigation: Different Types of Governments

Government 6 - Democracy

Democracy is a form of government in which all citizens have an equal say in the decisions that affect their lives. Democracy allows citizens to participate equally, either directly or through elected representatives, in the proposal, development, and creation of laws. It encompasses social, economic and cultural conditions that enable the free and equal practice of political self-determination [having freedom from the oppression of government].

Depending on the constitution of a country, citizens are granted rights and freedoms.
Investigation: Different Types of Governments
Government 7 - Republic

A republic is a form of government in which the country is considered a "public matter", not the private concern or property of the rulers, and where offices of states are subsequently directly or indirectly elected or appointed rather than inherited. In modern times, a common simplified definition of a republic is a government where the head of state is not a monarch.

Depending on the constitution of a country, citizens are granted rights and freedoms.