

## Democracy vs Dictatorship

Criteria	Democracy	Dictatorship
Definition	Government of the people	One person or a group rules a population
Key Feature	People choose their representatives	The dictator rules every aspect of the country.
Power	Citizens have the ultimate power in a democracy.	The dictator has all the powers.
Freedom	Freedom provided in terms of rights and duties	No freedom to the people
Justice	A wholesome justice system	The power to provide justice lies in the hands of the dictator
Government	Promotes sovereignty	Facilitates domination
Rights	Human rights to express, vote, information, social rights, cultural rights, etc.	The dictator has all the rights and people are oppressed.

## What is Democracy?

Simply put, Democracy is the type of government in which the people can make themselves heard. In fact, Democracy is a government by the people. Here, the participation of people is of paramount importance without which it loses its very essence and nature. People in this form of the rule have their voices represented and

they receive an equal share of opportunities whether they belong to a religious or an ethnic minority. Here, anybody has the right to criticize the government.

## **Features of a Democracy**

From the equality of opinion and choice to a representation of the people, here are some of the main features of a Democracy.

- **Freedom of Expression:** In a Democratic setup everybody has the right to express their opinions without any fear or intimidation. A person can criticize the government or form opinions freely. They are free to choose their mode of expressing their voice.
- **The Sovereignty of People:** People in a Democracy are the ones who make it possible to choose the government of their own choice through the process of elections. They elect their representatives who are all accountable to the people.
- **Free Judiciary:** In a Democratic nation, the judiciary is an independent institution in itself, not answerable even to the ruling government. The rights of a judiciary are vested in the very constitution of a country. It ensures fair and unbiased operations of the judiciary, even if it involves giving a verdict against the government.
- **Rule of Law:** What makes a country Democracy is its primacy for the rule of law. It takes precedence over everything. Under the law, everybody is equally answerable for its actions irrespective of their social or political status.

## **What is a Dictatorship?**

Dictatorship is a type of government where one person or a group of people enjoy unbridled power in the absence of any limitations. Dictators usually use forcible means to achieve political power. They subsequently maintain their government through the use of violence, terror, and the suspension of civil rights. They also use different means such as the dissemination of disinformation to sustain their rule. All this helps the dictator to govern the country in the direction of his choice, even though it may come at the cost of public welfare.

## **Features of a Dictatorship**

When compared to a Democracy, Dictatorship lies opposite on the spectrum in many of its features. It bereaves the public of any actual say in the government, while the dictator enjoys unchecked power. Here are some of the major features that can help you identify a Dictatorship:

- Rule of a Single Person: Unlike a democracy, there is no concept of election and a single person or party continues to rule without any constitutional limitations. There is no accountability for the ruling government and people have no say in the government policies.
- Suppression of Individual Liberty: In the absence of any constitutional guarantees the government effectively denies individual rights. People in this type of government are persecuted and repressed on a daily basis.
- No Rule of Law: In this type of government there is a sort of government-enforced anarchy. Where people can be detained or imprisoned without any trial in the judiciary. They can be severely punished for petty crimes and languish in jails for years altogether.
- Absence of Judiciary: In case, a person is charged for a crime he has no option for appeal in a court. Neither the government can be held accountable for its actions because there is a total absence of a sham presence of a judiciary.

## **What are the Differences between Democracy and Dictatorship?**

As you must already know, these two forms of governments are fairly contrasting in nature. Here we will explain the difference between Democracy and Dictatorship very briefly for your understanding.

- The key difference between democracy and dictatorship is the change in government. Dictatorship has a single party rule without any elections, while Democracy is marked by regular and frequent elections which include the votes of all citizens.
- In a Democracy, peoples' voice takes primary precedence in matters of governance, whereas in a dictatorship people are effectively silenced and carry no relevance for the government. This is a major difference between Democracy and Dictatorship.
- Another difference between Democracy and Dictatorship is the accountability of the government which is a primary characteristic of a Democracy. In a

Dictatorship, government behaves according to its own wishes and whims, having unchecked power to implement policies and regulations.

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Definition	<p>In a democracy, a person who gets the most votes and popular support rises to become the leader.</p> <p>The person is responsible to respect the electorate and looks for its welfare.</p>	<p>In dictatorship, there is only one ruler who has illegally grabbed power and rules the whole country with iron-hand.</p> <p>Their rule is accompanied by propaganda to sanctify the rule.</p>
Type of Political System	<p>In this state there is a multi-party or bi-party system representing diverse communities and ideas. Political power is granted only through a strictly monitored free election process.</p>	<p>In a dictatorial form of government, the political parties are mostly proscribed from carrying out any type of activities. The political congregations are made illegal.</p>
Liberty & Rights	<p>Under democracy journalism and media is allowed to flourish freely, and criticize the government and their policies without worrying for consequences.</p>	<p>Individual liberty and free expression are anathemas in a dictatorship. No one is allowed to say a word against the government and civil rights are suspended.</p>
Governance	<p>Democracy gives people a free choice to establish or join a political party of their choice.</p>	<p>Since there is a single party system, political opposition is ruthlessly discouraged.</p>
Freedom	<p>Government can't direct people's lives in this state. Here, subjects are free to do anything they want or</p>	<p>Here every sphere of people's lives, their social lives are influenced by government regulations and edicts.</p>

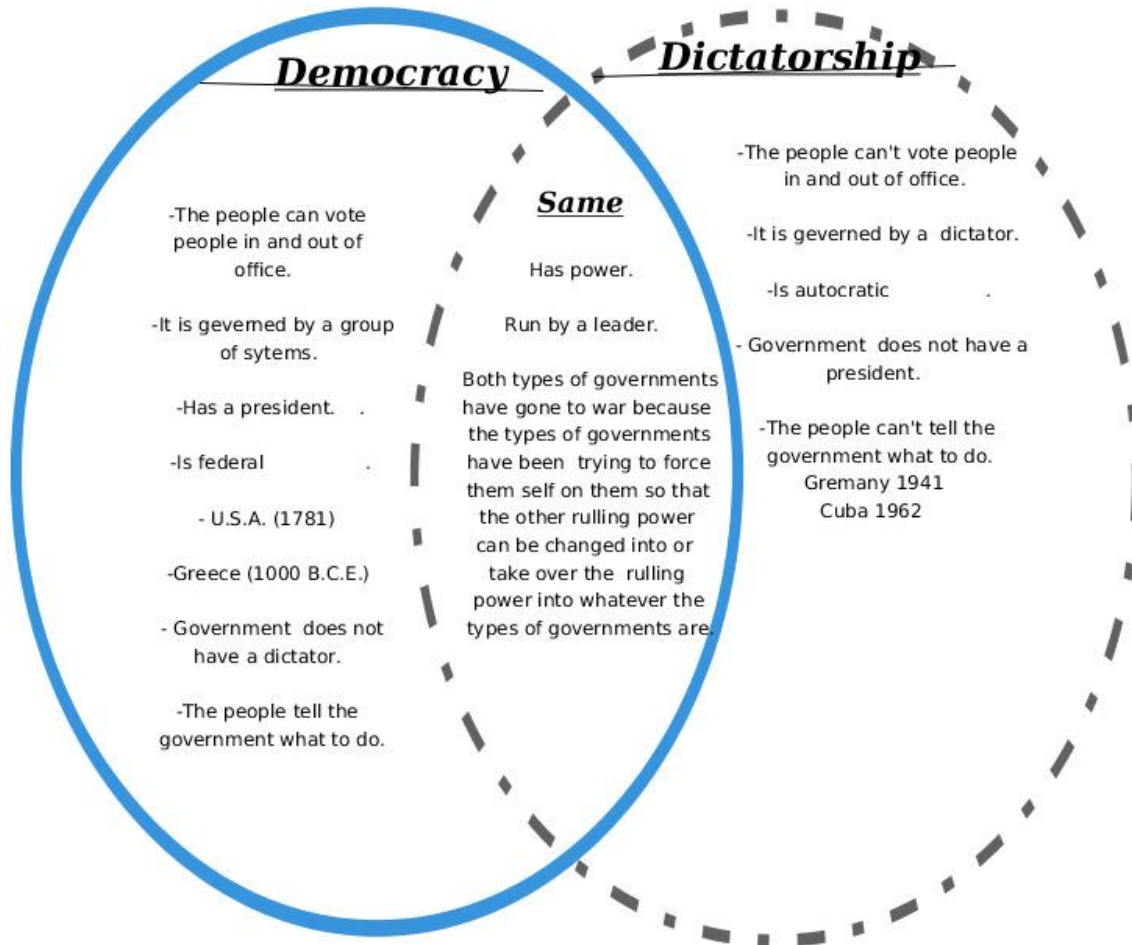
however, they want to spend their resources.

## Why is Democracy Considered Better than Dictatorship?

An important question that you might wonder after knowing the differences between these two political systems is why Democracy is considered better than Dictatorship. This is simply because Democracy gives more fundamental and human rights to the people and focuses on the public rather than dictatorship which purely follows what its dictator wants to do. Let's explore the major reasons why democracy is considered better than dictatorship:

- Democracy facilitates equality in the country and its citizens. Everyone is provided with equal rights, the most important of them being the right to choose their representatives. However, dictatorship blindly follows the orders of a country's dictator's rules and wishes.
- Democracy involves proper methods and ways to resolve conflicts, whether within the country or outside the country, while Dictatorship has no such features for conflict resolutions amongst its citizens.
- In political terms, Democracy is considered as a form of legitimate government where certain individuals are the representatives of people and the citizens also get the requisite rights and duties to function as samaritans. On the other hand, Dictatorship has no process for choosing the representative, thus have more chances of falling with the dictator and leaving its citizens without any representative.
- Democracy establishes a set of rules and regulations for quality decision-making, introducing new laws, conflict resolutions, solving distress amongst its citizens as well as for the timely resolution of the issues and problems faced by its public. On the other hand, dictatorship only believes in following the ruler blindly without objections, the scope for questioning the rules or even understanding the issues faced by its masses.
- Democracy is also an accountable political system as the government can be held accountable for its decisions and with the provided rights, citizens can question and inquire about what's happening in terms of decision-making. Dictatorship remains limited to a certain group of people who can't really be trusted and considered accountable as their own personal interests are favoured over what's beneficial for the masses.

# Difference Between Democracy and Dictatorship Venn Diagram



Courtesy: Blendspace

## FAQs

Which countries are currently under dictatorship?

Even in today's times there are many countries which are reeling under the dictatorial form of regimes. Those countries are Iran, China, North Korea, Venezuela, Syria, Egypt, Cambodia, Kazakhstan.

Who are dictators today?

Some brutal dictators ruling different countries are, Ayatollah Khamenei, Bashar al Assad, Kim Jong Un, Nursultan Nazarbayev, Abdul Fateh al Sisi, Xi Jinping and Hun Sen.

Is democracy better than dictatorship?

In every sense, democracy is the ideal state of living. It promotes equality, gives people the right to choose their government and voice their opinion in a free manner.

How do you spot a dictator?

Cardinal features of a dictatorship include, suspension of civil rights, muzzling the political opposition, undermining of judiciary, continuous state of emergency and relentless dissemination disinformation and propaganda.

Is monarchy a democracy or dictatorship?

Usually, a monarchy is characterized by the rule of a king or queen, exercising total control over its people. That form of monarchy is the face of dictatorship. But a country like the United Kingdom, which is a constitutional type of monarchy, narrows down the control of a monarch to a great extent.