



*Federal Courts' National Educational Outreach that
Involves, Informs, Inspires, and Ignites*

COMPARING FEDERAL AND STATE COURTS

*This is a teaching tool that simplifies key points for students.
Find more information in the educational resources section
of **uscourts.gov***

Simplified

Federal Courts

State Courts

CREATED BY

U.S. Constitution

State Constitution

STRUCTURE

U.S. Supreme Court

13 Circuit Courts of Appeals

94 District Trial Courts

52 Courts of Last Resort

~46 Intermediate Courts of Appeals

~16,000 Trial Courts

JUDGE SELECTION

President Nominates
Senate Confirms

Combinations of:
Governor Appoints
Legislature Confirms
Voters Elect

TERM OF SERVICE

Typically Lifetime Appointment

Different Tenure Lengths

TYPES OF CASES

U.S. Constitution
Cross State/Country Lines
Federal Crimes
Bankruptcy

State Constitution
In the Same State
State Crimes
Family Law

Developed by the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts

Contact: Rebecca Fanning, national education outreach manager: rebecca_fanning@ao.uscourts.gov