

## ***It's Good to be the President***

Being president is not without its perks. The president earns \$400,000 per year and is, traditionally, the highest-paid federal official. He has use of two presidential residences, the White House and Camp David in Maryland; has both an airplane, Air Force One, and helicopter, Marine One, at his disposal; and has a legion of staff members including a personal chef to assist him in both his professional duties and private life.

- The FF (first family) can park up to three vehicles behind the West Wing, although the President and First Spouse never drive around D.C. The First Children can, though, as long as they keep in touch with their Secret Service people.
- Obviously, Presidents don't have set hours. Reagan liked to take naps during the day, it wasn't abnormal for Clinton to work until 3 a.m., and George W. Bush came in around 7 a.m., took a two-hour exercise break during the day and left in the late afternoon.
- The President has his very own, top secret zip code. Friends and family can send letters to him at this zip code and it will be delivered directly to his office (although his secretary will open it first).
- No one can enter the Oval Office without permission - not even the First Spouse. He or she must obtain permission from the guard outside first. If the President has said he or she doesn't want to be disturbed by anyone, even the First Spouse is turned away.
- The White House Kitchen, operated by the U.S. Navy, is responsible for making sure that the President has food, no matter where in the world he or she is.
- Special Presidential food perks: free soda from both Coke and Pepsi in fridges all over the White House, M&Ms in boxes with the Presidential Seal on the outside, and lots of other free snacks from various companies, any time you want them.



- Air Force One is not one plane in particular. It applies to any plane the President is flying in. Typically, though, the President has two planes that he flies in regularly. Both of these planes have perfect safety records. And, in case you're wondering, the President can sit in the cockpit during takeoff and landing if he or she so chooses.

- Presidential limos only get about 10 mpg in the city.

- The President doesn't need to leave the White House to have fun. There's the pool, which FDR had installed in 1933 because swimming was good upper body exercise for him. In 1969, Nixon filled it in, but Ford had it restored pretty much immediately. George W. had solar panels installed in 2002 so the pool would be heated.

- There's also a movie theater - the front row seats are all La-Z-Boys. George H.W. had a horseshoe pit installed during his term, and in 1947, a bowling alley was installed for Harry Truman. Although Nixon apparently wasn't a fan of swimming, he loved the bowling alley and was known for bowling all by himself.



Let's not forget that with all of these perks comes the task of running the country. The president certainly has a lot on his shoulders. To quote Uncle Ben Parker, "With great power comes great responsibility."

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Consider This.....

1. The Founding Fathers created the office of the **PRESIDENT**, not a **KING**. Do you feel the men who created the constitution would be satisfied with the nature of the Presidency today? Explain.

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2. Although there are many perks attached to the Presidency, a person must give up a certain amount of personal freedoms while living in the "Presidential Bubble." If given the chance, would you choose to be President of the United States? Why or why not?

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