

## The Mayflower Compact

The Mayflower Compact was signed on 11<sup>th</sup> November 1620 by 41 men aboard the *Mayflower*, the ship that had brought the Pilgrims to America.

The ship had sailed from England with Virginia as its destination, but weather conditions forced the ship to land farther north, in what is now Provincetown Harbor, near Cape Cod. Because of this, and because they were no longer governed by the contract they had signed with the colony's investors, some aboard said that they wanted to leave the group. Hearing such "mutinous speeches," as he called them, William Brewster organized the drafting of a document to describe a sort of self-government, under which the settlers would agree to live and work together for mutual survival.

The result was a framework for self-government, in which the settlers agreed to form a "body politic" that would name leaders by majority vote, in the same way that they had done in their church congregations in England and Holland.

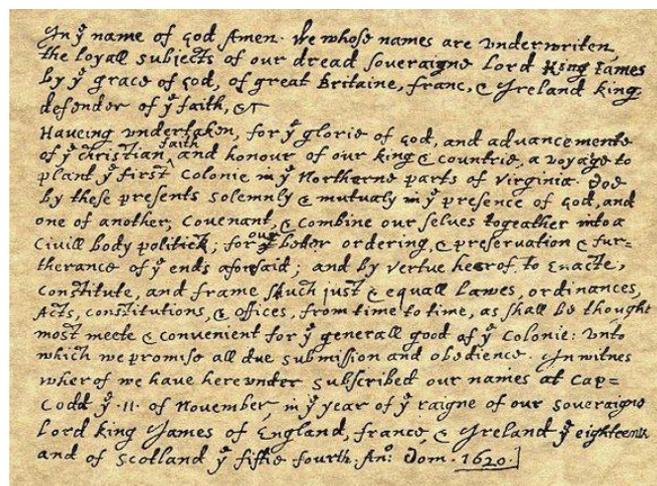
The document itself was approved by a majority of the men aboard the ship, and 41 male passengers (including longtime Plymouth Colony Governor William Bradford) signed their names. (More than 100 people were aboard the *Mayflower*, but not all were men or Pilgrims. Non-Pilgrims were referred to as "strangers.")

Based on: <http://www.socialstudiesforkids.com/articles/ushistory/mayflowercompact.htm>

### Words:

<b>contract (n.)</b>	<i>Vertrag</i>	<b>mutual survival (n.)</b>	<i>gemeinsames Überleben</i>
<b>investor (n.)</b>	<i>Geldgeber</i>	<b>congregation (n.)</b>	<i>Gemeinde</i>
<b>mutinous (adj.)</b>	<i>meuterisch</i>	<b>approve (v.)</b>	<i>zustimmen, bewilligen</i>
<b>draft (v.)</b>	<i>entwerfen</i>	<b>governor (n.)</b>	<i>Gouverneur (Chef der Regierung einer Kolonie)</i>

**Task:** Please explain what makes the Mayflower Compact an important historical document in US-American history.



Source: <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mayflowercomp.jpg>