**The Bill of Rights (common sense version)**

**1st Amendment**

Congress can't make any law about your religion or that stops you from practicing your religion. Congress can’t pass any law that keeps you from saying whatever you want or writing whatever you want (like in a newspaper or a book). Congress can't stop you from gathering *peacefully* with other citizens in order to ask the government to change something.

**2nd Amendment**

Congress can't stop people from owning or carrying weapons because we need to be able to defend ourselves.

**3rd Amendment**

You don't have to let soldiers live in your house (unless we are at war, and even then only if Congress has passed a law about it).

**4th Amendment**

Nobody can search your *body* or your *house*, and they cannot search or take your *personal belongings,* unless they can prove to a judge that they have a good reason to think you have committed a crime.

**5th Amendment**

You can't be tried for any serious crime without a Grand Jury meeting first to decide whether there's enough evidence for a trial. If you *are* tried for a crime, and a jury decides you are innocent, the government can't try you again with a different jury. You don't have to say anything at your trial. You can't be killed, or put in jail, or fined, unless you have been convicted of a crime by a jury. Finally, the government can't take your house, your land, or anything that is yours, unless the government pays you fairly for it.

**6th Amendment**

If you're arrested, you have a right to have your trial without a long wait. The trial has to be public, so everyone knows what is happening. The case has to be decided by a jury of ordinary people from your area. You have the right to know what you are accused of, to see and hear the people who are witnesses against you. You also have the right to have help in getting witnesses on your side, and you have the right to a lawyer to help defend you.

**7th Amendment**

You have the right to a trial by jury in any civil case (a law case between two people rather than between you and the government) where the disagreement is over something worth at least $20.

**8th Amendment**

The government can't make you pay more than is reasonable in bail or in fines, and the government can't order you to have cruel or unusual punishments (like torture) even if you are convicted of a crime.

**9th Amendment**

Just because these rights are listed in the Constitution, it doesn’t mean that you (as citizens) don’t have other rights, too.

**10th Amendment**

If the Constitution doesn't say that Congress has the power to do something, that thing should be left up to the states, or to the people.