

Difference Between Cabinet and Council of Ministers

June 28, 2025 • vajiramandravi.com



The Prime Minister of India holds the primary responsibility for selecting the members of the Council of Ministers, considering factors such as experience and seniority. This council is organised into distinct categories, namely Cabinet Ministers, Ministers of State, Deputy Ministers, and Parliamentary Secretaries. While the terms “Cabinet” and “Council of Ministers” are sometimes used interchangeably, they represent different entities with unique functions, even though both operate under the Prime Minister’s leadership. Understanding Difference Between Cabinet and Council of Ministers is crucial for UPSC aspirants preparing for the IAS Exam.

Council of Ministers

The Council of Ministers is a constitutional body under Article 74 and 75 of the Indian Constitution. It includes all categories of ministers, Cabinet Ministers, Ministers of State (MoS), and Deputy Ministers. It assists the President in the exercise of executive powers and helps the Prime Minister in administrative decision-making. The Council is collectively responsible to the Lok Sabha.

Cabinet

The Cabinet is a smaller, core group within the Council of Ministers, consisting of senior-most leaders who head key ministries. The Cabinet is responsible for formulating policies, taking important decisions, and advising the Prime Minister on crucial national matters. It is recognized as a constitutional body through the 44th Amendment Act, 1978. The Cabinet exercises more direct control over executive functions than the larger Council.

Difference Between Cabinet and Council of Ministers

The Cabinet and the Council of Ministers are two essential components of a government, each with distinct roles and structures. While both play different yet effective roles in governance, their functions and composition differ significantly.

Difference Between Cabinet and Council of Ministers	
Cabinet	Council of Ministers
The cabinet consists of many senior ministers who hold important portfolios such as defence, home affairs, education etc.	They consist of Cabinet Ministers, Deputy Ministers and Ministers of State
It was conferred the status of a constitutional body after the passing of the Constitutional Amendment Act of 1978 (Also Known as 44th Amendment)	It is a constitutional body
The Cabinet consists of some of the most experienced ministers. Thus the Prime Minister seeks their advice on important matters. The decisions of the cabinet are binding to all ministers	It is up to the Prime Minister to consult with the council of ministers or not when it comes to making important decisions
It enforces the collective responsibility of the council to its members	It enforces collective responsibility to the lower houses of the parliament
The Cabinet meets as frequently as possible to formulate policies and to decide on certain matters of national importance	The meetings between the council of ministers are rare.
The size of the cabinet is about 15-20 ministers	The council of ministers usually consists of about 60 to 70 ministers of the government.

Articles Related to Cabinet and Council of Ministers

Articles Related to Cabinet and Council of Ministers are important for the candidates to understand and prepare, especially in Indian Polity (GS Paper 2). The Indian Constitution lays down specific provisions that define the structure, powers, functions, and responsibilities of the executive branch at both the Union and State levels. The table below highlights the constitutional articles related to the Council of Ministers and Cabinet, explaining their

relevance in the functioning of the executive:

Articles Related to Cabinet and Council of Ministers	
Article	Provision
Article 74	There shall be a Council of Ministers with the Prime Minister at the head to aid and advise the President.
Article 75	Deals with the appointment, tenure, and responsibilities of ministers. Also mentions collective responsibility to the Lok Sabha.
Article 77	Relates to the conduct of government business — all executive actions of the Union shall be taken in the name of the President.
Article 78	Duties of the Prime Minister regarding communication between the President and the Council of Ministers.
Article 163	Corresponding provision for Council of Ministers in states, with the Chief Minister as head, to aid and advise the Governor.
Article 164	Covers appointment of Chief Ministers and State Ministers, their tenure, and responsibilities.
Article 166	Conduct of business of the Government of a State, similar to Article 77 but for state executives.
Article 167	Duties of the Chief Minister in regard to communication with the Governor, similar to Article 78 for the Union.

Also Check	
Difference Between Cabinet and Council of Ministers	Difference between National Anthem and National Song
Difference Between GMT and IST	Difference Between Citizenship and Nationality
Difference Between District Collector and District Magistrate	Difference Between Kumbh and Mahakumbh
Difference Between Fundamental Rights and Fundamental Duties	Differences Between Censure and No-Confidence Motion

Differences Between Absolute Poverty and Relative Poverty	Difference Between Wildlife Sanctuary and National Park
--	--

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/difference-between-cabinet-and-council-of-ministers/>

© Vajiram & Ravi. For personal use only.