Figure 1.2 Federal Court Hierarchy

Supreme Court

- Highest court in the federal system
- Nine justices, meeting in Washington, D.C.
- Appeals jurisdiction through certiorari process
- Limited original jurisdiction over some cases

Courts of Appeal

- Intermediate level in the federal system
- 12 regional "circuit" courts, including D.C. circuit
- No original jurisdiction; strictly appellate

District Courts

- Lowest level in the federal system
- 94 judicial districts in 50 states and territories
- No appellate jurisdiction
- Original jurisdiction over most cases

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