

# How we Pick Our **PRESIDENT**

A GUIDE TO OUR ELECTION PROCESS FOR KIDS

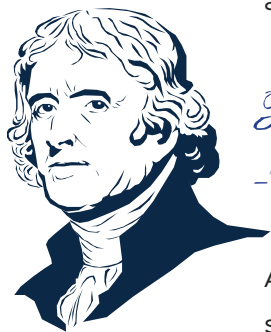
## What is Voting? Why Should You Vote?

When you turn 18 in the US, you have the right to vote. Voting isn't just a right; it's a privilege. It's important to vote, even if your candidate loses. Voting allows our voice and opinions to be heard.

Even when our candidate loses, it sends a message to others about your point of view. This is why it's so important to educate ourselves and research every candidate.

Presidential election are held every 4 years on the Tuesday after the first Monday of the month. This means, it could fall anytime between November 2nd and November 8th. This date was established by Congress in 1845.

Most states have an early voting system or sometimes called an "absentee ballot." Individuals are allowed to vote anywhere from 4 to 50 days prior to the election. This allows individuals who may have to be out of town or have other plans that do not allow them to be at their voting precinct to vote ahead of time. Each state has it's own procedures, deadlines, and regulations that govern absentee voting.



*The government you elect is the government you deserve.*

— Thomas Jefferson

All adults, 18 years and older, can register to vote at their post office and many states you can also register to vote through the mail. You'll need to then locate in what precinct you are designated to vote. This is also known as your polling place. You can locate this information online as well as on your voter registration card. On voting day, you'll enter the polling location and cast your ballot privately.

It's important to be able to make the most well thought-out decision you can. Government and those in power make many decisions. They have the power to impact your life for years to come.

## What is the Electoral College?

The Electoral College is not a place you go to school. The Electoral College is the official group of people who elect the President and Vice President every four years in the United States.

You might be surprised to learn that as a voter, you are not voting directly for the President when you go into the voting booth. Instead, you are voting for “electors,” a special, small group of people in your state who have pledged to vote for a particular presidential candidate.

Think of it like this. Every state gets a different number of electors. Let's say you lived in California which has 55 electoral votes—more than any other state in the country. This means there's a group of 55 electors chosen in that state who say, “We really want Candidate A to be President!” There's a group of another 55 electors in that state who say, “We really want Candidate B to be President!” On Election Day, if the majority of voters in California vote for Candidate A, all 55 of Candidate A's electors get to vote for who they want. None of Candidate

B's electors get to vote. This is called “winner-take-all”: if a candidate gets the majority of the votes in a state, they get all their electors and no one else gets theirs. (Most states have a winner-take-all system.)

There are 538 electors in the whole country. In order to become President, you need to win a majority of votes from the electors, which means you need 270 electoral votes to win.

How many electors do you get to have in your state?

The number of electors you get is equal to the number of representatives your state has in the House of Representatives plus the number of senators your state has in the Senate. States with bigger populations have more members in the House of Representatives, but every state has just two senators, regardless of population size. So, if your state had 14 representatives in the House and 2 senators in the Senate, that equals 16 individuals in your state who get to be electors.

## Here's the order of how things happen...

1. On Election Day (the Tuesday following the first Monday in November), voters around the country cast their votes for who they want to be President and Vice President.
2. Over a month later (the Monday after the second Wednesday in December) the electors meet in their own state capitals to officially cast their votes.
3. On January 6 the votes from the electors are officially counted by Congress and a winner is officially declared.
4. On Inauguration Day (January 20 or 21), at noon, the winner makes his oath to serve as the President.



You probably won't need to wait for January to find out who the next President will be. In every voting district, votes are unofficially counted which gives us a good idea how many electoral votes each candidate will get.

Learn more about the electoral college, including extra reading materials and engaging videos, at [journeyhomeschoolacademy.com/election](https://journeyhomeschoolacademy.com/election).



**Directions:**

Use this map to fill out how many electoral votes each state gets. On election night, color in each state as the winners are declared. Color the states that the republican candidate wins red and the states that the democrat candidate wins blue. Color states won by other candidates another color. You can use this to add up how many electoral votes each candidate received. Remember, each candidate needs 270 electoral votes to win.

**INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE** ★



Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Birthdate \_\_\_\_\_  
Home State \_\_\_\_\_  
Party \_\_\_\_\_  
Experience \_\_\_\_\_  
Running Mate \_\_\_\_\_

**REPUBLICAN CANDIDATE** ★



Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Birthdate \_\_\_\_\_  
Home State \_\_\_\_\_  
Party \_\_\_\_\_  
Experience \_\_\_\_\_  
Running Mate \_\_\_\_\_

**DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATE** ★



Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Birthdate \_\_\_\_\_  
Home State \_\_\_\_\_  
Party \_\_\_\_\_  
Experience \_\_\_\_\_  
Running Mate \_\_\_\_\_

# PRESIDENTIAL TRIVIA!

KIDS, QUIZ YOUR PARENTS

1. How many electors do we have in the electoral collage?
2. How many electoral votes does a candidate need to win the Presidency?
3. How is the number of electoral votes determined for each state?
4. Which two states do not have a winner-take-all system for electoral votes?
5. Has any President ever won enough electoral votes when they didn't win the popular vote in America?
6. Who is the only President to be unanimously elected by the Electoral College?
7. What is the most number of states won in a Presidential race.
8. What is the minimum age for being President?
9. What is the minimum voting age in America?
10. When is Election Day for federal elections?
11. Which Constitutional amendment gave women the right to vote?
12. Which Constitutional amendment gave citizens the right to vote regardless of race?
13. In today's election cycle, is Inauguration Day ever not on January 20?
14. When does the Constitution say we should have Election Day?
15. Who was the first President to not be elected to the office of President?
16. To what party did George Washington belong when he was elected?
17. Who was the first person to run for and win the position of Vice President.
18. Name all 4 Presidents who have been assassinated while office?
19. Name the three Presidents who have been impeached.
20. Who is the only President to not be elected by voters (either as President or as Vice President)



# PRESIDENTIAL TRIVIA!

ANSWER KEY

1. 538
2. 270 (just one more than half the total electoral votes)
3. Electoral votes = number of representatives the state has in the House plus the number of senators they have in the Senate
4. Maine and Nebraska
5. Yes. This has happened 5 times. In 1824, neither John Quincy Adams nor his opponent Andrew Jackson won enough electoral votes. The decision was passed to the House of Representatives who voted for Adams. In 1876, Rutherford B. Hayes won the election by one electoral vote but had 250,000 fewer popular votes than Samuel Tilden. In 1888, Benjamin Harrison received 233 electoral votes compared to his opponent, Grover Cleveland, who won 168. Harrison, however, had 90,000 fewer popular votes than Cleveland. In 2000, George W. Bush beat Al Gore, 271 to 266, but he had 540,000 fewer popular votes. In 2016, Donald Trump beat Hillary Clinton, 304 to 277, but he had over 2.8 million fewer votes.
6. George Washington, both in 1789 and again in 1792.
7. 49. Nixon won every state except Massachusetts in 1972. Ronald Reagan won every state except Minnesota in 1984. (Both lost the District of Columbia.)
8. 35
9. 18
10. The Tuesday after the first Monday of the month
11. The 19<sup>th</sup>
12. The 15<sup>th</sup>
13. Yes. If January 20 falls on a Sunday, it is moved to the next day, January 21.
14. It doesn't say anything about when Election Day should be.
15. John Tyler, after the death of William Henry Harrison
16. He was not affiliated with any party. Nor was his opponent John Adams.
17. George Clinton in 1804. Prior to this, the position of Vice President was awarded to the Presidential candidate with the second most electoral votes.
18. Abraham Lincoln, James Abram Garfield, William McKinley, and John F. Kennedy
19. Andrew Johnson, Bill Clinton, and Donald Trump
20. Gerald Ford. Richard Nixon appointed Ford to be Vice President after Vice President Spiro Agnew resigned. The next year, Nixon resigned, making Ford President.



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ELECTORAL  
COLLEGE**

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