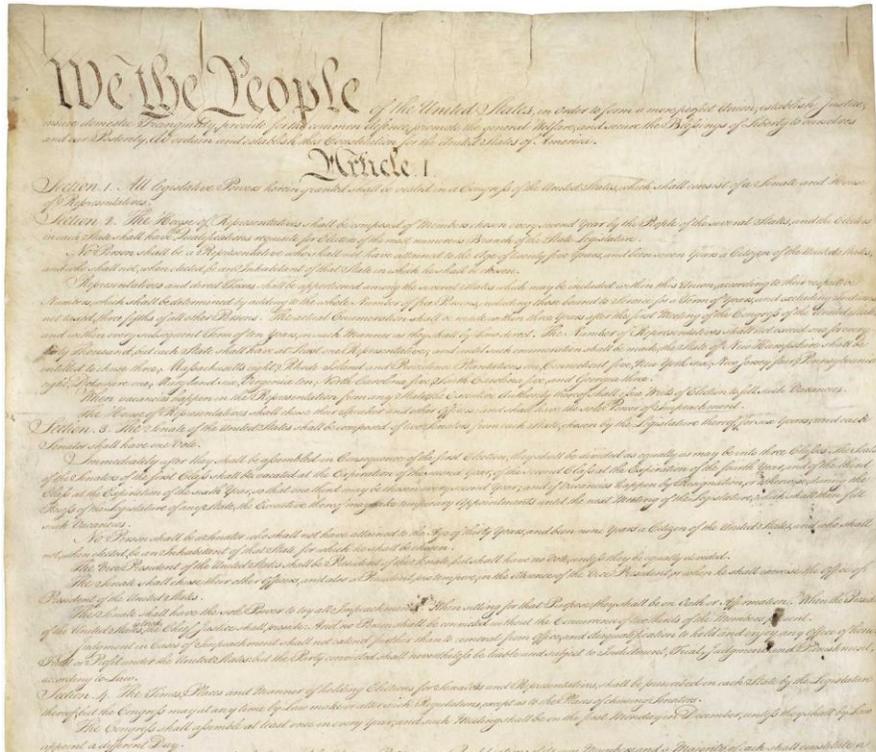


How the U.S. President is Elected



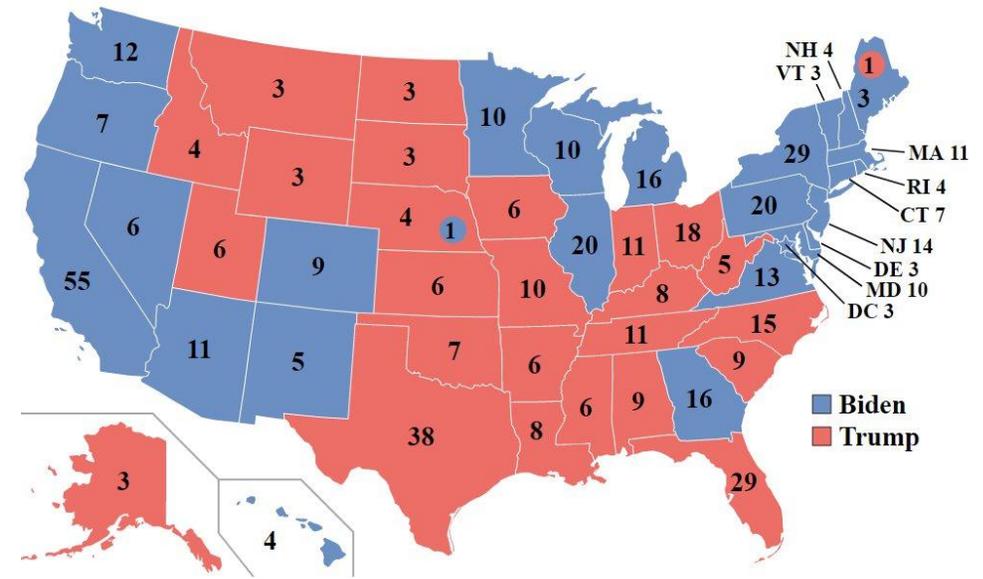
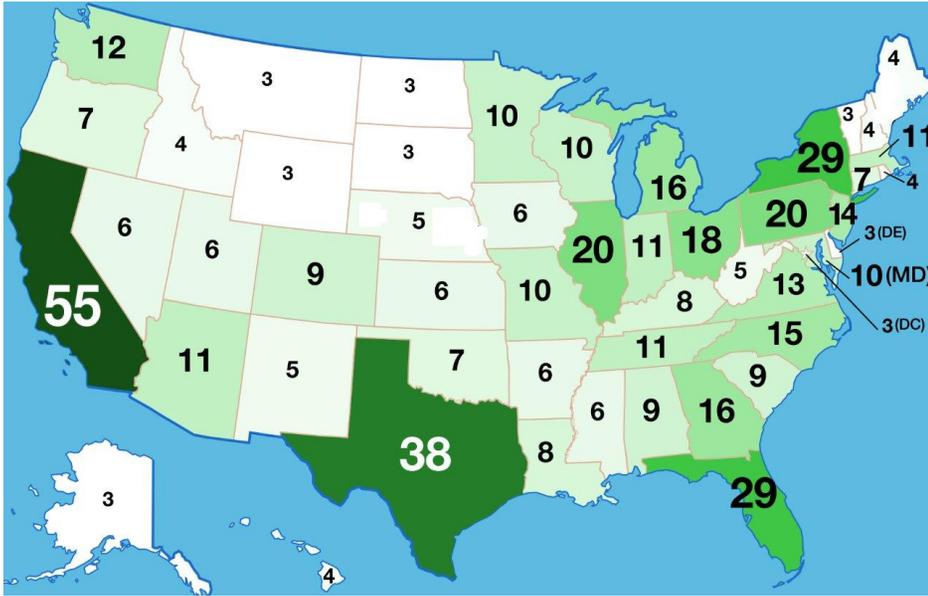
Article 2, Section 1

1. The executive Power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. He shall hold his Office during the Term of four Years, and, together with the Vice President, chosen for the same Term, be elected, as follows
2. Each State shall appoint, in such Manner as the Legislature thereof may direct, a Number of Electors, equal to the whole Number of Senators and Representatives to which the State may be entitled in the Congress: but no Senator or Representative, or Person holding an Office of Trust or Profit under the United States, shall be appointed an Elector.
3. The Electors shall meet in their respective States, and vote by Ballot for two Persons, of whom one at least shall not be an Inhabitant of the same State with themselves. And they shall make a List of all the Persons voted for, and of the Number of Votes for each; which List they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the Seat of the Government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate. The President of the Senate shall, in the Presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the Certificates, and the Votes shall then be counted. The Person having the greatest Number of Votes shall be the President, if such Number be a Majority of the whole Number of Electors appointed; and if there be more than one who have such Majority, and have an equal Number of Votes, then the House of Representatives shall immediately chuse by Ballot one of them for President; and if no Person have a Majority, then from the five highest on the List the said House shall in like Manner chuse the President. But in chusing the President, the Votes shall be taken by States, the Representation from each State having one Vote; A quorum for this Purpose shall consist of a Member or Members from two thirds of the States, and a Majority of all the States shall be necessary to a Choice. In every Case, after the Choice of the President, the Person having the greatest Number of Votes of the Electors shall be the Vice President. But if there should remain two or more who have equal Votes, the Senate shall chuse from them by Ballot the Vice President.
4. The Congress may determine the Time of chusing the Electors, and the Day on which they shall give their Votes; which Day shall be the same throughout the United States.

The United States Electoral College is the group of presidential electors required by the Constitution to form every four years for the purpose of electing the president and vice president.

But don't U.S. citizens elect the president and vice president? Not exactly. Each state appoints electors, according to its own state laws, equal in number to its senators and representatives, which is roughly equal to its population. And they do the actual voting.

Currently, the states and the District of Columbia hold a popular vote on Election Day in November to choose electors based upon how they have pledged to vote for president and vice president, with some state laws requiring that they vote according to how the citizens voted. Most states use a winner-take-all method to choose their electors. Maine and Nebraska are the exceptions; they choose electors proportionately. The electors meet and vote in December and the inauguration of the president and vice president takes place in January.



Electoral votes, out of 538, allocated to each state and the District of Columbia for presidential elections held in 2012, 2016 and 2020, based on congressional representation, which depends on population data from the 2010 Census.

In the 2020 presidential election, the total number of electoral votes was 538, of which Joe Biden received 306 (●) and Donald Trump 232 (●).

Critics argue that the Electoral College system is less democratic than a direct popular vote. Due to this system, a president may be elected who did not win the national popular vote, as occurred in 1876, 1888, 2000, and 2016.

- 1876: Tilden received 50.9% of America's votes, Hayes received 47.9%
- 1888: Cleveland received 48.6% of votes, Harrison received 47.8%
- 2000: Gore received 48.4%, Bush received 47.9%
- 2016: Clinton received 48.0% of America's votes, Trump received 45.9%

Further objection is that instead of spending equally on each voter in the nation, candidates focus their campaigns on just a few swing states.

Polling data show having a direct popular vote for presidential elections is consistently favored by a majority of Americans, with the popularity of the Electoral College hovering between 35 and 44%.

Arguments in favor of a popular vote	Arguments in favor of the Electoral College
<p>The Electoral College can result in a president that got fewer votes than his opponent. This seems undemocratic and undermines faith in such a system and support of such a president.</p>	<p>Some people want individual states to have more power and the national government to have less, and they feel that the Electoral College system promotes that. For example, the system allows each state to design its own laws on voting without an undue incentive to maximize the number of votes cast.</p>
<p>The Electoral College encourages political campaigners to focus on a few so-called “swing states” while ignoring the rest of the country. (Swing states are populous states in which pre-election poll results show no clear favorite, so called because they can “swing” the election.)</p>	<p>Instead of decreasing the power of minority groups by depressing voter turnout, proponents argue that by making the votes of a given state an all-or-nothing affair, minority groups provide the critical edge that allows a candidate to win a close-battle state. This encourages candidates there to court a wide variety of such minorities and advocacy groups.</p>
<p>People who live in non-swing states have little incentive to vote or work to get their neighbors to vote.</p>	
<p>Advocates of a national popular vote for president suggest that this effect would also be true in popular vote elections. Of 918 elections for governor between 1948 and 2009, for example, more than 90% were won by candidates securing more than 50% of the vote, and none have been won with less than 35% of the vote.</p>	<p>Proponents of the Electoral College see its negative effect on third parties as beneficial. They argue that the two-party system has provided stability because it encourages a delayed adjustment during times of rapid political and cultural change. They believe it protects the most powerful office in the country from control by what these proponents view as regional minorities until they can moderate their views to win broad, long-term support across the nation.</p>