



U.S. Presidential Election: Summary

France-USA-Net.Com | 538 electors | 270 required | Nov 3, 2028

Educational summary sheet on the federal electoral process. Factual content based on FEC, National Archives, and vote.gov sources.

1. Electoral College

- 538 electors: 435 representatives + 100 senators + 3 for Washington, D.C. (23rd Amendment).
- 270 votes minimum to win (absolute majority).
- Winner-takes-all: in 48 states, the statewide winner receives all electors.
- Maine and Nebraska split some votes by congressional district.
- National popular vote != presidency: documented in 2000 and 2016.
- California: 54 electors (2020 census); Wyoming, Vermont, and Alaska: 3 each.

2. Primaries, caucuses and conventions

- Closed primaries: only party-registered voters may participate (roughly half of states).
- Open primaries: any registered voter may participate.
- Caucuses: local meetings (Iowa traditionally opens the season).
- National conventions (summer of election year): formal nomination of the ticket.

3. Election cycle calendar

Preparation : Primaries, conventions, and general campaign

January through October: caucuses and primaries (Iowa, New Hampshire, Super Tuesday), national conventions in July-August, then the general campaign with televised debates and swing-state mobilization.

Election Day : Tuesday, November 3, 2028

Federal elections fall on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November. Voters cast ballots in person, early, or by mail depending on state rules. Last election: November 5, 2024.

Post-election : Certification and Electoral College vote

Each state certifies results and appoints electors. In December, electors meet in state capitals. On January 6, Congress certifies the count (reformed by the 2022 Electoral Count Reform Act).

Inauguration : Presidential oath on January 20

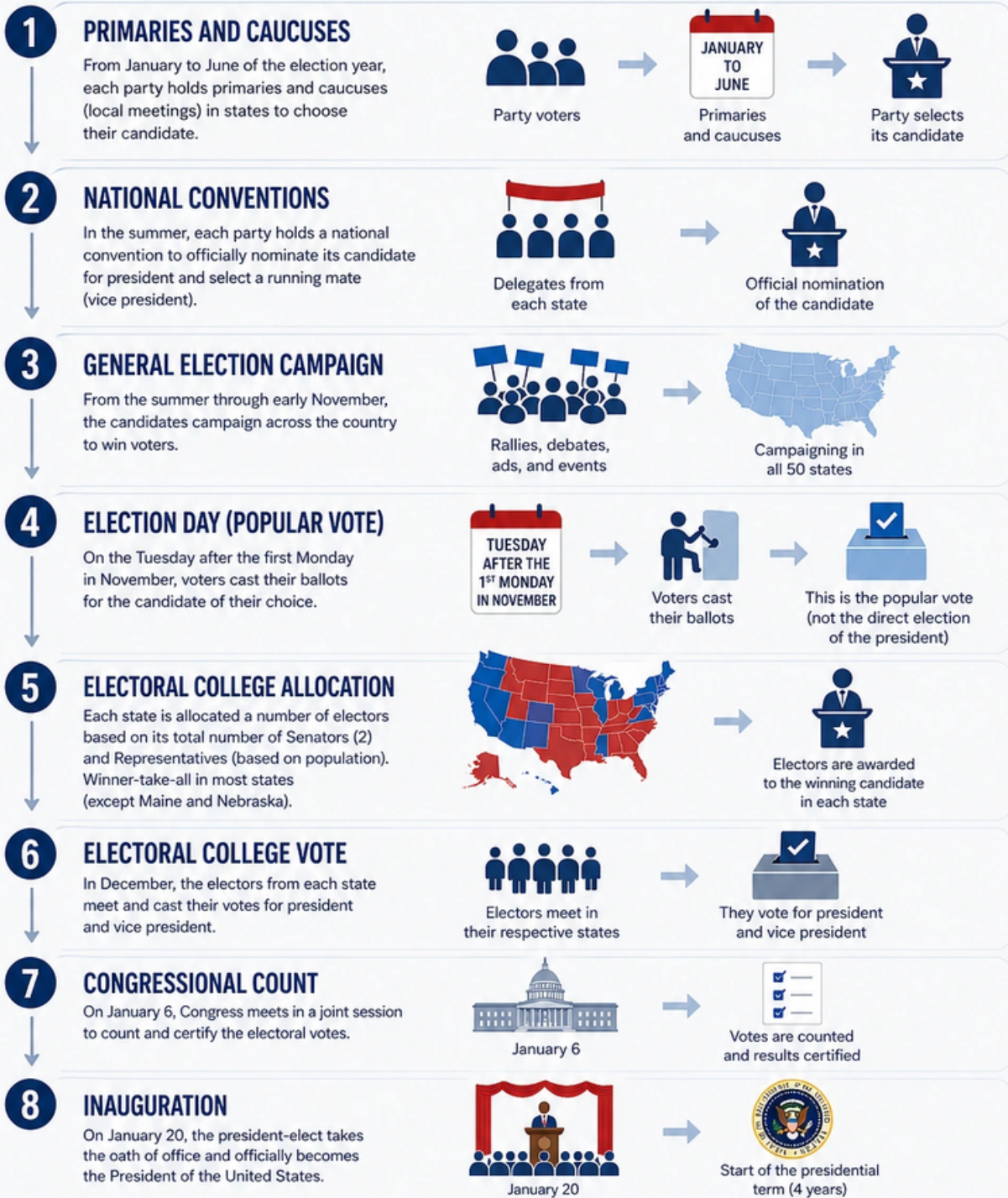
The president-elect takes the oath at the Capitol and begins a four-year term. The 22nd Amendment limits presidents to two elected terms.

4. Infographic

HOW THE U.S. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION WORKS

★ STEP BY STEP ★

The U.S. president is not elected directly by the people. Instead, they are chosen by the Electoral College. Here's how the process works.



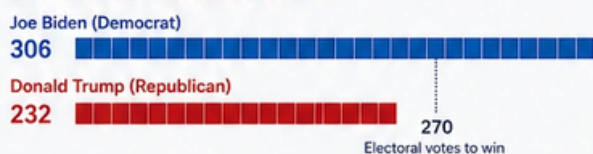
THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE BY THE NUMBERS

- 538 total electoral votes
- 435 Representatives (based on state population)
- 100 Senators (2 per state)
- 3 electors for Washington, D.C.

To win: A candidate must receive a majority of the electoral votes—at least 270.

i The system is designed to balance state representation by giving each state at least 3 electoral votes, regardless of population.

EXAMPLE RESULTS: 2020 ELECTION



Sources: USA.gov | Federal Election Commission (FEC.gov)

Diagram of the U.S. presidential election process, from nomination to inauguration.

5. Voting methods

- Election Day voting: local polling places, typically 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. (varies by state).
- Early voting: available in most states, often 1-3 weeks before Election Day.
- Mail-in / absentee voting: rules vary widely by state.
- Drop boxes: secure deposit of mail ballots at official locations.
- 2020-2024: record levels of early and mail-in voting. Check vote.gov or your Secretary of State.

6. Voter registration

- Be a U.S. citizen (by birth or naturalization).
- Be 18 on Election Day.
- Reside in the state where you vote (residency period varies, often 30 days).
- Be registered before your state's deadline (some allow same-day registration).
- Register online: vote.gov (official federal portal).

7. Swing states

Under winner-takes-all rules, campaigns concentrate resources on swing states, where outcomes remain competitive. In 2024, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin, Arizona, Georgia, Nevada, and North Carolina played decisive roles. Their electoral makeup can shift each cycle.

8. USA vs France comparison

Two presidential republics with sharply different electoral traditions.

Criterion	United States	France
Voting method	Electoral College (538 / 270 required)	Direct two-round vote
Term and frequency	4 years, first Tuesday in November, max. 2 terms	5 years (quinquennat), election in April
Nomination	Primaries and caucuses, conventions, general election	Party primaries or designation, 500 sponsors
Winning threshold	Electoral College majority (270 / 538)	Absolute majority in round 1 or runoff in round 2
Registration	Voluntary, state-by-state rules (vote.gov)	Automatic for adult citizens
Key distinction	National popular vote != final result (2000, 2016)	Top national vote-getter wins

9. Issues and reforms

Recurring debates include abolishing or reforming the Electoral College, ballot and machine security, voting access, fighting disinformation, and campaign finance (super PACs, FEC). The Electoral Count Reform Act (2022) clarified January 6 procedures to prevent abusive challenges to certified results.

10. Official U.S. links

[Federal Election Commission \(FEC\)](https://www.fec.gov/)
<https://www.fec.gov/>
[National Archives - Electoral College](https://www.archives.gov/electoral-college)
<https://www.archives.gov/electoral-college>
[Historical election data](https://www.archives.gov/electoral-college/historical-election-data)
<https://www.archives.gov/electoral-college/historical-election-data>
vote.gov
<https://vote.gov/>
[USA.gov - Voting](https://www.usa.gov/voting)
<https://www.usa.gov/voting>

