

ELECTING THE PRESIDENT

ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT (The General Election and Electoral College)

As in the primary, only the names of the candidates and their vice presidential running mates appear on the ballot. However, we are again not voting directly for the candidate, but for a slate of electors pledged to that candidate, who will, in turn, elect the President and Vice President when the Electoral College convenes in December.

The Electoral College is a body of citizens elected in each state to cast their ballots for President and Vice President of the United States. Elector numbers are allocated to the states based on each one's representation in Congress -- one elector for each of the two Senators, one for each member of the House of Representatives. California has 55 electoral votes because we have two Senators, 53 members of the House.

On the first Monday after the second Wednesday in December (December 13, 2004), the electors representing the party whose presidential slate carried the state assemble in the Assembly Chambers of the State Capitol at 2:00 p.m. to cast their votes, voting separate ballots for President and Vice President. The results are sealed and delivered to the Secretary of the United States Senate for transmittal to the President of the Senate; the Senate tallies the states' votes and officially declares the result to President.

Electors are paid \$10 plus mileage (5¢ per mile) for the round trip from their homes to the Capitol for the meeting of the Electoral College. Arrangements for the meeting are handled through the Governor's office.

What happens if the nationwide electoral vote is a tie?

The House of Representatives makes the decision with each state having one vote. Representatives of at least two-thirds of the states must be present for the vote. If the House cannot decide by March 4, then the sitting Vice President becomes President and the person receiving the largest number of Electoral College votes for Vice President becomes Vice President.

How Electors Are Selected

On or before October 1 of the presidential election year, each party's nominee must file with the Secretary of State a list containing the names, residence addresses, and business addresses of the 55 electors pledged to him/her.

Each party determines its own method for selecting electors:

Democratic Party: Each congressional nominee and each US Senate nominee (determined by the last two elections) designates one elector.

Republican Party: The nominees for governor, lieutenant governor, treasurer, controller, attorney general, secretary of state, United States Senators (again, going back two elections), the Senate and Assembly Republican leaders, all elected officers of the Republican state central committee, the national committeeman and committeewoman, the president of the Republican county central committee chairmen's organization, and the chair or president of each Republican volunteer organization officially recognized by the state central committee act as electors.

American Independent: Electors are selected at the party's nominating convention.

Green, Libertarian, Natural Law, and Peace and Freedom parties: Electors are selected at each party's nominating convention and must have a 50/50 ratio of men and women.

No incumbent Senators, congressional representatives or persons holding an office of trust or profit of the United States may serve as electors.

HOW CALIFORNIA VOTED IN GENERAL ELECTIONS 1900 TO THE PRESENT
(Candidates receiving more than 20% of the vote)

1900	*William McKinley (R)	54.50%	William Jennings Bryan (D)	41.30%
1904	*Theodore Roosevelt (R)	61.90%	Alton Parker (D)	26.90%
1908	*William Howard Taft (R)	55.50%	William Jennings Bryan (D)	33%
1912	*Woodrow Wilson (D)	41.80%	Theodore Roosevelt (Prog.)	41.80%
1916	*Woodrow Wilson (D)	46.60%	Charles Hughes (R)	46.30%
1920	*Warren G. Harding (R)	66.20%	James Cox (D)	25.30%
1924	*Calvin Coolidge (R)	57.20%	Robert Lafollette (D)	33.10%
1928	*Herbert Hoover (R)	63.90%	Alfred Smith (D)	34.20%
1932	*Franklin D. Roosevelt (D)	58.40%	Herbert Hoover (R)	37.40%
1936	*Franklin D. Roosevelt (D)	67%	Alfred Landon (R)	31.70%
1940	*Franklin D. Roosevelt (D)	57.40%	Wendell Willkie (R)	41.30%
1944	*Franklin D. Roosevelt (D)	56.50%	Thomas Dewey (R)	47.10%
1948	*Harry Truman (D)	47.60%	Thomas Dewey (R)	47.10%
1952	*Dwight Eisenhower (R)	56.30%	Adlai Stevenson (D)	42.70%
1956	*Dwight Eisenhower (R)	55.40%	Adlai Stevenson (D)	44.30%
1960	Richard Nixon (R)	50.10%	*John F. Kennedy (D)	49.60%
1964	*Lyndon Johnson (D)	59.10%	Barry Goldwater (R)	40.80%
1968	*Richard Nixon (R)	47.80%	Hubert Humphrey (D)	44.70%
1972	*Richard Nixon (R)	55%	George McGovern (D)	41.50%
1976	Gerald Ford (R)	49.70%	*Jimmy Carter (D)	48%
1980	*Ronald Reagan (R)	52.70%	Jimmy Carter (D)	35.90%
1984	*Ronald Reagan (R)	57.50%	Walter Mondale (D)	41.30%
1988	*George Bush (R)	51.13%	Michael Dukakis (D)	47.56%
1992	*Bill Clinton (D)	46.01%	George Bush (R) [Ross Perot (I) 20.63%]	32.61%
1996	*Bill Clinton (D)	51.10%	Bob Dole (R)	38.21%
2000	Al Gore (D)	53.5%	*George W. Bush (R)	41.7%
2004	John Kerry (D)	54.4%	*George W. Bush (R)	44.4%

*Elected