

US Presidential Elections

American presidential elections are a complicated affair. It might seem that choosing one person for one position should be straightforward, but the complex relationship between the political parties, states, and national government in the United States results in a very lengthy process.

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The two largest parties – and, realistically, the only two that compete for the presidency – are the Democrats and Republicans. Each party chooses a candidate in primary elections. There are more than fifty of these elections for each party – one in each state and territory of the United States. The person who gets the most support in these elections becomes the candidate. In 2020, the Republican candidate has already been chosen – Donald Trump – so the Republican primary is a mere formality.

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The presidential elections are then held at the start of November. The candidate who gains the most support becomes president. However, because there are more than fifty elections, the candidate that gets the least votes nationwide can still win most of the individual elections and become president. This happened in 2016, when Trump received three million fewer votes than Hillary Clinton, and in 2000, when George Bush became president.

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What are the two main parties in the American elections?

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How many primary elections are held?

Presidential elections are held every four years; in the last five elections, how many times has the loser become president?