

Presidential Elections

by
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“With more than two centuries’ worth of U.S. presidential elections, the historical ledger is filled with an array of facts. For example, when Donald Trump was named the 45th president, he was really only the 44th president because Grover Cleveland is counted twice. And with Article II, Section 1, Clause 5 of the U.S. Constitution stating that a citizen has to be at least 35 years old to become president, John F. Kennedy came the closest to that limit by earning election at age 43.

The 2000 and 2016 elections were not the only times a candidate won the popular vote but lost the election. It has happened five times in our nation’s history:

In 1824 Andrew Jackson won the popular vote but got less than 50 percent of the electoral votes. John Quincy Adams became the next president when he was picked by the House of Representatives.

In 1876 Samuel Tilden won the popular vote but lost the election when Rutherford B. Hayes got 185 electoral votes to Tilden’s 184.

In 1888 Grover Cleveland won the popular vote but lost the election when Benjamin Harrison got 233 electoral votes to Cleveland’s 168.

In 2000 Al Gore won the popular vote but lost the election to George Bush. In the most highly contested election in modern history, the U.S. Supreme Court stopped the Florida recount of ballots, giving Bush the state’s 25 electoral votes for a total of 271 to Gore’s 255.

In 2016 Hillary Clinton won 48.2 percent of the total popular vote to Donald Trump’s 46.1 percent, but lost the election to Trump. Trump won 306 electoral



votes to Clinton's 232.

Grover Cleveland was elected president (1884) then lost his re-election campaign (1888) and came back again to win the presidency for a second time. (1892)

Only 13 U.S. Presidents have been elected to office for two terms and served those two terms. The longest-serving President was Franklin D. Roosevelt, who was elected to office for four terms prior to the Twenty-second Amendment.

John F. Kennedy is the youngest elected U.S. President at 43. He is also the first Catholic President. Ronald Reagan is the oldest elected U.S. President at 73 (second term).

The only President and Vice President to never be elected to the office was Gerald Ford. He became vice president when Spiro Agnew resigned and became president when Nixon resigned.

Percent-wise, the 1992 election had the biggest turnout since 1972 with 61.3 percent off the voting age population heading to the polls.

Ronald Reagan and Donald Trump are the only divorced men to be elected president.

James Monroe received every electoral vote but one in the 1820 election.

Victoria Woodhull became the first woman to run for President in 1872.

Hillary Clinton became the first woman to be nominated for president by a major party ticket in 2016.

Martin Van Buren was the first natural-born American to become president in 1837. Each of the seven previous presidents were born as British subjects.

The 2020 U.S. presidential election will be the first time all members of the millennial generation will be able to vote. The age group of what will then be persons in the 18 to 45-year-old area will represent 40 percent of the United States' eligible voters in 2020. It has also been estimated that 1/5 percent of eligible voters in the 2020 U.S. presidential election will be Hispanic.

If no presidential candidate wins a majority of electoral votes, the House of Representatives chooses the president. Although there have been recent calls to eliminate the Electoral College in the United States, it is very unlikely to happen since it would require a 2/3 majority by either the entire Congress or of each of the individual states' legislatures to do so.

When Americans vote for President and Vice President of the United States, they are actually voting for presidential electors in the Electoral College. According to the Constitution, each state is assigned a number of electors equal to the combined total of the state's Senate and House of Representatives delegations. Today, there are 538 electors. The number of electors per state ranges from three (District of Columbia) to 55 (California). To be elected President of the United States, a candidate needs a majority of 270 electoral votes. [<https://www.history.com/topics/us-presidents/presidential-election-facts>; https://facts.kiddle.co/2020_United_States_presidential_election]

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