

The Electoral College and The 2012 Presidential Election

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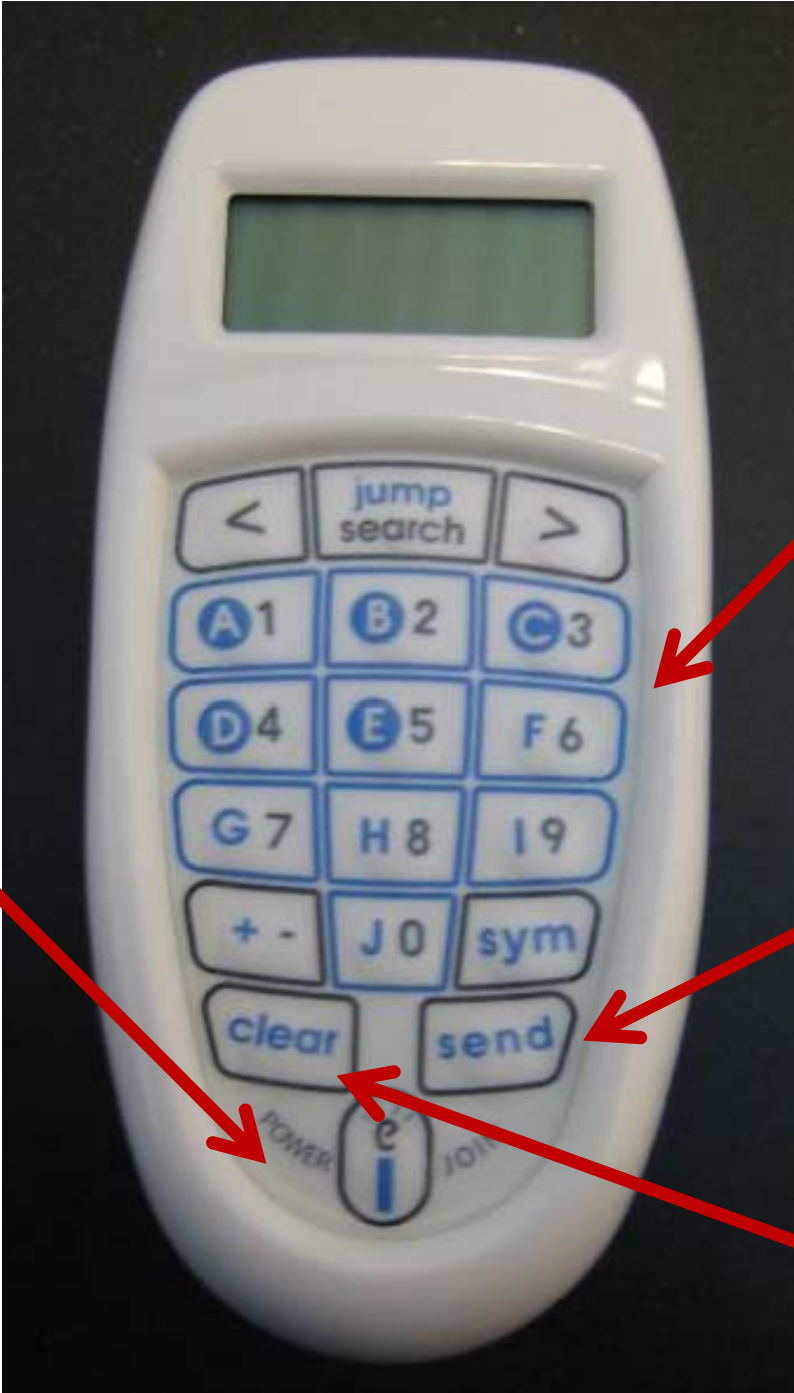
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Topics

- Origin
- Changes over time
- Problems
- Proposed reforms



**Power
key**

**ABCDE
Answer
keys**

**Send
key**

**Clear
key**

The Electoral College balances power between:

- A. The president & Congress**
- B. The federal & state governments**
- C. Various types of states**
- D. All of the above**

The Electoral College was a compromise between –

- A. Large and small
population states**
- B. Slave and free states**
- C. Both**
- D. Neither**

Each state's total number of Electoral Votes is based on the size of that state's:

- A. Registered-voter population**
- B. Voting-age population**
- C. Total population**

To be elected president, a candidate needs a simple majority of:

- A. Popular votes
- B. Electoral votes
- C. Both
- D. Neither

Which presidential candidate won the popular vote but lost the electoral vote?

- A. Andrew Jackson (1824)
- B. Samuel Tilden (1876)
- C. Grover Cleveland (1888)
- D. Al Gore, Jr. (2000)
- E. All of the above

If no candidate wins a majority of the electoral votes, then who chooses the president?

- A. U.S. Supreme Court**
- B. U.S. Senate**
- C. U.S. House**
- D. None of the above**

How each state translates popular votes into electoral votes is established by:

- A. The Constitution**
- B. The U.S. Congress**
- C. The U.S. Supreme Court**
- D. Each state legislature**
- E. None of the above**

Which states now use the winner-take-all method of awarding electoral votes?

- A. Mainly states with large urban populations
- B. Mainly rural states
- C. All 50 states
- D. All but Maine & Nebraska

Recent changes in U.S. elections & campaigns

1. 1930s: reliable public-opinion polling
2. 1970s: primary elections
3. 1980s: communications-media narrow-casting
 - Cable & satellite TV
 - Internet blogs/social media
4. 1990s: high-tech redistricting
5. 2010: unlimited campaign spending

Which gives the most accurate predictions of presidential-election outcomes?

- A. National polls**
- B. National economic models**
- C. State polls**

2012 Electoral College projections

- <http://electoral-vote.com/>
- <http://elections.huffingtonpost.com/2012/romney-vs-obama-electoral-map>
- <http://www.centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/articles/category/2012-president/>
- <http://core.talkingpointsmemo.com/election/scoreboard>
- <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/special/politics/election-map-2012/president/>
- <http://elections.nytimes.com/2012/electoral-map>
- <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/vote2012/map/calc.html#states=lrGSpRqGBIvGnqBIKp>
- <http://www.cnn.com/ELECTION/2012/ecalculator#?battleground>
- <http://www.270towin.com/2012-election-polling-map/obama-romney/>
- http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2012/president/2012_elections_electoral_college_map.html
- <http://cookpolitical.com/presidential/charts/scorecard>
- <http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/>
- <http://election.princeton.edu/electoral-college-map/>
- <http://votamatic.org/>

Proposed Reforms

1. Keep Electoral College but eliminate electors

–Pro

- Eliminates “faithless electors”

–Con

- Only a handful of faithless electors since 1948

Proposed Reforms

2. Keep Electoral College but use Maine/Nebraska plan

– Pro

- Makes all popular votes count
- Increases turnout
- Greatly reduces chance of PV winner being EV loser

– Con

- Increases chance of 3rd-party kingmaker
- Doesn't off-set rural bias of U.S. Senate

Proposed Reforms

3. Keep Electoral College but replace statewide winner-take-all with **proportional division**

– Pro

- Makes all popular votes count
- Increases turnout
- Eliminates chance of PV winner being EV loser

– Con

- Increases chance of 3rd-party kingmaker
- Doesn't off-set rural bias of U.S. Senate

Proposed Reforms

4. Replace Electoral College with **direct election**

– Pro

- Most popular option with public
- Makes all popular votes count
- Increases turnout
- Eliminates chance of PV winner being EV loser
- Eliminates “faithless” electors and House /Senate runoff elections

– Con

- What to do if no PV majority?
- Encourages spoiler candidates to run in order to broker their support in runoff election
- Runoffs shorten transition time for eventual winner
- Doesn't offset rural bias in U.S. Senate