




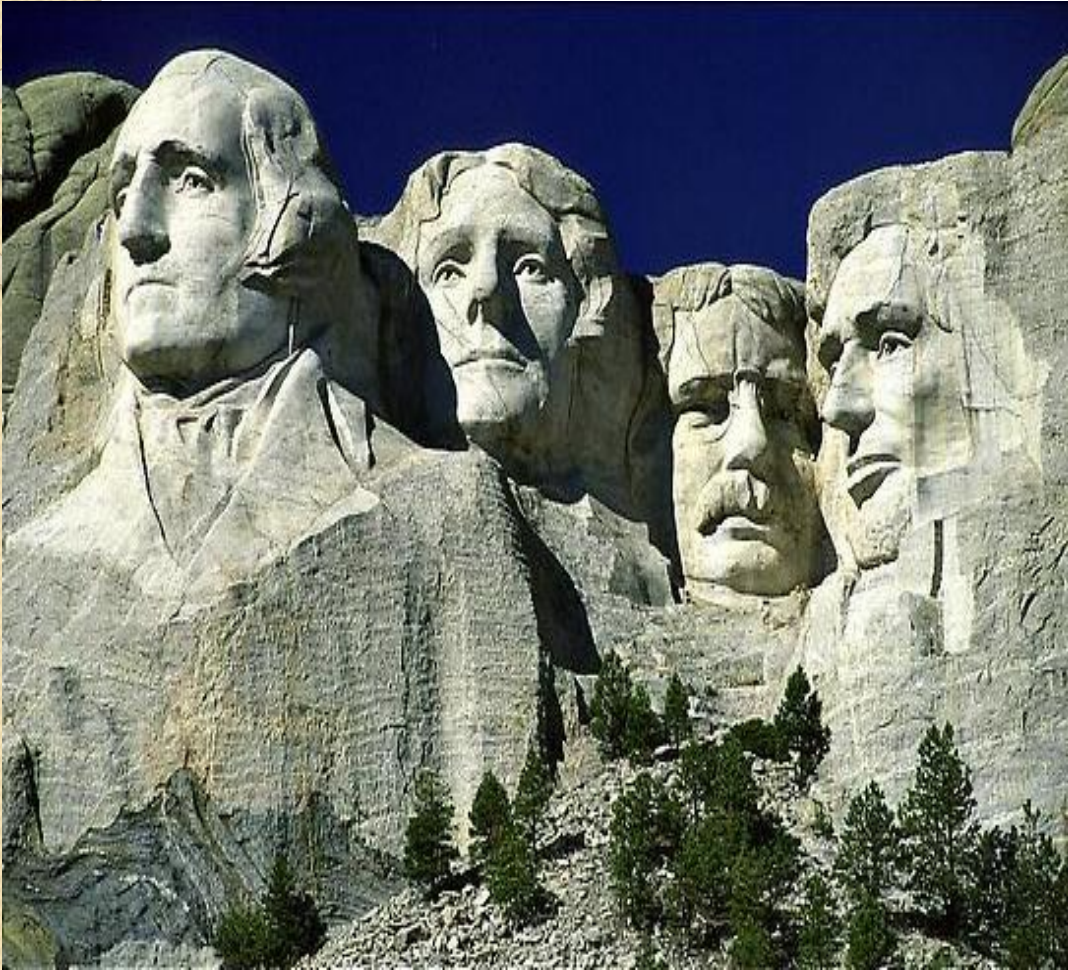
How to become a US President

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American politicians say that the way they elect presidents is one of the most open and democratic processes in the world. According to the US constitution, a president must be elected every four years. To become a US president, you must...

- Be 35 or older
- Be a US citizen born in the US
- Have lived in the USA at least 14 years



You can only serve two terms. This means you can only be president twice. This became law in 1951. Before that, the law was different. In fact, Franklin D. Roosevelt became president in 1933 and was still president when he died in 1945.

The president is not actually chosen by a direct vote of the people. He is elected by the 538 electors that make up what is called the Electoral College. The Electoral College means the total number of «electoral votes» from all the states. Altogether, there are 538 electoral votes and a candidate must win at least 270 of them.





Barack Obama is the 44th
US president. Do you think
he will be re-elected in
2012?

The US president lives and works in the White House. It is situated at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, the capital city of the United States. American presidents have been living and working in the White House for over 200 years.



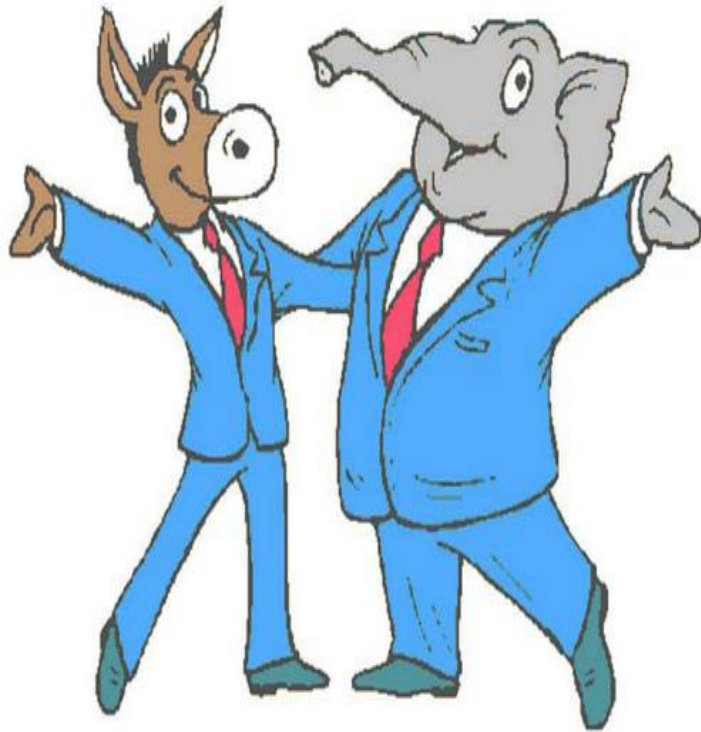
Step 1: Get yourself nominated!

- The first step is primaries and caucuses. Voters all over the country go to the polls to help each political party decide on a single candidate. Voters have to choose from the list of candidates made by the party.



Two-party system

The United States has two main political parties:
The Democrats (the Donkey) and **the Republicans** (the Elephant)



The Republicans tend to be more conservative and have more support among the upper classes. **The Democrats** tend to be more liberal and have more support among the working classes.



Step 2: The Convention

The party delegates gather together to unite behind one presidential candidate. They choose their presidential candidates and it's not unusual for them to vote several times. They also create their party platforms.



Step 3: The campaign



- TV, radio, and print advertisement are everywhere! The candidates travel up and down the country, giving speeches and appearing on TV. These guys want you to know why they should live in the big White House.

Step 4: Great Debates

The candidates face each other in national debates. They have to answer difficult questions – about taxes, education, foreign policy... All the country watches them



Step 5: The election Day

- On November 7, people in every state vote their choice for president.



Step 6: Moving-In Day

On Inauguration Day, which is always held on January 20, Americans finally call the winner “ Mr. President”. There is usually a parade and the new president usually makes a speech about his plans for the US.



Americans want to be proud of their president. They like him to be good-looking, religious, and a good family man. They want him to be strong, to be a good talker, and to be confident about the future.



Barack Obama in the White House with his family

Did you Know?

- Out of 44 American presidents, 25 have been lawyers.
- Eight American presidents never went to college, including George Washington, the first US president.
- In February, Americans celebrate President's Day, which honours the birthdays of George Washington, Abraham Lincoln and all other past presidents of the US.



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