Should Election Day be on a weekend?

The change has been proposed as a way to increase voter turnout in the US.

What you need to know

- **An act of Congress in 1845 declared that Presidential Election Day in the US would take place on an early Tuesday in November.**
- **Tuesday was chosen because it was a convenient day for farmers who lived far from polling sites.**
- **Many countries, including Australia, Germany, and New Zealand, have elections on weekends.**
- **In the US, 47 states have early in-person voting and 27 states allow voting by mail.**



BALLOT NUMBERS
More than 150 million people voted in the 2024 US Presidential election, and 40% did so in person on Election Day.

Every two years, Americans vote for members of Congress (the branch of government that makes laws) in midterm elections, and every four years Americans vote for members of Congress and the US President. State, city, and local elections happen every fall. But US voter turnout is lower than in other countries. About 65% of people of voting age cast ballots in the most recent Presidential election, and about 46% voted in the 2022 midterms. Some people say it's hard for people with jobs to get to the polls on a weekday and have called for change to increase voter turnout. What do you think? Should Election Day be on a weekend?

Yes—it's better for democracy

Most adults work on Tuesdays, and many cannot get time off from work or afford to lose hourly wages to go to a polling site. Moving Election Day to a weekend would make it easier for them. There is evidence that having elections on weekends is a good policy. Countries that have elections on weekends or on special holidays typically have higher voter turnout than the US does. Ultimately, it is important that as many Americans as possible have the chance to make their voices heard in elections. This is better for democracy and will help to ensure that elected officials adhere to the values of more of the people they represent.

No—it's not worth the trouble

Many people are busy on weekends. They have sports practice or family gatherings, they use the time to travel, or they have jobs in hospitals or restaurants that require working on the weekend. They wouldn't necessarily have more time to vote on a weekend than on a Tuesday. Moving Election Day to Saturday or Sunday would also require poll workers, ballot counters, journalists, and anyone else whose job revolves around elections to work on weekends. That's not fair to them. Besides, there are better ways to increase voter turnout, like expanding early voting days, adding voting by mail options, or making Election Day a national holiday.

YES Three reasons Election Day should be on a weekend

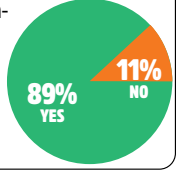
1. **Most people go to work on Tuesdays, so moving Election Day to a weekend would give them time to vote.**
2. **Countries that hold weekend elections consistently have higher voter turnout than the US does.**
3. **Ensuring that as many people as possible can vote is vital for American democracy.**

NO Three reasons Election Day should not be on a weekend

1. **People are busy on weekends, so moving Election Day to Saturday or Sunday is not guaranteed to increase voter turnout.**
2. **Moving the day would be unfair for poll workers, ballot counters, and others who would have to work on weekends.**
3. **There are other ways we could make it easier for people to vote.**

LAST WEEK'S POLL

Last week, we asked if adults should dress up for Halloween. A majority of you said yes to letting grown-ups join the fun with family or solo costumes.



What do you think?

Now that you've read a bit more about this issue, visit kids.theweekjunior.com/polls so you can vote in our debate. Vote YES if you think Election Day should be on a weekend or NO if you don't. We'll publish the results next week.

The goal of the big debate is to present two sides of an issue fairly in order to stimulate discussion and allow our readers to make up their minds. The views on this page do not reflect those of *The Week Junior*, and the page is not funded by third parties.

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