



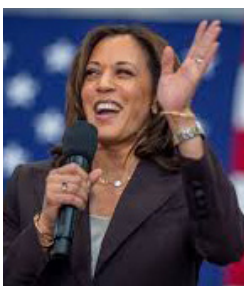
Former Democratic Vice President Joe Biden defeated President Donald Trump to become the 46th president of the United States.

Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden has defeated President Trump, denying him a second term after a bitter campaign and dramatic, prolonged vote count in battleground states that sparked a flurry of lawsuits. Joseph R. Biden Jr. was elected the 46th president of the United States. After winning the battleground state of Pennsylvania, Mr. Biden defeated President Trump, which put his total Electoral College votes above the 270 he needed to clinch the presidency. “I am honored and humbled by the trust the American people have placed in me and in Vice President-elect Harris,” Biden said in a statement. “In the face of unprecedented obstacles, a record number of Americans voted. Proving once again, that democracy beats deep in the heart of America.”

### Vice President-elect Kamala Harris

California senator Kamala Harris has made history by becoming vice president-elect. She is the first woman ever elected to the office, and the first Black and first Indian-American person to hold the title.

Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden announced Harris as his running mate on August 11, 2020. He called her “a fearless fighter for the little guy, and one of the country’s finest public servants.” Harris is 56-years old and is a Democratic member of the U.S. Senate from California. She was first elected to the Senate in 2016.

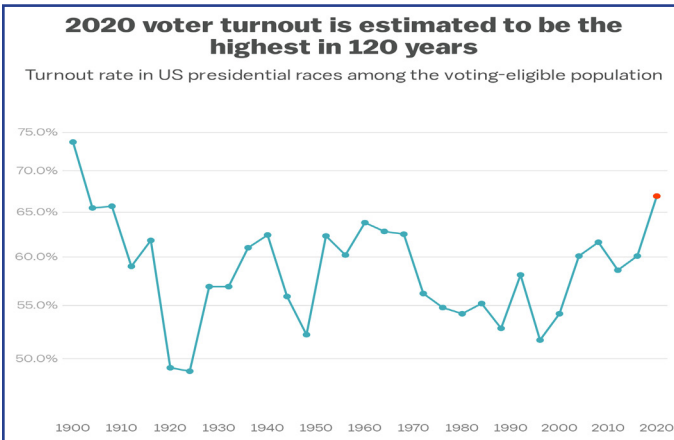


Senator Kamala Harris

### High Voter Turnout

With votes still being counted, turnout in the 2020 presidential election has hit a 50-year high, exceeding the record set by the 2008 presidential election of Barack Obama — an extraordinary engagement in what amounted to a referendum on President Donald Trump’s leadership. However, election experts and partisans are already debating the forces behind the

swell of civic participation. Some pointed to the numbers as evidence of what happens when states expand the time and the ways voters can cast ballots, as many states did this year. Others noted the extraordinary high passions President Trump provoked — both for and against.



### U.S. Senate Election Update

100 Total Senate Seats - 51 Needed for Control

<b>Democratic</b> 48	<b>not decided</b> 4	<b>Republicans</b> 48
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There are 35 seats up for election in the Senate, and of those, 23 belong to Republicans and 12 to Democrats. Democrats would need a net gain of three or four seats to win a majority in the Senate, currently held by Republicans with 53 senators. Democrats control 45 seats, with two independent senators caucus with Democrats. In Georgia, voters will have another two months in the election season, as the state’s two Senate races come down to a January 5, 2021 run-off election. If the Democrats win both seats, we could have a 50-50 split in the Senate. The Constitution specifies that the vice president is the president of the Senate and has the tie-breaking vote (and would give the advantage to the Democrats in certain legislation).

### U.S. House Election Update

435 Total House Seats - 218 Needed for Control

<b>Democratic</b> 215	<b>not decided</b> 24	<b>Republicans</b> 196
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Democrats will maintain the majority they won back in 2018, but the party has lost seats as Republicans defeated incumbents in conservative-leaning districts in South Carolina, Iowa, and New Mexico. Longtime Republicans also held on in Missouri, Michigan, and Ohio. The results will likely mean that House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) will have the smallest majority in 18 years. All 435 seats were up for election. (over)

## Electoral College and Popular Votes

Six days after the election, Joseph R. Biden Jr. had 279 confirmed electoral votes, nine more than needed to win. President Trump had 214 confirmed electoral votes. Mr. Biden was leading in the popular vote, with approximately 75.6 million votes. About 71.2 million votes had been counted for President Trump. Four states remained uncalled: Alaska (3 electoral votes), Arizona (11), Georgia (16) and North Carolina (15).

**Can a president lose the popular vote but still win the election?** Yes, and that is what happened in 2016: Although Hillary Clinton won the national popular vote by almost 3 million votes, Donald Trump garnered almost 57 percent of the electoral votes, enough to win the presidency. The same thing happened in 2000. Although Al Gore won the popular vote, George W. Bush earned more electoral votes after a contested Florida recount and a Supreme Court decision.

## An Unusual Election Day

The 2020 presidential election was unusual and will not be soon forgotten. Americans had to overcome obstacles to cast their ballots this year. The coronavirus pandemic prompted more voting by mail, despite some concerns over mail delivery. High interest in the presidential race meant extraordinary wait times during early and day-of voting. Regardless, a record number of eligible citizens participated in our democracy. Federal elections are administered by state and local governments, although the specifics of how elections are conducted differ between the states. The Constitution and laws of the United States grant the states wide latitude in how they administer elections.

At least 30 states plus the District of Columbia have made at least some changes that made it easier and more accessible for voters to cast their ballots from home. These changes include removing strict excuse requirements or allowing COVID-19 concerns to be a valid excuse to vote absentee, allowing ballot drop boxes, offering prepaid postage on election mail and proactively sending all active registered voters applications to request an absentee ballot.

## President Trump and Conceding the Election

Within an hour of Democrat Joe Biden being declared president-elect, President Donald Trump's campaign signaled he would refuse to concede. "The simple fact is this election is far from over," Trump said in a statement.

If Trump refuses to deliver a public concession speech or make a congratulatory call to Biden, it will break with 124 years of American history. Experts say it would also undermine the election results and exacerbate the nation's political tensions, already magnified by a bitter campaign and the extended, contested vote count.

Since 1896, every losing presidential candidate in American history has delivered a concession message, whether by telegram to the victor or via a nationally televised address to the nation. The last incumbent president to lose a re-election bid was George H.W. Bush. Like others, he used his concession speech to urge Americans to move past the election and unite behind his opponent Bill Clinton.

## President-Elect Biden To Take Office

President-elect Biden is expected to be sworn in as the 46th president of the United States on January 20, 2021, at an outdoor inauguration ceremony. However, the coronavirus pandemic might cause the plans to be scaled back. Before Mr. Biden takes the oath of office, Vice President-elect Kamala Harris, the first woman elected as vice president, will be sworn in that day from the West Front of the U.S. Capitol in Washington.

Every president since George Washington has delivered an *Inaugural Address*, which has ranged from 8,445 words to 135 words. While many of the early Presidents read their addresses before taking the oath, current custom dictates that the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court administer the oath first, followed by the President's speech. Most Presidents use their Inaugural address to present their vision of America and to set forth their goals for the nation.

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

**TRUE OR FALSE?** Write a **T** or **F** in the space provided.

- \_\_\_ 1. All 100 U.S. Senate seats were up for reelection in the 2020 general election.
- \_\_\_ 2. All 435 U.S. House seats were up for reelection in the 2020 general election.
- \_\_\_ 3. The popular vote determines the winner of the 2020 presidential election.
- \_\_\_ 4. The 2020 presidential election is on track to have the highest voter turnout in 120 years.
- \_\_\_ 5. The year 2026 is the next presidential election year.
- \_\_\_ 6. President-elect Biden will take office on January 1, 2021.
- \_\_\_ 7. Vice president-elect Harris will make history by becoming the first woman to hold that office.
- \_\_\_ 8. A candidate that loses the electoral college can still become president.
- \_\_\_ 9. After the election, it is projected that the Democrats will control the House.
- \_\_\_ 10. If the Senate has a 50-50 split between Republicans and Democrats, any tie-breaking votes come from the Supreme Court.

Answers: 1-F, 2-T, 3-F, 4-T, 5-F, 6-F, 7-T, 8-F, 9-T, 10-F