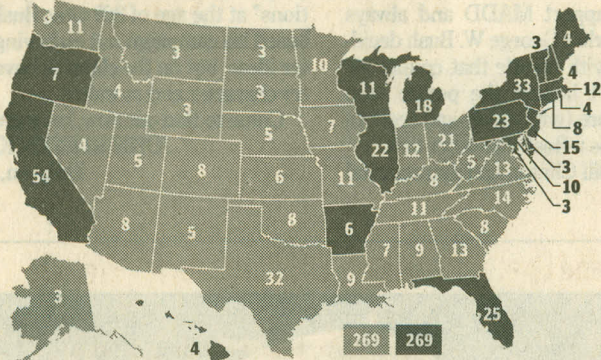
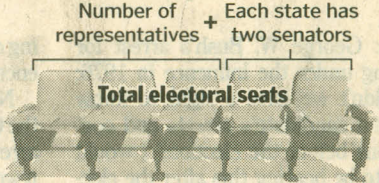


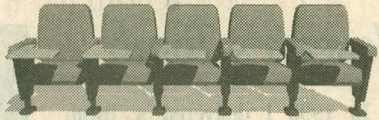
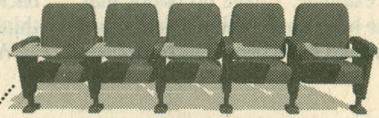
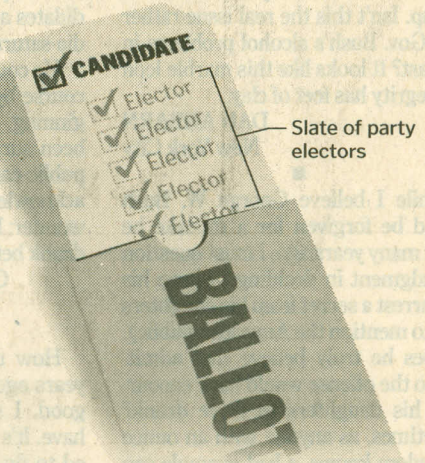
How the Electoral College Works

- 1 Each state is allotted one elector for each U.S. representative and senator it has. Washington, D.C., receives three electors, the same number of electors as the least populous state. (The math: There are 435 representatives and 100 senators. Add D.C. and the total number of electoral votes is 538.)
- 2 Mostly, electors are nominated at state party conventions. The electors' names are given to the state's election official.
- 3 On Election Day, voters in each state cast their ballot for the slate of electors representing their choice of presidential ticket. The electors' names do not usually appear on the ballot.
- 4 The slate of electors for the presidential ticket that receives the most votes is appointed, and all the electoral votes for that state go to those candidates.*
- 5 A candidate needs to win a majority of electoral votes—270—to be elected president. If no candidate wins a majority of electoral votes (see example below), the House would choose the president and the Senate would choose the vice president.



- 6 In December, in a largely ceremonial gesture, the electors cast ballots for president and vice president and are expected to follow the popular vote of their state. On rare occasions, "faithless" electors have voted for another candidate.
- 7 The votes are counted at a joint session of Congress, and the president officially is elected.

*Except in Maine and Nebraska, which each give two at-large delegates to whomever wins the state and the rest to whomever wins in each congressional district.



Candidate that wins popular vote in a state gets all of the electoral votes*

Previous Close Calls

It is possible for the candidate who wins the popular vote to lose the election. This has happened three times, including 1824, when the House decided the election because no candidate won a majority of electoral votes.

✓ Elected president

Election year/candidates	Popular vote percentage	Electoral votes received	Electoral votes needed for majority
1824			131
John Quincy Adams ✓	30.92%	84	
Andrew Jackson	41.34	99	
Henry Clay	12.99	37	
William H. Crawford	11.17	41	
1876			185
Rutherford B. Hayes ✓	47.95%	185	
Samuel J. Tilden	50.97	184	
1888			201
Benjamin Harrison ✓	47.82%	233	
Grover Cleveland	48.62	168	

SOURCES: Congressional Quarterly's "Guide to U.S. Elections," Federal Election Commission, Associated Press