

Ranked Choice Voting

What is Ranked Choice Voting?

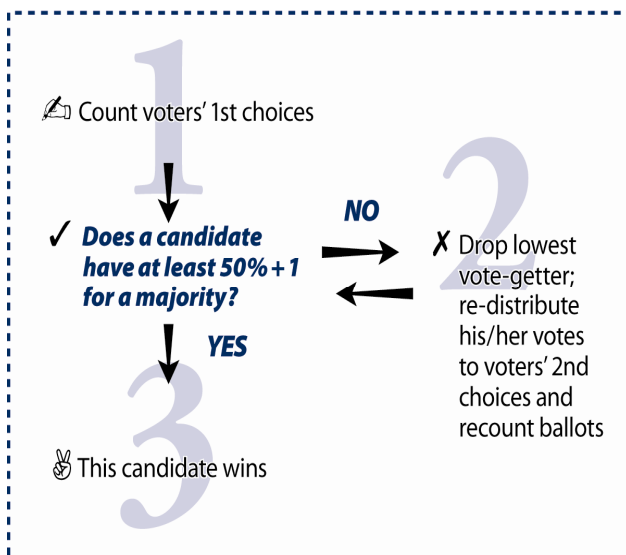
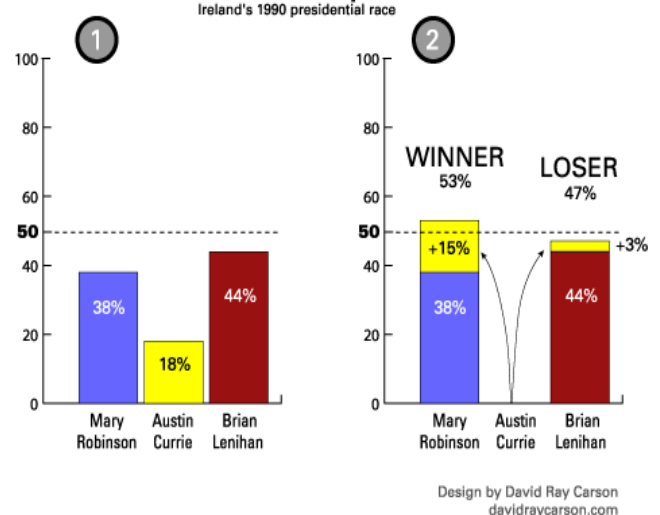
The concept of Ranked Choice Voting (also known as Instant Runoff Voting) is a simple one. It allows voters to rank candidates according to their preference – 1st choice, 2nd choice, 3rd choice, etc. **Every vote counts and very few votes are wasted.**

How does it work?

If a candidate receives a majority of first choice votes, that candidate wins. If not, the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated and votes cast for this candidate are redistributed to remaining candidates according to second choice on each of those voters' ballots. All the ballots are counted again and if a candidate receives a majority, that candidate wins. If not, the process is repeated until one candidate has a majority of votes.

Ranked Ballot			
Fill in the ovals by ranking candidates in order of preference.			
	1st Choice ↓	2nd Choice ↓	3rd Choice ↓
Mary	①	②	③
Austin	①	②	③
Brian	①	②	③

Instant Runoff Example



Do voters understand it?

Yes! Exit polls taken when voters first went to the polls using Ranked Choice show that the vast majority understood it:

- 87% in San Francisco (CA)
- 89% in Burlington (VT)
- 88% in Takoma Park (MD)
- 95% in Cary (NC)
- 86% in Hendersonville (NC)

How does it work in multi-seat elections?

Ranked Choice Voting works equally well when there are multiple seats to fill. Candidates win by attaining a certain “threshold”, depending on the number of seats to fill. After all first choices are counted, if no candidate reaches the threshold, then the candidate with the fewest votes is defeated and votes cast for this candidate are redistributed to the second choice on each ballot. If a candidate receives more votes than needed to win, the surplus votes are proportionately reallocated to remaining candidates in accordance with the next choice on the elected candidate’s ballots. This process is repeated until all seats are filled and ensures minimal wasted votes.

Where is it used?

RCV is a tested and accepted voting method used in several jurisdictions across the United States - Minneapolis (MN), San Francisco (CA), Burlington (VT), Takoma Park (MD), Hendersonville (NC), Cambridge (MA), Pierce County (WA) and Aspen (CO). It is pending implementation in more than a dozen other cities.

RCV is also used in democracies such as Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland and London.

Who supports it?

MINNESOTA ORGANIZATIONAL ENDORSEMENTS

League of Women Voters of Minnesota • MN Council of Nonprofits • Citizens for Election Integrity • MN Public Interest Research Group • Sierra Club • Take Action MN • UFCW, Local 789 • United Steel Workers of America, District 11 • Unite HERE • Minneapolis Urban League • White House Project • MN DFL, Green, Independence and Libertarian Parties • Several neighborhood and community organizations • Media: Star Tribune, La Prensa, MN Daily & Spokesman Recorder

INDIVIDUAL ENDORSEMENTS

• President Barack Obama • Senator John McCain • Congressman Keith Ellison • MN Senate Majority Leader Larry Pogemiller House • House Speaker Margaret Anderson Kelliher • former US Senator Dave Durenberger • former Governor Arne Carlson • former US Senator Mark Dayton • Minneapolis Mayor R.T Rybak • Lilydale Mayor Tom Swain • former Minneapolis mayor Don Fraser and Saint Paul mayors George Latimer and Jim Scheibel • Wy Spano • Chuck Denny • George & Sally Pillsbury • Elizabeth Dickinson • several local officials and state legislators. See full list at www.fairvotemn.org.

Why is it a better way to vote?

Ranked Choice Voting....

- **Simplifies the election process and saves money.**
RCV consolidates two rounds – a nonpartisan primary and a general election or a partisan general election with a runoff – into a single general election, reducing the cost of elections for candidates and taxpayers.
- **Ensures winners have support from a majority of voters**
In single-winner elections, candidates can’t win without the support of a majority of voters.
- **Ensures more diverse representation**
In multi-winner elections, RCV ensures more voters are represented by someone they voted for.
- **Increases voter participation**
By consolidating two-round elections into one, all candidates are on the ballot in the general election when voter turnout is highest, increasing voter participation in the selection of the winner.
- **Gives voters more choices & makes every vote count**
RCV empowers voters to vote sincerely without worrying that voting for their favorite candidate might unintentionally help elect their least-favorite. It eliminates worries about “wasted” votes and allows all candidates to gain an accurate tally of support.
- **Expands political access for all candidates**
By doing away with wasted votes and the spoiler dynamic and folding two-round elections into one, RCV lowers barriers to political participation for candidates not traditionally viable in current elections. In multi-seat elections, RCV increases opportunity for candidates representing traditionally underrepresented communities not viable in winner-take-all elections.
- **Promotes civil elections**
RCV discourages negative campaigning and promotes issue-based debates by providing a real incentive for candidates to appeal to voters for second place votes.