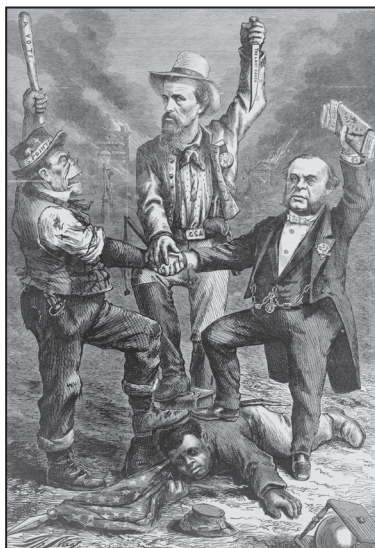


History of Voting in America

1776 Voting is controlled by individual state legislatures. Only white men age 21 and older who own land can vote. ▼



1870 The 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution eliminates racial barriers to voting; however, many states continue practicing voter discrimination. Poll taxes, literacy tests, fraud, and intimidation still prevent many from voting. Native Americans are still denied the right to vote. ►



1920 The 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution is ratified, giving women the right to vote nationwide.

1924 The Indian Citizenship Act grants Native Americans citizenship and voting rights.

1868 The 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution grants full citizenship rights, including voting rights, to all men born or naturalized in the United States.



1923 Washington State voters pass Initiative 40, repealing the poll tax. Poll taxes are used in many states as a way to discriminate against certain voters.

1912 Washington voters amend the state Constitution, giving citizens the power to propose initiatives and referenda; the first statewide initiative in 1914 bans alcohol sales.

1910 Washington voters amend the state Constitution, allowing women to vote and run for office. ◀

1964 The federal Civil Rights Act is passed to ensure that all men and women age 21 and older, regardless of race, religion, or education, have the right to vote.

The 24th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution is ratified, eliminating poll taxes nationwide.



1965 The federal Voting Rights Act suspends literacy tests. Registration and voting rights are now federally enforced.

2000 The U.S. Supreme Court decides the Presidential Election after dubious ballot counting practices call into question Florida's electoral votes. The incident sparks national outcry and a wave of election reforms.

The U.S. Census reveals that Washington's non-English speaking population has grown large enough that voting materials in some counties must be translated to comply with the 1975 Voting Rights Act.

1971 The 26th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution lowers the voting age to 18.



1984 The federal Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act requires polling places to be accessible to people with disabilities.

1975 The federal Voting Rights Act is renewed, permanently banning literacy tests nationwide. Section 203 is added, requiring translated voting materials in areas with large numbers of citizens with limited English skills.

Today About 4 million people are registered to vote in Washington, roughly 68 percent of those eligible.

2009 Washington becomes the second state in the U.S. (after Oregon) to vote entirely by mail rather than in person at the polls.

2008 After a lengthy U.S. Supreme Court battle, Washington enacts the "Top 2 Primary" that allows voters to choose any candidate regardless of party preference.