



CAMPUS
VOTER

REGISTRATION

A How To Guide

ROCK^{THE}**VOTE**



INTRODUCTION

In 2008, more young voters cast a ballot than in any other election since 18-20 year olds won the right to vote in 1971. On Election Day this year – November 2, 2010 – young people can continue building political power and determining the direction of our country by voting . . . or we can take a step back. Let's keep building, eh?

The participation of college students in the 2010 midterm elections is critical. Control of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives is up for grabs. Races for Governor and the fate of state legislatures are on the line. This is big stuff.

First things first: people can't vote unless they are registered to vote. (That's a fact. Look it up.)¹ This guide will help you register your classmates and neighbors to vote. Here's what we've got for you:

- ✓ Step-by-step guide
- ✓ Event checklist for gameday
- ✓ Answers to FAQs
- ✓ Quick training guide
- ✓ Bonus: get your own online voter registration tool (and get your school to use it, too!)

¹ Also a fact: you need to register before your state's voter registration deadline. These deadlines are often at the beginning of October. Go to www.rockthevote.com to find your state's deadline.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

STEP 1: PICK A PLACE, DATE, AND TIME FOR YOUR REGISTRATION EVENT

You know your campus. Where and when are the students most likely to show up, wait in lines, hang out, or walk by on their way to eat or go to class? Be creative. Some suggestions:

- Be a visible presence at freshman orientation, including when freshmen are moving into their dorms.
- Register students waiting in line to get their ID photo taken or to buy books at the bookstore.
- Hit the big events. Canvass tailgates at football games, hang out in front of the stadium entrances, go to the big on-campus speeches and concerts.
- Go door-to-door or set up tables in front of dorms and Greek houses.
- Set up a table in high-traffic areas like the student unions, dining halls, and activities fairs.
- Ask professors to allow you to make a presentation before class starts.

STEP 2: TALK TO THE APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES (IF NECESSARY)

In 1998, Congress updated the Higher Education Act of 1965 to require every college and university to make a “good faith effort” to register their students to vote. So they should help you! Some registration events – like dorm storming or registering voters outside the football stadium or in the bookstore – may require permission of the proper authorities. Here is a list of some honchos that may be helpful. They vary by campus, but you get the point.

- Office of the President likes to know when voter registration events are happening and can be a helpful ally to get access to on-campus events and programming. They might even send an email to the entire student body about registering to vote (including a link to the online registration tool).
- Dean of Student Life is often in charge of room and equipment reservations and can help put you in touch with relevant student-run organizations.
- Registrar’s Office usually has the charge of handling class registration, so if you want to have your work

DID YOU KNOW...

Most states will not accept a P.O. Box as a voter’s residence. Many students live in dorms or residence halls, and do not know the street address (or do not have one) for that location. Students will need a street address to register to vote, so make sure you know what the physical addresses are for dorms and other on-campus housing. Get that information from your school and also check with your local election official to find out what is needed on the voter registration forms for students.

coincide with registration contact them early.

- Dean of Resident Life can provide access to student housing and RA-driven programming.
- Orientation Office is in charge of managing all events surrounding freshman move-in and can let you know important places to be, promote, and some times even require new students to at least visit your “table.”
- Head of Student Government can help navigate the bureaucracy and be a good resource for where students congregate and identifying other student organizations to be a part of your plans.
- Head of Greek Life is responsible for identifying and executing positive programming for fraternity and sorority members. That could be you!
- Your Favorite Prof might let you hand out forms in class.

STEP 3: BUILD YOUR TEAM.

You need to determine how many people you need to run a successful event and recruit volunteers. The more volunteers you have at your table, working a room, canvassing a line, or talking to their friends the more students you are going to register. Plus, it is fun to register voters with your friends.

- Ask your friends to help you out. Tell them what you are doing and explain why it is important to you. Your “inner circle” will be there for you.
- Expand that circle by creating flyers and post them wherever you can – like cafeterias, classrooms, dorms, community events boards. Bring it up at a floor meeting, your Greek chapter meeting, and your discussion groups. Get a sample poster here: <http://www.rockthevote.com/assets/publications/field/rtv-poster.jpg> or order them at <http://live.rockthevote.com>.
- Get online. Post your event on your Facebook page. And make sure you post your event on the Rock the Vote website! Go to live.rockthevote.com and enter the details of your event. We can promote your event and help you recruit more volunteers.

NOTE...

Make sure you post your event on live.rockthevote.com. You can also download voter registration forms and get other things you need for your voter registration drive here: [Rock the Vote t-shirts, posters, stickers and more!](http://live.rockthevote.com)



STEP 4: GET VOTER REGISTRATION FORMS . . . AND FIGURE OUT WHAT YOU ARE GOING TO DO WITH COMPLETED FORMS

Where do you get voter registration forms? Great question! You have a few options here:

- You can often download state voter registration forms from the Secretary of State or local board of elections websites.
- Go to your local board of elections or county registrar office to get forms and let them know what you're doing. Google can help.
- Go to <http://www.rockthevote.com/assets/publications/field/download-the-national.pdf> to download the National Voter Registration Form. (Note: this form is not accepted in North Dakota, New Hampshire and Wyoming.)

Once you have a stack of completed forms, what do you do with them? Another great question! You can take them to the local board of elections or county registrar in person. That's the best and safest thing to do. Another option: mail them to the local board of elections, county registrar or Secretary of State's office.

Whatever you decide, make sure the forms get turned in quickly! There are often state laws about how quickly completed forms must be turned in. The fate of all your hard work rests squarely on your shoulders. No pressure.

Tip: Double check all the forms before you turn them in! Most common errors are forgetting to sign the form and putting the current date in the signature date line.

DID YOU KNOW...

It is always helpful to contact your local election officials – usually the county board of elections or county clerk. They can answer important questions like the appropriate addresses for students living on campus, how quickly completed forms need to be returned, requirements for people running voter registration drives (some states require those running registration drives to get training), critical deadlines, and more.

STEP 5: SUPPLIES

Make sure you've got what you need. Some things you will need:



- Voter registration forms
- Clipboards
- Pens
- Envelope or box for completed forms
- Table
- Posters, Banners, "register to vote here" signs
- Other schwag: stickers, buttons, t-shirts



Did we mention that you can get some things you need for your voter registration drive – like Rock the Vote t-shirts, posters, stickers and more – at live.rockthevote.com? We thought so.

STEP 6: PUBLICIZE THE EVENT

Publicizing your event will help recruit volunteers and let potential voters know where they can go to register. Tell the campus newspaper and radio station what you are up to. Get a local radio station to come broadcast from your registration event. Don't ignore your own social media network – Facebook and Twitter – and make sure you post your event at live.rockthevote.com!

You can find a complete media guide and samples at:

<http://www.rockthevote.com/assets/publications/working-with-media-rtv-campus.pdf>

STEP 7: TRAIN YOUR VOLUNTEERS

Prior to your event – and this can happen at a team meeting days before or 30 minutes prior to your event starting – you'll want to train your volunteers on the keys to a successful voter registration event. (Don't worry! We'll tell you how first.) You go over the tactics needed to register voters and help foster a team atmosphere, set goals, and hold each other accountable.

Bottom line: you are doing something important and that feels good.

The training guide is on page 9 below.

STEP 8: SHOWTIME

Game on.



SHOWTIME: YOUR EVENT CHECKLIST

You've locked down the where and when. You've posted the event on Facebook and the Rock the Vote website. You've recruited the volunteers you need. The voter registration forms and supplies are stacked neatly in the corner of your dorm room. Tomorrow is the big event. What now?

PRE-GAME (DAY BEFORE THE EVENT)

1. Confirm the logistics for the event with your venue or host organization.
2. Call your volunteers to confirm their attendance.
3. Make sure you've got all the voter registration forms, supplies and equipment you need. (Got your voter registration forms? Clipboards? Pens? Signage? Table? Chairs?)

GAMEDAY (STARTS AT LEAST ONE HOUR BEFORE THE EVENT)

4. Arrive an hour – yes one hour! – before your event starts.
5. Lay out your supplies and make your spot look sweet. Set up your signs, lay out your buttons, rock your t-shirts.
6. Volunteers arrive 30 minutes prior to the start of the event.
7. Train your volunteers. Show them the ropes of registration. And go through the list of FAQs.
8. Work it! All hands on deck and no standing behind your table!

POST-GAME

9. Thank volunteers, celebrate your achievements, debrief and make plans for the next event.
10. Turn in the completed voter registration forms to the elections office within 24 hours. (Find your elections office here:
<http://www.rockthevote.com/election-center/contact-sos/>)

RINSE. REPEAT.

FAQs

Can I register to vote at my college or university address?

Yes. Even if you are already registered at home, we encourage you to register at school. You are much more likely to vote.

And local election officials cannot treat students differently than they treat any other citizen when it comes to voting. (That's in the U.S. Constitution, baby!) You cannot vote in two places – like at your parent's house and at school – but if you consider your dorm or address at school your residence, you should register to vote there.

Are there any restrictions on registering to vote using a P.O. Box, college campus, or dorm address?

A person may register to vote using any address he or she considers to be his or her legal residence. Residence requires both domicile and a place of abode. A P.O. Box is sufficient as a mailing address, but insufficient to establish residency. College students should list the street address of their dorm and specify the room, floor, or apartment they occupy.

I live in the same state but have moved to a different address than the address that is on my current voter registration. Do I need to re-register?

Yes. Each part of the state has its own unique candidates and measures on the ballot. When you vote at your assigned polling place you will have the opportunity to vote on the candidates and issues that most directly affect you and your neighbors. When you send in your new voter registration form indicate that you are changing your address. You will get a voter registration card in the mail within a month that will tell you where your precinct's polling place is located. You do not have to "unregister" your previous registration.

What if my college or university encourages me to vote at home?

You have the legal right to register and vote at any address that you will have been living in for a state-specific amount of time prior to the election. In every state, if you moved into on-or off-campus housing at the start of the fall semester, you will have been living there for long enough to vote.

Do I need to show photo ID at the polls?

Yes, but only to verify your identity (not your address). A voting card, a social security card, any federal, state or employee issued ID, regardless of address, is fine. But the rules all vary by state, so check out your state rules here:

<http://www.rockthevote.com/election-center/>

I want to vote, but I will not be in my home precinct on Election Day. Can I still vote?

Absolutely. Go to http://www.longdistancevoter.org/absentee_ballots for details on getting and submitting an absentee ballot. Advanced planning is encouraged because in some states the deadline for applying for an absentee ballot is a few weeks prior to Election Day. As long as the absentee ballot itself is postmarked by Election Day it legally has to be counted.

If I register to vote, am I going to be called for jury duty?

It is against the law to use the voter roles to determine jury duty.

TRAINING

Here's a quick guide to training your volunteers for some voter registration action. Depending on the size of the group, here are a few things you should do to get the ball rolling:

- **Icebreaker.** Let everyone get to know each other and laugh together. Each volunteer is doing this for a reason. You can motivate yourself, each other, and potential registrants by telling them your reason and asking for theirs.
- **Goal setting.** You are a team so set goals and celebrate successes.
- **Role-playing.** Give all your volunteers the chance to practice their pitch.

Your training is an opportunity to talk about what is going to make your voter registration drive a success. The following 9 rules will ensure a fun and productive event:

1. Voter registration forms are gold. Treat them like it.
2. Don't stand behind the table. Move around, be assertive and friendly and let everyone see how much you are enjoying this!
3. Ask everyone to register . . . not just the people that look like you or the people that approach you.
4. Make sure you have two clipboards on you. While someone is filling out a form, start engaging your next registrant.
5. Don't waste time convincing the un-convincible. If you get the feeling someone is just talking to be heard and won't be talked into registering, move on.
6. Check the form twice. Make sure the registrant has signed their name in the appropriate spot and has not mixed up their birth date and the current date.
7. There is a role for everyone. If someone wants to help, let them help. Each person has something to contribute.
8. "Already registered" is just an excuse. Make sure they are registered at their current address – ask them if they have moved since last registering – and encourage them to register at their school address.
9. Have fun. Wave. Smile. Laugh. Ask questions. Share successes. Celebrate.

ONLINE VOTER REGISTRATION

Did we mention that Rock the Vote has a free, easy-to-use online voter registration tool that you and your school can use to help students fill out voter registration forms? True story. You can direct people to www.rockthevote.com to fill out a form online (and by direct we mean post it to Facebook and email all of your friends).

You can also get an online voter registration tool all for yourself! Go to www.RockTheVote.com/partner and sign up. Then get your friends to register through your online tool!



The screenshot shows the 'New Registrant' form on the Rock the Vote website. The form is titled 'New Registrant' and includes a link for 'En español'. It features three input fields: 'Email Address', 'ZIP Code', and 'Date of Birth'. Below these fields are two checkboxes: 'I am a U.S. citizen.' and 'I am registering to vote for the first time.' A red 'NEXT STEP >' button is located at the bottom of the form. The top of the page has a navigation bar with 'YOUR LOGO HERE' and 'VOTER REGISTRATION powered by ROCK THE VOTE'. A progress indicator shows 'Step: 1 2 3 4 5' with '2' highlighted. The footer contains links for 'FAQ', 'Privacy & Security', 'Contact Us', 'About', and '© Copyright 2010, Rock the Vote'.

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