

STAR Voting Canvassing Script

Intro: Hi, how's it going? Have you heard of STAR Voting?

STAR Voting is a more fair and expressive voting method. The idea is that **we should be able to vote our conscience, without wasting our vote**, and the candidate preferred by the people should actually win!

The Problem:

Our current system is only accurate when there are only two candidates in the race. **That's why we have a 2 party system.** If there are more than that, voters have to be strategic and consider voting 'lesser evil' to avoid splitting the vote and spoiled elections. We can do a lot better.

STAR Voting:

With STAR Voting you score each candidate from 0 up to five stars.

The 5 star ballot lets you show who you prefer to who, and also how much or how little you support each candidate. If you don't have a preference you can give candidates the same scores. Those you leave blank get a zero.

STAR Voting is counted in 2 rounds: A scoring round, and a top two runoff.

- First, all the scores are totaled and the two highest scoring candidates are finalists.
- In the runoff, your vote automatically goes to the finalist you preferred.

Whether or not your favorite can win, your vote automatically goes to the finalist you prefer, so it's safe to vote your conscience and your vote can always make a difference.

Elevator pitch:

We should be able to vote our conscience without wasting our vote, but our current system is wildly inaccurate when there are more than two candidates in the race. That's why we have a 2 party system. We can do better! With STAR Voting you score each candidate from zero up to five stars and if your favorite can't win, your vote automatically goes to the finalist you preferred. Simple, fair, accurate!

The Ask: Listen, ask questions, and personalize it!

Find out what people are interested in or involved in already. Tell your story!
Find out how they can help or contribute. Invite them to get involved!

- **The mini-zine** has all the info you need in a nutshell, including the talking points and once you've read it you can show it to a friend.
- **Sign up!** (starvoting.org/signup or clipboard.) Put down your email to join the email list, your phone number if you want local text updates and action items, and put down your address if you want a lawn sign when we launch a campaign in your area.
- The best way to stay in the loop is to sign up on **the email list**. We have events and volunteer opportunities all the time, and email is a great stay in the loop.
- Come to our **monthly meetings** or **volunteer from home**.
- Look up STAR Voting and Equal Vote on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter and **like, follow, and share our social media content**.
- Know of a group that might like a **presentation or an event we can table at?**
- As we work to get STAR Voting adopted for government elections we're also looking for **local organizations to adopt STAR** for internal decision making and elections. The BetterVoting.com site is a great polling tool to get people familiar with the system and the starvoting.org/elections page details secure options for online and paper ballot elections.
- **Make a donation to support our work!** (equal.vote/donate or starvoting.org/donate) You can also become a member of our non-profit, the Equal Vote Coalition. Membership is just \$10 a month or \$120 a year, or you can earn your membership by volunteering.

Check the sign up sheet to make sure it's legible before they leave!

Be friendly! Show that you are personally inspired by this. Feel free to be yourself! The script is just a guideline. Speak from the heart!

If someone is not interested that's okay. Just move on!

STAR Voting FAQ:

What's wrong with our current voting method?

- “Choose One” Plurality Voting is only accurate when there are two candidates in the race. That's why we have a two party system.
- When there are more than two candidates, vote-splitting can cause a majority coalition to end up divided and conquered. (Spoiler Effect.)
- Voters often have to be strategic and vote for the lesser of two evils.

What is STAR Voting?

- STAR Voting is a more expressive voting method using a 5 star ballot.
- Give each candidate a score from 0 - 5.
- If you don't have a preference you can give candidates the same scores.
- Those you leave blank get a zero.

Is STAR Voting vulnerable to strategic voting?

- With STAR Voting, honesty is the best policy. Strategic voting doesn't give you an edge, unlike the current voting method
- The best strategy is to give your favorite candidate(s) 5 stars, your least-favorite(s) 0 stars, and to show your preferences. This ensures your vote can make a difference even if your favorites can't win.
- STAR Voting is more strategy-resistant than RCV or our current system and trying to game the system won't give you an edge.

Does STAR mean we can eliminate primary elections?

- In most cases yes. STAR Voting is highly accurate with any number of candidates in the race, so there's no need for a primary.
- With the current voting method, primaries have notoriously low turnout and high rates of vote-splitting, which means that the candidates elected aren't as representative of the people as they could be.
- Eliminating primaries makes running for office more accessible and affordable for candidates, and would save taxpayers money.
- There would still be a primary for Presidential races, and the rest is up to the jurisdiction. STAR can be used for primaries, general elections, or both.

Can we use STAR Voting for statewide and presidential elections?

- Yes! This is a model that can be used locally, statewide, and nationally.
- STAR Voting is legally and logistically viable across America, including for the Presidential Primary, and in states where RCV is unconstitutional.

Is this just a third party issue?

- No! Both the Democratic and Republican parties have unfairly lost presidential elections where they had majority support, due to the spoiler effect, and vote-splitting happens all the time in statewide and local races.
- Partisan primary elections with multiple candidates often fail to elect the candidate with the most support due to vote-splitting.

Is this the same as Ranked Choice (RCV) aka Instant Runoff Voting (IRV)?

- No, STAR Voting is a hybrid of Score Voting and Ranked Choice that is more accurate and more strategy-resistant than either.
- In RCV, not all rankings given are actually counted. Ignoring ballot data leads to serious issues in elections with three or more viable candidates.
- In RCV, some ballots are “exhausted”. If your favorite is eliminated your vote may not be transferred to your next choice and your ballot isn’t always counted in the final round, even if your other rankings could have made a difference, despite common talking points that gloss over this detail.
- STAR Voting is more transparent. It uses simple addition and is counted locally, unlike RCV which uses algebra and must be tabulated centrally.

Is STAR Voting constitutional? Does it pass One-Person-One-Vote?

- Yes! Your ballot is your one vote and your full vote goes to the finalist you prefer. The legal definition of One-Person-One-Vote is an Equally-Weighted Vote and STAR Voting ensures every voter has an Equally-Weighted Vote.

What happens in the STAR runoff if I gave both finalists the same scores?

- All your scores still make a difference and help your favorites advance.
- If you gave both finalists the same scores, that is a vote of no-preference between those two. You like or dislike them equally.
- The ability to give candidates equal support is critical for maintaining accurate elections when there are many candidates in a race.

What about multi-winner or Proportional Representation (PR) elections?

- STAR Voting can be used for multi-winner races as well and there is a proportional representation version, called Proportional STAR Voting .

Are you talking about the electoral college?

- The voting system itself and the electoral college are different, but vote splitting, which STAR eliminates, was also a major factor every time the electoral college failed to elect the winner of the popular vote.

Is this the same as the “Jungle Primary” California Top 2 system?

- No. The Jungle Primary still uses Choose One voting, which can lead to very unrepresentative results, especially with large fields of candidates. The Jungle Primary is also two separate elections, while STAR can be used without a primary if desired.

Where has STAR Voting been used for elections to date?

- STAR Voting has been used for party elections and others at the local and statewide level. Learn more at: https://starvoting.org/case_studies
- To set up a STAR election yourself go to: <https://star.vote>

Learn more at: starvoting.org and equal.vote

