

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 (aka the 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.
- Voters give their favorite(s) 5 stars, their last choice(s) 0 stars, and score other candidates as desired. You can score candidates equally if you don't have a preference, and scores show how much or how little you support each option.
- The two highest scoring candidates are finalists and your vote goes to the finalist you scored higher. The finalist with the most votes wins.

What are the two petitions?

- **STAR Voting for Eugene.** If adopted, Eugene would skip the primary and STAR Voting would be used in November for all local elections.
- **STAR Voting for Oregon.** If adopted, STAR Voting would become the default voting method for all Oregon elections, including local, statewide, federal, and presidential elections. By default, nonpartisan elections would skip the primary.
- STAR Voting for Oregon does **not** override jurisdictions like Benton County and Multnomah County that have decided to use other alternative voting methods.
- **Wasn't STAR Voting on the ballot before?** STAR Voting was on the ballot for Lane County in 2018. It almost passed, but a closer look at the results showed that Eugene voters voted YES by 54%. We're excited to try again and take this over the finish line!

How many verified signatures are needed?

- STAR Voting for Eugene needs 9,689 signatures by October 2nd, 2023.
- STAR Voting for Oregon needs 120,413 signatures by July 5th, 2024.

Is STAR Voting vulnerable to strategic voting?

- No. STAR Voting was invented to ensure that voters can and should vote their conscience. With STAR Voting, honesty is the best policy.
- In STAR, you should follow the instructions and give your favorite or favorite(s) 5 stars, your last choice(s) 0 stars, and show your honest preference order.
- Under the current system, if you don't vote for a frontrunner, you risk wasting your vote, and with RCV, ranking your favorite 1st can actually backfire in close elections.

What are the benefits of eliminating unnecessary primary elections?

- STAR Voting is highly accurate with any number of candidates in the race, so there's no need for a primary for nonpartisan elections in most cases.
- Oregon primaries generally have lower turnout than general elections, which means they aren't as representative as they could be.
- Eliminating unnecessary primaries makes running for office more accessible and affordable, shortens the campaign season, and saves taxpayers money.

Why not just go with Ranked Choice (RCV?)

- STAR Voting was invented to go further to deliver on the goals of RCV, while addressing valid concerns and known issues with RCV.
- In RCV, simple voter errors can invalidate your ballot. In STAR, scoring candidates equally is allowed and voters can vote however they want, so this is a non-issue.
- In RCV, not all rankings given are actually counted, and ignoring this ballot data leads to serious issues in competitive elections. STAR Voting is more accurate because all ballot data is counted and every ballot is included in the deciding round.
- STAR Voting is tallied in two rounds only, so it's simpler and more transparent, more resistant to strategy, and easier to officiate and audit.
- STAR Voting is tallied using addition so it can be tallied quickly and easily at the local level and it scales well, while RCV requires centralized tabulation, making it less secure, creating logistical and legal issues, and causing significant delays before results can be reported.

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

- If you have a preference between candidates, you should show it, but regardless, the scores you give will always help your favorites advance.
- If you give both finalists the same score it will be counted as a vote of no-preference between those two. You like or dislike them equally.
- The ability to give candidates equal support, if desired, is critical for getting accurate results when there are many candidates in a race..

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

- STAR Voting is adaptable and can be used for multi-winner races as well. There is a proportional representation version, called Proportional STAR Voting, that jurisdictions could adopt in the future if desired.

Would STAR Voting cost money or save money?

- STAR Voting would simplify and streamline our elections processes, and would save money in the long run. STAR Voting is compatible with our existing elections infrastructure and wouldn't require new equipment.
- Initial transition costs would likely be recouped within the first few election cycles.
- The main upfront costs would include voter education, software upgrades, and one-time certification costs.

Where has STAR Voting been used for elections to date?

- STAR Voting is being used increasingly frequently in both the public and private sector, including for Oregon political party elections at the local and statewide levels.
- To set up a STAR election or try it for yourself, go to star.vote

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

- Yes! Your ballot is your one vote and your one vote goes to the finalist you prefer.
- The legal definition of One-Person-One-Vote is an Equally-Weighted Vote. STAR Voting ensures that all votes are equally powerful no matter how many candidates you have on your side and whether or not your favorite can win.
- STAR Voting is not only fully constitutional in Oregon, but it's constitutional and legally viable all over the country.

Learn more at starvoting.org and equal.vote or info@equal.vote