

# Steps in electing a U.S. President

The president is elected every four years and can serve for only two terms. According to the U.S. Constitution, the president must be a native-born citizen of at least 35 years of age and a resident for at least 14 years



**1 Nomination:** Candidates campaign in primaries and caucuses to win their party's appointment at National Conventions



**Jul:** Conventions back **Donald Trump** (right) as Republican presidential nominee and **Mike Pence** (inset right) as his running mate; **Hillary Clinton** (left) as Democratic nominee and **Tim Kaine** (inset left) as candidate for vice president

**2 Sep 5, Labor Day:** Final eight-week dash kicks off on **Labor Day**. In each of past four elections 22 states have consistently voted Republican and 18 have voted Democrat



**Swing-state war:** Campaign to win remaining 10 battleground states will be backed up with unrelenting radio and TV adverts. **Last election aired 1.1 million TV ads costing \$698.8m**

**3 Nov 8, Election Day:** President is not chosen directly by voters but by **Electoral College**



Winner of **popular vote** takes all Electoral College votes in each state apart from Maine\* and Nebraska\*

**4 Dec 19, Electoral College:** President and Vice President formally elected by body of 538 electors – candidate with 270 electoral votes wins. Electors equal to total membership of Congress – 435 Representatives, 100 Senators, plus three electors from District of Columbia



**6 Jan 20:** President-elect takes **Oath of Office** and becomes **President of the United States**



**5 Jan 6, 2017:** Congress meets in joint session to count electoral votes. If no candidate wins 270 majority, House of Representatives elects President by majority vote. Senate elects Vice President

\*votes split between districts and state-wide ballot  
Sources: Center for Responsive Politics, Wesleyan University