

# MAKE YOUR VOTE COUNT

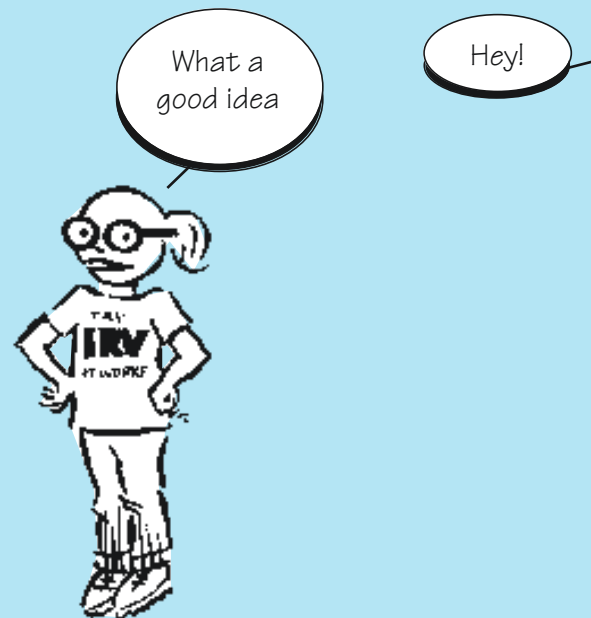
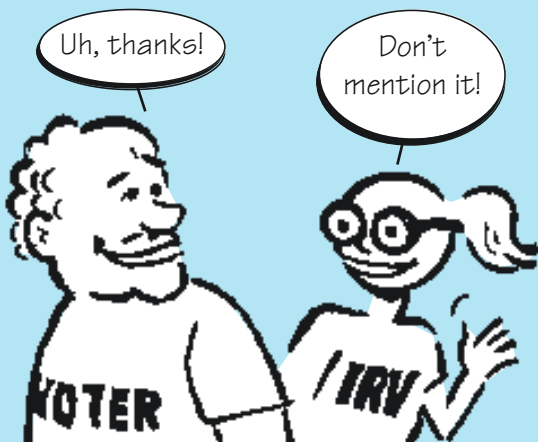
## What You Can Do

- ❑ If your city uses runoffs, talk to city council members about saving the cost of runoff elections.
- ❑ Use IRV for elections in your organization, school or company.
- ❑ Work with local officials to ensure that new voting equipment is compatible with ranked-choice ballots.
- ❑ Ask your state representatives to introduce or support IRV legislation. A dozen states did so in 2001.
- ❑ Conduct demonstration IRV elections using paper ballots or the Internet.
- ❑ Contact us for assistance and join CVD by sending \$15 to:

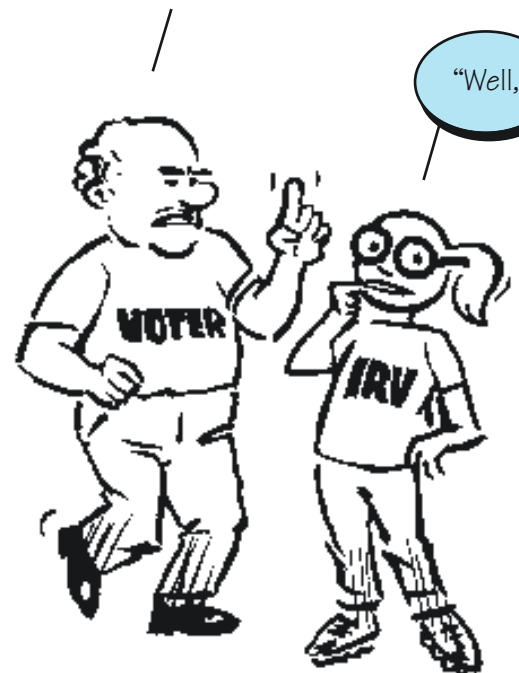


### Center for Voting and Democracy

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"Whaddya mean 'make my vote count?'"  
It already counts – doesn't it?"



If a candidate wins with less than 50%, then the majority of voters split their votes between two or more candidates,

... And Their Votes Didn't Count.

If you're not happy with any of the candidates and vote for the "lesser of two evils" to avoid something worse, then

... Your Vote Didn't Count  
... For Much.

If an independent or third party candidate "spoils" the race and swings it to the major party candidate you don't like, then

... Your Vote Didn't Count.

Bill Clinton and Richard Nixon both won elections with less than 45% of the vote. Three governors were elected with less than 38% in 1994. Several members of Congress won primary elections with under 25% of the vote. When powerful offices can be won with such low percentages, there's no guarantee of majority rule.



"OK, OK – so what can we do to make sure the majority rules?"



"Well ... it's good that you asked."

We could hold a second runoff election, but that means **taxpayers have to pay for a second election**, voters have to vote a second time, and candidates have to raise and spend more money.

Ouch, who wants to pay for all that?

What we need is a way to ensure **majority rule in a single election**.

Yeah, so we save tax dollars.

We need a system that allows you to vote for the candidate you like without helping to elect the one you don't.

Yeah, no more spoilers.

We need a system that encourages **positive campaigning and coalition building**.

Yeah, something that brings us together, rather than tears us apart.

Right on! What we need is **INSTANT RUNOFF VOTING**.



### Why instant runoff voting?

**IRV is better than runoff elections because it:**

- Saves the cost of a separate runoff election (\$10 million in New York City alone)
- Eliminates the problem of lower voter turnout in the runoff
- Reduces the influence of special interest cash in the runoff

**IRV is better than plurality (non-majority) elections because it:**

- Ensures winners have majority support
- Eliminates the problem of "spoiler" candidates swinging the outcome of the election
- Encourages positive campaigning and coalition building

### Instant runoff voting is a proven system.

It has been used for over 80 years to elect the Australian House of Representatives and the president of Ireland. The first-ever election of the mayor of London used IRV. Robert's Rules of Order recommends the system, called preferential voting, and many states, counties and cities in this country are considering it.

### Instant runoff voting gives all voters one vote.

It works like a two-round runoff. If your favorite candidate doesn't make the second round, you have to choose among the remaining candidates. If your candidate does make the second round, you continue to support that candidate. But with the instant runoff this all happens in one election.

### Instant runoffs are easy for the voter.

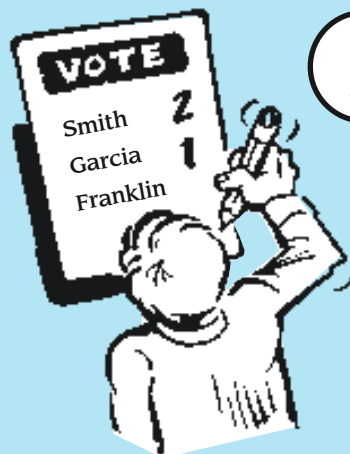
The voter simply ranks one or more candidates in order of choice. It's like ordering ice cream. "If I can't have mocha fudge, I'll settle for chocolate."

### IRV is constitutional.

Courts have ruled that instant runoff voting is a constitutional voting system that upholds the principles of one person/one vote and majority rule. Visit our website, [www.fairvote.org](http://www.fairvote.org), to learn more about instant runoff voting.



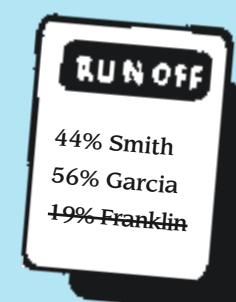
## How Instant Runoffs Work ... It's as Easy as 1-2-3.



**1** You rank candidates in order of choice, indicating both your favorite candidate as well as your runoff choices. If your first choice gets eliminated, your vote counts for your second choice.



**2** If a candidate receives a majority of first choices, she or he wins. In this example, no one has a majority. But voters don't need to return to the polls because they have already picked their runoff choices. The last place candidate, Franklin in this example, is eliminated and ...



**3** ... the INSTANT RUNOFF occurs. Your vote counts for your favorite candidate who is still in the race. In this example, 56% of all voters ranked Garcia ahead of Smith, so Garcia wins. If we hadn't used instant runoff voting, then Smith would have won with 41% of the vote, even though the majority preferred Garcia.