

The electoral system you use directly impacts the representation you get.



In California, ranked choice voting (RCV), also known as instant runoff voting, is used in local elections in Berkeley, Oakland, San Francisco, and San Leandro. Nationally, there are nearly 30 states that have legislation to enact RCV or have cities using RCV.

## By giving voters the power to rank their candidates in order of preference, ranked choice voting...

- **Promotes fairness** by ensuring winners earn a majority of the vote and are more broadly representative.
- **Fosters civil elections** by incentivizing inclusive campaigns and coalition building.
- **Minimizes strategic voting, vote splitting, and the spoiler effect** because you always get to vote your favorite first without fear you may divide the community and help elect the candidate you like the least.
- **Reduces costs** by eliminating runoff elections, which saves administrative and campaign finance needs.
- **Supports greater voter participation** because every vote counts in a single high turnout, more representative election.

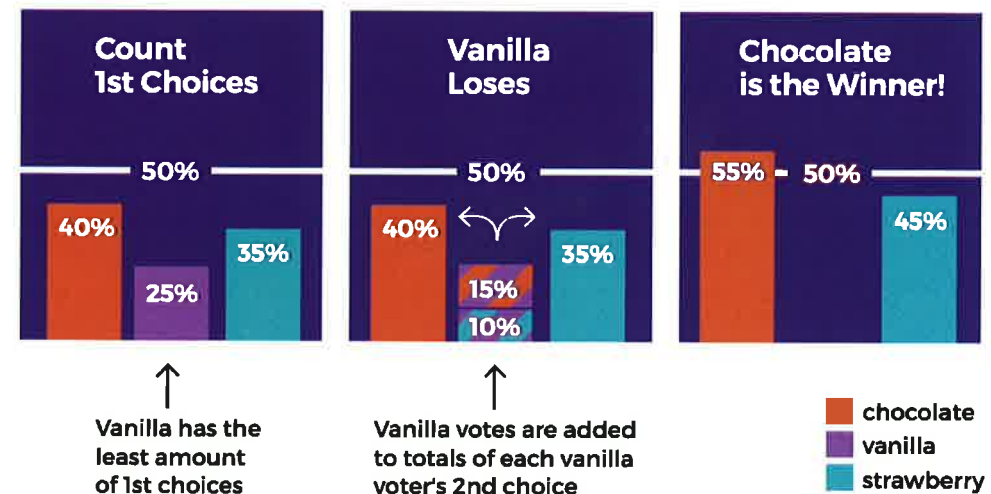
# FairVote CALIFORNIA

Ranked choice voting gives voters more choice and a stronger voice in our elections. If your favorite candidate can't win, your vote counts for your next choice.

	1st choice	2nd choice	3rd choice
Candidate A	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 3
Candidate B	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/>
Candidate C	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 3

## Rank candidates in order of choice.

**Everyone has one vote.** Ranking your favorite candidate more than once will not help them. Also, indicating only one choice or “bullet voting” does not help your favorite candidate because a 2nd choice only counts if your 1st choice is eliminated.



GCC/IBT 040-M

## RANKED CHOICE VOTING EASY AS 1, 2, 3

### Why Ranked Choice Voting? (RCV)

RCV gives voters the power to rank candidates. In addition to your 1st choice, you are able to select a 2nd and 3rd choice as backups. RCV gives voters more voice and greater choice.

- You don't need to vote twice. There is no primary or runoff election, which would mean two separate elections and the risk of lower voter turnout. Instead, you get a winner in a single election when most people vote.
- You always get to vote your favorite first. This allows you to vote for your true preference based on your hopes and values, instead of the fear of "splitting the vote" among candidates you like from the same community.

### How to Vote with a Ranked Choice Ballot

The diagram illustrates a Ranked Choice Voting ballot with three columns: 1. FIRST CHOICE, 2. SECOND CHOICE, and 3. THIRD CHOICE. Each column lists five candidates: OCEAN, MOUNTAIN, LAKE, FOREST, and BEACH. Arrows indicate the ranking process. Red circles highlight the 'LAKE' candidate in the first column, the 'FOREST' candidate in the second column, and the 'OCEAN' candidate in the third column. Red arrows point to the first column, and blue arrows point to the second and third columns.

**1.** Select your preferred candidate and fill in the arrow next to the candidate's name in the 1<sup>st</sup> column.

**2.** Indicate your 2<sup>nd</sup> choice. Your ballot will count for this candidate if (and only if) your 1<sup>st</sup> choice loses. It doesn't help your 1<sup>st</sup> choice candidate to rank them more than once or to not rank anyone else.

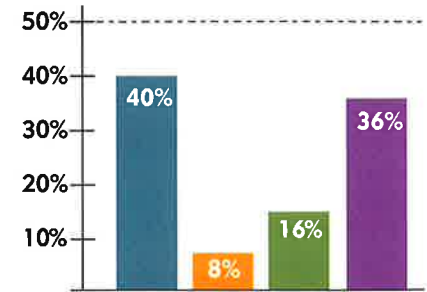
**3.** Rank a 3<sup>rd</sup> choice. Your ballot will count for this candidate only if your 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> choices lose.

## How to Count RCV Ballots

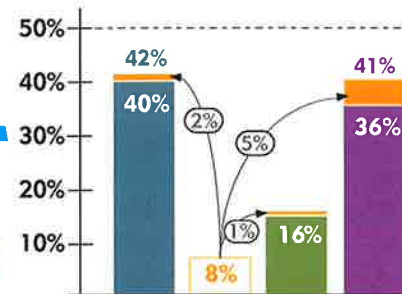
Here's how we count RCV ballots in a single-seat race.

step 1

All 1<sup>st</sup> choices on the ballots are counted. Did a candidate receive 50%+1 votes? If yes, then they win.



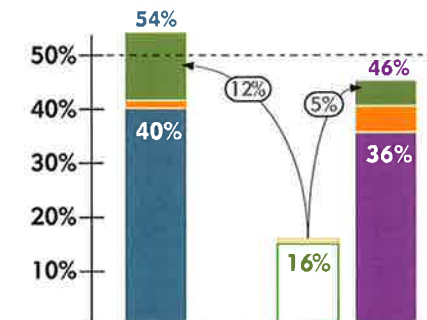
step 2



If not, the candidate with the fewest 1<sup>st</sup> choices is defeated. The ballots for that candidate go to those voters' 2<sup>nd</sup> choices. (Note: ONLY the defeated candidate's ballots go to their next choice. Ballots cast for all other candidates continue to count for those candidates.)

step 3

Did a candidate receive 50%+1 votes? If yes, then they win. If not, repeat Step 2.



Keep going until a candidate reaches 50%+1 votes. A majority can also be reached when there are only two candidates in a race.

A candidate will win in the first round if they earn a majority of first choices. A candidate will win in a later round if they earn a majority after adding in the votes they have earned from supporters of losing candidates.

### THINGS TO REMEMBER:

- Everyone has 1 vote. Ranking your favorite candidate more than once will not help them because your vote will only be counted once for that candidate.
- Indicating only one choice or "bullet voting," does not help your favorite candidate because a 2<sup>nd</sup> choice only counts if your 1<sup>st</sup> choice is eliminated.