

HOW VOTING STAYS FAIR

No one counts the votes alone.

An election is how a whole country makes a big choice together – by counting everybody's vote.

The secret to keeping it fair is simple: **lots of people check each other's work.**

1 A VOTE'S JOURNEY

- 1 **You choose.** A grown-up picks who they want. Their choice is private – nobody peeks.
- 2 **It's on paper.** Most votes leave paper you can see and check. A computer far away can't change paper.
- 3 **Locked up safe.** Papers go in sealed boxes – like a jar taped shut, so you'd notice if it opened.
- 4 **Lots of people count.** Machines help, but people from different teams watch to keep it right.
- 5 **The numbers must match.** How many people voted has to equal how many votes there are.
- 6 **Checked again by hand.** People re-count a big pile of papers by hand to be sure the machines were right.

2 SO MANY HELPERS

 **The paper stays.** Real votes are on paper, so anyone can go back and check. You can't secretly erase paper.

 **Rival teams watch.** People who want different sides to win share the room – each hoping to catch the other. So they watch closely.

 **Sealed boxes & matching math.** Broken seals show instantly, and the number of voters must equal the number of votes.

 **The hand re-count & judges.** Humans re-count by hand, and anyone with real proof can show a judge.

To cheat, you'd have to fool the paper, the rival teams, the seals, the matching math, the hand re-count, AND a judge – all at once. That's why big cheating almost never happens, and little mistakes get caught.

3 BE A TRUTH DETECTIVE

QUESTION 1

Who said it?

A real election office – or a stranger who wants clicks?

QUESTION 2

How do they know?

Real proof – or just a scary picture?

QUESTION 3

Can I check it?

An official .gov site, or a grown-up you trust.

 **Detective's secret:** When something gives you a BIG feeling – really scared, super mad, or "WOW I have to share this!" – that feeling is your signal to **slow down** and ask your three questions first. A photo or video by itself is not proof.

• THE NOW OF YOU PAGE •

You already have what you need.

You don't have to know everything to be smart. Being smart is being brave enough to ask, "*How do I know that's true?*" When the world feels loud and everyone's sure – you can stop, breathe, and decide for yourself, gently and carefully.

Take a slow breath. You are calm. You are curious. You are enough – right now.

Checking what's true, being fair, and staying kind while you do it is one of the strongest things a person can do – and it already belongs to you.

– from The Now of YOU, for every young truth-seeker



SCAN TO OPEN

For grown-ups & teachers: Strictly nonpartisan – teaches how elections are secured and how to check any claim, not who to trust or how to vote. Pairs with the full teen/adult guide, TALLY. Official sources: [vote.gov](https://www.vote.gov) • [usa.gov/state-election-office](https://www.usa.gov/state-election-office) • [eac.gov](https://www.eac.gov). Marks subject to clearance (McAuliffe / Bill Olson). Not legal advice. • Born Between 2 Generals • Family Fact Guides