

Host a Ballot Preview Party.

Help your group get ready and vote smart.

Every community has its own rhythm, values, and way of taking care of each other. Voting is part of that. A Ballot Preview Party is a simple way to bring your people together, make sense of what's on the ballot, and head to the polls feeling ready. No pressure. No politics. Just your community, doing what it does best.

WHY IT WORKS

Most people haven't seen their ballot until they're standing in the voting booth. Walking through it together takes the mystery -- and the anxiety -- out of voting. It's educational, communal, and completely nonpartisan, which means everyone leaves feeling more confident and prepared.

BEFORE THE PARTY

Keep it simple. Here's what you need:

- A date (aim for 1-2 weeks before Election Day)
- A space that feels like yours -- a community room, place of worship, a neighbor's backyard, wherever your group already gathers
- Food that fits your crew (snacks, a potluck, whatever brings people to the table)
- QR codes linking to BallotReady (ballotready.org) so everyone can pull up their sample ballot
- A screen to walk through the tools together (optional but helpful)
- A facilitator to welcome people and keep things on track

SET THE GROUND RULES

Before you dive in, set the tone:

- This is a no-debate zone. We're here to understand the ballot, not argue about it.
- All questions are good questions. There's no such thing as a dumb one.
- Respect that everyone in the room may vote differently -- and that's ok.
- Stick to official, nonpartisan sources. If you're not sure, look it up together.
- The facilitator has the final word on keeping things moving and neutral.

DURING THE PARTY

Here's a simple flow:

1. **Welcome (5 min):** Remind your group why you're here. Your community's voice matters.
2. **Review your ballot (15-20 min):** Walk through each race and measure together. What is it? What does it do? Where can you learn more? If there's a language barrier in your group, pair people up.
3. **Make your voting plan (10 min):** When are you voting? How are you getting there? Write it down. Better yet, go together.
4. **Wrap up + celebrate (5 min):** This is a tradition worth repeating. Make it feel like one.

AFTER THE PARTY

Send a quick follow-up with links to official voter resources. Remind everyone of key deadlines. Check in on Election Day. Communities that vote together, stay together.

PRO TIPS

- Ground it in your group's values. Remind people why civic participation matters to who you are as a community.
- First time hosting? Keep it to 5-10 people. You can always go bigger -- and make it an annual tradition.
- Not sure who should facilitate? Pick someone your group already trusts and respects.

Every community has a voice. This is how you use it.

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