

# STRATEGY GUIDE

*How scoring really works, how to play each phase, and the habits that win — and lose — close elections.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Win the Presidency rewards two things: winning states, and **multiplying** those wins through bonuses. After the 36th state is won, whoever holds the most total electoral votes takes the presidency — just as most real elections are called once the 36th state is announced.

This guide starts with how scoring works, then walks through how to play each phase, choose your die, manage cash, and sidestep the mistakes that lose close games.

## HOW SCORING WORKS

Every state has a fixed electoral-vote (EV) value. You win states through **auctions** and **campaign-card challenges**; when you win a state, its EV are yours. Win the auction for Missouri (10 EV) and those 10 votes are now in your column.

That is the natural way to score. The players who actually win, though, are the ones who multiply their votes through the three bonus levers below.

## SWING STATES — DOUBLE VALUE

A set of swing states is designated during setup. Win one and you score **double** its electoral votes. A swing state worth 10 EV banks you 20. Because everyone can see them, swing states draw fierce, expensive bidding.

**Strategy.** Let rivals bleed cash fighting over swing states early, then snipe one or two late with the money you saved.

## THE HOME REGION BONUS

Your home state is set during setup, and it anchors your most reliable bonus. Win states that connect into a contiguous block with your home state and you earn a lump-sum bonus on top of each state's value.

**Example.** Your home state is Kentucky. You win Missouri, which shares a border with Kentucky. Then you win Arkansas, which touches *both* Kentucky and Missouri. Those three connected states form a home region worth **+15 bonus EV**.

### Regional bonus scale

- 3 states (home + 2 connected) **+15** bonus EV

- 4 states **+25** bonus EV
- 5 states **+35** bonus EV
- 6 states **+45** bonus EV

Each state added after the core must connect to **two** states already in your region. Expand early, before opponents block the corridors out of your home state.

## BLOCKING & THE SIEGE PENALTY

You can damage a rival's biggest bonus without building anything yourself. Whenever a state **bordering an opponent's home state** comes up for auction, bid aggressively — if you win it, that opponent's regional bonus is permanently reduced by **10 EV**. This is the **Home Region Siege Penalty**, and a well-timed siege can swing a close game.

## STRATEGY BY PHASE

### Early game — the board is open

- Borders are uncontested, so your regional cluster grows fastest now.
- Everyone is flush, so swing-state bidding wars are expensive — let others overpay.
- **Priority:** expand out from your home state and grab easy states opportunistically.

### Mid game — borders harden

- Regions get harder to extend as contested borders multiply.
- Some swing states are claimed; others sit orphaned and affordable.
- **Priority:** assess your strongest path honestly. If your region is blocked, pivot to swing states or to blocking opponents.

### Late game — positions lock

- Regions are mostly set — what you have is largely what you'll score.
- Swing states decide close games.
- **Priority:** play defense. Deny opponents their next bonus state and contest swing states when the margin is tight.

## CHOOSING YOUR MOVE

Each turn you choose how to act: **move your pawn** 1–2 spaces onto an unclaimed state, or **use the result of a die**. Make the choice deliberately every turn — don't default.

### Move your pawn when

- You can land next to your regional cluster and extend it.
- You want to reposition for stronger options next turn.

### Take a die result when

- Moving would only land you on a contested or low-value state.

- The roll lets you trigger an auction for a state you need elsewhere on the board.
- A Campaign Card or Super Tuesday outcome is worth more to you than a step on the map.

## MANAGING YOUR CASH

Each player starts with six random dollar cards (the highest denominations are set aside) — roughly **\$45M** on average. Cash is a weapon; spend it when it buys real position, not territory for its own sake.

- Income comes from cash outcomes, card draws, and the bank's payout when an opponent wins an auction you triggered.
- Most players peak in cash mid-game, then deplete toward the end.
- Bidding runs hot early, calculated mid-game, and desperate late.

**The patient play:** let opponents drain each other in early bidding wars, bank your cash, and strike when they're weak.

## COMMON MISTAKES

1. **Building a loose region.** States that touch at only one point don't score — every state after the core must link two region members. Check connections before you bid.
2. **Tunnel vision on one plan.** Pursue your strongest path, but take opportunistic wins elsewhere and stay ready to pivot.
3. **Overbidding early.** Spending \$40M to win a \$10M state in round two is how you go broke. Let others overpay; cash is power late.
4. **Forgetting to block.** Track every opponent's progress — a timely siege or challenge can cost them more than a win earns you.
5. **Lazy die choice.** Evaluate both options every turn and ask what each one actually gets you.

## ENDGAME CHECKLIST

- How many states are in my home region — and can I add one more tier of bonus?
- Is any opponent close to a big regional bonus? Can I siege a border state to cut it?
- Which swing states are still in play, and can I afford to contest them?

*Close games are decided by who makes the best decisions over the final handful of states.*