

WIN THE PRESIDENCY

Official Rulebook

For 3–4 Players | Ages 12+ | ~50–55 Minutes

Win the Presidency is a strategy game of trivia, bidding, and geographic positioning. Players campaign across the United States, winning states through auctions and outmaneuvering opponents with Campaign Cards. The player who controls the most electoral votes when the 33rd state is won takes the presidency.

Components

Component	Details
50 State Cards	One per US state. Shows electoral votes (EV) and abbreviation.
39 Campaign Cards	Action, Reactive, and Economy cards used for claiming states, attacks, defense, and cash.
Dollar Cards	A 49-card campaign-currency deck totaling \$650M, in denominations from \$2.5M to \$50M.
4 Player Pawns	One per player, in four colors. Marks your position on the board.
Swing State Tokens	Mark the four swing states on the board.
Trivia Card Deck	Sorted by category: History & Entertainment, Geography & Climate, Food & Entertainment, Wordplay, and Above or Below.
Game Board	Hex-based map of the United States.

Setup

1. Prepare the Dollar Cards

The dollar deck has 49 cards totaling \$650M. Remove the \$30M, \$40M, and \$50M cards and set them aside. Shuffle the remaining sub-\$30M cards (43 cards) and deal 5 face-down to each player as their starting campaign fund. Shuffle the high-denomination cards back into the deck and place it in the center as the bank draw pile. Card counts are public; values stay secret.

Denomination	Qty	Role
\$2.5M	6	Exact \$2.5M raises and making change
\$5M	10	Workhorse bids
\$10M	12	Workhorse bids
\$15M	8	Workhorse bids
\$20M	6	Mid-tier / contested states
\$25M	3	Mid-tier / contested states
\$30M	2	Whale — held out of the opening deal
\$40M	1	Whale — held out of the opening deal
\$50M	1	Whale — held out of the opening deal

2. Determine Player Order and Game End

The player whose birthday is closest to the next Presidential Election Day goes first. The default game end is when the 36th state is won (home states count toward the 36). Why 36? Networks call the race for the victor around when the 36th state (plus or minus a couple) is called. Optionally, choose a lower count to shorten the game.

3. Select Swing States

Select the four swing states for the game. Each player takes a turn in order:

1. Shuffle the state deck.
2. Draw 4 random cards.
3. Choose one of them as a swing state; return the other three.
4. Rotate clockwise and repeat until all 4 swing states are chosen.

Place swing state tokens on the board. Swing states are unclaimed at the start and score double their face electoral votes.

4. Select Home States

Each player selects a home state using the same draw-and-keep process. Your home state sets your starting pawn position, is yours from the start (no auction), and scores its face EV automatically. Choose a central state away from opponents — regional blocks of adjacent states are where the bonus points live.

5. Prepare the Campaign Deck

The Campaign Deck has 39 cards. Deal 1 card to each player from the 29 Action cards only (Debate, Open State, October Surprise, Recount, Veto). Shuffle everything else — including all 4 Super Tuesday cards and all 6 Economy (Instant Cash) cards — into one face-down draw deck in the center. There is no hand limit. Played cards recycle: reshuffle the discard pile into a new draw deck whenever the deck runs out.

On Your Turn

Each turn has two phases: an optional card play, then one main action.

Phase 1: Play an Action Card (Optional)

Before taking your main action, you may play up to one Action card from your hand — Debate, Open State, Super Tuesday, October Surprise, or Recount. This is free and does not use up your main action.

Phase 2: Take One Main Action

Then choose exactly one of the following:

1. Move & Auction — move your pawn 1 or 2 spaces to an unclaimed state, then trigger a standard auction for that state. Your pawn stays there whether or not you win.
2. Take a Campaign Card — draw the top card of the Campaign Deck. Economy (Instant Cash) cards resolve immediately; all other cards go to your hand.
3. Take a Cash Card — draw 2 dollar cards into your hand (values secret).

The game ends the instant the 36th state is claimed. Finish any auction in progress, then score.

Auctions

All auctions except Super Tuesday follow four phases: Trivia, Adjacency Bonus, Bidding, and Payment.

Phase 1: Trivia

The initiating player chooses a difficulty and category. The player to their left draws a card and reads the question. You have 30 seconds to answer.

Difficulty	Correct	Incorrect
Easy	+\$5M bidding credit	Auction stops unless a challenge succeeds
Hard	+\$15M bidding credit	Auction stops unless a challenge succeeds

The Trivia Gate. If the initiating player misses the trivia question, the auction does not proceed unless a challenge succeeds.

- Challenge: the first opponent to call “Challenge” gets one attempt at the same question. If correct, the auction proceeds and the challenger earns the trivia bonus as bidding credit for this auction only. If incorrect, the challenger pays the initiator \$5M (Easy) or \$10M (Hard).

- If no challenge succeeds — the challenger also misses, or no one challenges — the auction is cancelled, and the initiating player draws one cash card as consolation.
- Binary (two-answer) questions cannot be challenged.

Note: Some questions have no single definitive answer. Players determine the answer using online sources; majority rules.

Phase 2: Adjacency Bonus

Every bidder earns bidding credit for states they already own that border the auctioned state: +\$5M per bordering state, up to a maximum of \$15M.

Owned bordering states	Bonus
1	+\$5M
2	+\$10M
3 or more	+\$15M (maximum)

Example: You own Utah and Wyoming, both bordering Colorado, so you receive +\$10M when bidding on Colorado.

Phase 3: Bidding

1. The initiating player opens bidding at a minimum of \$5M.
2. Bidding proceeds clockwise. Each player may bid or pass.
3. Each new bid must exceed the previous bid by at least \$2.5M.
4. Once you pass, you cannot re-enter that auction.
5. The last remaining bidder wins the state.

Phase 4: Payment

Amount Owed = Winning Bid – Trivia Bonus – Adjacency Bonus.

Pay in dollar cards. If you cannot pay the exact amount, you must overpay — no change is given. If you cannot pay at all, you forfeit and the auction restarts without you. Trivia and adjacency credits apply to this auction only and are never kept as cash.

Where Payments Go

Auction Type	Payment Goes To
Move & Auction (standard)	The bank
Open State card	The bank
October Surprise or Recount	The current owner (or the bank if the owner wins it back)
Super Tuesday	The bank

The winner places the state card face-up in front of them. It remains there for the rest of the game unless lost via an October Surprise or Recount card.

Super Tuesday

Super Tuesday is an Action card. When it is played, conduct a blind auction for 3 mystery states:

1. Shuffle all unclaimed state cards face-down.
2. Draw 3 and place them face-down in the center of the table.
3. Each player secretly writes one sealed bid.
4. All players reveal their bids simultaneously, then flip the 3 states face-up.
5. The highest total bid wins all 3 states and pays the bank. On a tie, the tied players rebid.

Super Tuesday has no Trivia or Adjacency phase — it is a pure blind bid.

Campaign Cards

The Campaign Deck contains 39 cards. Draw campaign cards with the “Take a Campaign Card” action. Hold Action and Reactive cards until played; Economy cards resolve the moment they are drawn.

Economy Cards (Instant) — Resolve Immediately When Drawn

Card	Count	Effect
Devon Tusk	2	A megadonor backs your campaign: gain cash from the bank. (Amount to be finalized.)
VP Gaffe	4	Your rivals' running mate stumbles: collect cash from other players. (Amount, and whether from one opponent or all, to be finalized.)

Action Cards — Play One (Optional) at the Start of Your Turn

Card	Count	Effect
October Surprise	6	Trigger a standard auction for any opponent-owned state that is NOT their home and NOT a swing state. Winner pays the current owner (or the bank if the owner wins). The owner may play Veto to block.
Recount	3	Trigger a standard auction for any opponent-owned state, including swing states. Winner pays the current owner (or the bank if the owner wins). The owner may play Veto to block.
Debate	8	Trigger a Debate for any unclaimed state. All players compete; the winner claims the state free. Cannot be blocked by Veto. See Debate Rules.
Open State	8	Force a standard auction on any unclaimed state of your choice, anywhere on the board. Standard trivia and auction rules apply; payment goes to the bank.
Super Tuesday	4	Conduct a Super Tuesday blind auction (see above). Not dealt in the opening hand.

Reactive Cards — Play Anytime to Interrupt

Card	Count	Effect
Veto	4	Cancel an October Surprise or Recount targeting one of your states. Play it when the attack is declared; the attack is cancelled and the attacker's card is discarded.

Debate Rules

When a Debate card is played, all players (including the card player) compete in a trivia showdown. No money is involved; trivia and adjacency bonuses do not apply.

How a Debate Plays Out

1. The card player names any unclaimed state on the board.
2. The card player chooses a trivia category for the other players. That assignment holds for the entire Debate.
3. The player to the left selects a Hard question from the chosen category and reads it. All players have 30 seconds to respond.

Elimination Rounds

Situation	Result
Round 1 — exactly one contestant correct	That contestant wins the state immediately.
Round 1 — two or more correct	Incorrect contestants are eliminated. Survivors move to the Easy category.
Round 1 — none correct	No one is eliminated. Repeat the round at Easy difficulty. All subsequent rounds are Easy.

Situation	Result
Three consecutive rounds with no correct answers	The Debate ends with no winner.

End Game and Scoring

Game End Trigger

The game ends immediately when the 36th state has been won by any player. Complete the current auction if one is in progress, then score.

Scoring

Add the total electoral votes of every state you own, then add your Regional Bonus and subtract your Siege Penalty. The player with the most electoral votes wins the presidency.

State Type	Electoral Vote Value
Standard state	Face value
Swing state	Face value $\times$ 2

Your home state scores its face value automatically.

Regional Bonus

Your home state lets you build a contiguous territorial region for bonus electoral votes. Only one region may exist per player, and it must remain physically connected by shared hexagon sides.

Forming the 3-State Core (+15 EV). To activate regional scoring, control your home state plus two additional states that both border your home state and border each other. This interconnected 3-state cluster earns a +15 EV Regional Bonus.

Expanding Your Region. After forming the core, add states one at a time. Every state added after the core must share a side with at least TWO states already in your region. Bordering only your home state is not enough — a state connected to your region at just one point does not qualify.

Region Size	Bonus
3 states (Home + 2)	+15 EV
4 states	+25 EV
5 states	+35 EV
6 or more states	+45 EV (maximum)

Maximum Regional Bonus: +45 EV. States beyond the sixth still count their face value but add no further Regional Bonus.

Example: Your home state is Ohio. Indiana and West Virginia each border Ohio and border each other, forming the 3-state core (+15 EV). Add Kentucky (borders both Indiana and West Virginia) and Tennessee (borders both Kentucky and West Virginia) for a 5-state region worth +35 EV.

The Regional Bonus is a lump-sum addition to your score at game end. It does not change the individual EV value of any state in the region.

Home Region Siege Penalty

Each state adjacent to your home state that an opponent owns at game end reduces your Regional Bonus by 10 EV, to a minimum of zero.

Example: Your region earns a +45 EV Regional Bonus, but opponents own two states adjacent to your home state. Your Regional Bonus is reduced by 20 EV to +25 EV.

Quick Reference

Campaign Deck Summary

Card	Count	Type	Timing
Devon Tusk	2	Economy (Instant)	Resolve when drawn
VP Gaffe	4	Economy (Instant)	Resolve when drawn
October Surprise	6	Action	Start of your turn (optional)
Recount	3	Action	Start of your turn (optional)
Debate	8	Action	Start of your turn (optional)
Open State	8	Action	Start of your turn (optional)
Super Tuesday	4	Action	Start of turn (optional); not dealt at start
Veto	4	Reactive	Anytime, to block October Surprise or Recount
TOTAL	39		

Auction Quick Reference

- Trivia bonus: Easy +\$5M, Hard +\$15M (bidding credit only). Miss the question and the auction stops unless a challenge succeeds; if it doesn't, the initiating player draws one cash card as consolation.
- Adjacency bonus: +\$5M per bordering state you own, maximum \$15M.
- Bidding: open at \$5M, raise by \$2.5M. No change is given on payment. No stipend.