Getting Oriented

Welcome to the second What to Expect When You're Electing, a series created to help you navigate Canada's federal election. This week: what to consider when deciding who to vote for.

Getting Oriented

LEARN ABOUT:

1. Political party platforms
2. Party leader
3. Local candidates
4. Past performance of government

Getting Started

Getting Informed

Getting to the Polls

Getting Involved

Getting Engaged

Getting into Discussions

Presented by

The Samara Centre
for Democracy

Processing

Staying

Getting Oriented

Okay, let's start from the top. What are party platforms?

Platforms present a plan for what a party hopes to do based on what it knows today. But who do you want leading the country when the unexpected happens? One of the leaders will become prime minister and represent Canada on the world stage, and the others will take up the important job of reviewing federal laws and spending plans.

If platforms tell us what a party will do if elected, why should I care about party leaders?

Local candidates matter too. As we described in our first explainer, your vote goes towards electing your MP, who represents you in the House of Commons. Your MP votes on laws, reviews spending plans, and contributes towards running the country. Your MP can also raise local issues to the federal government and help constituents if they have difficulty accessing federal government services (like employment insurance, veterans’ benefits, or immigration services).

Elections give you a chance to decide whether the party, leader, and local candidate who won the last election did a good job representing your interests and governed the country well. If they did, you may want to vote for them. If they didn’t, you have the chance to vote for someone else.

Then why bother learning about the local candidate running in my constituency?

What should I consider when deciding who to vote for?

This may seem like a lot, but once you start to learn more, you’ll know which of these you value most!

A platform sets out what a party plans to do if its candidates are elected. It can cover big national issues, like climate change or income taxes, and more local issues, like public transit or a manufacturing plant. Candidates campaign on their party’s platform. A party’s platform gives you a good idea of their goals and values.

Then why bother learning about the local candidate running in my constituency?

 platforms come from?

Where do platforms come from?

It’s impossible to know everything about the political parties, candidates, and issues in a federal election. But four things that can help you orient yourself are:

1. Political party platforms
2. Party leaders
3. Local candidates
4. Past performance of government

PLATFORM

PARTY LEADER AND CAMPAIGN TEAM

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Still have questions? Want to learn more?

Visit samaracanada.com/what-to-expect or email info@samaracanada.com

The Samara Centre for Democracy is a non-partisan charity dedicated to strengthening Canada’s democracy. To learn more, visit samaracanada.com.

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Coming up next:

How to find accurate, reliable information about parties, candidates, and leaders