

Election Day is October 21

what to expect when you're ELECTING

Presented by The Samara Centre for Democracy

5 Getting Involved



Welcome to the fifth explainer in the What to Expect When You're Electing series. This week: **How to join a campaign, volunteer, and make a difference** on the issues you care about.

For more explainers, go to samaracanada.com/what-to-expect.

LEARN ABOUT:

- What volunteers do during a political campaign
- Non-partisan ways to become involved
- Elections Canada as an independent agency

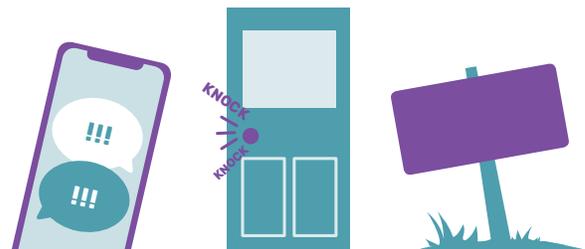
1 There's a political party or candidate that I really like. How can I help them win?

Reach out to this party or candidate, and we guarantee you'll be given something to do. Volunteers are essential to political parties, especially during elections. As a volunteer, you may be able to:

- > Distribute flyers
- > Put up election signs
- > Call constituents
- > Knock on doors in your community
- > Volunteer at events
- > Drive constituents to the polls
- > Scrutinize the actual counting of the ballots

You can also donate to an official party or candidate. Just remember that there are limits to how much you can donate, and that contributions over \$200 are posted on the Elections Canada website.

You can receive 75% of your donation back as an income tax credit (on the first \$400 you give!)



2 Actually, I don't want to campaign for a party or candidate, but there are issues that I really care about. How can I get people to think about them?

It's likely that an advocacy organization or community group is already organizing around the issues you're concerned with, so seek them out! Some will be looking for volunteers or financial support, while others simply need help gathering signatures for petitions or spreading the word.

3 I'm not really passionate about a particular issue, and don't want to publicly support one side or the other. Is there anything I can still do?

Yes! There are plenty of other ways you can get involved during the election. You can:

- ✓ Organize an all-candidates meeting in your constituency
- ✓ Drive people to the polls (ask your neighbours or residents of a local retirement home if they need a ride for advance voting or on election day)
- ✓ Make an election sign—not for a candidate or party, but to encourage the act of voting itself
- ✓ Get people together to watch a leaders' debate
- ✓ Gather a group of friends, neighbours, and family and vote together (as long as you've been assigned the same polling station)
- ✓ Start conversations that will make people think about their role as citizens (and keep in mind [last week's explainer](#))

4 I can't vote, so what else can I do?

If you're under the voting age or not yet a citizen you can still volunteer with parties. Some parties will even allow you to become a member. In fact, youth and non-citizens can do everything mentioned in the answers above!

The act of casting a ballot is an important right for citizens—for some, it's the only way they participate in the political process. But it's only one of a number of ways to get involved! Participating regularly in civic life (like taking part in government consultations, signing petitions, or contacting your elected representatives) can be just as meaningful as casting a ballot, if not more!



5 How can I be sure that the election is run fairly?

The body responsible for organizing our federal elections, called Elections Canada, is independent and non-partisan (meaning it's not connected to any party). Before every federal election, Elections Canada hires thousands of workers to staff polling stations across the country. All poll workers swear an oath to be politically neutral and non-partisan, to respect voters' rights, and to protect the secrecy of the vote. If someone has a concern about how the election was run, there are formal ways for complaints to be made and for election laws to be enforced.

Did you know that the Chief Electoral Officer is the only Canadian adult who is *not* allowed to vote in a federal election?

Still have questions? Want to learn more?

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

Coming up next:

With Election Day just around the corner, what do you need to know to get to the polls?

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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