

Background / context Notes

and prior to the 2016 election

- Since the presidential election in 2000, "all but 10 states and one congressional district in Nebraska" consistently voted for either the Democratic or Republican party. (270 to win) → this history allows elections to be more predictable, several elections, including while the previous 2 elections (2016 and 2020) have been determined by the "not-so-consistent" states (i.e. swing or battleground states).
- Swing states are states where both Democratic and Republican parties receive similar support - so the direction in which these states vote have the potential to significantly impact election outcomes. (Fitzgerald, 2024; BBC; The Telegraph; Diver & Coen, 2024)
- In 2016, Republican candidate, Trump, won the election by winning several swing states, such as Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Wisconsin - despite losing the popular vote. (Scott, 2016; The Telegraph)
- In 2020, President Biden won six of seven swing states, providing him with enough votes to win the election (The Telegraph; Diver & Coen, 2024)
- For the current 2024 race, seven key swing states - Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin - are said to be the deciding factors of a very tight race. (USA Today; Anadolu Agency + Fitzgerald, 2024 + Diver & Coen, 2024; Lyn, 2024; Crowley, 2024)
- While five swing states → Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, v Pennsylvania, Wisconsin have been won by the Republican party in 2016 and the Democratic party in 2020, two swing states - Nevada and North Carolina have consistently voted for the Democratic and Republican party, respectively. (NBC News) → this suggests that while five swing states are considered "toss-ups", the remaining two states are ones that can be strategically targeted by both presidential candidates.
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since Nevada voted for the Democratic party in 2016 and 2020, it can be a target in which Trump attempts to flip the state in his direction.
since North Carolina has been won by the Republican party in 2016 and 2020, it can be a targeted state for Harris' campaign.
- With all this, swing states are important for this election, so can use poll data to predict the outcomes for each swing state in addition to all states.