

Voters and Elections

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The **participation paradox** says that individual votes rarely have any effect on the outcome of an election.

So why do people vote? Cost-Benefit analysis says that we can only perform one action at a time, and we must choose between actions. Many people don't value voting. Older people vote more because the older you get, the more intervention the government has in your life.

The Practice of Voting

The most important demographic variables are education, income, and age. More educated, richer, and older people are more likely to vote.

Citizens of the US who are at least 18 years old and live in Texas can vote. Individuals prohibited from voting:

- Those declared mentally incompetent in formal court proceedings
- Those convicted of a felony (resets after 2 years)

Texans must be registered to vote, which is easy. You can register to vote while renewing your drivers license. You must be registered 30 days before the election.

Voter turnout is the proportion of eligible Americans who vote. The **Voting age population** has grown at a much faster rate than the actual voting population. Voter turnout in Texas is extremely low. The 26th amendment decreased the voting age from 21 to 18, but many young people don't vote. The poll tax, lack of women's suffrage, the white primary, military vote, long residence requirement, and property ownership all contributed to low voter turnout.