

The 2008 Campaign

Trial Heats

		Obama	McCain
Gallup Track	Jul. 27–29 (RV)	46%	42%
Gallup/USAT	Jul. 25–27 (LV)	45	49
Gallup/USAT	Jul. 25–27 (RV)	47	44
Fox/OD	Jul. 22–23 (RV)	41	40
NBC/WSJ	Jul. 18–21 (RV)	47	41

Four-Way Trial Heat

Fox News/Opinion Dynamics		July 2008	
Obama		40%	
McCain		37	
Nader		2	
Barr		--	

Partisan Identification

		Dem	Rep
July 2008	Gallup	47%	37%
Late June 2008	Pew	53	37
2007 Average	Gallup	51	40
2007 Average	Pew	50	36

Note: The 2007 averages are the lowest numbers for the GOP since Gallup started compiling yearly averages twenty years ago and Pew started eighteen years ago. Gallup and Pew numbers include those who lean to one party or another.

Opinion of the Candidates

Please say if you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of these people . . . ?

Gallup/USA Today

	July 2008	
	Favorable	Unfavorable
Barack Obama	61%	35%
John McCain	62	33

Is your opinion of . . . ?

Quinnipiac

	July 2008	
	Favorable	Unfavorable
Barack Obama	55%	29%
John McCain	50	31

Candidate Visibility

Pew Research Center

		July 18–21, 2008	
		Heard about the most	
Barack Obama		76%	
John McCain		10	

Note: Since the June 21–23 weekly News Interest Index more than 70 percent of Americans have heard the most about Barack Obama and around 10 percent have heard the most about John McCain.

The Enthusiasm Contest

When it comes to your vote for _____, would you say that you are . . . ?

NBC News/Wall Street Journal

	July 2008	
	Obama supporters	McCain supporters
Excited	44%	14%
Satisfied	33	42
Lesser of two evils	22	43

Do you support _____ strongly or only moderately?

PSRA/Newsweek

	July 2008	
	Obama supporters	McCain supporters
Strongly support	61%	39%
Moderately support	39	61

Trust More?

Regardless of who you may support, who do you trust more to handle . . . ?

ABC News/Washington Post

	July 2008	
	Obama	McCain
The war in Iraq	45%	47%
Terrorism	43	49
The economy	54	35
Illegal immigration	48	38
June 2008		
Health care	53	33
Taxes	48	40
Energy policy	51	36

Vice Presidents

When deciding your vote for president, how much do you take into consideration the vice presidential running mate?

Fox News/Opinion Dynamics	July 2008
A lot	28%
Some	43
Not much	20
Not at all	7

Obama: Mainstream and Very Liberal?

When it comes to his approaches to issues, would you say that _____ is in the mainstream of most Americans' thinking, or is out of step with most Americans' thinking?

NBC News/Wall Street Journal	July 2008	
	McCain	Obama
In the mainstream	45%	60%
Out of step	42	29

Would you describe _____ as liberal, moderate, or conservative?

NBC News/Wall Street Journal	July 2008	
	Obama	McCain
Very liberal	33%	3%
Somewhat liberal	23	5
Moderate	29	34
Somewhat conservative	5	30
Very conservative	3	21

Defections

Historical Defection Rates

National Exit Polls	Percentage Defecting in Presidential Elections	
	Democrats	Republicans
1980	26%	9%
1984	25	7
1988	17	8
1992	10	10
1996	10	13
2000	11	8
2004	11	6

Source: Network/AP Consortium Exit Polls.

2008 Defections: A Snapshot

Gallup/USA Today	July 2008
Democrats for McCain	11%
Republicans for Obama	10
Note: Sample is a weekly aggregate from July 21-28, 2008.	

Who Will Win

Regardless of how you plan to vote, who do you really believe will win the 2008 presidential election . . . ?

Fox News/Opinion Dynamics	July 2008
Barack Obama	51%
John McCain	27

The Media's Candidate

Which presidential candidate—Barack Obama or John McCain—do you think most members of the media want to win the election?

Fox News/Opinion Dynamics	July 2008
Barack Obama	67%
John McCain	11

Do you think the national press is covering both presidential campaigns objectively or is one campaign receiving more positive coverage than the other?

Fox News/Opinion Dynamics	July 2008
Both objectively	36%
Obama receiving more positive	46
McCain receiving more positive	6

The President

Bush's Ratings

		Approve	Disapprove
Gallup/USAT	Jul. 25–27	32%	65%
AP/Ipsos	Jul. 10–14	28	67
CBS/NYT	Jul. 7–14	28	65
ABC/Post	Jul. 10–13	28	69
Quinnipiac	Jul. 8–13	26	67

Four-Part Breakdown, Bush Approval

ABC News/Washington Post

	July 2008
Strongly approve	12%
Somewhat approve	16
Somewhat disapprove	13
Strongly disapprove	56

Party Breakdown, Bush Approval

Gallup/USA Today

	July 2008
	Approve of Bush
Republicans	67%
Independents	28
Democrats	7

Bush Approval—Yearly Averages

Gallup/USA Today

	Approve
2007	33%
2006	37
2005	46
2004	50
2003	60
2002	71
2001	68

Congress

Congress's Ratings

		Approve	Disapprove
AP/Ipsos	Jul. 10–14	18%	77%
Gallup/USAT	Jul. 10–13	14	75
Quinnipiac	Jul. 8–13	14	77
ABC/Post	Jul. 10–13	23	71
Fox/OD	Jun. 17–18	19	69

Party Breakdown, Congressional Approval

Gallup/USA Today

	July 2008
	Approve of Congress
Republicans	19%
Democrats	11
Independents	14

How Each Party Rates, Congressional Approval

ABC News/Washington Post

	July 2008
	Approve
Democrats in Congress	35%
Republicans in Congress	25

Congressional Approval—Yearly Averages

Gallup/USA Today

	Approve
2007	27%
2006	25
2005	36
2004	42
2003	47
2002	54
2001	56

In the next election for U.S. Congress, do you feel ... ?

NBC News/Wall Street Journal

	My U.S. Representative Deserves re-election	Does not
July 2008	40%	47%
Oct. 2006	39	45
Oct. 2004	49	34
Oct. 2002	42	39
Oct. 2000	50	35
Oct. 1998	48	37
Oct. 1994	39	49
Oct. 1992	31	56

The Economy and the Mood

How would you rate the condition of the national economy these days?

CBS News/New York Times

	July 2008	Jan. 2008
Very good	1%	3%
Fairly good	18	35
Fairly bad	45	42
Very bad	35	19

During the next twelve months, do you think the nation's economy will . . . ?

NBC News/Wall Street Journal

	Get better	Get worse	Stay the same
July 2008	25%	43%	28%
Jan. 2007	21	16	60

Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way things are going in the United States at this time?

Gallup/USA Today

	July 2008	July 1979
Satisfied	17%	12%
Dissatisfied	81	84

Most Important Problem Facing the Country

Gallup/USA Today

	July 2008
Economy in general	35%
Fuel/oil prices	23
Situation in Iraq/War	18
Poor leadership/corruption	9
Energy	6

Note: Only the top five shown.

Most Important Financial Problem Facing Your Family Today

The Gallup Organization

	July 2008
Gas prices/energy costs	29%
Inflation/high cost of living	18
Lack of money/low wages	14
Health care costs	9
Cost of owning/renting a home	9

Note: Only the top five shown.

Consumer Confidence Trend

University of Michigan/Reuters

	Index of Consumer Sentiment
July 2008	61.2
Jan. 2008	78.4
July 2007	90.4

Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the economy?

CBS News/New York Times

	July 2008
Approve	20%
Disapprove	71

Do you think _____ energy policies would help bring down gas prices if he was elected president, or not?

CBS News/New York Times

	July 2008
Yes, would bring down prices	
Barack Obama	30%
John McCain	25

How would you rate the financial situation of your household . . . ?

CBS News/New York Times

	July 2008	Feb. 2008	Apr. 2007
Very good	13%	18%	14%
Fairly good	61	60	69
Fairly bad	19	15	13
Very bad	7	6	4

Iraq and Foreign Policy

Based on what you have heard or read about the surge of U.S. troops in Iraq that began last year, do you think the increase in the number of troops is . . . ?

Gallup/USA Today

	July 2008	July 2007
Making the situation better	48%	22%
Not much difference	32	51
Worse	17	25

Do you think the United States is making significant progress toward restoring civil order in Iraq . . . ?

ABC News/Washington Post

	July 2008	Dec. 2006	June 2004
Yes	46%	31%	51%
No	51	66	48

Do you think going to war with Iraq was . . . ?

Quinnipiac

	July 2008
Right thing for the U.S. to do	34%
Wrong thing	59

Do you think the United States . . . ?

Gallup/USA Today

	July 2008	Nov. 2001
Made a mistake in sending troops to Afghanistan	28%	9%
Did not	68	89

Would you favor or oppose sending additional U.S. troops to Afghanistan . . . ?

Gallup/USA Today

	July 2008	
Favor	59%	Oppose 38%

When it comes to re-establishing America's image abroad, there are two viewpoints concerning what would be better to re-establish America's image in other countries. Please tell me which one you agree with more. Viewpoint A: We need a president who will present an image that America has a more open approach and is willing to negotiate with friends and foes alike. Viewpoint B: We need a president who will present an image of strength that shows America's willingness to confront our enemies and stand up for our principles.

NBC News/Wall Street Journal

	July 2008
Image of a more open approach	39%
Image of strength	50

Obama has proposed a timetable to withdraw most U.S. forces from Iraq within 16 months of his taking office. McCain has opposed a specific timetable and said events should dictate when troops are withdrawn. Which approach do you prefer . . . ?

ABC News/Washington Post

	July 2008
Prefer Obama's timetable	50%
Prefer McCain's position	49

Race

Would you personally vote for a presidential candidate who is black, or not?

CBS News/New York Times

	July 2008
Would	90%
Would not	6

Do you think America is ready to elect a black president, or not?

CBS News/New York Times

	July 2008
Yes, America is ready	69%
No	25

Thinking about your neighbors and friends, do you think . . . ?

LA Times/Bloomberg

	June 2008
My neighbors and friends would have an easy time voting for Barack Obama because he is an African-American	63%
Difficult time	16
Don't know	21

If Barack Obama is elected president, how will you view it in terms of progress for blacks in the United States . . . ?

The Gallup Organization

	Jun.-Jul. 2008
One of two or three most important advances in the past 100 years	50%
Important, but not one of the two or three most important advances	24
Not that important	21

If Barack Obama wins the presidential election, do you think . . . ?

The Gallup Organization

	Jun.-Jul. 2008
Race relations in this country will get better	56%
Not change	23
Get worse	18

Convention Facts

- The first American political convention took place in September 1831 and was held by the Anti-Masonic Party in Baltimore. This will be the Democratic Party's forty-fifth convention and the thirty-ninth for the GOP.
- In the last open contest in 2000, nearly 60 percent of voters made up their minds during or after the conventions.
- Barack Obama will be delivering his speech on the forty-fifth anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech. John McCain will deliver his on the opening night of the NFL season when the Washington Redskins will take on the defending Super Bowl Champions, the New York Giants. Go Skins!
- Denver, Colorado and Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota, the sites of the respective Democratic and Republican conventions, will each host their second conventions and represent the same goal for each party—to capture a state traditionally won by the other party. Minnesota would be more historic; the Land of the Lakes has not voted for a Republican presidential candidate since 1972. Colorado last voted for a Democrat, Bill Clinton, in 1992.
- 1924 was the first year a convention was broadcast over radio and 1940 was the first broadcast on television. In 1968, the Republican convention was the first to be broadcast in color. In 1984, gavel-to-gavel network coverage ended, but C-SPAN began its gavel-to-gavel coverage in the same year. In 2008, both conventions will be broadcast in high-definition and be available online via streaming video for the first time.

Upcoming Election Watch: September 18

AEI's Election Watch series, which began in 1982, is the longest-running election program in Washington. The 2008 presidential election campaign has unfolded in unexpected ways. At our next event, Election Watch panelists will continue to focus on the run-up to the general election.

Other upcoming Election Watch dates:

October 23

November 6 (*Post-election Wrap-Up*)

2008 Senate Races

110th Congress Lineup: 49 Democrats, 49 Republicans, and 2 independents (who caucus with Democrats)

Democrats (12)

State	Senator/First Elected	Results of Last Election	Bush's Margin over Kerry	Status
AR	Mark Pryor-2002	54-46	+9	Running
DE	Joe Biden-1972	58-41	-7	Running
IA	Tom Harkin-1984	54-44	+1	Running
IL	Richard Durbin-1996	60-38	-11	Running
LA	Mary Landrieu-1996	52-48	+15	Running
MA	John Kerry-1984	80-18	-25	Running
MI	Carl Levin-1978	61-38	-3	Running
MT	Max Baucus-1978	63-32	+20	Running
NJ	Frank Lautenberg-1982	54-44	-7	Running
RI	Jack Reed-1996	78-22	-20	Running
SD	Tim Johnson-1996	50-50	+22	Running
WV	Jay Rockefeller-1984	63-37	+13	Running

Republicans (23)

State	Senator/First Elected	Results of Last Election	Bush's Margin over Kerry	Status
AK*	Ted Stevens-1968	78-11	+25	Running
AL	Jeff Sessions-1996	59-40	+25	Running
CO	Wayne Allard-1996	51-46	+5	Retiring
GA	Saxby Chambliss-2002	53-46	+17	Running
ID	Larry Craig-1990	65-33	+38	Retiring
KS	Pat Roberts-1996	83-09	+25	Running
KY	Mitch McConnell-1984	65-35	+20	Running
ME	Susan Collins-1996	58-42	-9	Running
MN	Norm Coleman-2002	50-47	-3	Running
MS	Thad Cochran-1978	85-15	+19	Running
MS#	Roger Wicker-appointed 2007	N/A	+19	Running
NC	Elizabeth Dole-2002	54-45	+12	Running
NE	Chuck Hagel-1996	83-15	+33	Retiring
NH	John Sununu-2002	51-47	-1	Running
NM	Pete Domenici-1972	65-35	+1	Retiring
OK	Jim Inhofe-1994	57-36	+32	Running
OR	Gordon Smith-1996	56-40	-4	Running
SC	Lindsey Graham-2002	54-44	+17	Running
TN	Lamar Alexander-2002	54-44	+14	Running
TX	John Cornyn-2002	55-43	+23	Running
VA	John Warner-1978	83-10	+9	Retiring
WY	Michael Enzi-1996	73-27	+40	Running
WY^	John Barrasso-appointed 2007	N/A	+40	Running

* Sen. Stevens was appointed in 1968. He was first elected in 1970.

Sen. Wicker is running to fill the remainder of former-Sen. Trent Lott's term (through 2012).

^ Sen. Barrasso is running to fill the remainder of former-Sen. Craig Thomas' term (through 2012).

Bold indicates an open seat in 2008.

2008 House of Representatives Open Seats

Current Lineup: 236 Democrats, 199 Republicans.

Democrats (7)

<i>District</i>	<i>Representative/First Elected</i>	<i>Bush's Margin over Kerry</i>	<i>Reason for Leaving</i>
ME-01	Tom Allen-1996	-12	Seeking other office-Senate
NJ-01	Robert Andrews-1990	-22	Lost in Senate primary
AL-05	Robert "Bud" Cramer-1990	+21	Retiring
OR-05	Darlene Hooley-1996	+1	Retiring
NY-21	Michael McNulty-1988	-12	Retiring
CO-02	Mark Udall-1998	-17	Seeking other office-Senate
NM-03	Tom Udall-1998	-9	Seeking other office-Senate

Republicans (28)

<i>District</i>	<i>Representative/First Elected</i>	<i>Bush's Margin over Kerry</i>	<i>Reason for Leaving</i>
UT-01	Chris Cannon-1996	+57	Lost in primary
WY-AL	Barbara Cubin-1994	+40	Retiring
VA-11	Tom Davis-1994	+1	Retiring
CA-04	John Doolittle-1990	+24	Retiring
AL-02	Terry Everett-1992	+34	Retiring
NJ-07	Mike Ferguson-2000	+6	Retiring
NY-13	Vito Fossella-1997	+10	Retiring
MD-01	Wayne Gilchrest-1990	+26	Lost in primary
OH-07	David Hobson-1990	+14	Retiring
MO-09	Kenny Hulshof-1996	+18	Seeking other office-Governor
CA-52	Duncan Hunter-1980	+23	Retiring
IL-18	Ray LaHood-1994	+16	Retiring
KY-02	Ron Lewis-1994	+31	Retiring
LA-04	Jim McCrery-1988	+19	Retiring
NM-02	Steve Pearce-2002	+17	Seeking other office-Senator
PA-05	John Peterson-1996	+22	Retiring
MS-03	Chip Pickering-1996	+31	Retiring
OH-15	Deborah Pryce-1992	<1	Retiring
MN-03	Jim Ramstad-1990	+3	Retiring
OH-16	Ralph Regula-1972	+8	Retiring
AZ-01	Rick Renzi-2002	+8	Retiring
NY-26	Tom Reynolds-1998	+12	Retiring
NJ-03	Jim Saxton-1984	+2	Retiring
CO-06	Tom Tancredo-1998	+21	Retiring
NY-25	James Walsh-1988	-2	Retiring
FL-15	Dave Weldon-1994	+14	Retiring
IL-11	Jerry Weller-1994	+7	Retiring
NM-01	Heather Wilson-1998	-3	Lost in Senate primary

When Were Vice Presidential Running Mates Announced?

Democrats

Year	Convention Began	Nominee	VP Selection Announced	Days Before
2004	July 26	John Kerry	July 6 (John Edwards)	20
2000	August 14	Al Gore	August 7 (Joseph I. Lieberman)	7
1996	August 26	Bill Clinton	N/A (Clinton/Gore renominated)	-
1992	July 13	Bill Clinton	July 9 (Gore)	4
1988	July 18	Michael S. Dukakis	July 12 (Lloyd Bentsen)	6
1984	July 16	Walter F. Mondale	July 12 (Geraldine Ferraro)	4
1980	August 11	Jimmy Carter	N/A (Carter/Mondale renominated)	-
1976	July 12	Jimmy Carter	July 15 (Mondale)	-3
1972	July 10	George McGovern	July 13 (Thomas F. Eagleton)**	-3
1968	August 26	Hubert H. Humphrey	August 29 (Edmund S. Muskie)	-3
1964	August 24	Lyndon B. Johnson	August 26 (Humphrey)	-2
1960	July 11	John F. Kennedy	July 14 (Johnson)	-3
1956	August 13	Adlai E. Stevenson	August 17 (Estes Kefauver)***	-4
1952	July 21	Adlai E. Stevenson	July 26 (John Sparkman)	-5

Republicans

Year	Convention Began	Nominee	VP Selection Announced	Days Before
2004	August 30	George W. Bush	N/A (Bush/Cheney renominated)	-
2000	July 31	George W. Bush	July 25 (Cheney)	6
1996	August 12	Bob Dole	August 10 (Jack Kemp)	2
1992	August 17	George H.W. Bush	N/A/ (Bush/Quayle renominated)	-
1988	August 15	George H.W. Bush	August 16 (Quayle)	-1
1984	August 20	Ronald Reagan	N/A (Reagan/Bush renominated)	-
1980	July 14	Ronald Reagan	July 16 (Bush)*	-2
1976	August 16	Gerald Ford	August 19 (Dole)	-3
1972	August 21	Richard M. Nixon	N/A (Nixon/Agnew renominated)	-
1968	August 5	Richard M. Nixon	August 8 (Agnew)	-3
1964	July 13	Barry Goldwater	July 16 (William E. Miller)	-3
1960	July 25	Richard M. Nixon	July 28 (Henry Cabot Lodge Jr.)	-3
1956	August 20	Dwight Eisenhower	N/A (Eisenhower/Nixon renominated)-	-
1952	July 7	Dwight Eisenhower	July 11 (Nixon)	-4

*Reagan technically told the convention at 12:15 a.m., on July 17, 1980, that he had chosen Bush as his running mate.

**Eagleton withdrew July 31 and was replaced by Sargent Shriver, who was nominated August 8.

***Stevenson left the decision of a running mate to the Democratic convention, which selected Kefauver.

Source: CQ Politics.com