**2000 Election Chronology**

* **Tuesday, Nov. 7—**Election Day. Pundits have predicted a tight race between Texas governor [George W. Bush](http://www.infoplease.com/cgi-bin/id/A0878291) and Vice President [Al Gore](http://www.infoplease.com/cgi-bin/id/SPOT-ALGORE1), but few expect one of the closest elections in U.S. history. By early evening, it's clear the election hinges on [Florida](http://www.infoplease.com/cgi-bin/id/A0108198).
* **Wednesday, Nov. 8—**Gore calls Bush at approximately 3 A.M. to concede, but retracts the concession shortly after, because Bush's razor-slim lead prompts an automatic recount. He leads Gore by about 1,210 votes
* out of nearly 6 million cast in Florida. Meanwhile Gore leads in both the national popular count and the electoral college.
* An unusual amount of votes for third-party candidates in Palm Beach County leads to disputes over the county's [“butterfly ballots.”](http://www.infoplease.com/cgi-bin/id/SPOT-CAMPAIGN2000BALLOT) A number of ballots in other counties are disqualified because the [chad](http://www.infoplease.com/cgi-bin/id/SPOT-STCHAD1) > the small piece of paper punched out of punch-card ballots—did not fully detach from the ballot.
* **Thursday, Nov. 9—**Gore's camp requests a hand recount of the approximately 1.8 million ballots cast in Palm Beach, Miami-Dade, Broward, and Volusia counties, Democratic strongholds.
* **Friday, Nov. 10—**Florida's automatic recount is completed. The Associated Press reports that Bush has retained his lead but only by 327 votes.
* **Saturday, Nov. 11—**The Bush team, led by former secretary of state [James Baker](http://www.infoplease.com/cgi-bin/id/A0805809), files suit in federal court to block Gore's request for a hand recount.
* **Monday, Nov. 13—**Florida secretary of state [Katherine Harris](http://www.infoplease.com/cgi-bin/id/SPOT-KATHERINEHARRIS1) announces she will not extend the Nov. 14 deadline for the submission of all state results, excluding absentee ballots from overseas.
* A federal judge in Miami rejects Bush's efforts to halt manual recounts. Bush appeals the decision.
* **Tuesday, Nov. 14—**Harris postpones certification of the state's votes until Nov. 15, so Miami-Dade, Palm Beach, and Broward counties have time to prepare an explanation of why they should hand count their ballots.
* **Wednesday, Nov. 15—**Harris decides that no county offered adequate evidence to justify further hand recounts.
* Florida Supreme Court denies a request from Harris to stop the hand recounts. Certification is again postponed.
* **Thursday, Nov. 16—**Bush's lawyers present written arguments to the U.S. federal appeals court in Atlanta to end the manual recounts. Gore's team files a counter motion.
* **Friday, Nov. 17—**The Florida Supreme Court blocks Harris from certifying election until it rules on the Democrats' motion to include hand recounts.
* The 11th Circuit Court of Appeals denies the Republicans' motion to stop manual recounts on constitutional grounds.
* **Saturday, Nov. 18—**With a tally of absentee ballots, uncertified count has Bush ahead of Gore by 930 votes.
* **Tuesday, Nov. 21—**Florida Supreme Court rules that results of hand counts of ballots in Miami-Dade, Palm Beach, and Broward counties must be included in the vote tally if the counts are completed by Nov. 26.
* **Sunday, Nov. 26—**Harris certifies Bush as the winner of Florida’s 25 electoral votes, with a 537-vote lead over Gore. Gore pledges to challenge certification in court. The tally does not include results from Palm Beach County, which finished its hand recount hours after the deadline.
* **Monday, Nov. 27—**Gore contests the Florida results in a circuit court in [Tallahassee](http://www.infoplease.com/cgi-bin/id/A0847704).
* **Wednesday, Nov. 29—**Leon County Circuit Court judge N. Sanders Sauls orders that all ballots from Palm Beach and Miami-Dade counties be sent to Tallahassee for a hearing on whether the hand count, which was incomplete at the time of the court-ordered Nov. 26 deadline, should be included in the final vote tally.
* **Thursday, Nov. 30—**Florida lawmakers, voting along party lines, recommend holding a special session to name the state's 25 electors if the election dispute is not resolved by Dec. 12, six days before the electoral college meets.
* **Friday, Dec. 1—**The [U.S. Supreme Court](http://www.infoplease.com/cgi-bin/id/A0873869) hears arguments on whether the Florida Supreme Court acted properly when it forced the Florida secretary of state to accept manual recounts submitted after the legal deadline.
* The Florida Supreme Court denies Gore's appeal to immediately begin recounting ballots and rejects motion filed by some Palm Beach County citizens who questioned the integrity of the “butterfly ballot.”
* Gore requests a count of approximately 14,000 “undervotes” from Palm Beach and Miami-Dade counties.
* **Monday, Dec. 4—**Judge Sauls rejects Gore’s contest of the election results, saying the vice president failed to prove that hand recounts would have altered the results. Gore appeals to the Florida Supreme Court.
* U.S. Supreme Court asks Florida Supreme Court to explain why it ordered Harris to accept results submitted after the Nov. 14 deadline mandated by state law, thus returning the case to Tallahassee.
* **Thursday, Dec. 7—**Gore's legal team appeals Sauls's ruling. Bush's lawyers argue that the decision should stand.
* **Friday, Dec. 8—**The Florida Supreme Court, ruling on Gore's appeal, orders manual recounts in counties with large numbers of undervotes. Bush appeals to the U.S. Supreme Court and seeks injunction to stop recounts. 4-3
* In two separate lawsuits, Leon County Circuit Court judges refuse to throw out absentee ballots from Seminole and Martin counties that had been disputed by Gore.
* **Saturday, Dec. 9—**The U.S. Supreme Court votes 5–4 to halt the hand recounts and sets a hearing for Dec. 11.
* Florida Supreme Court hears appeal on whether absentee ballots in Martin and Seminole counties should be counted.
* **Tuesday, Dec. 12—**The U.S. Supreme Court rules in [*Bush* v. *Gore*](http://www.infoplease.com/cgi-bin/id/A0877961) 7–2 to reverse the Florida Supreme Court, which had ordered manual recounts in certain counties. The Court contends that the recount was not treating all ballots equally, and was thus a violation of the Constitution's equal protection and due process guarantees. The Supreme Court of Florida would be required to set up new voting standards and carry them out in a recount. The justices, however, split 5–4 along partisan lines about implementing a remedy. Five justices maintain that this process and the recount must adhere to the official deadline for certifying electoral college votes: midnight, Dec. 12; other justices question the importance of this date. Since the Court makes its ruling just hours before the deadline, it in effect ensures that it is too late for a recount. The decision generates enormous controversy. Those objecting to the ruling assert that the Supreme Court, and not the electorate, has effectively determined the outcome of the presidential election. As Justice [Ruth Bader Ginsburg](http://www.infoplease.com/cgi-bin/id/A0772253) writes in a scathing dissent, “the Court’s conclusion that a constitutionally adequate recount is impractical is a prophecy the Court’s own judgment will not allow to be tested. Such an untested prophecy should not decide the Presidency of the United States.”
* **Wednesday, Dec. 13—**In another decision, Florida Supreme Court decides not to hear an appeal from Gore asking that absentee ballots from Martin and Seminole counties be thrown out.
* In televised speeches, Gore concedes, and Bush accepts the presidency.
* **Monday, Dec. 18—**Electoral college representatives meet in state capitals and cast votes to select president.
* **Wednesday, Jan. 5—**Congress meets to tally electoral college results.
* **Saturday, Jan. 20—**George W. Bush sworn in as 43rd president of the United States.