

spirited dialogue factoids on the primaries



the primary crunch

You've heard it before—every state is pushing up its primary date to be part of the “momentum machine.” This year, primaries after Feb. 5, Super Duper Tuesday, may all be too late to count.



racking up delegates

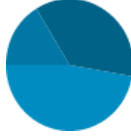
To win their party's nomination, candidates have to rack up a majority of delegates at the national convention. That's: **2,025 delegates to be the Democratic** nominee and **1,191 delegates for the Republican** slot.



how do you get a delegate? *

It depends on your party and state. Both parties require an open process, but that can take the form of a caucus or primary.

Democrats require that candidates (who get at least 15% of the vote) get a proportionate share of the delegates.



Republicans let states choose how to divvy up delegates—proportionally or winner takes all.



(We're only talking “pledged” delegates here—that is, those delegates who get picked up in primaries and caucuses. About 1 out of 4 Democratic delegates and 1 out of 5 Republican delegates are “unpledged” and get to vote for whoever they want at the convention. State elected officials and party bigwigs make up many of the “unpledged.”)

delegates up for grabs



162 134



2075 1081



1796 1032

over the years



'10—Oregon is the first state to set an open primary, specifying that delegates have to support the winner at the conventions. Before, who delegates voted for was more about back room deals.

'52—New Hampshire becomes the “beauty contest” testing a candidates popular pull.

'76—Iowa caucus gains viability as momentum maker. Also last year that the convention actually picks the nominee.

'84—35 states hold primaries (up from 26 in '76 and 20 in '72).