

Make Your Vote Count!



by Julie McDonald

EVERY ELECTION DAY many Americans leave the polls unaware that their vote will not count. Mistakes that steal votes go uncorrected because the same secret ballot which gives you independence in the voting booth covers your identity when you make errors. Your vote can be lost in many ways. This check-list will make it count:

1. Know when and where to vote.
The time and place of the election are posted and also published in local newspapers.
"There's no sadder sight than a prospective voter's nose pressed against the glass after the polls have closed!" a precinct committeeman told me.
2. Study sample ballots at the polls.
A common error on the voting machine is to vote the top row of a ticket and miss candidates in the second row. Inspect the official sample ballot before entering the booth to avoid overlooking part of the ballot.
3. When in doubt, ask the election judges for help with the voting machine.
The voting machine is almost fool-proof, but not quite. An election judge tells of the man who emerged from the booth saying, "I hope I did that right!"
"Did you push down the levers over the names of your candidates?" the judge asked.

"Yes, I did," the voter said happily, "and then I pushed them all up again!" He was disappointed to learn he had wiped out his vote before it could be recorded.

If the operation of the voting machine is unfamiliar, don't hesitate to ask the election judges for help. That's why they're there, and they want your vote to count as much as you do.

4. Place voting cross (X) within the outlines of the space provided.
5. Mark paper ballots with pencil.
Paper ballots give the voter more opportunity for error.
"It makes me sick to throw out ballots cast by people who don't know they did anything wrong!" one election judge said. "The voting cross (X) is the only valid marking, yet we find dozens of ballots marked with a check (✓) that we can't count!"
The election laws of some states are more stringent than others. To be safe, make the cross inside the outlines of the circle or square provided for the mark. The mark should be made in pencil, not in ink. Erasures can spoil your ballot.
If you should accidentally spoil your ballot, give it to an election judge in return for a fresh one.
Above all, don't forget to vote. Your vote is important!



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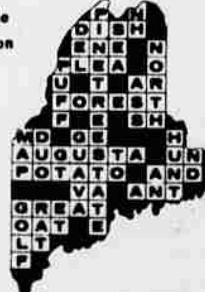
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