



Hello there and CONGRATS!

You've taken the first step - making it to your Ballot Party. Want to start by introducing yourself to the folks you're with?



Before we get started:

There are probably candidates and offices on your ballot that you've never heard of. How do you know who to choose?

HERE'S SOME TIPS:

STEP 1

As you're using BallotReady you can click on a candidate and see their school and work history, endorsements and stances on particular issues. Take a look at the folks endorsing - are these organizations that share your values?

STEP 2

Do a google search of the candidate, and check their latest news. Any hot gossip?

STEP 3

Take a quick peek at their social media OR go to Illinoisunshine.org and check out who's funding their campaign.

STATE MATTERS

www.statematters.org

Political Ice Breakers

- If you could pass any law (any at all) what would it be?
- What is one deal breaker for you when choosing a candidate?

Non-Political Ice Breakers

- Describe your neighborhood/city with only three emojis

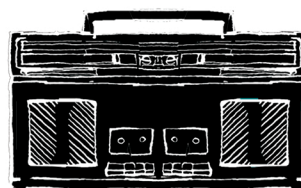
START

**Find your ballot:
Let's get to it!**

1. Pull out your smartphone.
2. Head to BallotReady.org
3. Enter your address

This is a copy of your ballot. You can use this as a cheat sheet to help you remember who you've chosen for each office.

**Yes, voting IS an open book test.
DIVE RIGHT IN...**



LOCAL CANDIDATES

They matter a whole lot - even if you have no clue what they do. Each County, Municipality, and City has a number of other governmental agencies that run things like wastewater reclamation, property assessment, and education. These are the folks who fix potholes fund textbooks, and keep your drinking water safe.



** TIP **

We vote for 3 Metro Water Reclaim in Chicago (MWRD are like the vatican city of Lake Michigan-- the water Popes of Chicagoland.). The order you pick them doesn't matter, just make sure you pick three!

Where's the mayor?

Depending on where you live, you might be having a local election in February or April. I know, that's so soon, I'm sorry. Democracy never rests. Do you want to do a ballot party then?

**SIGN UP AT
STATEMATTERS.ORG!**

JUDICIAL CANDIDATES! DON'T SKIP IT!

BREAK

Take a deep breath. Hydrate. Make eye contact with a stranger. Do a little shimmy shake for democracy.

FEDERAL

Check out who's running for the U.S. House of Representatives. Because U.S. Senators serve a six year term, you won't be voting for one this time around (though other states are!). Your representative in congress is the one fighting for you at the national level.

STATE LEVEL

Unlike the U.S. President, our Governor doesn't get to appoint their friends to their executive cabinet. In Illinois, the people elect them. We are #blessed.

** TIP **

Lieutenant Governors run on the same ticket as Governors (think President & V.P. of the U.S.), if they've got the same letter after their names they're running together.

STATE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

Just like congress, the Illinois legislature is divided into two houses: the Senate and the House of Representatives. They make the laws for the state!

State Senator

Don't see a state senator on your ballot? Don't panic! State senators are elected to either two-year or four-year terms. Because their terms are staggered, some folks will have senators on their ballot and some won't.

MATCH GAME! Take two minutes to find two candidates who look like they could be (or should be) related. White shirts with red neckties definitely don't count. Share with your friends and vote on who's made the best match. Bonus: mash their last names together to give them a hip celebrity brand name. Brangelina move over...

FINISH

ELECTION DAY IS NOVEMBER 6TH

Final Checklist:

1. E-mail your completed ballot to yourself to use as a reference!
2. Use BallotReady to make a plan to vote
3. Take a selfie & post it on social media [#ballotpartyil](https://twitter.com/ballotpartyil)
4. Check your voter registration google: voter registration Illinois, you'll find your way

Maybe get contact info from your new friends & hold each other accountable for **ACTUALLY VOTING!**

That's it! YOU DID IT!

Give your neighbor a vigorous and unexpected high five. You are both doing a thing that the majority of registered voters will not do this November (i.e. vote). You're quite a hip cool person.

BALLOT MEASURES

Sometimes the government just wants to hear your opinions about ideas they have. Like whether or not you think a certain law might be very awesome or categorically unawesome. How will you know?

DO SOME GOOGLING.

Report back to your group.

CHECK-IN

How're we feeling? This midterm election ballot is a marathon and we just crossed mile 20. I told you to hydrate! You've got it. That space tin foil blanket thing is just around the corner. Dig deep. Avoid chafing.

Chicago Bar Association and voteforjudges.org are our two go to's.

If they say "not recommended" or "not qualified" maybe vote **NO!**

If you're in Cook County, we apologize. There are a LOT of judges. But remember - it's an open book test! You can take your notes in to the polling place.

Those running for retention need 60% of folks to vote for them, or else they lose their job! This is the only way to get rid of bad or incompetent judges.

Some judges are running for the first time (it'll say "vacancy") and some judges are running for retention (basically re-election, but without an opponent).

