

Pundit accountability: The official 2012 election prediction thread

By **Brad Plumer** , Updated: **November 5, 2012**

There are a lot of predictions floating around out there about who will win the presidential election on Tuesday. So why not round them all up in one place?

Here are the electoral vote predictions from various modelers, political scientists and pundits from around the Internet. All predictions are as of Monday evening. And yes, this will be a fun thread to revisit the day after the election:

Nate Silver, FiveThirtyEight: [Obama 332, Romney 203](#). This appears to be the most likely scenario in Silver's model, which now gives Obama a 91 percent chance of winning and shows Florida as basically a tossup. "In order for Mr. Romney to win the Electoral College, a large number of polls, across these states and others, would have to be in error, perhaps because they overestimated Democratic turnout.," Silver [writes](#).

Intrade: [Obama 303, Romney 235](#). The betting markets also give Obama a 70 percent chance of winning as of Tuesday morning. The main difference from Silver's model is that Intrade gives Romney a fairly strong chance (65 percent) of winning Florida.

Washington Post's Outlook contest: There are a slew of different predictions [here](#). Chris Cillizza of the Fix predicts a narrow 277-261 Obama win. Andrew Beyer, our horse-racing columnist, predicts a 284-254 Romney win. And Jason Samenow of the excellent Capital Weather Gang predicts a 281-257 Obama victory.

Sam Wang, Princeton Election Consortium: [Obama 303, Romney 235](#). "In terms of EV or the Meta-margin, [Obama has] made up just about half the ground he ceded to Romney after Debate #1."

Drew Linzer, Emory University: [Obama 326, Romney 212](#). "The accuracy of my election forecasts depend on the accuracy of the presidential polls," Linzer [writes](#). "As such, a major concern heading into Election Day is the possibility that polling firms, out of fear of being wrong, are looking at the results of other published surveys and weighting or adjusting their own results to match."

Michael Barone, The Examiner: [Romney 315, Obama 223](#). "Both national and target state polls show that independents, voters who don't identify themselves as Democrats or Republicans, break for Romney."

Ezra Klein, The Washington Post: [Obama 290, Romney 248](#). "I have a simple rule when predicting presidential elections: The polls, taken together, are typically pretty accurate. Systemic problems, while possible, aren't likely."

Larry Sabato, UVA Center for Politics: [Obama 290, Romney 248](#). "Who could

have imagined that a Frankenstorm would act as a circuit-breaker on the Republican's campaign, blowing Romney off center stage for three critical days in the campaign's last week, while enabling Obama to dominate as presidential comforter-in-chief, assisted by his new bipartisan best friend, Gov. Chris Christie (R)?"

Josh Putnam, Davidson College: [Obama 332, Romney 206](#). "Everything above is based on a graduated weighted average of polls in each state conducted in 2012," Putnam [wrote](#) in explaining his methodology. "The weighting is based on how old a poll is. The older the poll is the more it is discounted. The most recent poll is given full weight."

Jay Cost, Weekly Standard: [Romney victory](#). "For two reasons," Cost writes. "(1) Romney leads among voters on trust to get the economy going again. (2) Romney leads among independents."

Philip Klein, The Examiner: [Obama 277, Romney 261](#). "I've given Romney the states that are essentially tied, in which he's led in at least some recent polls. But in states where Romney has trailed in nearly all polls, and in some cases by a comfortable margin, I'm giving them to Obama."

Ross Douthat, New York Times: [Obama 271, Romney 267](#). "In general, I think that the political class tends to overestimate the power of the Hispanic bloc, whose influence is growing more slowly than many pundits and strategists acknowledge. In general, I think that the political class tends to overestimate swing voters' sympathy for strident social liberalism, and to imagine a lockstep support for legal abortion among female voters that doesn't actually exist."

Simon Jackman, Stanford University: [Obama 332, Romney 206](#). "The model uses poll data (and house effect corrections) to generate estimates of Obama and Romney levels of support in the states (and at the national level). The modeling is done simultaneously: if you will, there are up to 52 latent quantities (e.g., Obama support in 50 states, the District of Columbia, plus the national level) moving over time, with polls giving us (noisy) snapshots as to where the latent targets might be on any given day."

Dave Weigel, Slate: [Romney 276, Obama 262](#). He originally had Romney winning Ohio. But, as he explained yesterday, he's not so confident about that anymore: "That was 48 hours ago. Since then, I've grown more bearish on the Republicans in Ohio, as the final reliable newspaper and college polls arrive. And since then I've [spent lots of time](#) with different Ohio voter groups, and been surprised by the power of the Ds. So, if you like, you can unskew the prediction."

Kenneth Bickers, University of Colorado and Kevin Berry, CU-Denver: [Romney 330, Obama 208](#). "While many election forecast models are based on the popular vote, the model developed by Bickers and Berry is based on the Electoral College and is the only one of its type to include more than one state-level measure of economic conditions." (This model was last updated in October.)

Jamelle Bouie, The American Prospect: [Obama 303, Romney 235](#). "[I]f Obama wins on Tuesday, the political science on debates will have won out; they can shift the short-term situation, but they don't fundamentally change the direction of an election."

George Will, The Washington Post: [Romney 321, Obama 217](#). “I guess the wild card in what I’ve projected is I’m projecting Minnesota to go for Romney. Now, that’s the only state in the union, because Mondale held it — native son Mondale held it when Romney was — when Reagan was getting 49 states — the only state that’s voted Democratic in nine consecutive elections. But this year, there’s a marriage amendment on the ballot that will bring out the evangelicals and I think could make the difference.”

Ben Domenech, The Transom: [Romney 278, Obama 260](#). “In sum, I see the bottom slipping out from under Obama’s feet, and a campaign hoping to hold on just long enough to salvage a slim victory, one where he is almost certain to lose the popular vote. He is underperforming among whites and independents, and particularly among those likeliest to vote. I have never believed in running the prevent defense, and Obama has been running it for months.”

Markos Moulitsas: [Obama 332, Romney 206](#). “Currently, national polling assumes a big dropoff from registered voters to likely voters. I don’t believe that’ll be the case, and we’re certainly not seeing it in the early vote—Democratic turnout is *up*. And the RV models have been [more accurate](#) historically.”

Karl Rove: [Romney 285, Obama 253](#). He’s got Romney winning Ohio, Iowa, Virginia, Colorado, and Florida.

Xu Cheng, Moodys’ Analytics: [Obama 303, Romney 235](#). Note that this prediction was made back in February: “This prediction is tied to the Moody’s Analytics current baseline forecast for U.S. growth, which assumes that most states will continue to recover at slow to moderate speeds.”

James Pethokoukis: [Romney 301, Obama 227](#). “Many pollsters are not catching the stratospheric GOP enthusiasm, *particularly* among voters of faith, in voting for Romney and Paul Ryan — not just against Obama and Joe Biden. In this way, the Bush-Kerry parallel from 2004 does not hold up”

Joe Trippi, Democratic consultant, [Obama 303, Romney 235](#). Trippi sent in his by e-mail—he’s going with [these states](#).

Dick Morris, FoxNews: [Romney 325, Obama 213](#). “It will be the biggest surprise in recent American political history,” Morris said. “It will rekindle the whole question on why the media played this race as a nailbiter where in fact Romney’s going to win by quite a bit.”

Jim Cramer, CNBC: [Obama 440, Romney 98](#). Here’s [a tweet](#) from Cramer: “No one is going to recall the guy who picks Obama by 10 electorals if it turns out to be 150 margin. Believe me.”

Dean Chambers, UnskewedPolls.com: [Romney 275, Obama 263](#). “Many others in the media project very favorable maps and projections for Obama but those doing so fail to realize or accept how heavily-skewed polls distort any average or analysis that relies on them.”

A ton of predictions from CNN’s pundits. You can see them all [here](#). Paul Begala thinks Obama will win 297-241. Ari Fleischer thinks Romney will win with “minimum 271 EVs.” And so on.

Did we miss any notable predictions? Let us know. And be sure to add yours in comments.

Update: We've been adding new predictions as they come in.

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