

Positions on the ballot paper

Draw for the Senate and draw for the House of Representatives

Key dates	Date
Close of nominations It is not possible to nominate as a candidate for election until the writs have been issued. Candidates must nominate by 12 noon on the date specified on the writs as close of nominations. (the Act s.156)	12 noon, Thursday 29 July 2010
Declaration of nominations The public announcement of nominations received followed by a draw for positions on the ballot paper, 24 hours after the close of nominations. (the Act s.176)	12 noon, Friday 30 July 2010

Election timetable according to the *Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act* and the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*.

The order in which candidates' names appear on the ballot paper is determined by a random draw that takes place immediately following the declaration of nominations.

The declaration of nominations takes place 24 hours after the close of nominations.

- A system of double randomisation is used to determine the order of groups and ungrouped candidates on the Senate ballot paper
- A separate draw is conducted for the Senate in each State and Territory
- A separate draw is conducted for every House of Representatives Division
- Double randomisation is also used to determine the order of candidates' names on House of Representatives ballot papers.

Candidates, media and the public are welcome to attend the draws conducted to determine the order of names on the relevant ballot papers.

House of Representatives draw

The Divisional Returning Officer (DRO) declares the House of Representatives nominations received for their Division at 12noon on the day after the nominations for the election close.

Following the declaration, the DRO conducts the double randomisation draw in the Divisional Office.

The first draw assigns a number to each candidate and the second draw determines the order in which each candidate appears on the ballot paper.

How is the draw done?

1. A list of the names of the candidates in the order of receipt of nominations is used for the draw.
2. Consecutively numbered balls equal to the number of candidates are placed in a container large enough for all the balls to move freely when it is rotated.
3. The container is rotated by an AEC officer (usually the DRO) who then invites any other person present to rotate the container.
4. A person who has been blindfolded prior to the container being rotated then selects the balls one by one and passes them to another person who reads out each number. As the numbers are called, they are allocated to the candidates. That is, the first number called is written against the first candidate on the list. The order of names on the list is the order in which they nominated.
5. The balls are then replaced in the container. Again, the container is rotated and any person present may rotate it.
6. The blindfolded person once again selects the balls one by one and passes them to another person who reads out the numbers. The numbers are placed in the second column on the list the order in which they are read out. Against each number is placed the name of the candidate who was allocated that number in the first draw.
7. The order of candidates in this second draw determines the order of names on the ballot paper.

Senate draw

The Australian Electoral Officer (AEO) declares the nominations received for the Senate in their State or Territory at 12noon on the day after the nominations for the election close.

Following the declaration, the AEO conducts the draw for positions on the ballot paper. This is usually conducted in the AEC capital city Head Office in the relevant State or Territory.

In Senate elections, the names of candidates included in groups are placed on the ballot paper before the names of candidates not included in groups.

For the purposes of the Senate draw and ballot paper printing, incumbent Senators who have given written notice of an intention to lodge a voting ticket are treated as a group.

The AEO determines the order of grouped and ungrouped candidates on the ballot paper by conducting a public draw for positions. This draw is conducted in two parts, with each part consisting of two draws.

There are two separate draws, one for groups and one for ungrouped candidates.

In the first part, the first draw allocates a number to each group and the second draw determines the order in which each group appears on the ballot paper.

This is followed by two draws for ungrouped candidates, with the first draw allocating a number to each ungrouped candidate and the second draw determining the order in which each ungrouped candidate appears on the ballot paper.

The Senate draws are conducted in this order because groups appear before ungrouped candidates on the ballot paper.

How is the draw done?

1. A number of consecutively numbered balls equal to the number of groups are placed in a container large enough for all the balls to move freely when it is rotated.
2. The container is rotated by the AEC officer (usually AEO) who then invites any other person present to rotate the container.
3. The first draw is to allocate a number to each group.
4. A person is blindfolded and selects the balls one by one and passes them to another person who reads out the number. As the numbers are called, they are allocated to the groups in the order in which they nominated.
5. The balls are then replaced in the container. Again, the container is rotated and any person present may rotate it.
6. The second draw is conducted for positions on the ballot paper using the first allocated number. The order that these numbers are drawn determines the order of names on the ballot paper.
7. This process is then repeated for ungrouped candidates to determine the order in which the names will appear in the final column.

What happens after each draw is complete?

After each draw, the AEC moves immediately to begin the printing of ballot papers.

Once the ballot papers are printed, voters who will be away on election day are able to begin voting in the election by casting an early vote.

Want more information?

For more information visit the AEC website at www.aec.gov.au or call us on **13 23 26**.



AEC
Australian Electoral Commission