

Host a Debate Watching Party!

This tip sheet is meant to complement the League of Women Voters' download, [Debate Watching 101](#). Watching and discussing candidate debates can help voters reflect on the issues that matter most to our communities and prepare us to participate fully in the 2016 elections.

Tips for hosting a debate watching party:

1. Host somewhere comfortable

Consider hosting a debate watching party at your home, a local university, restaurant, bar or club. Invite your guests to come at least a half-hour before the start of the debate so that you can get acquainted.



2. Invite...everyone!

Think about integrating your debate watching party with other group activities you participate in, such as book clubs, volunteer activities with your local League of Women Voters or other organization, or classes. Keep the discussion lively (and respectful) by inviting lots of folks to your debate watching party – including those with different political leanings from yourself.

3. Have election themed treats

Encourage your guests to bring beverages and snacks (food brings people together when politics can't!). You could also come up with an election themed cocktail for your 21+ crowd, or entice your guests with some red, white and blue cupcakes or cookies! This will keep the theme of the party alive and impress your guests.



4. Document the party



Take lots of photos! Make sure you share photos of your watch party on Facebook and Twitter, Instagram or Snapchat. You and your guests can use the hashtag #LWV2016 or other debate-centric hashtags so that others will see your posts.

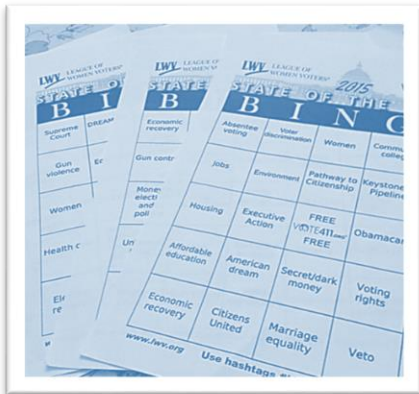
During and After the Debate: Discuss and Have Fun!

Candidate debates can spark interesting and surprising discussions about how politics affects your lives. To add some spirit to your debate watching party, invite your guests to arrive early so that you can offer some viewing tips to keep things lively. The key is to find ways to make the ‘watching’ part of the party a more active experience. Try out these ideas:

Directly after the debate is a perfect time to get everyone involved in discussion. Check out our [How to Judge a Candidate](#) page for the best ways to reflect on the debate and candidates. This will keep your guests focused and organized and encourage respectful discussion!



- Assign guests roles to follow – moderator, candidates, questioner, etc. After the debate, talk about how that perspective affects your view of the debate and the candidates.
- Talk about in advance the issues your guests most want to hear the candidates discuss- or even try policy issue “BINGO”!



- Make predictions about the topics that will be covered in the debate and which candidates might ‘win.’ After the debate, you can compare your expectations with what you saw and heard.
- Make a game of it – award points or prizes to the guest who can best argue for and/or against statements made by the candidates during their debate.
- **Keep your guests involved as voters.** Use a sign-in sheet to keep track of who attended your party,

then follow-up with election reminders to encourage them to get out the vote. Share information about the great resources available at www.VOTE411.org, remind attendees about upcoming voter registration deadlines, and ask them to talk to their friends and families about the importance of voting.



Best of luck with your party!