

Battleground state: North Carolina is no longer the Republican stronghold it once was

Presidential candidate strategy in North Carolina



North Carolina from Clinton's perspective

- Clinton appears to have a slight edge in North Carolina, leading Trump by 0.7 points in the most recent RCP Average
- Though NC is a key state for Clinton to take from Trump, Democratic party leaders may pressure the candidate to spend time in other states to bolster Senate candidates who may help the party gain a majority
- Black voters, an electorate with whom Clinton has a strong advantage, have the biggest share of the total vote in NC than in any other battleground state with 23%
- Obama was the first Democrat in three decades to carry the state, but lost to Romney in NC in 2012
- Clinton has 30 field offices in the state, while Trump has only recently opened three
- Clinton and Clinton supporters have booked \$16 million in PA ads, while Trump has booked just \$1 million in ads



North Carolina from Trump's perspective

- Trump and Clinton have been neck and neck in September NC polling, though overall Clinton appears to have a slight edge and as of September 13th, Trump trails Clinton by 0.7 points in the RCP Average
- State GOP operatives call NC a must-win state for Trump and worry that the candidate's under-developed ground game will fail to consolidate the Republican base in the state
- Without the base, Trump will have a difficult time overcoming his unfavorability with NC's large population of college-educated voters as well as Black and Latino voters
- Trump opened his first three field offices in the state on September 12th in an effort to surpass Clinton considering he was able to keep the race very close with little to no ground game in the state
- Lara Trump, the candidate's daughter-in-law, and Omarosa Manigault, a former *Celebrity Apprentice* contestant, met with volunteers at the launch of these offices to energize supporters

Sources: Katie Guleck, "Time running out on Trump in North Carolina," POLITICO, August 18, 2016; Gabby Morrongiello, "Trump opens first field offices in N.C. while Clinton opens no.20," Washington Examiner, September 12, 2016; Darren Samuelsohn, Katie Glueck, Kyle Cheney, Daniel Strauss, "25 battleground counties to watch," POLITICO, August 8, 2016; RealClearPolitics Poll Average, September 13, 2016; Niall Stanage; "Will Trump or Clinton Win? The 11 states deciding the race," The Hill, September 7, 2016.

Battleground state: Hope for Trump lies in appealing to North Carolina’s college-educated voters

Key battleground counties in New Hampshire

County	Past elections	Population	Registered voters	Analysis
Forsyth County	2016 primary: Clinton, Cruz 2012: Obama 53, Romney 46	369,019	Undeclared: 65,344 Republican: 75,145 Democrat: 101,967 Libertarian: 1,022	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• George W. Bush carried Forsyth County twice, but the county has since moved to the left and backed Barack Obama twice, even as the state flipped for Romney in 2012• Many counties in the state, including Forsyth, have urbanized over the past ten to 15 years
Wake County	2016 primary: Clinton, Cruz 2012: Romney 55, Obama 44	1,024,198	Undeclared: 228,638 Republican: 185,694 Democrat: 258,050 Libertarian: 3,711	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wake County is home to an affluent and well-educated population and contains Raleigh and part of the Research Triangle• The county was formerly Republican territory, but moved left for Obama in 2008 and 2012• This is a key county for Trump, because the only larger county (Mecklenburg, which includes Charlotte) is a Democrat stronghold• However, Trump will have to contend with his lack of favorability among college-educated voters

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