

Battleground state: Iowa is beginning to look like Trump's first step on a potential path to victory

Presidential candidate strategy in Iowa



Iowa from Clinton's perspective

- *RealClearPolitics's* average shows Clinton trailing in Iowa by 4.3 points as of September 15th
- In 2012 white voters cast 93% of the IA ballots; Clinton does relatively well among white Democrats, but in general does not do as well as Trump among white men
- Clinton has a difficult history in Iowa stemming from her 2008 campaign's third place finish in the Democratic caucuses
- According to a Monmouth University poll conducted in Iowa, only 37% of those polled said they would vote for Clinton, down from 42% in the same poll two months ago
- Iowa's Democrat base is active and consolidated, but Clinton's main task in the state will be keeping moderate and right-leaning Democrats from voting Republican or staying home on election day
- However, IA Democrats expect moderate Republicans may be open to moving left as well



Iowa from Trump's perspective

- Trump's lead has been fluctuating in Iowa, but has grown steadily in September and has reached its highest margin of 4.3 points in the most recent average
- The mostly white electorate could be an advantage for Trump who has 51% support from likely white voters in *Huffpollster's* demographics average as compared to Clinton's 40%
- Trump is coming off a loss to Ted Cruz in the Iowa caucuses and will have to make sure the evangelical and far-right voters don't stay home on election day
- Trump's campaign will also have to watch out for Republican voters turning to conservative third-party candidate, Gary Johnson
- IA GOP Chairman Jeff Kaufmann said, "Reagan Democrats, union Democrats—there's a lot more opportunity to bring those Democrats into the fold than Clinton has at bringing moderate Republicans into her fold."

Sources: Nick Gass, "Iowa poll: Trump expands lead over Clinton," *POLITICO*, September 15, 2016; Natalie Jackson, Ariel Edwards-Levy, "Clinton leads nationally, but struggles in some battleground states," *Huffpollster*, August 15, 2016; Darren Samuelsohn, Kyle Cheney, Daniel Strauss, "25 battleground counties to watch," *POLITICO*, August 8, 2016; *RealClearPolitics* Polling Averages, September 9, 2016.

Battleground state: Trump is making a hard play for Iowa’s independent voters in the state’s key counties

Key battleground counties in Iowa

County	Past elections	Population	Registered voters	Analysis
Polk County	<p>2016 primary: Clinton, Rubio</p> <p>2012: Obama 56, Romney 42</p>	476,711	<p>Democrat: 116,093</p> <p>Republican: 89,644</p> <p>Unaffiliated: 86,703</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Democrats have a registration advantage in Polk County, Iowa’s most populous and home to Des Moines • Clinton’s strategy here will be to run up her margin as much as possible to offset likely losses from more conservative parts of the state • Trump will likely not be able to win here—he came in third in the caucuses—but if he can keep it close that will make winning the state overall more likely
Scott County	<p>2016 primary: Sanders, Rubio</p> <p>2012: Obama 56, Romney 42</p>	172,126	<p>Unaffiliated: 49,026</p> <p>Democrat: 40,563</p> <p>Republican: 35,146</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The last four Democratic presidential nominees have won Scott County, but neither Clinton nor Trump won it during the caucuses • The county is home to the state’s third-largest city, Davenport, and packed with independent voters • Trump is targeting this county heavily—it was the first visit Trump made to Iowa after accepting the Republican nomination

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