

Do October surprises move the polls?

Timeline of October surprises 1



Harry Enten, "How much do 'October surprises' move the polls?" October 30, 2016, FiveThirtyEight; Taylor Gee, "15 October surprises that wreaked havoc on Politics," Politico, October 4, 2016.

October surprises might move the polls, but they rarely affect the election outcome

Timeline of October surprises 2

Oct. 6, 2008	<p>The stock market plummets in October</p> <p>In September 2008, Lehman Brothers collapsed and by early October the financial system had received a \$700 billion bailout. The state of the economy hurt McCain’s chances of winning, but the huge October stock market losses did not significantly affect the polls or the outcome.</p>	➔	<p>Polling averages: Before: Obama +6 After: Obama +8 Result: Obama +7</p>
Oct. 29, 2012	<p>Hurricane Sandy devastates the East Coast</p> <p>When Romney did not win the 2012 election, many pundits blamed Sandy. Obama was able to demonstrate his strong leadership before, during and after the storm. While the polls did not move after Sandy, Obama did win by a larger margin than polls indicated.</p>	➔	<p>Polling averages: Before: Obama +1 After: Obama +1 Result: Obama +4</p>
Oct. 28, 2016	<p>FBI Director James Comey announces the reopening of Clinton email server investigation</p> <p>Potentially violating the Hatch Act, Comey releases a letter to Congress informing them of new emails found on computer of Clinton aide Huma Abedine’s husband in the course of another investigation. Polling is most accurate a week after an event occurs, so the effect of this announcement will not be known until shortly before election day.</p>	➔	<p>Polling averages: Before: Clinton +5.4 After: TBD Result: TBD</p>

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