

# Sample Instant Runoff Election: Ruler of the Universe

## THE BALLOT

On the ballot, voters mark their 1<sup>st</sup> choice, 2<sup>nd</sup> choice and 3<sup>rd</sup> choice.

**Sample Ballot:** Mark your choices by filling in the ovals.  
Only one choice per candidate. Only one choice per column.

Candidate	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice
Luke Skywalker	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Princess Leia	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Darth Vader	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Chewbacca	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Write in:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Write in:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## THE COUNT AND RECOUNT

Candidates	1st Round		2nd Round		Final Round	
	Tally	Status	Tally	Status	Tally	Status
Luke Skywalker	25	<i>Continuing</i>	25+2 = 27	<i>Defeated</i>	0	
Princess Leia	30	<i>Continuing</i>	30+6 = 36	<i>Continuing</i>	36+ 24 = 60	<b><i>Elected</i></b>
Darth Vader	35	<i>Continuing</i>	35+2 = 37	<i>Continuing</i>	37+ 3 = 40	<i>Defeated</i>
Chewbacca	10	<i>Defeated</i>	0		0	

In this sample election, 100 votes were cast. To win, a candidate needs at least 51 votes (a majority). The voters ranked their three favorite candidates in order of their preference. Though write-in votes were possible, no one chose to select a write-in candidate.

### Round 1:

Only the first choice votes are counted. As seen in the Tally column for the first round, 25 voters chose Luke Skywalker as their first choice, 30 chose Princess Leia as their first choice, 35 chose Darth Vader, and 10 chose Chewbacca. As you can see, none of the candidates have 51 votes or more, so the election will have to go on to an “instant runoff.”

In this example, if a candidate needed only the *most* votes to win, rather than a majority, Darth Vader would have won – even though he received only 35% of the vote. Clearly, this is a result that the majority of people would be unhappy with. The forces of good are splitting the vote, so although more voters want a “good” candidate, the Dark Side of the Force comes out in the lead in the first round. Fortunately, this is an Instant Runoff election, so Darth Vader does not win outright.

**Round 2:**

Chewbacca had the fewest votes in the first round. Because he lacks the voter support he needs to be an effective leader, he is eliminated. Of those who selected Chewbacca as their first choice, two voted for Luke Skywalker as their second choice, two for Darth Vader, and six for Princess Leia. The votes are distributed accordingly, as you can see in the 2nd Round tallies.

**Round 3:**

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> Round, Luke Skywalker had the least number of votes (27), so in the 3<sup>rd</sup> round he is eliminated. Three of his voters selected Darth Vader as their next preference, while twenty-four selected Princess Leia. The happy result is that Princess Leia, though apparently trailing Darth Vader in the previous rounds, wins with 60% of the vote.