

# YOUR VOICE. YOUR VOTE.

PRESENTED BY THE  
**GAP YEAR**  
ASSOCIATION

## 4 SIMPLE STEPS TO VOTING DURING YOUR GAP YEAR

Most American citizens over the age of 18 are entitled to vote in federal and state elections, and we believe it remains one of the more important duties of an engaged citizen. It's important to know that **even if you are traveling during an election, you still have a right to submit your ballot and have your voice count.** We recommend getting an early start, and checking on your state's absentee ballot request procedures and return deadlines [HERE](#).

### STEP 1: REGISTER TO VOTE

Are you registered to vote? [Check your voter registration status online](#). If you ARE registered, great! Move on to requesting your absentee ballot. If not, then you need to get registered. If you need [to register to vote, you can do so online, in person, or by mail](#). 38 states and the District of Colombia allow you to register online. The others require you to register in person, so make sure you look up your registration status before embarking on any travels. [Registration deadlines](#) vary between states. We recommend visiting [Rock the Vote](#) for additional resources and guidance.

### STEP 2: REQUEST AN ABSENTEE BALLOT

**Federal Voter's Assistance Program:** This federal organization specializes in helping service members and other Americans living overseas to vote—visit their site for step by step directions, printable forms, and other details.

**Youth Vote:** This non-partisan site dedicated to helping people vote has a handy Student's Studying Abroad page and a printable [Study Abroad and Vote Toolkit](#).

### STEP 3: VOTE!

Depending on how you've requested your absentee ballot, it may come by post or email. You'll then need to fill it out and mail it in by the deadline. If your ballot does not arrive by your state's deadline, it may not be counted—be sure to double check your absentee voting deadline well in advance!

### STEP 4: RETURN YOUR BALLOT

This might be obvious, but...even if you're registered, even if you get your ballot, even if you fill it out...if you don't mail it back to the right place at the right time, you haven't voted! Put voting at the top of your priority list for your pre-departure preparations, and make sure you have a plan in place to make your vote count.

