

# Five election disinformation trends to expect — and what to know about them

During polarized times, elections become flashpoints for false claims and bogus rumors about candidates and voting. A quick review of these five common disinformation trends and tactics can help you avoid being duped this election season.

### 1. Expect to see raw videos presented out of context as “evidence” of fraud.

**THE TRUTH:** People determined to sow doubt in the integrity of U.S. elections will misrepresent video footage of poll workers doing ordinary parts of their jobs. Trolls are also known to stage footage of ballots being destroyed. An actual voting fraud scandal would be covered extensively by credible news outlets, not just shared on social media.

### 2. Know that vote totals will jump late at night as more densely populated urban counties report results.

**THE TRUTH:** Urban counties have far more ballots to count on election night and traditionally vote more Democratic than Republican. Results from more conservative, rural counties come in first.

### 3. Assume that some people will try to declare a race over before it actually is.

**THE TRUTH:** When the outcome of a race is clear on election night, expect news organizations to call it. But know that even then, the results aren't official until the vote is certified by officials — a process that can take weeks.

### 4. Remember that recent artificial intelligence technologies make it easy to fabricate convincing images, video and audio.

**THE TRUTH:** If people are sharing what they say is a shocking photo, video clip or audio recording of a candidate in the days leading up to the election, it might be an AI-generated fake. Check it against standards-based news sources to see if it's real. You can also do a reverse image search with tools like [TinEye](#) to identify AI-generated and digitally altered images. [Here's an example](#) of how to do that.

### 5. Be ready for partisan claims about voter fraud and ineligible voters — even though election fraud is exceedingly rare.

**THE TRUTH:** It's become popular during the last few presidential elections for campaigns and supporters to claim — even in advance — that cheating will take place. But the evidence is clear: Election fraud cases are extremely rare.

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#### Nonpartisan election resources:

- [Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency's election security “rumor vs. reality” webpage](#)
- [USA.gov voting and elections webpage](#)
- [Vote.org website](#)
- [BallotReady](#)
- [Vote411.org \(League of Women Voters\)](#)

This prebunking guide for the 2024 U.S. presidential election is a collaboration between the [News Literacy Project](#) and the [Mental Immunity Project](#).