

Issue	Republican Party	Democratic Party
Social Security	Social security should be privatized (based on private investments).	Social security should remain a government sponsored insurance plan for retirees.
Jobs	Pro small business. Supports giving small businesses tax incentives so that more jobs can be created.	Encourage businesses to keep jobs here and not outsource them overseas. Supports unions and advocates for the rights of low income workers.
Economy	Supports free market competition and entrepreneurship, corporate deregulation and cutting entitlement spending.	Increase taxes to cut deficit. Believes large deficit negatively affects government services and that low deficits stimulate the economy.
Security/Defense	Believe in a proactive military and defense. Supports building weapons and technology that serve to protect our nation. Believe that peace is achieved through strong defense. Increase defense and research budget.	Believe in a limited missile defense. Oppose nuclear buildup in the U.S. Believe that peace is achieved through worldwide relationship building.
Tax Reform	Supports tax cuts, low interest rates and the repeal of the death tax penalty in effort to stimulate the economy.	Generally supports raising taxes on the wealthy, lowering taxes for the middle class.
Immigration	Generally supports closed or tight borders and tracking system for foreign travelers.	Support illegal alien's ability and right to become citizens and giving them more protections under the law.
Faith	Religion strongly associated with Republican party. Advocate free exercise of religion.	Strict adherence between the separation between church and state. Promote secular issues and a more secular nation.
Education	Promote school choice/vouchers and homeschooling. Supports voluntary student supported prayer in school. Opposes gender and race quotas in colleges.	Oppose vouchers. Increase NCLB federal funding. Enact new taxes to decrease class size and hire new teachers.
Energy	Support tax incentives for energy production. Support increased drilling in U.S. in order to be less dependent on foreign nation's oil.	Wish to find environmentally friendly energy sources and solutions. Oppose increased drilling, especially in the U.S., due to environmental concerns.
Healthcare	Keep healthcare private. Would like to impose caps (<i>maximum limit</i>) on malpractice suits. Supports reformed medicare to give seniors more choices.	Supports more federally funded healthcare programs.

Foreign Policy	Spread Democracy. Supports UN reform. Wants to stop WMD proliferation countries. Believe that nations who support terrorists are just as bad as the terrorists themselves.	Strongly supports worldwide coalitions and multi-national programs (UN & NATO). Supports aid for disadvantaged countries. Supports the UN.
Campaign Finance Reform (<i>Rules/Laws on where & how much money can be donated/contributed to political campaigns</i>)	Generally support soft money contributions from individuals, but supports limiting it from corporations. Also supports full disclosure.	Favor more regulation with spending limits on individuals and corporations.
Environment	Supports privatizing federal land. Believe in cap and trade market based air pollution reductions and that the market should regulate itself.	Generally puts the interest of the environment over business. Wants to maintain federal land under government control.
Guns	Limited gun control.	Strict gun control.

Comparison Chart

Philosophy	Conservative, right-leaning.	Liberal, left-leaning.
Economic Ideas	Believe taxes shouldn't be increased for anyone (including the wealthy) and that wages should be set by the free market.	Minimum wages and progressive taxation, i.e., higher tax rates for higher income brackets. Born out of anti-federalist ideals but evolved over time to favor more government regulation.
Social and human ideas	Based on individual rights and justice	Based on community and social responsibility
Stance on Military issues	Increased spending	Decreased spending
Stance on Death Penalty	A large majority of Republicans support the death penalty.	While support for the death penalty is strong among Democrats, opponents of the death penalty are a substantial fraction of the Democratic base.
Stance on Taxes	Tend to favor a "flat tax" (same tax rate regardless of income). Generally opposed to raising taxes.	Progressive (high income earners should be taxed at a higher rate). Generally not opposed to raising taxes to fund government.
Stance on Government Regulation	Government regulations hinder free market capitalism and job growth.	Government regulations are needed to protect consumers.
Healthcare Policy	Private companies can provide healthcare services more efficiently than government-run	Support universal healthcare; strong support of government involvement in healthcare,

	programs. Oppose Obamacare provisions like (1) requirement for individuals to buy health insurance or pay a fine, (2) required coverage of contraceptives.	including Medicare and Medicaid. Generally support Obamacare.
Stance on Immigration	Republicans are generally against amnesty for any undocumented immigrants. They also oppose President Obama's executive order that put a moratorium on deporting certain workers. Republicans also fund stronger enforcement actions at the border.	There is greater overall support in the Democratic party for a moratorium on deporting - or offering a pathway to citizenship to - certain undocumented immigrants. e.g. those with no criminal record, who have lived in the U.S. for 5+ years.
Traditionally strong in states of...	Oklahoma, Kansas, Texas	California, Massachusetts, New York
Symbol	Elephant	Donkey
Color	Red	Blue
Founded in	1854	1824
Website	www.gop.com	www.democrats.org
Famous Presidents	Abraham Lincoln, Teddy Roosevelt, Ronald Reagan, George Bush, Richard Nixon	Franklin Roosevelt (FDR), John F. Kennedy, Bill Clinton, Woodrow Wilson, Jimmy Carter, Barack Obama
Membership	30.7 million (as of 2012)	43.1 million (as of 2012)

U.S. politics is dominated by its two major political parties, the Democrats and Republicans. While it's impossible to peg-hole all members of either party on every political issue, there are several key points that are held by the vast majority of each party's members. These key points are summarized in the parties' platforms.

Health Care

Democrats tend to favor a higher degree of government oversight of health care to ensure that health care is available to all people. Republicans oppose universal health care legislation based on the belief these programs, including the Affordable Health Care Act passed by a Democratic Congress and signed into law by President Obama in 2010, will drive up overall prices and negatively impact the quality of health care.

Tax Policy

Both Republicans and Democrats favor tax cuts in some instances. Republicans favor across-the-board tax cuts, both for individuals of all income levels and for corporate interests. Democrats favor tax cuts for lower and middle-income families, but believe taxes should be raised on wealthy individuals and

corporations. In many cases, Democrats favor temporary exceptions for businesses that are creating employment opportunities.

Social Programs

Generally speaking, Democrats support more tax dollars going to welfare, food stamps, unemployment benefits, Medicaid and other programs designed to support people in need. Most Republicans acknowledge some need for such programs, but favor tighter controls and less funding for them. Many Republicans favor government funding of privately run social programs, while Democrats believe the federal and state governments should run social welfare programs.

Social Issues

Republicans tend to be conservative on social issues, while Democrats tend to be progressive. The Republican Party's platform opposes the legalization of gay marriage and favors legally defining marriage as being between a man and a woman. The Democratic Party's platform supports extending the rights to marriage and all of the benefits that come with it to gay couples. Republicans generally oppose any attempts to introduce gun control legislation. Democrats have a wide variety of stances on the issue, but generally support some measure of gun control.

Environmentalism and Energy Issues

When environmental concerns and energy concerns clash, as they often do, Democrats tend to vote in favor of environmental concerns, while Republicans tend to favor energy concerns. Democrats often oppose efforts to open new areas to drilling for oil based on concerns about the environment. Republicans support allowing companies to expand their oil-drilling activities. Democrats stress renewable resources such as solar and wind power in their efforts to achieve energy independence and favor government subsidies for these industries. Republicans support allowing market conditions to dictate which types of energy are used.

Labor and Free Trade

Republicans believe that the best way to ensure prosperity for the largest number of Americans is to create an environment favorable to businesses, believing that all Americans benefit when businesses are prosperous. Democrats approach the issue from the other side, suggesting that businesses prosper when all people have more resources with which to purchase their products. Democrats favor increases to the minimum wage; Republicans oppose minimum wage hikes. Democrats are more likely to favor trade restrictions in an effort to protect American jobs, while Republicans are more likely to favor free trade in an effort to keep costs down for consumers and promote the profitability of business.

Foreign Policy

There is widespread disagreement about foreign policy in both parties. Both parties have favored military intervention in other countries in some instances. Generally speaking, when military involvement is believed to be called for, Democrats favor targeted strikes while Republicans favor displacing enemy regimes. Both parties agree that U.S. aid is sometimes needed in other parts of the world, but they sometimes disagree about who should receive aid and what the nature of the aid should be.