

Presidential Debate 1, outline:  
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1. Jim Lehrer's introduction
  - a. Sponsored by commission
  - b. 90 minutes in length, following rules
  - c. Topic is foreign policy and homeland security. Questions by Jim.
  - d. Outline of the rules
  - e. Green/Yellow/Red lights, backup buzzer system
  - f. Audience rules
2. Welcome the candidates
  - a. Audience cheers
  - b. Candidates shake hands
  - c. Move to podium
3. To Kerry: Do you believe you could do a better job than President Bush at preventing another 9/11 type terrorist attack on the United States?
  - a. Kerry:
    - i. Thanks everyone for organizing debate
    - ii. Can make America safer
    - iii. Different set of convictions about how to make America safe
    - iv. Safest/strongest when leading the world with strong alliances
    - v. 90% of casualties and costs in Iraq??
    - vi. Better plan for homeland security and war in Iraq
    - vii. Rebuild alliances, reach out to Muslim world
    - viii. "Radical Islamic Muslims"
    - ix. Summit of all the allies
    - x. (Jumbled answer)
  - b. Bush:
    - i. Sept 11 changed how America must look at the world
    - ii. Pursued al Qaeda, found lots of them
    - iii. Harboring is just as bad as being one
    - iv. 10 million registered to vote in Afghanistan
    - v. In Iraq they saw a threat
    - vi. (Kerry taking notes)
    - vii. Pursuing policy of disrupting those who proliferate weapons of mass destruction (Libya, A. Q. Khan)
    - viii. Strategy of pursuing freedom
4. Do you believe the election of Senator Kerry on Nov. 2 will increase the chances of another 9/11 terrorist attack?
  - a. Bush:
    - i. He's shown American people he knows how to lead so he doesn't think it'll happen.
    - ii. Nation has a solemn duty to defeat the ideology of hate
    - iii. Rattling on, but solid, passionate
    - iv. We have a duty to defeat enemy
    - v. Never waver, be strong, stay on offensive spread liberty

- vi. In Iraq, it's tough, b/c enemy understands stakes
- b. Kerry
  - i. Believes in being strong, resolute, determined
  - ii. Also have to be smart
  - iii. Don't divert from real war on terror
  - iv. No connection between Iraq and Al Qaeda
  - v. (Bush looks peeved)
  - vi. Important military figures supporting him, lists them
  - vii. Won't take eye off goal
  - viii. President "outsourced" job of fighting
- 5. What colossal misjudgments has President Bush made in this area?
  - a. Kerry:
    - i. Said he'd build a true alliance, and would exhaust options, but he didn't. Didn't even want to go to U.N.
    - ii. Alludes to flip flopping
    - iii. Promised he'd go to war as a last resort, didn't.
    - iv. 90% of casualties, 90% of costs
    - v. Incidentally, Afghanistan isn't going well either.
  - b. Bush:
    - i. My opponent declared that Hussein was a grave threat in 2002
    - ii. In Dec 2003, world is safer without Saddam
    - iii. Hardest decision a president can make,
    - iv. He wanted to go to U.N.
    - v. Free world passed a resolution, but Saddam had no intention of disarming.
    - vi. "Pre-September 11 mentality"
    - vii. World is safer
- 6. What about Senator Kerry's point, the comparison he drew between the priorities, going after Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein
  - a. Bush:
    - i. It's a global effort
    - ii. We can do both
    - iii. We need strong alliances, and we have them
    - iv. Need to keep weapons out of their hands
    - v. There are multiple foci of war on terror
    - vi. "Of course we're after Saddam Hussein, I mean bin Laden"
    - vii. More than one front, Phillipines, Iraq (Zarqawi)
    - viii. Iraq is/will be on track, and we have a plan
  - b. Kerry:
    - i. President talked about Iraq as a center of the war on terror. Wasn't until it was invaded!
    - ii. Diverted forces from Afghanistan before congress approved it
    - iii. Rushed to war without a plan to win the peace
    - iv. Didn't provide all the supplies he should have
    - v. More people killed each month, etc.
    - vi. Beheadings, etc.

- c. Bush:
    - i. Kerry voted to authorize force
    - ii. He can't lead the country if he says "wrong" what message does that send everybody
  - d. Kerry:
    - i. I am resolved, I will succeed for those troops
    - ii. That doesn't mean it wasn't a mistake in judgment to go
    - iii. We can succeed but this president can't
    - iv. We need someone who can bring allies back
7. As president what would you do specifically in addition to or differently to increase the homeland security of the United States with respect to what Bush is doing.
- a. Kerry:
    - i. President is cutting cops program
    - ii. Shutting down firehouses
    - iii. Isn't fixing tunnels, bridges, subway system
    - iv. 95% of containers that come into ports aren't expected
    - v. Aircraft cargo holds aren't x-rayed
    - vi. Gave a tax cut rather than invest in homeland security
    - vii. Long before tax cut for the rich, invest in homeland security
    - viii. President gave in to the chemical industry
    - ix. Won't secure nuclear material
  - b. Bush:
    - i. How's he gonna pay for this, huge tax gap, "anyway"
    - ii. We've tripled budget
    - iii. More border patrol
    - iv. "Modernizing our borders"
    - v. 3.1 billion on fire and police,
    - vi. Best way is to stay on the offense, we need to be right 100% of time, enemy only once
    - vii. Changed culture of the FBI
    - viii. PATRIOT Act is vital, congress must renew
    - ix. Best way to protect is to stay on the offense
  - c. Kerry:
    - i. FBI has changed its culture, but over 100,000 un-listened-to hours of tapes.
    - ii. More money? How about doing everything possible
  - d. Bush:
    - i. We're doing everything we can to protect America
    - ii. Works with FBI, meets with Mueller every morning.
    - iii. You need a president on offence
8. What criteria would you use to determine to when to bring U.S. troops home from iraq
- a. Bush:
    - i. Train Iraqis for security
    - ii. Best way to do it is to get Iraqis in charge

- iii. When generals on ground say Iraqis are ready to take charge, stability, elections have happened, on way to free election
  - iv. Hopes it's as soon as possible
  - v. Artificial deadlines won't work
  - vi. Thanks for what you're doing, we're standing with you strong
  - vii. Home when mission is done
  - viii. Free Iraq will do all kinds of things
- b. Kerry:
- i. To Troops: Help is on the way
  - ii. They'll get better than what they're getting today
  - iii. Better way to do this
  - iv. Bush Sr. said no viable exit strategy, troops will be occupiers in a hostile land
  - v. Only building guarded in Baghdad was oil refinery
  - vi. Need other allies, fresh credibility, new start
- c. Bush:
- i. What message does wrong war, wrong place, wrong time send?
  - ii. Help is on the way, hard to tell when he voted against \$87
  - iii. Voted for before against
- d. Kerry:
- i. Kerry made mistake about how he talked about war
  - ii. President made a mistake in action
  - iii. When something going wrong, make it right
9. Speaking of Vitetnam, you spoke to congress in 1971 and asked them "how do you ask a man to be the last man to die for a mistake." Are Americans in Iraq now dying for a mistake?
- a. Kerry:
- i. No...
  - ii. But Bush didn't hold true to his promises
  - iii. Same stuff about Iraq
  - iv. Everyone has a stake in not having civil war in Iraq
  - v. President isn't a statesman, he pushed them away.
- b. Bush:
- i. That's totally absurd, we support the U.N.
  - ii. We had allies, Blair, Kwasniewski
  - iii. Cornerstone of plan is to call upon nations to serve
  - iv. What's the message going to be? Join us for a diversion?
  - v. I know how these people think, I talk to them, sit, talk to them frequently, they're not going to follow Kerry, someone whose conviction changes all the time due to public opinion
  - vi. We will have summits (one in Japan, one in Arab world)
- c. Kerry:
- i. U.N. offered help after Baghdad fell,
  - ii. We didn't take them up to transfer authority or reconstruction
  - iii. When we went in, 3 countries, we can do better
- d. Bush:

- i. Forgot Poland, and there's now 30 nations.
    - ii. Kerry's denigrating the contributions of these brave soldiers.  
Called them the coerced and the bribed
- 10. You have said there was a "miscalculation of what the conditions would be in post-war Iraq" What was the miscalculation and how did it happen.
  - a. Bush:
    - i. Because we achieved such a rapid victory, more of the Saddam loyalists would be around, but because we did so well, most Baathists disappeared
    - ii. So we're fighting them now
    - iii. It's hard work, I understand that, I get the casualty reports, I see the TV
    - iv. I'm tuned in
    - v. We're making progress
    - vi. Our alliances are strong
    - vii. Hard work to go from a tyranny to a democracy.
  - b. Kerry:
    - i. What troubles a lot of people is that the president has said that even knowing there were no weapons of mass destruction, no immanent threat, no connection to Al Qaeda, he would have done things the same way
    - ii. I would not
    - iii. I'm trying to talk the truth
    - iv. That's what good policy and leadership is based on.
    - v. I have nothing but respect for what the British have done
    - vi. 8,300
    - vii. Others below 4000
    - viii. Below that nobody out of the hundreds
    - ix. Not a genuine coalition
    - x. Principally USA, GBR, today we're 90% casualties 90% costs
    - xi. Meanwhile North Korea has nuclear weapons
- 11. You've repeatedly accused President Bush of not telling the truth about Iraq, of lying to the American people about Iraq. Give us examples of that.
  - a. Kerry:
    - i. I haven't said lied
    - ii. He hasn't been candid
    - iii. He told us about nuclear materials that didn't exist
    - iv. Coalition
    - v. Process aborted ("Time for diplomacy is over")
    - vi. Rushed to war
    - vii. Mised people in a speech, saying they planned carefully
    - viii. Last resort? No!
    - ix. Most Americans know the difference
    - x. I've worked with world leaders for LONGER than the President
    - xi. He'll be like Reagan, Kennedy
  - b. Bush:

- i. Bin Laden used invasion as an opportunity
    - ii. But bin Laden can't decide. Americans decide. Wha?
    - iii. Kerry wasn't misleading when he said these various things that sound like they agree with Bush's policies
    - iv. Misleading is to say that you can lead if you keep changing your positions, not how a commander in chief acts
    - v. They both looked at the same intelligence
    - vi. He used that intelligence to support the auth of force
  - c. Kerry:
    - i. I've had one position, one consistent position, wrong way to disarm him
  - d. Bush:
    - i. Only thing consistent is inconsistency
    - ii. I expect to win
12. Has the war in Iraq been worth the cost of American lives, 1,052 today?
- a. Bush:
    - i. Every life matters
    - ii. It's the hardest part of the job
    - iii. Mentions an individual whose husband was killed in Iraq
    - iv. (Sounds insincere, I think)
    - v. I understand the stakes of this war on terror
    - vi. We must spread freedom, etc.
    - vii. It IS worth it, because in the long term a free Iraq and Afghanistan will set a good example for the world
  - b. Kerry:
    - i. I understand what the president is talking about because I know what it means to lose people in combat
    - ii. Question reminds him of his own thinking when he came back from Vietnam
    - iii. Vital not to confuse war with warriors
    - iv. I believe I can get this job done because I am determined for those soldiers.
    - v. I have a plan for Iraq, etc.
    - vi. President is not getting the job done
    - vii. JohnKerry.com
    - viii. President's plan: "More of the same"
    - ix. I will hunt and kill the terrorists
  - c. Bush:
    - i. I understand what it means to be commander in chief. Wrong, wrong, wrong, troops would wonder, how can I follow this guy
    - ii. Cannot lead terror if you keep changing position
    - iii. Not a grand diversion!
  - d. Kerry:
    - i. Powell told president, pottery barn rule, if you break it, you gotta fix it. That's what we have to do, no inconsistency.
    - ii. Soldiers know it isn't being done right yet, I'll do it right!

13. Can you give us specifics in terms of a scenario, timelines, etc. for ending major U.S. military involvement in Iraq
- a. Kerry:
    - i. I didn't say I would bring troops out in six months
    - ii. If we are successful, we can begin to draw the troops down in six months
    - iii. Critical element of success is to convince them that the U.S. doesn't have a long term plan to be occupying Iraq
    - iv. We make them think we have designs on the place, oil, etc.
    - v. Change dynamics on the ground
    - vi. Close borders
    - vii. Prepared to bring rest of world in
    - viii. United States has no long term designs on staying in Iraq
    - ix. Get all the troops out with minimum amount needed for training and logistics
    - x. That's how we'll win, by rapidly training Iraqis
  - b. Bush:
    - i. 100,000 troops trained
    - ii. More by end of year
    - iii. We're getting the job done, but it's hard work because there's a determined enemy
    - iv. Allawi came, Kerry criticized him. Said Allawi was like a puppet. No way to treat someone, can't change dynamics on ground
    - v. Send consistent, sound messages to Iraqi people
  - c. Kerry:
    - i. Iraqis want to be free and could be free
    - ii. Bush president hasn't shown how he'll go about it the right way, more of the same
    - iii. Allawi said, terrorists are pouring over the border
    - iv. Intelligence assessment: More of same to Civil war
  - d. Bush:
    - i. Allawi said that b/c he recognizes it's an essential part of war on terror.
    - ii. Big stakes, can't leave, hold line, win, we'll win war in Iraq
14. Does the Iraq experience make it more likely or less likely that you would take the United States into another preemptive military action
- a. Bush:
    - i. I hope I never have to
    - ii. Enemy attacked us and I have a solemn duty to protect Americans
    - iii. By speaking clearly, doing what we say, not sending mixed messages, we'll be able to avoid this
    - iv. No doubt in his mind Saddam blah blah blah
    - v. If Kerry was President world would be worse off. We use diplomacy every chance we get
    - vi. Look at Libya,
    - vii. Less likely

- b. Kerry:
  - i. President said: the enemy attacked us. Saddam didn't attack us. Osama attacked us
  - ii. When we had Osama surrounded, we didn't use best trained troops in world, outsourced job to Afghan warlords who were on the other side a week before
  - iii. That's the enemy that attacked us, was allowed to walk out.
  - iv. They're now in 60 countries
  - v. He's wrong that Saddam would have been stronger
  - vi. Saddam would have been continually weakening.
- c. Bush:
  - i. "Of course I know Osama attacked us"
  - ii. To think another round of resolutions would have worked is ludicrous. Significant difference of opinion.
  - iii. Saddam would have been stronger if we hadn't dealt with him
- d. Kerry:
  - i. 35-40 countries in the world had a greater capability of making weapons when he focused on Saddam
  - ii. While he's been diverted, N. Korea got weapons, Iran is moving towards it, Darfur has genocide, Kerry would have made better choice

15. What is your position on the whole concept of Preemptive war

- a. Kerry:
  - i. President always has that right
  - ii. No president through all of American history the right to preempt in any way necessary to protect US.
  - iii. Have to do it in a way that passes the global test. People need to understand why, you can prove you did it for right reasons
  - iv. Sec. Of State had to apologize to war
  - v. In Cuban Missile Crisis, no need to see photos
  - vi. Who would say that today!?
  - vii. Credibility of United States is in question
  - viii. Iran and North Korea are more dangerous
  - ix. He'll never take his eye whole time, fighting proliferation
  - x. Bush turned away from treaties, won't help.
- b. Bush:
  - i. What does Kerry mean by pass the global test
  - ii. It's about protecting the American people
  - iii. On not signing treaties:
  - iv. I wouldn't join ICC.
  - v. It's the right move not to join a foreign court where our people could be prosecuted. Kerry supports it
  - vi. Trying to be popular if it's not in our best interests, doesn't make sense

16. Do you believe that diplomacy and sanctions can resolve the nuclear programs in North Korea and Iran, take them in any order you like.



- a. Bush:
    - i. In N. Korea, yes.
    - ii. We found out they weren't honoring agreement we signed
    - iii. Involved other nations, agreed with China, began new dialog
    - iv. Included S. Korea, Japan, and Russia
    - v. If Kim Jong Il decides again not to honor agreement, he'll be doing injustice with China as well.
    - vi. On Iran, hope we can do same thing. Convince Iranian Mullahs to abandon nuclear ambition
    - vii. IAEA involved, European nations involved
  - b. Kerry:
    - i. Iran: Brits, French, Germans initiated effort without the United States
    - ii. We could have done better.
    - iii. North Korea: We had inspectors in there, thanks to Clinton, we knew where fuel rods are, Powell announced we were going to continue, but Bush reversed that while S. Korea president was here, and that put off discussion for 2 years
    - iv. Meanwhile, everything went to pot,
    - v. Today 4-7 weapons on their watch.
17. You want to continue multiple talks
- a. Kerry:
    - i. I want bilateral talks that put all the issues from 1952 on the table
18. And you're opposed to that, right?
- a. Bush:
    - i. Minute we start that, six-way talks will erode
    - ii. We've already sanctioned Iran, etc.
    - iii. We were a party to the convincing
19. You mentioned the Darfur region of Sudan, 50,000 have already died, 1,000,000 have been labeled homeless, yet neither one of you, no member of your campaign has discussed the possibility of sending in US troops
- a. Kerry:
    - i. In Iran, he's wrong about sanctions
    - ii. Darfur: reason we're not talking about troops: we can do this through the African union if we give them logistical support, president is only giving humanitarian support
    - iii. Also, we're overextended
    - iv. In Kerry's plan, two new active duty divisions
    - v. Doubled special forces
    - vi. We can never allow another Rwanda
  - b. Bush:
    - i. Iraq: wasn't my administration that put sanctions on Iran
    - ii. Darfur: it's genocide, Powell stated that. We've committed \$2 million in aid, we'll commit more in time to help
    - iii. Involved in sanction policy with U.N.
    - iv. Ambassador Danforth was negotiating

- v. We shouldn't commit troops, work with African Union
  - vi. Rainy season will end shortly
20. There clearly major policy differences between the two of you. Are there also underlying character issues that you believe are serious enough to deny Senator Kerry the job of President of the United States.
- a. Bush:
    - i. I admire senator Kerry's service to our country
    - ii. He's a great dad
    - iii. I'm glad his daughters have been good to my daughters
    - iv. I admire his service in the senate (not record)
    - v. Won't hold it against him that he went to Yale, nothing wrong with that.
    - vi. Concerns: He changes position on the war in Iraq
    - vii. Changes positions on what he believes in his core
    - viii. Can't lead if you send mixed messages.
    - ix. "I just know how this world works, and that in the councils of government there must be certainty from the U.S. President"
  - b. Kerry:
    - i. I appreciate the personal comments
    - ii. I share them with him
    - iii. He's done more campaigning, so I acknowledge that his daughters have chuckled a few times,
    - iv. I have great respect and admiration for his wife
    - v. We do have differences, not my business to talk about character
    - vi. Issue of certainty:
    - vii. One thing to be certain, one thing to be certain and wrong, another to be certain and be wrong
    - viii. President isn't acknowledging the truth, the realities, etc.
  - c. Bush:
    - i. One should shift tactics and we will in Iraq
    - ii. Commanders have all the flexibility
    - iii. I won't change my core values
    - iv. Enormous pressure, can't wilt
  - d. Kerry:
    - i. I've never wilted in my life, never wavered in my life
    - ii. I know exactly what I want to do and my position has been consistent
    - iii. Saddam was threat, etc. etc.
21. If you are elected President, what will you take to that office thinking is the single most serious threat to the United States
- a. Kerry:
    - i. Nuclear proliferation:
    - ii. Six million unsecured tons in former Soviet Union.
    - iii. Kerry has done a lot of work about this.
    - iv. Terrorists are trying to get it

- v. This president has secured less material since 9/11 than we did in 2 years preceding.
  - vi. President cut the funding.
  - vii. President is researching new set of “bunker busting nuclear weapons.”
  - viii. There’s a mixed message!
  - ix. He’ll shut that program down.
- b. Bush:
- i. I increased funding about 35%
  - ii. Biggest threat is weapons of mass destruction in the hands of a terrorist network, and that’s why proliferation is one of the centerpieces of a multi-tiered strategy
  - iii. Proliferation-security initiative
  - iv. Over 60 nations involved
  - v. Busted A. Q. Khan network
  - vi. Libya
  - vii. Missile defense system
22. Both of you agree that if you’re re-elected, if you’re elected, single most serious threat is Nuclear proliferation
- a. Bush: if it’s in the hands of a terrorist
  - b. Kerry: yes, but it’s getting worse, it’ll take 13 years, etc.
  - c. Bush: big mistake to have bi-lateral talks.
23. Last question: has to do with Pres. Putin. Did you misjudge him or do you feel that what he’s doing in the name of antiterrorism in terms of reforms is okay.
- a. Bush:
    - i. No I don’t think it’s okay,
    - ii. There need to be checks and balances, he’s sending the message that he doesn’t perhaps think that’s necessary.
    - iii. He’s also a strong ally in the war on terror.
    - iv. He’s been through hard situation in Beszlan.
    - v. I’ve got a good relationship with Vladimir, and that’s important
    - vi. Important to establish good personal agreements
    - vii. Important to work toward democracy
  - b. Kerry:
    - i. Kerry was there right after the transformation, first person to go down into KGB and see all the files and stuff.
    - ii. Brought home the transition Russia was trying to make
    - iii. I regret what’s happened, goes beyond response to terror
    - iv. Mr. Putin controls all the TV stations
    - v. Political opposition put in jail
    - vi. We want a partnership
    - vii. But we have to stand up for democracy
    - viii. About China:
    - ix. Just b/c pres says it can’t be done doesn’t make it so, This is president who said mission accomplished, there were weapons, etc.
  - c. Bush:

- i. Looked at same intelligence came to same conclusions
    - d. Kerry:
      - i. It was a threat, that's not the issue, the issue is what you do about it
      - ii. President said etc. words have to mean something, but he didn't do it!
      - iii. Now we have this big mess, not what we thought we were getting.
24. Closing statements:
- a. Kerry:
    - i. Both love country
    - ii. Different set of convictions about how to make country strong at home and respected in the world
    - iii. Who is the person who can be a commander in chief to get the job done and win the peace
    - iv. What kind of world will kids go into
    - v. I defended it as a young man in war, I'll defend it as president
    - vi. We need to build strong alliances
    - vii. I have a plan for Iraq
    - viii. We can be successful
    - ix. Fresh start, credibility, allies to our side
    - x. Plan to win war on terror, doing all this stuff
    - xi. Building alliances
    - xii. America's best days are ahead of us, because future belongs to freedom not fear
    - xiii. Give me opportunity to make you proud, lead great nation, so we can be stronger, respected, have strong leadership we deserve
  - b. Bush:
    - i. If America shows uncertainty or weakness world will drift toward tragedy
    - ii. Not under me
    - iii. Strengthen homeland, intelligence gathering, reform military, all volunteer
    - iv. Stay on the offence, fight terrorists around world, so not at home
    - v. Continue to build our alliances
    - vi. Never turn over needs to other countries
    - vii. Continue to spread freedom
    - viii. Free Iraq, Afghanistan, powerful example
    - ix. By being steadfast and resolute and strong, by keeping our word, supporting our troops.
    - x. Nice closing.
25. That ends our first debate, next one on Oct. 8, then Oct 13. VP on Tuesday
26. Applause, shake hands families on stage, both say thanks to moderator, hi to each other's families.