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Party with the most losses

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Party with the most losses

Which major party has lost the most presidential elections?

If you define the start of the Democratic party with Andrew Jackson's presidency (1829-1837), then Democrats have been involved in a total of 46 presidential elections, and they have lost 26 of them (57 percent of the time). The two earliest losses were to Whig candidates, in 1840 and 1848, and the 24 subsequent losses were to Republican candidates.

The Republican party was not established until the 1850s, so Democrats and Republicans have only been going head-to-head since 1856 -- that's 39 elections. As noted, the Democratic candidate went down 24 times to the Republican (62 percent of the time).

Of course, the 1912 election was the wildcard that has to be taken into account. It should have been a Republican victory but was not. The Democrat, Woodrow Wilson, won that election because Republican candidate William Howard Taft and former Republican president Theodore Roosevelt, now running on the Progressive or Bull Moose party ticket, split the GOP vote.

The longest losing streak suffered by Democrats was 20 years in duration, from 1860 to 1880. The second longest losing streak Democrats suffered was 12 years in duration, from 1896-1908.

The Republicans had their losing streak, too, during the era of FDR. Their losing ways lasted 16 years, from 1932-1948.

What has the trend been in the last three to four decades? Since Richard Nixon ran for president in 1968, Democrats have lost seven of the last ten elections (70 percent of the time).

(Question from Jo V. of Kansas City, MO)

