



# Learn the Best Time to Canvass & Maximize the Number of Contacts

## Want to work smarter and not harder?

Whether you are a political canvasser or a Girl Scout of America prospecting on a door to door basis, your goal is to talk to as many people as possible. This can be difficult since people work at different times, have changing schedules, and complete errands away from their house.

Because of this, you need to know the best time to canvass and maximize your contact rate in every turf you are assigned. A neighborhood (Voter Activation Network (VAN) turf isn't "truly worked" until you have talked to 90% of the houses or your target group (i.e. Seniors, working families, Democrats, etc.) ***Your first pass should be in the late afternoon or evening. Ideally, you should talk to at least 1 out of every 4 doors you knock.***

Where are the people who are not home you might ask? Well, we don't know. Maybe they just worked late that evening. Maybe they had a "get-together." Or maybe they work the night shift and won't be home until 6 am (They sleep and have the day time to get their stuff done.).

**Reminder to volunteer leaders and/or ward captains:** New volunteers get discouraged when they cover a 40-house turf and only talk to 4 people. They leave the campaign feeling that they may have wasted their time and made no impact. You need to prepare for this situation and mitigate their feelings, so they return for another volunteer task.

While the late afternoon or evening might be the best time to canvass, you're going to want to try three intervals in order to maximize engagement with your prospects.

- **9am-12pm:** Here you're going to catch stay-at-home parents who have just driven their kids to school or retired folks. You may ask is this a good time? No problem. Set an appointment to come back later to meet with them.
- **1pm-4pm:** Here's where you can catch many night workers. By now, they will be awake after coming home and sleeping for a few hours.
- **4pm-Dark:** This will usually be the interval with the **highest response rate.** Errands/appointments are done, and people have returned home. Families eat dinner at all different times so whether you are at the door at 5 pm or 8 pm, you always run the risk of interrupting dinner but that's just part of what we do.

To maximize your contacts, giving yourself the best time to canvass is vitally important. This way you avoid wasting time contacting people who are unavailable. A higher number of contacts provides essential information to campaign leaders. This is vitally important in persuasion canvasses and GOTV (Get Out the Vote) contacts. 2018 contact information can also be applied to future campaigns.

*Adapted from [www.spotio.com](http://www.spotio.com). Note: This information was confirmed by multiple people who worked for the 2010 U. S. Census.*