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The wheels of democracy never stop turning — even in odd years. Between the presidential race of 2020 and the midterm elections of 2022, hundreds of elections will be held in 2021 in states and cities whose election calendars don't sync up with most of the rest of the country. There will also be at least four special elections for the U.S. House that not only could affect Democrats' narrow [eight-seat majority](#) but also give us an [early clue](#) as to the political environment in 2022.

Here's a primer on the main races to be aware of this year — and if that's not enough to whet your electoral app!

Republican to **any** statewide office [since 2009](#) — so Democrats start out as the favorites to win, but the race could be close if the national environment gets more favorable for Republicans.

Additionally, because Virginia governors can't run for reelection, there are competitive contests for both parties' nominations that largely [mirror the national divides in each party](#). The Democratic front-runner, former Gov. Terry McAuliffe, channels Biden as a moderate white man with plenty of experience and name recognition. But just like in the 2020 presidential primary, more progressive and demographically diverse candidates (including two who would each be the first Black female governor in U.S. history) are making the case for a new generation of leadership. The Democratic primary is set for June 8. Republicans, meanwhile, are figuring out how closely they want to tie themselves to former President Donald Trump and balance prevailing grievances like “cancel

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There are too many other competitive mayoral races to preview, but a few deserve a brief mention. Two huge Texas cities feature stark left-versus-right clashes — rarities in modern urban politics. In **Gu** (the nation's seventh-largest city, with a population greater than Hawaii's), conservative Greg Brockhouse is
