

Organizing Best Practices: GOTV with MiniVAN

With MiniVAN, Packet Land has become a thing of the past. When it's time to get out the vote, it's clear that using MiniVAN is the most impactful way to run efficient and effective canvassing operations. Instead of having tables full of paper walk packets that took hours to print, you can simply have a few sheets of paper with list numbers for volunteers to quickly get a turf and head out to the doors.

MiniVAN also allows you to do multiple passes on the same packet. Plus, you'll be able to see any activity any canvasser has done on the same packet, without messy cross-outs and dog-eared paper. Best of all, since you don't need to re-print paper packets, you can refresh your turfs and your list numbers and send fresh packets to your volunteer simply by sending them a list number — making it easier to exclude people who have voted or add new targets to your GOTV universe.

[Read an overview of MiniVAN](#)

[Read our GOTV success guide](#)

Using absentee and early vote data

Absentee and early voting data is updated periodically by your admin. Updates occur at different intervals due to a variety of factors in each state. Reach out to your admin to learn about the cadence of updates in your state. Once this data is available, there are a few actions you can take:

If you click the boxes to Exclude anyone who has Early Voted or Absentee Voted while creating a List under the Early Voting drop-down or while creating a Virtual Phone Bank, these voters will be removed from your lists so your volunteers can focus on connecting with voters who still need to vote. MiniVAN automatically checks for people who have voted early or absentee and displays a "Voted" icon next to those voters in the app.

You can also Exclude anyone who has voted on Election Day when you are running GOTV efforts on Election Day.

[Watch a video about using early vote data](#)

Turf cutting

Turf Cutter allows you to segment households in your canvass list geographically to make knocking doors easier for your canvassers and streamline your organizing efforts.

Whether you're cutting turf in rural areas, suburban neighborhoods, or urban communities, there are a few best practices you should follow when cutting turf for your volunteers. Following these tips will help you ensure a safe, efficient, and effective canvass.

1. Avoid major road crossings when possible.

While road crossings are sometimes unavoidable, do your best to prevent them for your volunteers' safety. Neighborhood roads are usually easy and safe to cross while canvassing. Major roadways and highways are not, so they should be avoided as much as possible.

2. Look out for natural barriers (waterways, fields, mountains, etc.).

Sometimes, natural barriers will not allow your volunteers to access a certain part of their turf. Try to scope out the area ahead of time using the satellite view in the turf cutter to make sure your volunteers will be able to navigate their turf easily (without having to cross rivers or climb mountains).

3. Keep your doors as close as possible.

Canvassers shouldn't have to walk more than a block or so between doors. If your turfs are too sparsely populated or spread out, it may be best to consider driving between doors.

4. Cut enough doors for your volunteers.

How many doors should be in a turf packet can vary depending on your script, volunteers, turf density, and many other factors — however a rough guide is 30-50 doors per packet. You want to make sure your volunteers finish their packets, feel like their time is well spent, and have a good time on the doors. If you're canvassing in pairs, you can either give pairs two turfs or cut larger turfs of 60 to 80 doors as they will move through the doors faster than a single canvasser. As you get to learn your turfs and canvassers' preferences, you can better customize your turf-cutting in the future.

[Read more in our Turf cutting and canvassing best practices guide](#)

[Read more about cutting and managing MiniVAN turf](#)

[Watch a Turf Cutter tutorial](#)

Street Team canvassing

The Street Teams feature allows you to survey anyone you might encounter, which means you don't need create a list or cut turf ahead of time. It allows you to enter a brand new contact or look up an existing voting record. Canvassers will also be able to collect contributions.

When you use the add-on **MiniVAN Street Team package for your canvassing efforts**, you'll have an easy way to capture the contact details of the people you speak to in the community and then record the results of your conversations. You won't need a pre-defined list of voters or contacts. After entering a supporter's name or identifying their voter record, you can jump right into your script, gather their answers to questions, encourage them to sign electronic petitions, and even donate on the spot. All your results automatically sync back to your CRM.

If you are canvassing registered voters for your Street Team effort in My Voters, your first step will be to search the voter file for the person you are speaking with. If you're not using the voter file but instead are using your EveryAction or My Campaign database, you'll be able to directly add a new person to your list as you go.

[Read more about canvassing with Street Team](#)

[Read more about setting up a Street Team effort](#)

Download our [MiniVANual](#) and [VANual](#) to learn more.