A recent survey of electoral laws in modern societies identified six fundamental characteristics of democratic systems: (i) that virtually all adults may vote; (ii) that elections are held regularly; (iii) that no large group of citizens is prohibited from fielding candidates; (iv) that all legislative seats are contested; (v) that election campaigns are conducted fairly; and (vi) that votes are secretly cast and accurately counted. This chapter examines how well Britain’s electoral system satisfies these tests, first tracing the evolution of the democratic electoral system, followed by a review of the contemporary electoral process.
7. The Electoral System

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