



The 6 questions people ask most about Kerry's position on Iraq

1. Why did he vote "yes" on the authorization of the use of force in Iraq?

To strengthen the President's hand in dealing with Saddam and the U.N. As he said, "The idea was simple. We would get the weapons inspectors back in to verify whether or not Iraq had weapons of mass destruction. And we would convince the world to speak with one voice to Saddam: disarm or be disarmed." Kerry was willing to use force if needed. But Bush rushed in before force was needed — the weapons inspectors were back in Iraq, in fact — and went to war without enough allies or troops and without a plan to win the peace.

2. Has Kerry flip-flopped on Iraq?

No. Kerry has had one consistent position: Saddam needed to be disarmed. But it had to be done in a smart way. He summed it up in the first debate: "I've had one consistent position: that Saddam Hussein was a threat; that there was a right way to disarm him, and a wrong way. And the President chose the wrong way." Independent journalists have examined hundreds of Kerry's statements on Iraq and found that he's been remarkably consistent.

3. Why did Kerry say he would still vote "yes" on the use of force?

Because President Bush needed the authority to put pressure on Saddam to let the weapons inspectors back in. That was part of the strategy to contain Saddam, render him harmless, and weaken him until he could be pushed out of power. Kerry did NOT say he would have invaded Iraq. His exact words were: "Yes, I would have voted for the authority. I believe it's the right authority for a president to have. But I would have used that authority, as I have said throughout this campaign, effectively. I would have done this very differently from the way President Bush has." Kerry has since stated many times that, knowing there were no WMDs, he would not have invaded Iraq.

4. Why did Kerry vote "no" on the \$87 billion that included money for the troops?

Kerry supported an earlier version of the bill that rolled back recent tax cuts for the rich in order to pay for the spending. He did not support the one that kept those tax breaks in place, burdening future generations with an even greater debt load. President Bush, by comparison, threatened to veto any version of the bill other than the one that had everything exactly as he wanted.

5. What is Kerry's plan to fix the mess in Iraq?

Kerry has laid out four crucial steps and called on President Bush to take them immediately: 1) Get assistance from our allies. If not with troops, then with election security, supplies and reconstruction. 2) Get serious about training Iraqi security forces. 3) Focus on reconstruction efforts that bring tangible results to the Iraqis. Put an end to the cronyism that has rewarded corporations like Halliburton and focus on giving Iraqis employment and hope for the future. 4) Take immediate steps to ensure that credible elections can be held. John Kerry's overall goal is to get enough assistance to take the pressure off of our troops, stabilize Iraq and get our troops out. He has no plans to install permanent U.S. bases in Iraq.

6. Why should we believe John Kerry can succeed where George Bush can't?

Senator Kerry has more credibility with our allies than President Bush does. At this point, many world leaders want to do as little for George Bush as possible. They aren't anti-U.S., they're only tired of being insulted by Bush. Kerry will also make policy changes to install competent reconstruction staff and to put an end to the cronyism, which will in turn get Iraqi companies more involved in the reconstruction and make it more attractive to our allies to help.

"The Bush administration would have you believe that when it comes to our allies, it won't make a difference who is president. But I have news for President Bush: just because you can't do something, doesn't mean it can't be done."