When is democratic voting desirable?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Favorable conditions</th>
<th>Unfavorable conditions</th>
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</table>
| Democratic voting  | • The knowledge, skills, and motivation needed to make a good decision are distributed widely.*  
      • The average voter is more likely to make a good decision than a bad one.***  
      • Whoever controls the information needed to make good decisions is willing to share it with voters.*  
      • Everyone in the group needs to abide by the same decision. (Otherwise individuals can just decide for themselves without a group vote.)**  
      • It is important for the voters to be committed to the decision. (They are more likely to feel committed to the decision if they had a chance to vote on it.)                                                                                                                                 | • The average voter is more likely to make a bad decision than a good one.***  
      • The voters’ motivations are too divergent. For instance, there is no satisfactory way to prevent:  
        • Gaming*  
        • Sabotage*  
      • There isn’t enough time (or enough of other resources) for everyone to become informed and then to vote.  
      • If votes are visible to others, then  
        • early voters may have too much influence on decisions (“information cascades”)  
        • social pressures may have too much influence on decisions                                                                                                                                                                                  |

* Conditions shared with other forms of action by a Crowd  
** Conditions shared with other forms of Group Decision  
*** See Condorcet Jury Theorem (described, for example, in Sunstein, 2006)