

Canadian Citizenship

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A Look at Canada

What Does Canadian Citizenship Mean?

Canadian values include freedom, respect for cultural differences and a commitment to social justice. We are proud of the fact that we are a peaceful nation. In fact, Canadians act as peacekeepers in many countries around the world.

Canada is a large country with a small population. We have developed a unique federal style of government that is based on compromise and co-existence. We value our **democracy**, and every citizen is encouraged to do his or her share. Our laws are based on our **democratic values**. Canadian values include:

Equality—We respect everyone's rights. Everyone has the right to speak out and express ideas that others might disagree with. Governments must treat everyone with equal dignity and respect—two other fundamental Canadian values.

Respect for cultural differences—We try to understand and appreciate the cultures, customs and traditions of all Canadians, whether they were born in Canada or came here from another country.

Freedom—As Canadians, we enjoy basic freedoms, such as freedom of thought, freedom of speech, freedom of religion and freedom of peaceful assembly.

Peace—We are proud of our non-violent society and our international role as peacekeepers.

Law and order—We respect democratic decision making and the “rule of law.” We promote due process so that the courts and the police treat everyone fairly and reasonably. We ensure that our elected governments remain accountable to Canadians.

As you reflect on these values, ask yourself which **responsibilities** you will take on when you become a Canadian citizen.

Canadian Citizenship

What does it mean to be a Canadian citizen?

Citizenship means working together with all other Canadians to build a stronger Canada, and making sure our values, dreams and goals are reflected in our institutions, laws and relationships with one another. Canada is a country that:

- is free and democratic;
- is multi cultural;
- has two official languages; and
- extends equal treatment to all its citizens.

Each Canadian, whether a citizen by birth or by naturalization, enjoys certain rights and freedoms, for example:

the right to vote or to be a candidate for elections in Canada;

the right to apply for a Canadian passport.

Canadians also share rights and freedoms with permanent residents, for example:

the right to enter, remain in or leave Canada;

the right to reside in any province or territory.

Who is a Canadian citizen?

In most cases:

you are a Canadian citizen if you were born in Canada;

you are a Canadian citizen if you were born in another country **after** February 14, 1977, and one of your parents was a Canadian citizen at the time of your birth.

If you were born in another country **after** February 14, 1977, to a Canadian parent who was also born in another country to a Canadian parent, you may need to take steps to retain (keep) your citizenship before turning 28 years old even if you are living in Canada now. If you think this applies to you, contact the Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) Call Centre at **1-888-242-2100** (toll-free) for more information.

If you were born outside Canada **before** February 15, 1977, and one of your parents was a Canadian citizen at the time of your birth, contact the CIC Call Centre for more information on your citizenship status. If you reside outside Canada, contact the Canadian embassy, high commission or consulate responsible for your region.

Who can become a Canadian citizen?

To become a Canadian citizen:

you must be 18 years of age or older;

you must be a permanent resident who has lived in Canada for three of the four years immediately preceding the application;

you must be able to communicate in English or French; and

you must have knowledge of Canada, including the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

Minors: Parents or legal guardians may apply for citizenship on behalf of a minor (under 18 years of age) as soon as the minor receives permanent resident status. To apply on behalf of a minor, one parent must already be a Canadian citizen or must be applying to become a citizen at the same time.

Who cannot become a Canadian citizen?

In general, you cannot become a Canadian citizen if:

- you are in prison, on parole or on probation or you were in prison, on parole or on probation for a year or more in the past four years;
- you are currently charged with an indictable offence (a crime);
- you were convicted of an indictable offence or crime, or an offence under the *Citizenship Act* in the three years preceding your application;
- you are under a removal order;
- you are under investigation for or you were convicted of a war crime or a crime against humanity; or
- your Canadian citizenship has been taken away (revoked) in the past five years.

How do I apply for Canadian citizenship?

To apply for Canadian citizenship, you must complete the form "Application for Canadian Citizenship" and follow the instructions provided with the application. You must include a receipt of payment for the appropriate fees and the necessary documents with your application form. You can visit the CIC Web site at www.cic.gc.ca to download and print the application form or contact the CIC Call Centre at **1-888-242-2100** (toll-free) to order the forms you need.

A copy of the booklet *A Look at Canada* will be sent to you with the acknowledgment of your application. If you are between the ages of 18 and 54 inclusively, you will have to take a citizenship test based on the content of this booklet. People 55 years of age and older do not need to take the test. The test will help determine if you meet the language and knowledge requirements for citizenship. If you meet all the requirements for citizenship, you will be invited to a citizenship ceremony where you will take the oath of citizenship and receive your citizenship certificate. At the ceremony, you may choose to either swear on a holy book or to affirm the oath of citizenship. If you choose to swear the oath on your holy book, bring it with you to the ceremony.

Who is eligible to obtain a citizenship certificate?

The Canadian citizenship certificate is an official document issued by the Government of Canada as proof of Canadian citizenship status.

Any Canadian citizen is entitled to apply for a citizenship certificate. Citizens born in Canada may apply for a citizenship certificate if they wish, although provincial or territorial birth certificates are frequently sufficient to establish Canadian citizenship. **Naturalized Canadians automatically receive a citizenship certificate when they become citizens.**

If you wish to confirm your Canadian status, to update your citizenship certificate or to replace a lost, destroyed or stolen certificate, you must make an application for a Canadian citizenship

certificate.

A citizenship certificate is proof of citizenship. It is not a travel document. Any Canadian citizen wanting to travel outside Canada should obtain a Canadian passport.

How do I apply for a Canadian citizenship certificate?

To apply for a Canadian citizenship certificate, you must complete the form "Application for a Citizenship Certificate" and follow the instructions provided with the application. A non-refundable processing fee must be paid at the time of the application. You must include a receipt of payment and the necessary documents with your application form. You can visit the CIC Web site at www.cic.gc.ca to download and print the application form or contact the CIC Call Centre at 1-888-242-2100 (toll-free) to order the forms you need.

What is dual citizenship?

Dual or multiple citizenship means holding citizenship in two or more countries. In general, a person may acquire Canadian citizenship by birth in Canada, birth outside Canada to a Canadian parent or through naturalization.

Since February 15, 1977, Canadian law allows dual citizenship without restriction and Canadians do not lose their Canadian citizenship upon acquiring citizenship of another country.

Some countries will not allow their citizens to keep citizenship of that country if they become citizens of another country. For information on the rules and laws for dual citizenship of other countries, you should contact the embassy or consulate of those countries.

What is the permanent resident card?

The permanent resident card (PR card) is a wallet-sized card that replaced the Record of Landing document (IMM 1000). On December 31, 2003, the permanent resident card became the proof of status document required by permanent residents seeking to re-enter Canada on a commercial carrier (airplane, boat, train or bus). All permanent residents, including children, need a valid PR card for re-entry into Canada on a commercial carrier.

A permanent resident with a PR card must surrender the PR card to CIC upon becoming a Canadian citizen. Canadian citizens may apply for a Canadian passport for international travel. For more information on the PR card, visit the Department's Web site at www.cic.gc.ca or contact the CIC Call Centre at 1-800-255-4541 (toll-free).¹

¹All this information comes directly from the Canadian Citizenship and Immigration Website at <http://www.cic.gc.ca>.

Canadian Citizenship Quiz:

1. Which of the following is NOT an official Canadian value?
 - a, Peace
 - b, Freedom
 - c, Moose
 - d, Equality
2. Which two languages are official Canadian languages?
 - a, English and Spanish
 - b, English and French
 - c, English and Italian
 - d, English and German
3. At what age can you become a Canadian Citizen?
 - a, 16
 - b, 19
 - c, 21
 - d, 18
4. You cannot become a Canadian Citizen if you were in prison or on probation for..
 - a, A year or more in the past 4 years
 - b, A year or more in the past 8 years
 - c, half a year or more in the past year
 - d, 2 years or more in the past decade
5. The Canadian Citizen Certificate is an official document issued by...
 - a, The Tourism Industry
 - b, The Immigration Board
 - c, The Government of Canada
 - d, Me



Canadian Citizenship Quiz Answers:



1. C

2. B

3. D

4. A

5. C

6. A

7. C

8. The Canadian Citizenship Certificate is an official document issued by...

9. 3 years or more in the past 5 years

10. 1 year or less in the past 5 years

11. 4 years or more in the past 5 years

12. 5 years or more in the past 5 years

13.

14. You cannot become a Canadian Citizen if you were in prison or on parole...

15. 18

16. 21

17. 16

18. 19

19. You must be 18 or older to become a Canadian Citizen.

20. English and French

21. English and Italian

22. English and Russian

23. English and Spanish

24. Most of the languages are official Canadian languages.

25. English

26. French

27. Russian

28. None

29. None of the following is NOT an official Canadian language.

Canadian Citizenship Quiz