

CANADIAN CITIZENSHIP- MYTHS AND FACTS



*Prepared by Agata Rebisz, Global Village Vancouver,
A Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultant (RCIC #R417711) pursuant to
section 91 of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*

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What is Canadian Citizenship? It is a legal concept as well as a set of rights and responsibilities.

- Rights:
- To vote or to be a candidate for elections in Canada
- To apply for a Canadian passport
- To be educated in the official language of your choice
- To enter, remain in or leave Canada at your convenience

NOTE: Canadian citizens are not subject to residency requirements and cannot lose their status
Canadian citizens cannot be deported

Benefits of Canadian Citizenship. In addition to the rights,

- the federal government gives preference to Canadian citizens in hiring
- some scholarships are available only to Canadian citizens
- Under the provisions of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the Canada-Chile Free Trade Agreement, qualified Canadian citizens can benefit from facilitated admission into the U.S., Mexico and Chile for business and work-related purposes

I am a citizen of another country. Will I lose that citizenship if I become a Canadian?

Possibly, it depends on the country. Under Canadian law, a Canadian can be a citizen of another country as well. Some countries, however, will not let you keep their citizenship if you become a Canadian citizen. The consulate or embassy of your other country of citizenship can let you know whether this applies to you.

What is dual citizenship and can I have two passports?

Every country decides whom it considers to be a citizen. If more than one country recognizes you as a citizen, you have dual citizenship. You do not apply for dual citizenship and there is no related certificate. Canadians are allowed to take foreign citizenship while keeping their Canadian citizenship.

There are approximately 90 countries that permit dual citizenship, Canada being one of them. While Canada has very open and accepting laws regarding dual citizenship, this cannot be said for all countries. Each country possesses their own set of rules and laws regarding dual citizenship. Those seeking Canadian citizenship should consult their original government or original country's embassy or consulate for complete information regarding the impact on their current citizenship status should they acquire Canadian citizenship.

Certain countries may forbid a person from travelling with two passports

If you travel to a country that prohibits dual citizenship and you have both a Canadian passport and one from your other country of citizenship, your Canadian passport may be confiscated or you may be subjected to a fine. You may be required to enter and exit a country using the same passport. If you run into trouble, Canadian consular services may try to help, but if the country considers you one of its citizens, there is little Canadian officials can do — their interest would be seen as meddling in internal affairs.

Some other countries take away citizenship the moment the person acquires another nationality

Numerous countries either ignore or prohibit dual citizenship. These include: Burma, China, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Kenya, Malaysia, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Singapore, Syria, Thailand, Vietnam and Zimbabwe.

Other countries, **such as Austria or Germany, allow dual nationalities until the age of 23** when they must decide which passport to keep.

Do I become a Canadian when I marry a Canadian?

No. Marriage to a Canadian citizen does not give you citizenship. You must first apply for and get permanent resident status. Then you must apply for Canadian citizenship and meet the same requirements as any other person seeking Canadian citizenship. **Requirements of naturalization:**

- Has Permanent resident status
- Is 18 years + (parents can apply on behalf of minors)
- Has lived in Canada for 3 out of the 4 years preceding application for citizenship
- Has the ability to communicate in English or French
- Has knowledge of Canada, including the rights and Responsibilities of citizenship

What is meant by adequate knowledge of English or French?

In order to become a Canadian citizen, you must have an adequate knowledge of English or French, Canada's two official languages. Adequate knowledge of English or French means the ability to speak one of Canada's official languages well enough to communicate with people. An applicant must know enough English or French to understand other people and for others to understand them.

If you are an adult (between ages 18-54) applying for citizenship, you will need to [provide documents proving your ability to speak and listen in English or French](#). These documents may be:

- the results of a CIC-approved third-party test; **or**
- evidence of completion of secondary or post-secondary education in English or French, in Canada or abroad; **or**
- evidence of achieving CLB/NCLC 4 or higher in certain government-funded language training programs.

Do you accept certificates from private language schools?

No. If you have taken private language classes, those classes are not enough to prove that you speak French or English well enough to apply for Canadian citizenship. You must take a CIC-approved [third-party language test](#). If you achieve CLB/NCLC 4 or above on this test, submit the result with your citizenship application.

What is the 1095-Day Rule?

To qualify for Canadian Citizenship you must have been physically present in Canada for at least three years (1095 days) during the four years preceding the date of your application, unless there are exceptional circumstances. This test is sometimes referred to as the "1095-Day Rule."

In determining whether exceptional circumstances exist, Canadian Citizenship Judges examine the specific facts and circumstances of each individual case. Each case must be assessed on its own merits, and Canadian Citizenship Judges have considerable discretion in determining whether exceptional circumstances truly exist. Thus, it is extremely difficult to conclusively pronounce which circumstances will be deemed to be exceptional.

How much does it cost to apply for Canadian citizenship?

The fee for adults is C\$630. The fee for children under 18 is C\$100.

Canadians do not speak "Canadian".

The two official languages are English and French. Many Canadians can speak both and other languages. However aside from a few pronunciations (ie: Americans say "Z" as "zee" and Canadians say it as "Zed"), and spelling (Americans "color", Canadians "colour") the English between the two countries are identical.

Canadians are not subjects.

While Canada does acknowledge the Queen, (represented by the Governor General) and under law we need "royal assent" for our bills to become law - Canada is its own country. We are a "Constitutional Monarchy" - that is we have our own constitution and we acknowledge the Queen as a figurehead - but that's where it ends. Canada makes its own laws and it is in no way dependent on Britain for laws or governing the country.

Under British law, Canadians are *Commonwealth citizens* and hence are entitled to certain rights in the United Kingdom:

- access to the British [working holiday visa](#) scheme
- for those with a British born grandparent, access to the [UK Ancestry Entry Clearance](#)
- for those born before 1983 who meet the requirements, [Right of Abode](#) in the United Kingdom
- if resident in Great Britain or Northern Ireland, the right to vote and stand for public office there

Toronto is not the capital of Canada.

Ottawa is the Capital. Toronto is however Canada's largest city and the Capital of the Province of Ontario.

Need more advice or help with your application?

*Please email our Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultant, Agata Rebisz, located at **Global Village Vancouver**, 888 Cambie Street, and arrange for consultation in person or by phone, skype or email. arebisz@qvenglish.com*

*The consultation charge is **CND \$70.00 + 5% GST tax per 30 minutes (minimum charge).***

*A rebate of up to **CND \$125** will be applied to the registration fee if the client enrolls in courses at **GV Vancouver**.*



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