

Travelling Outside Canada

Information for Canadian residents returning from a trip abroad

The information provided was accurate when it was published; however, legislative provisions and requirements can change at any time. The Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) makes every effort to provide timely updates to this publication and its Web site.

If you have information about suspicious cross-border activity, please call the CBSA Border Watch toll-free line at **1-888-502-9060**.

Are you visiting friends or planning a trip outside Canada? Proper planning can help ensure you have a worry-free cross-border trip. Whether you've been gone for only a few hours, or for several days, returning to Canada means a stop at a CBSA office. Here are a few tips to get you on your way.

Bring identification

Make sure you carry proper identification for yourself and any children travelling with you, regardless of their age, to assist in confirming your legal right or authorization to enter Canada upon your return. Proper identification includes a Canadian passport, a Canadian birth certificate, a certificate of Canadian citizenship, a Certificate of Indian Status or a Canadian Permanent Resident Card. Canadian and United States citizens who are members of the NEXUS or FAST trusted traveller programs may present their membership cards as proof of identity and as documents that denote citizenship when entering Canada at all land and marine ports of entry. For further information on these programs, please see the section on programs for trusted travellers.

If you are travelling alone with minor children or if you are not the legal guardian, you should carry proper documentation such as legal separation documents

and letter of authorization from the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) to facilitate your entry back into Canada. For further information regarding identification and travelling with children, please consult the *I Declare* publication on the CBSA Web site.

The Government of Canada recommends that Canadian citizens travel with a valid Canadian passport because it is the only reliable and universally accepted travel and identification document available to Canadians for the purpose of international travel.

International transportation companies such as airlines may require travellers to present a passport and/or a Permanent Resident Card. Therefore, Canadian residents who present other documents may face delays or may not be allowed to board the plane or other conveyance.

For your health and safety

Before you leave Canada, it is recommended that you contact a qualified health professional at a travel health clinic near you to find out what vaccinations and medications you might need.

If you are suffering from a communicable disease upon your return to Canada, or if you have been in close contact with someone with a communicable disease, you are obligated to inform a border services officer or a quarantine officer, who can determine if you require further assessment. If you've been ill while travelling or become ill after your return to Canada, inform a Canadian doctor that you've been abroad, where you were and what, if any, treatment or medical care you've received (e.g. medications, blood transfusions, injections, dental care or surgery) before arriving in Canada.

What can I bring back with me?

When you return to Canada, duty and taxes are applicable on all purchases unless you qualify for a personal exemption. Personal exemptions allow you to bring goods of a certain value into the country without paying the regular duty and taxes. If you bring in more than your personal exemption, you will have to pay regular assessments on the excess amount.

Personal exemptions – Goods free of duty and taxes

If you have been outside Canada for:

24 hours	CAN\$200. You cannot include alcoholic beverages* and tobacco products**. Must not exceed CAN\$200 or full duty and taxes apply on all goods.
48 hours	CAN\$800. You may include alcoholic beverages* and tobacco products**. All goods must be in your possession upon entry.
7 days	CAN\$800. You may include alcoholic beverages* and tobacco products**. With the exception of tobacco products and alcoholic beverages, you do not need to have the goods with you when you arrive.

Alcohol and tobacco

Within your personal exemption, you may include the following amounts of alcoholic beverages and tobacco products.

Alcoholic beverage limits

- 1.5 litres of wine; **or**
- a total of 1.14 litres of alcoholic beverages; **or**
- up to 8.5 litres of beer or ale.

* Alcoholic beverages are products that exceed 0.5% alcohol by volume. Minimum ages for the importation of alcoholic beverages, as prescribed by provincial or territorial authorities are 18 years for the provinces of Alberta, Manitoba and Quebec and 19 years for the remaining provinces and territories.

You may import additional quantities of alcoholic beverages above your personal exemption, as long as it is within the limits set by the province or territories where you enter Canada.

Tobacco product limits

- 200 cigarettes;
- 50 cigars;
- 200 grams of manufactured tobacco; **and**
- 200 tobacco sticks.

** If you are 18 years of age or over, you are allowed to bring in all of the above-mentioned amounts of tobacco products into Canada, free of duty and taxes within your personal exemption, if **they have** an excise stamp “**DUTY PAID CANADA DROIT ACQUITTE**”.

If you include cigarettes, tobacco sticks or manufactured tobacco in your personal exemption, a partial exemption may only apply. You will have to pay a special duty on these products **unless they have** an excise stamp “**DUTY PAID CANADA DROIT ACQUITTE**”. You will find Canadian-made products sold at duty-free shops marked this way.

The *Excise Act 2001* limits the amount of tobacco products that can be imported (or possessed) by an individual for personal use to **five** units if the product **does not have** an excise stamp “**DUTY PAID CANADA DROIT ACQUITTE**”. One unit of tobacco products consists of either 200 cigarettes, 50 cigars, 200 grams of manufactured tobacco **or** 200 tobacco sticks.

Identifying your valuables

Before travelling outside Canada with valuable items, you may wish to take advantage of a free identification service (BSF407 card) that is available at all CBSA offices. If you are questioned about your goods when you return to Canada, show your card to the border services officer. This will help identify the valuables that were in your possession before leaving the country.

Currency and monetary instruments

If you are importing or exporting monetary instruments equal to or greater than CAN\$10,000 (or the equivalent in a foreign currency), whether in cash or other monetary instruments, you must report this to the CBSA when you arrive or before you leave Canada. For more information, please refer to the publication called *Crossing the border with \$10,000 or more?*

Restrictions/prohibited goods

Before importing restricted or prohibited items, consult the publication called *I Declare* to ensure that the items which you are planning to import are admissible to Canada.

Examples are firearms and weapons, explosives, fireworks and ammunition, goods subject to import controls (such as clothing, handbags and textiles), food, plant, and animal products and related products, consumer products (such as baby walkers and jequirity beans), endangered species, obscenity, child pornography, hate propaganda, prescription drugs and certain antiquities.

Before you purchase or import a vehicle, consult the publication called *Importing a Vehicle Into Canada*.

CBSA programs for registered trusted travellers

NEXUS and Free and Secure Trade (FAST) programs streamline the border clearance process for pre-approved, low-risked travellers into Canada and the United States. CANPASS and the Commercial Driver Registration Program (CDRP) are for entry into Canada only. For more information, consult the *I Declare* publication.

Make a full declaration

When you return to Canada, you have to declare all of the goods you purchased or acquired while outside Canada, such as gifts, prizes or awards that you are bringing with you or are having shipped to you. You must always report the amount you are claiming for your personal exemption in Canadian dollars. The border services officer may ask to see receipts for the goods you've purchased while out of the country to confirm your declaration and the length of your absence from Canada.

Additional information

For more information within Canada, call the Border Information Service at 1-800-461-9999. From outside Canada, call 204-983-3500 or 506-636-5064 (long distance charges will apply). Agents are available Monday to Friday (08:00-16:00 local time/except holidays). TTY is also available within Canada at 1-866-335-3237.

You may obtain further information by consulting the publications (Guides and Brochures) available on the CBSA Web site at www.cbsa.gc.ca.