

# Welcome to Canada



## IMPORTANT THINGS TO DO BEFORE YOU ARRIVE IN CANADA



Your settlement journey begins long before you arrive in Canada.

### PREPARE BEFORE YOU ARRIVE

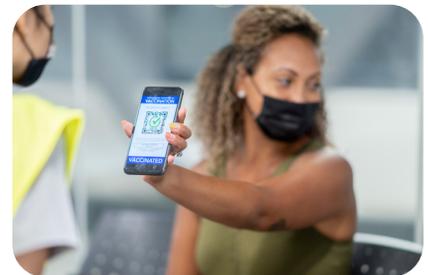
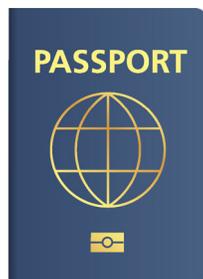
It is helpful to prepare for the opportunities and challenges you may face while you are still in your home country. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's (IRCC's) [pre-arrival services](#) are available in person and online for permanent resident newcomers to Canada. These services will help you get information on how to find housing, prepare for work and, in some circumstances, get started on the foreign qualification recognition processes before you arrive in Canada.

### IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

Collect all important original documents that belong to you and your family members who are also immigrating. Some common documents include

- passports or travel documents
- all education diplomas and certificates
- official vaccination records
- medical records
- dental and eye records
- driver's licences
- birth and death certificates
- marriage or divorce certificates

Learn more about gathering the right [documents](#) to enter Canada.



Begin to think about what documents you may need to help find work after you arrive in Canada. If you have work experience, professional training and educational certificates, bring documents that prove your experience. You may need these documents translated into our official languages, English or French, depending on where you settle.

Prepare the [Personal Effects Accounting Document \(form BSF186\)](#), where you list any personal items you are bringing with you and any goods you will be sending to Canada after you arrive. Print and fill out the [Declaration Card \(form E311\)](#) and check the IRCC website for more information on items you can bring into Canada.

## START PRACTISING ENGLISH OR FRENCH

Begin practising English or French if neither are your first language. English is most commonly spoken throughout the country. French is the official language in Quebec, and it is also widely spoken in New Brunswick, parts of Ontario and Manitoba, and many other Francophone communities across the country. You may choose to focus on one language, depending on where you settle. Familiarize yourself with common greetings and words like hello, please, thank you, and excuse me. You may also wish to learn to ask for directions for places like the washroom.

## PREPARE FOR THE PRACTICAL THINGS

Plan where to stay during your first days or weeks in Canada. Make arrangements to stay with family or friends or book a hotel or other short-term accommodation until you can find more permanent housing.

Purchase some warm clothes if you are arriving in Canada during the fall, winter, or spring. These seasons can bring cool to cold temperatures and can be quite a shock if you have not experienced cold weather before.



## MORE INFORMATION



For more info about important things to do before you arrive in Canada, visit [canada.ca/pre-arrival-services](https://canada.ca/pre-arrival-services).



To find newcomer settlement services in your area, visit [canada.ca/find-newcomer-services](https://canada.ca/find-newcomer-services).

