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Boundary Files, Reference Guide, Census year 2026, First Edition



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Boundary Files, Reference Guide, Census year 2026, First Edition

This reference guide is intended for users of the *2026 Census Boundary Files*. This guide provides an overview of the files, the general methodology used to create them, and important technical information.

What's new?

- The 2026 Census cartographic boundary files are now available in both detailed and generalized versions.
- The *2026 Census Boundary Files* are now available in GeoPackage (.gpkg) format.
- To increase consistency between products and concepts, some attribute names have changed.
- Some census subdivision (CSD) boundaries were adjusted to the Quarter-Section-Township-Range-Meridian in the provinces west of Ontario.
- The boundary between the Northwest Territories and Nunavut was adjusted.
- Geographic areas that cross a provincial boundary are now disseminated in two files, the whole geographic areas and the provincial parts, packaged together into a single compressed file using the naming convention of the whole geographic areas. This applies to the census metropolitan areas (CMAs) and census agglomerations (CAs), as well as the population centres (POPCTRs).

1 About this guide

This reference guide does not provide details on specific software packages that are available for use with the *2026 Census Boundary Files*. Users are advised to contact the appropriate software vendor for information.

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2 Overview

The *2026 Census Boundary Files* depict the boundaries of all geographic areas established for the purpose of disseminating census data. See Figure 1.1, "Hierarchy of geographic areas for dissemination, 2026 Census", from the *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2026*.

They contain information such as unique identifier (UID), name and type where applicable, as well as land area and province or territory unique identifier (PRUID). Each boundary file can be linked to all higher-level geographic areas using its Dissemination Geography Unique Identifier (DGUID) and the *2026 Dissemination Geographies Relationship File*. See *Dissemination Geographies Relationship File*.

The *2026 Census Boundary Files* are available in two types: digital and cartographic. Digital boundary files portray the full extent of the geographic areas, including the coastal water area. Cartographic boundary files portray the geographic areas using only the major land mass of Canada and its coastal islands. See Figure 1.4, "Example of a digital boundary file and a cartographic boundary file (provinces and territories)", from the *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2026*. A new set of generalized cartographic boundary files is also available to support efficient mapping and analysis at smaller scales while maintaining the shape and spatial relationships of geographic areas.

Digital and cartographic (detailed and generalized) boundary files are available for downloading or viewing in Lambert conformal conic projection (North American Datum of 1983 [NAD83]).

3 About this product

Purpose of the product

The purpose of the *2026 Census Boundary Files* is to provide a framework for mapping and spatial analysis, and to support Geographic Information System (GIS) applications used for land use and demographic studies, or social, economic and market research. DGUIDs permit linkage of statistical data to geographic areas depicted in the boundary files. Boundary files can also be used to create new geographic areas by aggregating existing geographic areas.

The boundary files are positionally consistent with the *2026 Road Network File*, which provides additional geographic context for mapping applications.

Definitions and concepts

Geographic terms and concepts are briefly defined in the *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2026*.

Content

Each boundary file contains the UID, DGUID, name and type where applicable, and land area of the geographic level the file represents. It also contains the PRUID. Boundary files are available for each of the following geographic areas:

- Province and territory
- Census division (CD)
- Federal electoral district (2023 Representation Order) (FED)
- Census subdivision (CSD)
- Designated places (DPL) (**available February 10, 2027**)
- Economic region (ER)
- Census agricultural region (CAR)
- Census consolidated subdivision (CCS)
- Census metropolitan area (CMA) and census agglomeration (CA) (**available February 10, 2027**)
- Census tract (CT) (**available February 10, 2027**)
- Population centres (POPCTR) (**available February 10, 2027**)
- Dissemination area (DA)
- Dissemination block (DB)
- Aggregate dissemination area (ADA)

General methodology

The National Geographic Database (NGD) is a joint Statistics Canada-Elections Canada initiative to develop and maintain a spatial database that serves the needs of both organizations. The focus of the NGD is the continual improvement of quality and currency of spatial coverage using updates from provinces, territories and local sources. The source files used for the creation of the *2026 Census Boundary Files* reside on Statistics Canada's Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI), which was derived directly from data stored in the NGD.

Creation of the *2026 Census Boundary Files*

For the boundary files creation, spatial and attribute information were extracted from SDI using the lowest level of geography, also known as the basic block. The spatial and attribute information of the hydrography component were also extracted. The native files were copied into a File Geodatabase to facilitate geo-processing (e.g. joins, transformation, and verification operations). Data manipulation of the product layers included maintaining the geographic hierarchy and associated attributes for each geographic level.

Digital

All the higher-level geographies were created from the extracted basic block layer.

Cartographic

The extracted basic block layer was intersected with the hydrographic layer, and the **detailed** basic block layer was created by selecting the land-based polygons from the intersection layer.

The intersection layer polygons were categorized based on their geographic setting, population and size. The boundaries of these polygons were then converted to lines and further categorized based on their coincidence with an administrative boundary and location relative to water features (islands, coastal, inland, or in water). A subset of lines was simplified or removed based on their categorization values. The remaining lines were then converted back to polygons, and the land-based polygons were selected to create the **generalized** basic block layer.

As with the digital boundary file creation, all the higher-level geographies were then created from the **detailed** and **generalized** basic block layers.

Post-processing

All the files were verified for their spatial and attribute content, translated into French and English, and appropriately named according to the file naming convention. Final data processing consisted of the conversion from the File Geodatabase format, using FME® (Safe Software), into the following file formats supported by Geographic Information System (GIS) software: Shapefile (.shp), Geography Markup Language (.gml), and GeoPackage (.gpkg).

The Esri® REST service and Web Map Service (WMS) were created and published using ArcGIS® Enterprise.

The Shapefile, Geography Markup Language, File Geodatabase and GeoPackage files were compressed files (file extension .zip) and made available for download from the Statistics Canada website.

Limitations

The input data used to create the files was originally obtained from several sources having a wide range of scales. The *2026 Census Boundary Files* are not suitable for use at scales larger than those of the source material used to create them. Maps created from the boundary files should not be used to determine the precise location of boundaries.

The positional accuracy of the files does not support cadastral, legal, surveying, digitizing or engineering applications.

Comparison to other products or versions

Each *2026 Census Boundary File* is compatible with other *2026 Census Boundary Files* and the *2026 Road Network File*. Boundary files are derived from the same native sources and the attributes found in each of the boundary files are compatible.

The *2026 Census Boundary Files* are similar but not necessarily consistent with the boundary files released prior to the 2026 Census.

The *2026 Census Boundary Files* can be linked to other 2026 Census data products using the UID and DGUID for each geographic area. The new *2026 Dissemination Geographies Relationship File* also allows the *2026 Census Boundary Files* to be linked to higher geographic levels through their DGUIDs.

Use with other products

When considering using the *2026 Census Boundary Files*, users should be aware of the compatibility of these files with those that are available from other sources. They may not be consistent with Statistics Canada files.

Reference date

The geographic reference date is a date determined by Statistics Canada to finalize the geographic framework for which census data are collected, tabulated and reported. The reference date for the geographic area boundaries in cartographic and digital boundary files is January 1, 2026.

4 Technical specifications

Record layout and data descriptions

The following tables identify and briefly describe the selected attributes comprising the content of the *2026 Census Boundary Files*.

Province and territory

Table 4.1
Record layout - Province and territory boundary files

Attribute name	Data type	Description
PRUID	Character (2)	Uniquely identifies a province or territory.
DGUID	Character (21)	Dissemination geography unique identifier.[1]
PRNAME	Character (100)	Province or territory name.
PRENAME	Character (100)	Province or territory name in English.
PRFNAME	Character (100)	Province or territory name in French.
PREABBR	Character (10)	English abbreviation of the province or territory name.
PRFABBR	Character (10)	French abbreviation of the province or territory name.
LANDAREA	Number (12.4)	Land area of geographic area, in square kilometres (km^2).

1. For further information please refer to the "Dissemination geography unique identifier (DGUID)" definition from the *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2026*.

For more information on provinces or territories, refer to the "Province and territory" definition from the *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2026.*

Census division

Table 4.2
Record layout - Census division boundary files

Attribute name	Data type	Description
CDUID	Character (4)	Uniquely identifies a census division (composed of the 2-digit province/territory unique identifier followed by the 2-digit census division code).
DGUID	Character (21)	Dissemination geography unique identifier.[1]
CDNAME	Character (100)	Census division name.
CDENAME	Character (100)	Census division English name.
CDFNAME	Character (100)	Census division French name.
CDTYPE	Character (3)	Census division type.
LANDAREA	Number (12.4)	Land area of geographic area, in square kilometres (km^2).
PRUID	Character (2)	Uniquely identifies a province or territory.

1. For further information please refer to the "Dissemination geography unique identifier (DGUID)" definition from the *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2026*.

For more information on census divisions, refer to the "Census division (CD)" definition and Table 1.4, "Census division types by province and territory, 2026 Census", from the *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2026*.

Federal electoral district

Table 4.3
Record layout - Federal electoral district boundary files

Attribute name	Data type	Description
FEDUID	Character (5)	Uniquely identifies a federal electoral district (composed of the 2-digit province/territory unique identifier followed by the 3-digit federal electoral district code).
DGUID	Character (21)	Dissemination geography unique identifier.[1]
FEDNAME	Character (200)	Federal electoral district name.
FEDENAME	Character (100)	The federal electoral district name in English.
FEDFNAME	Character (100)	The federal electoral district name in French.
LANDAREA	Number (12.4)	Land area of geographic area, in square kilometres (km^2).
PRUID	Character (2)	Uniquely identifies a province or territory.

1. For further information please refer to the "Dissemination geography unique identifier (DGUID)" definition from the *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2026*.

For more information on federal electoral districts, refer to the "Federal electoral district (FED)" definition from the *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2026.*

Census subdivision

Table 4.4
Record layout - Census subdivision boundary files

Attribute name	Data type	Description
CSDUID	Character (7)	Uniquely identifies a census subdivision (composed of the 2-digit province/territory unique identifier followed by the 2-digit census division code and the 3-digit census subdivision code).
DGUID	Character (21)	Dissemination geography unique identifier.[1]
CSDNAME	Character (100)	Census subdivision name.
CSDENAME	Character (100)	Census subdivision English name.
CSDFNAME	Character (100)	Census subdivision French name.
CSDTYPE	Character (3)	Census subdivisions are classified according to designations adopted by provincial/territorial or federal authorities.
LANDAREA	Number (12.4)	Land area of geographic area, in square kilometres (km^2).
PRUID	Character (2)	Uniquely identifies a province or territory.

1. For further information please refer to the "Dissemination geography unique identifier (DGUID)" definition from the *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2026*.

For more information on census subdivisions, refer to the "Census subdivision (CSD)" definition and Table 1.5, "Census subdivision types by province and territory, 2026 Census", from the *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2026*.

Designated place (available February 10, 2027)

Table 4.5
Record layout - Designated place boundary files

Attribute name	Data type	Description
DPLUID	Character (6)	Uniquely identifies a designated place (composed of the 2-digit province or territory unique identifier followed by the 4-digit designated place code).
DGUID	Character (21)	Dissemination geography unique identifier.[1]
DPLNAME	Character (100)	Designated place name.
DPLENAME	Character (100)	Designated place English name.
DPLFNAME	Character (100)	Designated place French name.
DPLTYPE	Character (3)	Designated place type.
LANDAREA	Number (12.4)	Land area of geographic area, in square kilometres (km^2).
PRUID	Character (2)	Uniquely identifies a province or territory.

1. For further information please refer to the "Dissemination geography unique identifier (DGUID)" definition from the *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2026*.

For more information on designated places, refer to the "Designated place (DPL)" definition and Table 1.6, "Designated place types by province and territory, 2026 Census", from the *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2026*.

Economic region

Table 4.6
Record layout - Economic region boundary files

Attribute name	Data type	Description
ERUID	Character (4)	Uniquely identifies an economic region (composed of the 2-digit province/territory unique identifier followed by the 2-digit economic region code).
DGUID	Character (21)	Dissemination geography unique identifier.[1]
ERNAME	Character (100)	Economic region name.
LANDAREA	Number (12.4)	Land area of geographic area, in square kilometres (km^2).
PRUID	Character (2)	Uniquely identifies a province or territory.

1. For further information please refer to the "Dissemination geography unique identifier (DGUID)" definition from the *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2026*.

For more information on economic regions, refer to the "Economic regions (ER)" definition from the *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2026*.

Census agricultural region

Table 4.7
Record layout - Census agricultural regions boundary files

Attribute name	Data type	Description
CARUID	Character (4)	Uniquely identifies a census agricultural region (composed of the 2-digit province/territory code and the 2-digit census agricultural region code).
DGUID	Character (21)	Dissemination geography unique identifier.[1]
CARNAME	Character (100)	The official census agricultural region.
CARENAME	Character (50)	The official census agricultural region English name.
CARFNAME	Character (50)	The official census agricultural region French name.
LANDAREA	Number (12.4)	Land area of geographic area, in square kilometres (km^2).
PRUID	Character (2)	Uniquely identifies a province or territory.

1. For further information please refer to the "Dissemination geography unique identifier (DGUID)" definition from the *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2026*.

For more information on census agricultural regions, refer to the "Census agricultural region (CAR)" definition from the *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2026*.

Census consolidated subdivision

Table 4.8
Record layout - Census consolidated subdivision boundary files

Attribute name	Data type	Description
CCSUID	Character (7)	Uniquely identifies a census consolidated subdivision (composed of the 2-digit province/territory unique identifier followed by the 2-digit census division code and the 3-digit census consolidated subdivision code).
DGUID	Character (21)	Dissemination geography unique identifier.[1]
CCSNAME	Character (100)	Census consolidated subdivision name.
LANDAREA	Number (12.4)	Land area of geographic area, in square kilometres (km^2).
PRUID	Character (2)	Uniquely identifies a province or territory.

1. For further information please refer to the "Dissemination geography unique identifier (DGUID)" definition from the *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2026*.

For more information on census consolidated subdivisions, refer to the "Census consolidated subdivision (CCS)" definition from the *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2026*.

Census metropolitan area and Census agglomeration (available February 10, 2027)

CMAs and CAs that cross a provincial boundary are disseminated in two files, the whole geographic areas and the provincial parts.

Table 4.9-a
Record layout - Census metropolitan area and census agglomeration boundary files

Attribute name	Data type	Description
CMAUID	Character (3)	Uniquely identifies a census metropolitan area/census agglomeration.
DGUID	Character (21)	Dissemination geography unique identifier.[1]
CMANAME	Character (100)	Census metropolitan area or census agglomeration name.
CMAENAME	Character (100)	Census metropolitan area or census agglomeration English name.
CMAFNAME	Character (100)	Census metropolitan area or census agglomeration French name.
CMATYPE	Character (1)	A one character field indicating whether the unit is a census metropolitan area, a tracted census agglomeration or a non-tracted census agglomeration.
LANDAREA	Number (12.4)	Land area of geographic area, in square kilometres (km^2).
PRUID	Character (2)	Uniquely identifies a province or territory.
XPRUID	Character (2)	Indicates which census metropolitan areas or census agglomerations cross provincial boundaries.

1. For further information please refer to the "Dissemination geography unique identifier (DGUID)" definition from the *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2026*.

Table 4.9-b
Record layout - Census metropolitan area part and census agglomeration part boundary files

Attribute name	Data type	Description
CMAUID	Character (3)	Uniquely identifies a census metropolitan area/census agglomeration.
CMAPUID	Character (5)	Uniquely identifies the provincial/territorial part of a census metropolitan area/census agglomeration in Canada (composed of the 2-digit province/territory unique identifier followed by the 3-digit census metropolitan area/census agglomeration code).
DGUID	Character (21)	Dissemination geography unique identifier.[1]
CMANAME	Character (100)	Census metropolitan area or census agglomeration name.
CMAENAME	Character (100)	Census metropolitan area or census agglomeration English name.
CMAFNAME	Character (100)	Census metropolitan area or census agglomeration French name.
CMAPNAME	Character (100)	Census metropolitan area part or census agglomeration part name.
CMATYPE	Character (1)	A one character field indicating whether the unit is a census metropolitan area, a tracted census agglomeration or a non-tracted census agglomeration.
LANDAREA	Number (12.4)	Land area of geographic area, in square kilometres (km^2).
PRUID	Character (2)	Uniquely identifies a province or territory.

1. For further information please refer to the "Dissemination geography unique identifier (DGUID)" definition from the *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2026*.

For more information on census metropolitan area and census agglomeration, refer to the "Census metropolitan area (CMA) and census agglomeration (CA)" definition and Table 1.10, "Census metropolitan area and census agglomeration types by province and territory, 2026 Census", from the *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2026.*

Census tract (available February 10, 2027)

Table 4.10
Record layout - Census tract boundary files

Attribute name	Data type	Description
CTUID	Character (10)	Uniquely identifies a census tract within a census metropolitan area/census agglomeration (composed of the 3-digit census metropolitan area/census agglomeration unique identifier followed by the 7.2-character census tract name).
DGUID	Character (21)	Dissemination geography unique identifier.[1]
CTNAME	Character (7)	Every census tract is assigned a 7.2-character numeric 'name' (including leading zeros, a decimal point and trailing zeros).
LANDAREA	Number (12.4)	Land area of geographic area, in square kilometres (km^2).
PRUID	Character (2)	Uniquely identifies a province or territory.

1. For further information please refer to the "Dissemination geography unique identifier (DGUID)" definition from the *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2026*.

For more information on census tracts, refer to the "Census tract (CT)" definition from the *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2026*.

Population centre (available February 10, 2027)

Table 4.11-a
Record layout - Population centre boundary files

Attribute name	Data type	Description
PCUID	Character (4)	Uniquely identifies a population centre.
DGUID	Character (21)	Dissemination geography unique identifier.[1]
PCNAME	Character (100)	Population centre name.
PCENAME	Character (100)	Population centre English name.
PCFNAME	Character (100)	Population centre French name.
PCTYPE	Character (1)	Population centre type.
PCCLASS	Character (1)	Identifies whether a population centre is small, medium or large urban.
LANDAREA	Number (12.4)	Land area of geographic area, in square kilometres (km^2).
PRUID	Character (2)	Uniquely identifies a province or territory.
XPRUID	Character (2)	Indicates which population centres cross provincial boundaries.

1. For further information please refer to the "Dissemination geography unique identifier (DGUID)" definition from the *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2026*.
Note: The official abbreviation for Population Centre is POPCTR. However, due to attribute name length limitations for some GIS applications, PC is used to represent Population Centre.

Table 4.11-b
Record layout - Population centre part boundary files

Attribute name	Data type	Description
PCUID	Character (4)	Uniquely identifies a population centre.
PCPUID	Character (6)	Uniquely identifies the provincial or territorial part of an population centre (composed of the 2-digit province or territory unique identifier followed by the 4-digit population centre unique identifier).
DGUID	Character (21)	Dissemination geography unique identifier.[1]
PCNAME	Character (100)	Population centre name.
PCENAME	Character (100)	Population centre English name.
PCFNAME	Character (100)	Population centre French name.
PCPNAME	Character (100)	Population centre part name.
PCTYPE	Character (1)	Population centre type.
PCCLASS	Character (1)	Identifies whether a population centre is small, medium or large urban.
LANDAREA	Number (12.4)	Land area of geographic area, in square kilometres (km^2).
PRUID	Character (2)	Uniquely identifies a province or territory.

1. For further information please refer to the "Dissemination geography unique identifier (DGUID)" definition from the *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2026*.
Note: The official abbreviation for Population Centre is POPCTR. However, due to attribute name length limitations for some GIS applications, PC is used to represent Population Centre.

For more information on population centres, refer to the "Population centre (POPCTR)" definition from the *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2026*.

Dissemination area

Table 4.12
Record layout - Dissemination area boundary files

Attribute name	Data type	Description
DAUID	Character (8)	Uniquely identifies a dissemination area (composed of the 2-digit province/territory unique identifier followed by the 2-digit census division code and the 4-digit dissemination area code).
DGUID	Character (21)	Dissemination geography unique identifier.[1]
LANDAREA	Number (12.4)	Land area of geographic area, in square kilometres (km^2).
PRUID	Character (2)	Uniquely identifies a province or territory.

1. For further information please refer to the "Dissemination geography unique identifier (DGUID)" definition from the *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2026*.

The digital boundary file contains the boundaries of all 59,607 DAs, which combined cover all of Canada. The detailed cartographic boundary file contains the boundaries of 59,606 DAs. DA 24690104 in Quebec falls completely in coastal water and is not included in the detailed cartographic boundary file. The generalized cartographic boundary file contains the boundaries of 59,604 DAs. DA 35510090 in Ontario and 59153594 in British Columbia do not meet the simplification criteria and are not included in the generalized cartographic boundary file.

For more information on dissemination areas, refer to the "Dissemination area (DA)" definition from the *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2026*.

Dissemination block

Table 4.13
Record layout - Dissemination block boundary files

Attribute name	Data type	Description
DBUID	Character (11)	Uniquely identifies a dissemination block (composed of the 2-digit province/territory unique identifier followed by the 2-digit census division code, the 4-digit dissemination area code and the 3-digit dissemination block code).
DGUID	Character (21)	Dissemination geography unique identifier.[1]
DBRPLAMX	Number (17.8)	Dissemination block representative point lambert X coordinate, in metres.
DBRPLAMY	Number (17.8)	Dissemination block representative point lambert Y coordinate, in metres.
LANDAREA	Number (12.4)	Land area of geographic area, in square kilometres (km^2).
PRUID	Character (2)	Uniquely identifies a province or territory.

1. For further information please refer to the "Dissemination geography unique identifier (DGUID)" definition from the *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2026*.

For more information on dissemination blocks, refer to the "Dissemination block (DB)" definition from the *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2026*.

Below is a list of the 256 DBs that are not included within the detailed cartographic boundary file. These DBs are located entirely within coastal waters and were therefore removed during the production of the cartographic boundary file. The list also includes the additional 38 DBs not included in the generalized cartographic boundary file as they did not meet the simplification criteria.

Table 4.14
Dissemination blocks not included within the 2026 Census "Dissemination block cartographic boundary files" - DBUID

Detailed cartographic boundary file	Generalized cartographic boundary file
Newfoundland and Labrador	
10010503033	10010503033
10010503034	10010503034
10010504070	10010504070
10010520040	10010520040
10010535028	10010535028
10010556009	10010556009
10010556032	10010556032
10020079053	10020079053
10020117005	10020117005
10040108013	10040108013
10040113052	10040113052
10040113065	10040113065
10070483004	10070483004
10070487003	10070487003
10070516024	10070516024
10070516026	10070516026
10070516027	10070516027
10070516028	10070516028
10070519018	10070519018
10070523069	10070523069
10070549011	10070549011
10070550003	10070550003
10070550004	10070550004
10090089043	10090089043
10090089045	10090089045
10100108017	10100108017
10110001005	10110001005
10110001006	10110001006
	10010504071
	10010682009
	10010682010
	10040113063
	10070501066
	10070516029
	10070551013
	10070563015
	10080166011
	10090089044

Table 4.14
Dissemination blocks not included within the 2026 Census "Dissemination block cartographic boundary files" - DBUID

Detailed cartographic boundary file	Generalized cartographic boundary file
Prince Edward Island	
11030289038	11030289038
11030303007	11030303007
Nova Scotia	
12070163026	12070163026
12090838005	12090838005
12090846021	12090846021
12090846022	12090846022
12090846023	12090846023
12090846024	12090846024
12090846025	12090846025
12090846026	12090846026
12090846027	12090846027
12090846028	12090846028
12090902005	12090902005
12090915023	12090915023
12090915024	12090915024
12090980004	12090980004
12090981006	12090981006
12091023001	12091023001
12120110001	12120110001
12120122009	12120122009
12170353005	12170353005
12170355009	12170355009
12170357004	12170357004
12170358009	12170358009
12170364019	12170364019
12170378014	12170378014
12170389013	12170389013
12170390013	12170390013
12170395006	12170395006
12170396012	12170396012
12170397005	12170397005
12170398001	12170398001
12170399002	12170399002
12170400004	12170400004
12170403016	12170403016
12170404019	12170404019
12170405014	12170405014

Table 4.14
Dissemination blocks not included within the 2026 Census "Dissemination block cartographic boundary files" - DBUID

Detailed cartographic boundary file	Generalized cartographic boundary file
12170406019	12170406019
12170415010	12170415010
12170417023	12170417023
12170420005	12170420005
12170425009	12170425009
12170426003	12170426003
12170429029	12170429029
12170432005	12170432005
12170440003	12170440003
12170449013	12170449013
12170451012	12170451012
12170460022	12170460022
12170461013	12170461013
12170480001	12170480001
12170485014	12170485014
12170486003	12170486003
12170491007	12170491007
12170497009	12170497009
12170517013	12170517013
12170522009	12170522009
12170531004	12170531004
New Brunswick	
13220198001	13220198001
13220203005	13220203005
13230322001	13230322001
13230322013	13230322013
13240347005	13240347005
13260139006	13260139006
13260139007	13260139007
13270040011	13270040011
13270133017	13270133017
13270235027	13270235027
13270312016	13270312016
13290055016	13290055016
13290103016	13290103016
13290238007	13290238007
13300063005	13300063005
13300072004	13300072004
13300072005	13300072005

Table 4.14
Dissemination blocks not included within the 2026 Census "Dissemination block cartographic boundary files" - DBUID

Detailed cartographic boundary file	Generalized cartographic boundary file
13300072006	13300072006
13300169002	13300169002
13300174009	13300174009
13300176027	13300176027
13300176028	13300176028
13300177013	13300177013
13300177014	13300177014
13300180019	13300180019
13300180020	13300180020
Quebec	
24020064006	24020064006
24020064012	24020064012
24180040016	24180040016
24180046016	24180046016
24180055028	24180055028
24180055030	24180055030
24180063014	24180063014
24180072018	24180072018
24230066001	24230066001
24250187026	24250187026
24250187027	24250187027
24250296011	24250296011
24250300015	24250300015
24250300017	24250300017
24250300018	24250300018
24250300019	24250300019
24250300021	24250300021
24340089017	24340089017
24340089019	24340089019
24340089021	24340089021
24340089023	24340089023
24370299011	24370299011
24370308017	24370308017
24380045028	24380045028
24520099015	24520099015
24520100018	24520100018
24530073008	24530073008
24530108023	24530108023

Table 4.14
Dissemination blocks not included within the 2026 Census "Dissemination block cartographic boundary files" - DBUID

Detailed cartographic boundary file	Generalized cartographic boundary file
24530124037	24530124037
24530126014	24530126014
24530126016	24530126016
24530126018	24530126018
24530126020	24530126020
24580552021	24580552021
24590220007	24590220007
24590221006	24590221006
24590221008	24590221008
24590221010	24590221010
24590221012	24590221012
24590222010	24590222010
24590222011	24590222011
24663520002	24663520002
24670307016	24670307016
24690104001	24690104001
24700067028	24700067028
24700088041	24700088041
24700151018	24700151018
24710145036	24710145036
24710189012	24710189012
24710191014	24710191014
24710191015	24710191015
24710191017	24710191017
24710191019	24710191019
24710191021	24710191021
24710194018	24710194018
24710242019	24710242019
24710244022	24710244022
24970125025	24970125025
	24590220009
	24590220010
	24670307011
	24670307013
	24670307020
	24700092033
	24710146022
	24710154016
	24710194016

Table 4.14
Dissemination blocks not included within the 2026 Census "Dissemination block cartographic boundary files" - DBUID

Detailed cartographic boundary file	Generalized cartographic boundary file
Ontario	
35010235010	35010235010
35120346018	35120346018
35120346019	35120346019
35120371016	35120371016
35120371019	35120371019
35205097001	35205097001
35205099018	35205099018
35370813015	35370813015
35380295018	35380295018
35410146019	35410146019
35420230022	35420230022
35420255011	35420255011
35430603026	35430603026
35430869046	35430869046
35490236010	35490236010
35510090001	35510090001
35570420035	35570420035
35580485003	35580485003
35580499043	35580499043
35600296010	35600296010
35600408044	35600408044
	35070235023
	35120392024
	35430612025
	35430869042
	35430869044
	35510090002
	35600286008
British Columbia	
59150871005	59150871005
59150871007	59150871007
59150871008	59150871008
59150884004	59150884004
59153569009	59153569009
59153569033	59153569033
59153569035	59153569035
59153569036	59153569036
59153586046	59153586046

Table 4.14
Dissemination blocks not included within the 2026 Census "Dissemination block cartographic boundary files" - DBUID

Detailed cartographic boundary file	Generalized cartographic boundary file
59153586047	59153586047
59153602084	59153602084
59153663024	59153663024
59153663026	59153663026
59153663029	59153663029
59153663032	59153663032
59153689035	59153689035
59153692005	59153692005
59153692006	59153692006
59154140006	59154140006
59154141005	59154141005
59154142006	59154142006
59170331005	59170331005
59170648027	59170648027
59170648032	59170648032
59170654007	59170654007
59170654009	59170654009
59170654011	59170654011
59190305008	59190305008
59190316002	59190316002
59210260004	59210260004
59210274010	59210274010
59210274012	59210274012
59210303008	59210303008
59230157022	59230157022
59240215009	59240215009
59260295042	59260295042
59260424007	59260424007
59260432012	59260432012
59290116030	59290116030
59290116031	59290116031
59290165002	59290165002
59290204013	59290204013
59310260039	59310260039
59310260040	59310260040
59310260041	59310260041
59310260042	59310260042
59310281001	59310281001
59310281002	59310281002

Table 4.14
Dissemination blocks not included within the 2026 Census "Dissemination block cartographic boundary files" - DBUID

Detailed cartographic boundary file	Generalized cartographic boundary file
59310282001	59310282001
59310282004	59310282004
59310282005	59310282005
59310283012	59310283012
59310284001	59310284001
59310284002	59310284002
59310284003	59310284003
59310284006	59310284006
59470103004	59470103004
	59153594001
	59153663031
	59153665015
	59170033018
	59170649001
	59190199005
	59270077009
	59290151001
Northwest Territories	
61010057001	61010057001
Nunavut	
62040062039	62040062039
62050013015	62050013015
62050013022	62050013022
62050013023	62050013023
62050013024	62050013024
62050013025	62050013025
62050013026	62050013026
	62050013005
	62050013010
	62050013012
	62050013017

Aggregate dissemination area

Table 4.15
Record layout - Aggregate dissemination area boundary files

Attribute name	Data type	Description
ADAUID	Character (8)	Uniquely identifies an aggregate dissemination area (composed of the 2-digit province/territory unique identifier followed by the 2-digit census division code and the 4-digit aggregate dissemination area code).
DGUID	Character (21)	Dissemination geography unique identifier.[1]
LANDAREA	Number (12.4)	Land area of geographic area, in square kilometres (km^2).
PRUID	Character (2)	Uniquely identifies a province or territory.

1. For further information please refer to the "Dissemination geography unique identifier (DGUID)" definition from the *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2026*.

For more information on aggregate dissemination areas, refer to the "Aggregate dissemination area (ADA)" definition from the *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2026*.

Attribute domain values

Census division type (CDTYPE)

For information on census division types, refer to the "Census division type (CDTYPE), 2026 Census" table.

Census subdivision type (CSDTYPE)

Census subdivisions are classified according to designations adopted by provincial, territorial or federal authorities.

For information on census subdivision types, refer to the "Census subdivision type (CSDTYPE), 2026 Census" table.

Census metropolitan area and census agglomeration type (CMATYPE) (available February 10, 2027)

For information on census metropolitan area and census agglomeration types, refer to the "Census metropolitan area and census agglomeration type (CMATYPE), 2026 Census" table.

File specifications

Not applicable

Software formats

Boundary files for the 2026 Census are available for download from the Statistics Canada website in the following formats:

- Shapefile
  File extension: .shp
- Geography Markup Language (GML) 3.1.1
  File extension: .gml
- File Geodatabase
  File extension: .gdb
- GeoPackage
  File extension: .gpkg

The *2026 Census Boundary Files* are also available as map services from the Statistics Canada website in the following formats:

- Esri® REST service
- Web Map Service (WMS)

File extension and accented character information

The Shapefile, Geography Markup Language, File Geodatabase and GeoPackage files are compressed (file extension .zip).

Some of the 2026 Census Boundary Files contain accented characters. They were successfully tested in ArcGIS® desktop applications version 10.8.2, ArcGIS® Pro 3.3 and FME Data Inspector 2024.3®.

Metadata

The downloadable compressed packages (.zip) include a metadata file (.xml) that describes and validates the structure and content of the *2026 Census Boundary Files*. The metadata file complies with the Harmonized North American Profile (HNAP) requirements for Government of Canada datasets.

The same metadata elements are used to describe the Esri® REST services and the Web Map Services (WMS).

Geographic representation

The *2026 Census Boundary Files* are available on the Statistics Canada website in the following geographic representation:

- Projection: Lambert conformal conic
- False easting: 6200000.000000
- False northing: 3000000.000000
- Central meridian: -91.866667
- Standard parallel 1: 49.000000
- Standard parallel 2: 77.000000
- Latitude of origin: 63.390675
- Linear unit: metre (1.000000)
- Datum: North American 1983 (NAD83)
- Prime meridian: Greenwich
- Angular unit: degree
- Spheroid: GRS 1980

Users of 2026 Census Boundary Files can transform the files into the representation that best satisfies their needs, knowing the effects these representations have on angles, areas, distances and direction. Users have the option to choose the best projection in concert with display objectives.

File naming convention

Spatial product file names follow a file naming convention. The file projection, the geographic level, geographic coverage, file type, geographic reference date, file format and language are embedded within the file name. Standardizing the names of the files facilitates the storage of compressed files, all having the extension .zip.

Each file name has 13 characters in length. All alphabetic characters are in lower case to maintain consistency.

First character: projection of file

- l - projection in Lambert conformal conic

Next three characters: primary geographic level of file

- pr_ - province and territory
- er_ - economic region
- car - census agricultural region
- fed - federal electoral district
- cd_ - census division
- ccs - census consolidated subdivision
- csd - census subdivision
- ada - aggregate dissemination area
- da_ - dissemination area
- db_ - dissemination block
- cma - census metropolitan area and census agglomeration
- cmp - census metropolitan area part and census agglomeration part

- ct_ - census tract
- pc_ - population centre
- pcp - population centre part
- dpl - designated place

Next three numbers: geographic code of coverage

- 000 - Canada

Next character: file type

- a - digital boundary file
- b - detailed cartographic boundary file
- c - generalized cartographic boundary file

Next two numbers: geographic reference date

The geographic reference date is a date determined by Statistics Canada for the purpose of finalizing the geographic framework for which census data are collected, tabulated and reported. For 2026 Census products, the geographic reference date is January 1, 2026.

- 26 - geographic reference date is 2026

Next character: file format

- a - Shapefile (.shp)
- f - File Geodatabase (.gdb)
- g - Geography Markup Language (.gml)
- p - GeoPackage (.gpkg)
- s - Services (Esri® REST and Web Map Service [WMS])

Final two characters: language

- _e - English
- _f - French

5 Data quality

Spatial data quality elements provide information on the fitness-for-use of a spatial database by describing why, when and how the data are created, and how accurate the data are. The elements include an overview describing the purpose and usage, as well as specific quality elements reporting on lineage, positional accuracy, attribute accuracy, logical consistency and completeness. This information is provided to users for all spatial data products disseminated for the census.

Lineage

Lineage describes the history of the spatial data, including descriptions of the source material from which the data were derived, and the methods of derivation. It also contains the dates of the source material, and all transformations involved in producing the final digital files.

All data in the *2026 Census Boundary Files* were originally extracted from Statistics Canada's SDI.

For more *2026 Census Boundary Files* lineage information, please refer to the General methodology section.

Positional accuracy

Positional accuracy refers to the absolute and relative accuracy of the positions of geographic features. Absolute accuracy is the closeness of the coordinate values in a dataset to true values or values accepted as true. 'Relative accuracy' is the closeness of the relative positions of features to their respective relative positions accepted as or being true. Descriptions of positional accuracy include the quality of the final file or product after all transformations.

The NGD is not fully Global Positioning Systems (GPS)-compliant. However, every possible attempt is made to ensure that the geographic area boundaries maintained in the NGD respect the limits of the administrative entities that they represent (e.g., CD and CSD) or on which they are based (e.g., CMA and CA). The positional accuracy of these limits is dependent upon source materials used by Statistics Canada to identify the location of limits. In addition, due to the importance placed on relative positional accuracy, the positional accuracy of other geographic data (e.g., road network data) that are stored within the NGD is considered when positioning the limits of the geographic areas.

Within the NGD, DB representative points were generated using ArcGIS® software in conjunction with their respective cartographic boundaries. The most detailed hydrography available was used in identifying cartographic boundaries and calculating representative points in Statistics Canada native format. Efforts were made to ensure that representative points do not fall into water, where possible. After geo-processing (e.g., projecting, appending, transforming and verification operations), the "2026 Dissemination Block Cartographic Boundary File" is converted into Shapefile (.shp), Geography Markup Language (.gml), File Geodatabase (.gdb) or GeoPackage (.gpkg) files. These manipulations may have caused slight shifting of some of the underlying land features resulting in representative points falling in water.

Attribute accuracy

Attribute accuracy refers to the accuracy of the quantitative and qualitative information attached to each feature (such as population for a population centre, a street name, or a census subdivision name and code).

As noted under the General methodology section, the attributes (names, types and UIDs) for all geographic areas are sourced from Statistics Canada's SDI. The names and types of geographic areas have been updated using source materials from provincial, territorial and federal authorities.

The attribute data associated with the polygons in the *2026 Census Boundary Files* were verified against the data in the SDI and found to accurately reflect them.

Logical consistency

Logical consistency describes the dependability of relationships encoded in the data structure of the digital spatial data.

The *2026 Census Boundary Files* were verified against data in SDI and found to be logically consistent.

In each boundary file, all geographic areas were verified to ensure that they have valid UIDs and DGUIDs for the 2026 Census.

Consistency with other products

The position of the boundaries in the *2026 Census Boundary Files* is not necessarily consistent with previous editions of boundary files or road network files as a result of updates made using provincially and territorially sourced data.

Topology checks were performed with the *2026 Road Network File* and the *2026 Census Boundary Files* to measure the degree of integration amongst these products. The results indicated the degree of integration was within the default tolerance parameters as defined below.

- Tolerance: 0.00001 metres
- Resolution: 0.000005 metres

Completeness

Completeness refers to the degree to which geographic features, their attributes and their relationships are included or omitted in a dataset. It also includes information on selection criteria, definitions used, and other relevant mapping rules.

In both digital boundary files and cartographic boundary files, a geographic area may be depicted by more than one polygon. In the digital boundary files, there are some geographic areas that have two or more parts. This is particularly the case for some CSDs. In cartographic boundary files, this is also due to having removed the coastal water area from the digital boundary files, thus creating several polygons for one geographic area. In the cartographic boundary files, this impacts only geographic areas that are situated in coastal areas.

Appendix

See the *2026 Census Boundary files*.

See the *2026 Road Network File*.

See Table 1.1, “Geographic areas by province and territory, 2026 Census”, from the *Dictionary, Census of Population, 2026*.

See *Interim List of Changes to Municipal Boundaries, Status, and Names From January 2, 2021 to January 1, 2026*.