

Welcome to Canada

Before you travel, at the border and your first 30 days

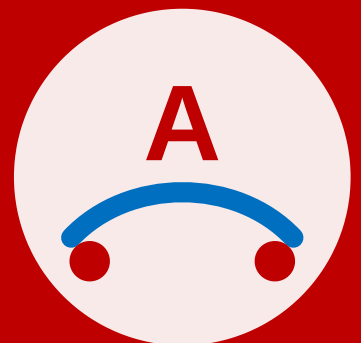
For permanent residents, workers, students and accompanying family members

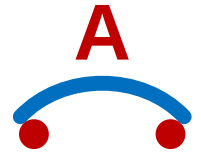


PRACTICAL. CLEAR. SOURCE-BASED.

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www.theworldbridge.ca





How to use this guide

Use the actions in the order that fits your status, province and circumstances. Write in the planning pages and return to the source page before a high-consequence decision.

01**Start with legal and safety steps**

Confirm documents, conditions, deadlines and immediate needs before optional purchases.

02**Use official sources**

The linked authorities are the primary reference. Rules and eligibility can change.

03**Keep evidence**

Save confirmations, receipts, records and written advice in a secure system.

04**Ask early**

Use free newcomer supports and seek individualized advice for high-consequence decisions.

**IMPORTANT**

This guide provides general information and practical orientation. It is not a substitute for individualized immigration, legal, tenancy, employment, financial, tax or medical advice. Eligibility, procedures and provincial or territorial rules can change. Verify current requirements with the linked authority before acting.

Start before you leave

Use this guide as a sequence, not a race. Complete urgent legal and safety steps first.

1

Keep these in your hand luggage

- Passports and travel documents for every traveller
- IRCC approval letters, visas, COPRs or permits, as applicable
- Accommodation address, school or employer contact, and proof of funds
- Prescriptions, medical summaries and vaccination records

2

Bring records that are hard to replace

- Birth, marriage, adoption, custody and divorce documents
- Education records, transcripts, licences and employment references
- Driver's licence, driving history and insurance experience letter
- Certified translations where records are not in English or French

3

Prepare a secure backup

- Scan important documents to encrypted storage
- Keep emergency contacts outside your phone
- Carry copies separately from originals
- Never place irreplaceable documents in checked baggage

At the Canadian border

1

Expect document and entry questions

- Answer truthfully and consistently with your application
- Explain your destination, purpose and intended length of stay
- Have contact details and supporting documents ready
- Ask questions if you do not understand a document issued to you

2

Inspect documents before leaving

- Confirm spelling, passport number and date of birth
- Review the expiry date and any work or study conditions
- Keep the original safe and make a clear digital copy
- Report a suspected error promptly through the proper IRCC process

3

Declare goods and money correctly

- Prepare goods-accompanying and goods-to-follow lists when settling
- Declare currency or monetary instruments over CAD 10,000
- Declare food, plants, animals and restricted goods
- Keep stamped customs records for future shipments

Your first 72 hours

1

Get safely established

- Confirm where you will sleep for the next several nights
- Obtain a working Canadian phone number or reliable internet access
- Learn your address, nearest transit stop and safe route home
- Share arrival confirmation with a trusted person

2

Know the essential numbers

- Call 911 for immediate police, fire or medical emergencies
- Call or text 988 for suicide crisis support
- Use 211 where available to locate community and social services
- Check your province's health advice line, often reached through 811

3

Do not make rushed commitments

- Avoid paying a rental deposit without verifying the property
- Do not hand your passport to an employer or landlord
- Do not sign contracts you have not read
- Be cautious with unsolicited immigration, job and banking offers

Your first week: essential accounts

1

Social Insurance Number

- Apply only if your status and document authorize you to work or access the program
- Use Service Canada's official online, in-person or mail process
- Temporary residents normally receive a SIN beginning with 9
- Update the SIN record when immigration status or permit expiry changes

2

Health coverage

- Check eligibility with your province or territory immediately
- Ask whether a waiting period or temporary private coverage is needed
- Understand that prescriptions, dental, vision and ambulances may not be fully covered
- Keep proof of application and coverage dates

3

Banking

- Compare account fees, included transactions and newcomer offers
- Ask about no-cost or low-cost account eligibility
- Protect your PIN and online banking credentials
- Do not use your SIN as everyday identification

Build a workable daily life

1

Housing

- Use short-term accommodation while you verify long-term options
- Calculate rent plus utilities, transportation and insurance
- Read the full lease and provincial rules before paying
- Photograph the condition of the unit at move-in

2

Phone and internet

- Compare total monthly cost, data, contract length and cancellation terms
- Ask whether the quoted amount includes tax and device financing
- Use secure Wi-Fi for banking and government accounts
- Keep account numbers and support contacts

3

Transportation

- Learn local transit fares, routes and service hours
- Check provincial rules before using a foreign driver's licence
- Obtain an International Driving Permit before travel when appropriate
- Budget for winter clothing and weather-related delays

Find support early

1

Settlement and pre-arrival services

- Check eligibility for federally funded newcomer services
- Ask for orientation, language, employment and community referrals
- Use pre-arrival services before travelling when eligible
- Remember that service eligibility and time limits can differ by immigration category

2

Build your local network

- Locate the public library, community centre and newcomer agency
- Connect with school, campus or workplace orientation supports
- Choose community and faith connections that feel safe and welcoming
- Balance familiar networks with opportunities to meet people beyond them

3

Ask specific questions

- Write down what you need before appointments
- Bring relevant documents but protect unnecessary personal information
- Request an interpreter or accessibility support where available
- Record the name, date and next step after important conversations

Protect your records and deadlines

1

Create one document system

- Keep immigration, tax, employment, housing and health folders
- Name files with the document type and date
- Back up documents using a secure method
- Do not send sensitive documents through unverified messaging accounts

2

Create a deadline calendar

- Record passport, permit, visa and provincial card expiry dates
- Add tuition, rent, tax and insurance dates
- Set reminders well before immigration documents expire
- Review the calendar monthly and after any status change

3

Keep evidence of important actions

- Save confirmation numbers and payment receipts
- Keep signed leases and employment agreements
- Save school enrolment and attendance records
- Document any suspected scam, payment problem or identity misuse

Common first-month mistakes

1

Assuming every rule is national

- Health coverage, driver's licences, tenancy and employment standards are provincial or territorial
- Confirm the rule for the place where you live
- Be cautious with advice copied from another province

2

Confusing immigration documents

- A visa or eTA supports travel; it is not the same as status in Canada
- A visitor record is not a travel visa
- Work and study authority depends on the document and its conditions
- Ask a licensed professional when the consequence could affect status

3

Trying to complete everything alone

- Use legitimate free settlement and public services
- Verify paid representatives and service providers
- Bring a trusted support person when appropriate
- Seek help early rather than after a deadline passes

Your first 30-day checklist

Completion matters more than speed. Some steps depend on your immigration status and province.

1

Days 1-3

- Check every immigration document issued at entry
- Confirm safe accommodation, phone access and emergency contacts
- Secure originals and make backups

2

Days 4-10

- Apply for a SIN and health coverage if eligible
- Open a suitable bank account
- Learn transit, local services and the cost of daily essentials

3

Days 11-30

- Stabilize housing and utilities
- Register with school, campus, settlement or employment supports
- Create a budget, document system and expiry-date calendar

My arrival plan

1

My first-week priorities

- Where I will stay: _____
- My local contact: _____
- My nearest health option: _____
- My transportation plan: _____

2

Documents to update

- SIN: _____ Health coverage: _____
- Banking: _____ School/employer: _____
- Address updates required: _____
- Next immigration expiry: _____

3

Questions I still need answered

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- Who can give reliable help: _____

Reliable sources and next steps

Open the linked authority and confirm the current rule before acting.

01 **IRCC - Prepare to cross the border as a newcomer**
www.canada.ca

02 **IRCC - Settling in Canada**
www.canada.ca

03 **IRCC - Pre-arrival services**
www.canada.ca

04 **Service Canada - Apply for a SIN**
www.canada.ca

05 **Health Canada - Health insurance cards**
www.canada.ca

06 **IRCC - Find free newcomer services**
ircc.canada.ca

GENERAL INFORMATION NOTICE

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