

Canada PR landing checklist

What to carry, what happens at the border, and the first things to do as a new permanent resident.

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Interactive version: nclcfrench.com/canada-pr-landing-checklist

QUICK ANSWER

To land in Canada as a permanent resident, carry your valid passport, your Confirmation of Permanent Residence (COPR) and PR visa if you got one, and proof of funds unless you are exempt. Travel before your COPR expires. At the border, declare CAN\$10,000 or more and give a list of goods to follow. In your first week, apply for your SIN, open a bank account and apply for provincial health insurance.

IN THIS GUIDE

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 First things to do in Canada as a new immigrant | 2 Documents to carry when landing in Canada |
| 3 What happens at the port of entry | 4 First week in Canada as a PR |
| 5 Things to do after landing in Canada: first months | 6 Keeping PR status: the 730-day rule |
| 7 Landing mistakes to avoid | |

I First things to do in Canada as a new immigrant

The real order, from COPR to settling in. Each stage has a checklist further down.

1

BEFORE YOU FLY

Check your COPR and plan the date

Compare your COPR with your passport: names, date of birth, passport number. You must enter Canada on or before the date on your COPR, and IRCC cannot extend it.

2

BEFORE YOU FLY

Prepare documents, money and your goods list

Put your passport, COPR, PR visa and proof of funds in your hand luggage. Write a list of the goods coming with you and the goods that will follow later.

3

LANDING DAY**Meet the border officer**

The CBSA officer checks your documents and identity, asks questions to confirm you are still eligible, and signs your COPR with your entry date. Declare money of CAN\$10,000 or more and hand over your goods list.

4

LANDING DAY**Give a mailing address for your PR card**

The officer confirms the Canadian address where IRCC mails your PR card. If you change address within 180 days of arriving, tell IRCC with its web form.

5

WEEK 1**SIN, bank, phone and health insurance**

Apply for your Social Insurance Number, open a bank account, get a Canadian phone number and apply for your province's health insurance.

6

FIRST MONTHS**Settle in and build your record**

Use free newcomer services, exchange or get a driver's licence, build credit history, sign up for language classes if you want them, and file your first tax return.

7

EVERY YEAR**Keep your status and count your days**

Stay at least 730 days in Canada in every five-year period to keep PR status, and track your days towards citizenship with the [citizenship calculator](#).

Documents to carry when landing in Canada

Keep these with you, not in checked bags. IRCC says not to pack them in your luggage.

Must carry

**Valid passport**

Each person

A regular, private citizen passport for each family member. Check it has not expired.

**Confirmation of Permanent Residence (COPR)**

Original

Enter Canada on or before its expiry date. Check every detail against your passport before you fly.

**Permanent resident visa**

If applicable

The visa in your passport, if IRCC issued you one. Visa-exempt nationals do not get one.

**Proof of funds**

FSW and FST

Federal Skilled Worker and Federal Skilled Trades immigrants show it, unless they are authorized to work in Canada with a valid job offer. Canadian Experience Class is exempt. See the [proof of funds calculator](#).

**List of goods: accompanying and to follow**

Two parts: goods with you now and goods arriving later, with values. CBSA records it on form BSF186 and BSF186A.

Smart to carry

☐ Paper and digital copies of key documents

Passport, COPR, diplomas, marriage and birth certificates, reference letters. Keep a copy separate from the originals.

☐ Diplomas, transcripts and your ECA

Employers and regulators ask for them, and they are hard to get from abroad.

☐ Driving record or licence from your country If you drive

Licence exchange rules vary by province. Having your record with you saves requesting it from abroad.

☐ Vaccination and medical records

Useful when you register with a doctor or a school.

☐ Children's school records Each child

Report cards and transcripts help with school placement.

☐ French or English test results

Keep your TCF Canada or TEF Canada certificate: you can reuse it as language proof for citizenship, even after it expires.

Declare your goods to follow on your first entry

CBSA asks new settlers to present a list of all personal goods at their first arrival, **even if nothing is coming with them that day**, split into goods with you and goods to follow. Goods to follow that are not on that list at your first entry may not get the settlers' exemption later. Alcohol and tobacco cannot be goods to follow.

What happens at the port of entry

A Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) officer checks that you are entering on or before the date on your COPR, confirms your identity (sometimes with your biometrics), reviews your passport and documents, and asks questions to make sure you are still eligible to immigrate.

If you carry CAN\$10,000 or more, you must declare it. There is no limit on how much you can bring, and it is not illegal to bring more, but it must be declared. This includes cash, bank drafts, cheques, money orders, travellers' cheques, stocks and bonds.

The officer then confirms your Canadian mailing address for the PR card. If your address changes within 180 days of arriving, tell IRCC with its web form.

First week in Canada as a PR

Week 1

☐ **Social Insurance Number (SIN)**

Free. Apply online, by mail or in person at Service Canada with your COPR or PR card plus a second ID such as your passport. You need it to work and for benefits.

☐ **Bank account**

Banks have newcomer packages. Bring your passport and COPR.

☐ **Canadian phone number**

Employers, banks and government services will need it.

☐ **Provincial or territorial health insurance** Each person

Apply as soon as you arrive. In some provinces coverage starts only after up to 3 months: buy private insurance for the gap.

☐ **Private health insurance for the waiting period** If applicable

Check your province's rules first: waiting periods vary.

Things to do after landing in Canada: first months

First 3 months

☐ **Free newcomer settlement services**

Funded by IRCC for permanent residents: job search help, licences for regulated jobs, housing and language. In Quebec, services are run by the province.

☐ **Driver's licence** If you drive

Rules to exchange a foreign licence differ by province and by country of issue. Check your province's licensing office early.

☐ **Family doctor**

Register on your province's waiting list as soon as you have a health card.

☐ **School enrolment for children** Each child

Contact your local school board with proof of address and status.

☐ **Credit history**

Canadian credit starts at zero. A secured or newcomer credit card paid in full each month builds it.

First year

☐ Free French or English classes (LINC / CLIC) If you want

Free for permanent residents after a language assessment. Reaching CLB 4 in listening and speaking also meets the citizenship language rule.

☐ First Canadian tax return

Usually due by April 30 of the next year. Filing keeps benefits paid and counts towards the tax rule for citizenship.

☐ Travel journal

Note every trip outside Canada with dates. You will need them for PR card renewal and citizenship.

Keeping PR status: the 730-day rule

To keep permanent resident status you must have been in Canada for at least 730 days during the last five years. The days do not need to be continuous, and some time outside Canada can count (IRCC lists the cases). You stay a PR until an official decision is made, even if you fall short.

Citizenship asks for more: 1,095 days of physical presence in the five years before you apply, tax filing for at least 3 of those years, and, if you are 18 to 54, proof of French or English at CLB/NCLC 4 in listening and speaking. Count your days with the [citizenship calculator](#) and prepare with the [citizenship document checklist](#).

- Not sure your French is at NCLC 4? Take the [free French level check](#) and see the [French test for citizenship](#) guide.
- Still before your ITA? Start with the [Express Entry ITA checklist](#).

Landing mistakes to avoid

DO

- Book your flight to arrive well before the COPR date, with a buffer for delays.
- Keep documents and your goods list in your hand luggage.
- Declare CAN\$10,000 or more, including bank drafts and cheques.
- Give an address where you can really receive mail for the PR card.
- Keep a record of every trip abroad from day one.

DON'T

- Don't forget goods to follow on your first entry list.
- Don't land without health coverage for the waiting period.
- Don't let your COPR expire: IRCC cannot extend it.
- Don't pay for settlement help that IRCC already funds for free.
- Don't stay outside Canada so long that you risk the 730-day rule.

Is your French at NCLC 7?

Strong French can add up to 50 CRS points and opens French-speaker draws. Find your level free in 10 questions, then take a full TCF or TEF mock test.

Check my French level free



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