

CANADA

Geography

Canada is the **second largest** country in the world. Its area is **almost 10 million square kilometres**. It is located in the **north** of North America. It borders only one country – the USA. It is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean in the east and by the Pacific Ocean in the west. The population of Canada is about **35 million people**. Most of them live in the southern part of Canada, near the border with the USA. The capital city of Canada is **Ottawa**.

Canada is made up of **10 provinces** and **3 territories**. The largest Canadian province is **Quebec**. It is a very special province because the first language of most people who live there is not English but **French**. The second largest Canadian province is **Ontario**. It is the most populous province. Quebec and Toronto are located in the eastern part of Canada. The province of **British Columbia** is located in the west. The other Canadian provinces are **Alberta, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Saskatchewan**.

The three Canadian territories are **Northwest Territories, Nunavut, and Yukon**. They are located in the north of Canada and not very many people live there. The difference between a province and a territory is in the government. The **provinces can make a lot of decisions for themselves** but the **territories are basically controlled by the federal government**.

The highest mountain in Canada is **Mount Logan**. It is almost 6,000 metres high. The longest rivers in Canada are the **St Lawrence River** and the **Mackenzie River**. There are also lots of lakes in Canada. Four of the five Great Lakes – **Superior, Huron, Erie, Ontario** – are located on the border between Canada and the USA. Other large lakes, like the **Great Bear Lake** or the **Great Slave Lake**, are located inside Canada. The famous **Niagara Falls** are on the border between Canada and the USA.

History

The first people who came to Canada were the **Indians** and the **Inuit (Eskimos)**. They came to Canada across a land bridge that connected Asia and North America. The Inuits lived in the **polar regions** and the Indians lived in the **prairies and forests**. Today, there are about one and a half million indigenous people in Canada. The first Europeans who arrived in Canada were the **Vikings**. They landed in New Foundland but they didn't settle there.

Later, **the British** and **the French** arrived. There were many wars between them and the Indians and between the British and the French themselves. At the end, the British won but a lot of French people continued living in Canada. They live mostly in the province of **Quebec**.

Economy

Canada is **one of the richest countries** in the world. At the beginning, the main source of money for the colonists who lived in Canada were **animal furs**. Later, Canadians started selling other things such as **wood, fish, coal, iron, and gold**.

In the 19th and 20th centuries Canada became an **industrialized country** and manufactured **steel, chemicals, cars, and other things**. It also became an **agricultural power** and it exports a lot of food, especially **wheat and other grains**.

Industry and agriculture are still important today but most Canadians work in **services** nowadays. The most important trading partner of Canada is **the United States**. The currency of Canada is the **Canadian dollar**.

Symbols

The Canadian flag is **red and white**. There are two red stripes on its sides and a white stripe in the middle. In the centre of the white stripe there is a **maple leaf**. The official animal of Canada is the **beaver**. The official tree of Canada is the **maple tree**. The motto of Canada is "A Mari Usque Ad Mare", which is Latin for "From Sea to Sea". The national anthem of Canada is "**O Canada**."

Political institutions

Canada is a **democratic country**. The official head of state is **the British king or queen**. Canadian laws are made by the **federal parliament** and important political decisions are made by **the prime minister and his cabinet**. Each province and territory has its own head called the **premiere**.

Nature

There are large parts of Canada where almost nobody lives. This is good for plants and animals because there is little pollution. There are **large forests** full of animals such as **wolves, beavers, raccoons, deer, rabbits and otters**. Both **grizzly bears** and **polar bears** live in Canada. There are **a lot of fish** in Canadian lakes and rivers, for example **salmon and trout**.

Sports

Canada is an ideal country for **winter sports**. The most popular sport in Canada is probably **ice hockey**. The highest ice hockey competition in Canada and in the USA is the **NHL (National Hockey League)**. There are seven teams from Canada in the league and players from Canada play in many other teams as well. The Canadian teams are **Montreal Canadiens, Toronto Maple Leafs, Vancouver Canucks, Edmonton Oilers, Calgary Flames, Ottawa Senators, and Winnipeg Jets**. The winner of the league gets the **Stanley Cup**. Some of the most famous Canadian players are **Gordie Howe, Mario Lemieux and Wayne Gretzky**.

Another popular sport in Canada is **football**. When Canadians say football, they usually mean American football, not soccer. The Canadian version has slightly different rules from the football played in the USA. That is why there are separate leagues in Canada and in the USA.

Lacrosse is a sport that is not popular in many countries outside Canada. It is a game that was originally played by **Indians warriors**. Lacrosse players use special kinds of sticks to carry a ball and to shoot it into their opponents' goal. There are **10 players** in each lacrosse team.

Other sports played in Canada are for example **baseball** and **basketball**. They are not as popular as they are in the USA. **Soccer** is played in Canada too, but not as much as in other parts of the world. Canadians have long tradition of **skating, skiing, and other winter sports**. Many tourists come to Canada to take part in the long Canadian skiing season.

Canada has been very successful in the Winter Olympic Games and Canadian sportsmen have won many gold medals. **The Olympic Games** have taken place in Canada three times: in **Montreal** in 1976 (summer), in **Calgary** in 1988 (winter), and in **Vancouver** in 2010 (winter).

Food

In Canada, you can find **food from almost everywhere in the world**. There are Indian, Italian, French, Thai, Chinese and other restaurants in every big city. There are very few kinds of food that are typically Canadian. One of them is **maple syrup**. It is often eaten with pancakes. Another typical Canadian dish is **poutine**. It is French fries with cheese curds and gravy. **Beaver tails** is a kind of sweet food that looks like a beaver's tail. It is eaten with sugar and cinnamon and sometimes ice cream.

Cities

Toronto

Toronto is **the largest city** in Canada. It is the capital of the province of **Ontario**. It is the financial and commercial centre of Canada. **More than two and a half million** people live in Toronto. It is located on the shore of lake Ontario. The most famous building in Toronto and one of the symbols of Canada is the **CN Tower**. The letters "CN" mean Canadian National. It is **more than 550 metres** high. Toronto is also the home of the **University of Toronto**, which is the largest and probably the best university in Canada.

Montreal

Montreal is the largest city in the province of **Quebec**. It is **the second largest city** in Canada. **More than one and a half million people** live there. Most people who live there **speak French** as their first language but it is not their fault. There are **a lot of churches** in Montreal. The city is one of the cultural centres of Canada with **museums, public libraries, art galleries, and bookshops**. One of the landmarks of Montreal is the **Place des Artes**. It is a complex of concert and theatre halls.

Vancouver

Vancouver is located on the **west coast** of Canada, in the province of **British Columbia**. More than half a million people live there. It lies very near the border between Canada and the USA. There are quite a lot of people from Asia in Vancouver. One of the most famous parts of Vancouver is the **Stanley Park**. There are beautiful beaches, local wildlife, cultural and historical landmarks, and **the largest aquarium in Canada**. Vancouver is often chosen as one of the greatest cities in the world to live in.

Ottawa

Ottawa is the **capital city** of Canada. It is located in the province of **Ontario**. The Canadian parliament and the federal government are located there. **Almost one million people** live there. It is the seat of many important national museums and other institutions, for example the **Canada Science and Technology Museum** or the **Canadian War Museum**. The **National Gallery of Canada** is an arts centre that includes an opera house and two theatres.

Calgary

Calgary is the largest city in the province of **Alberta**. More than **a million people** live there. The city is not very far from the Rocky Mountains. Calgary is famous for the **Calgary Stampede**, a ten-day rodeo event.

Famous people

Jim Carrey

Jim Carrey is a Canadian **actor and comedian**. He was born in Toronto. He played the lead role in *The Cable Guy*, *The Truman Show*, *Man on the Moon* and other movies.

Justin Bieber

Justin Bieber is a Canadian **singer and songwriter**. He is one of the most popular celebrities in the world. He also has the second largest number of followers on Twitter – after Katy Perry – so there must be some people somewhere who really listen to his music.

Terry Fox

Terry Fox is one of the most loved Canadians of all time. He was a **young student** when he discovered that he had **cancer**. He started **a run across Canada** to make people think about the problem of cancer and to get money for medical research. Unfortunately, he died when he was about halfway through. Today, the **Terry Fox Run** takes place in many places all over the world every year. It is not competitive and it helps to finance **the search for drugs against cancer**.

Wayne Gretzky

Wayne Gretzky is **one of the best ice hockey players** of all time. His nickname is "The Great One". During his more than twenty years long career he played for Edmonton Oilers, Los Angeles Kings, St Louis Blues, and New York Rangers. After he stopped playing ice hockey, he became the **coach of the Canadian Olympic hockey team**.

Steven Pinker

Steven Pinker is a Canadian **scientist, psychologist, and linguist**. He is one of the world's most famous intellectuals and his books on language, the human mind and other topics usually become bestsellers.

Chris Hadfield

Chris Hadfield is a Canadian **astronaut**. He first worked for the Royal Canadian Air Force and then he joined NASA. He became **the first Canadian to walk in space** and **the first Canadian commander of the International Space Station**. You can see his videos on YouTube. He really looks like a nice person.

The overview is largely based on the following sources:

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- <https://www.tripsavvy.com/canada-provinces-and-territories-1481740>
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