

## How To Become a Canadian: My Story

If you are born in Canada, you are already a Canadian.

However, there are people like me from other countries who would like to become Canadians, but can't do so automatically.

I was 16 at the time when my family applied to the Immigration department for permission to migrate to Canada. There are categories in which people can apply under in order to live in Canada, and my dad applies under his profession: Statistician. This is to show that my family is capable of survival in Canada because for the profession that he is in.

It was a few months later when we heard from the Immigration department! again. They wrote, requesting an interview with my parents. They wanted to make sure that my parents have the fundamental knowledge of Canada -- if one does not know anything about Canada, one is not allowed to live there. My parents have to know the history of the Country, as well as Geography, cultures etc.

After the interview is approved, all of us have to undergo a medical test to assure them of our perfect health. We passed every test with flying colours. It was after that we received certificates indicating that we were Canadian Immigrants, and we could live there permanently.

The procedure for becoming a Canadian Citizen is rather easy. The requirement for qualifications is that one has to live in Canada for three years.

Less than a year ago, I applied. I am in legal age, therefore I could no longer become a Canadian Citizen automatically under my parents. I went to the Canadian Immigration and Citizenship office in Charlottetown to pick up the application form. In order for them to process my application, I have to pay \$50.00, and show them my identification. My application was sent to New Brunswick, where the Head office is located.

Again, my application took several months before it went through. After that, I have to go through an interview with a Judge. The interview is based on my knowledge of Canadian history, Geography, and

Politics. I studied all these information through a book that was given to me by the Citizenship department.

In the interview, Judge Bernadette LeBlanc asked me all sorts of questions, lasting for almost half an hour. As a Canadian citizen, I am to be aware of my responsibilities, my privileges, and my rights (plus the basic knowledge, eg. the provinces and Territories; the official languages etc.) Also, I am to know my Charter of Freedom chart. (Sometimes I wonder if the natural Canadians know as much about their country as I have to know.)

Once my interview is approved, I have to be prepared for my Court Ceremony, which took place in the Confederation of Arts Centre. During the ceremony, I have to say my oath, and to sign "in" as a Canadian. This is what I have to say in front of everybody while my right hand is raised:

I swear/affirm that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second, Queen of Canada, Her heirs and Successors, according to law, and I will faithfully observe the Canadian laws, and fulfil my duties as a Canadian Citizen.

Hmmm, I am surprised I still remember it. Honestly, I don't think that I will ever forget it because it is such an important oath to live by.

To those who like to become a "reborn" Canadian, feel free to say the oath and be proud of who you are. I said my oath about a week ago, and people are asking me if I feel any different. After much thought, I can truly say that I am happy to be a Canadian, regardless of whether I am to reside anywhere in Canada, or in a "distinct" french society. It is DISTINCT just to be a Canadian.

By Kheng-Wee Wah.



A New  
Spirit of  
Giving