

Canada



Introduction

Canada has a population just less than 30 million people in a country twice the area of the United States. The heritage of Canada was French and English; however, significant immigration from Asia and Europe's non-French and English countries has broadened Canada's cultural richness. This cultural diversity is considered a national asset, and the Constitution Act prohibits discrimination against individual citizens on the basis of race, color, religion, or sex. The great majority of Canadians are Christian. Although the predominant language in Canada is English, there are at least three varieties of French that are recognized: Quebecois in Quebec, Franco-Manitoban throughout Manitoba and particularly in the St. Boniface area of Winnipeg, and Acadian. The Italian language is a strong third due to a great influx of Italian immigrants following W.W.II.

Canada's three major cities are distinctively, even fiercely different from one another even though each is a commercially thriving metropolitan center. Montreal, established in the 17th century and the largest French city outside France, has a strong influence of French architecture and culture. It is a financial and manufacturing center and seaport, with the majority of Canada's European exports and imports coming through its harbor. Toronto, another major financial and commercial center, is filled with office towers not historic buildings. It has a great number of people living in and around the central business district. The downtown district does not "close up" when people leave work. Vancouver, nestled at the base of the Coast Mountains, is the financial, commercial, agricultural, and industrial center for western Canada. Its harbor and mountains make it one of Canada's most picturesque. Consequently, West Vancouver is the most densely populated urban area and has the highest income per person of any municipality.

Fun Fact

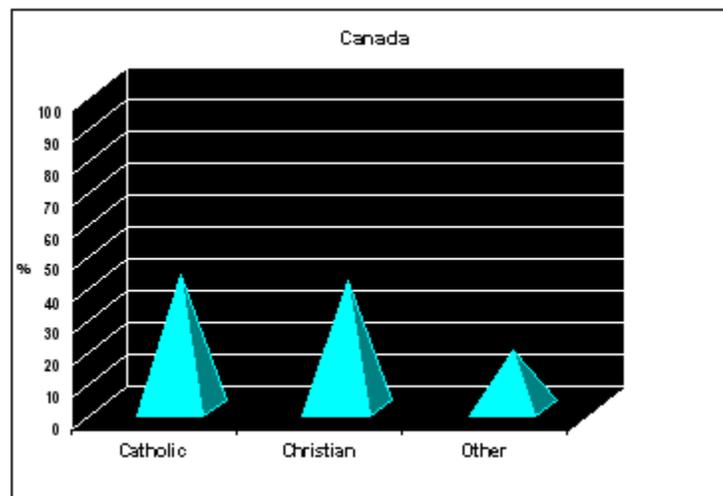
The western frontier was "opened" in 1885 when the Canadian transcontinental railroad completed its peaceful construction process. The railroad offered *cheap land* so immigrants moved in communities establishing towns with citizens from the same European country. These settlements, along with the Inuit communities, give Canada cultural diversity across its nation, not just in major metropolitan cities. Keep in mind that Quebec, because it is a French province, has a very different value system from the rest of Canada, with its predominately English influence.

Geert Hofstede Analysis Canada

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The majority of Canadians, as well as citizens of other English speaking countries, (see Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States) have individualism ranked highest. Success is measure by personal achievement. Canadians tend to be self-confident and open to discussions on general topics; however, they hold their personal privacy off limits to all but the closest friends. It should be noted there is tension between the French province of Quebec and other Canadian provinces. Citizens of Quebec tend to be more private and reserved. Ethnocentrism is high throughout Canada, but particularly in Quebec. [More Details](#)

Religion in Canada



* WORLD FACTBOOK 2002

Appearance

- Plan for a very cold climate, especially during their winter.
- Men should wear a dark conservative business suit with tie, especially in cities. Build a wardrobe based on classic lines (selecting suits with a traditional lapel width, and ties staying within a traditional width range). Conservative colors of navy and gray, and shirts in white and light blue.
- Women should wear a conservative business suit or dress, especially in cities. Select your clothing with classic lines and colors in mind. Navy, gray, ivory, and white are the basics to work with. The major cities can be very sophisticated.
- New or trendy clothing is a poor choice. Older, classic clothing that is clean and neat is more valued. Choosing quality, natural fibers for your wardrobe will give you this look. Quality leather shoes are important to completing this look.
- Rural areas are less formal, but stay conservative in your wardrobe. Even with cold winter weather you may find yourself in a skirt or dress. Add a good quality long coat with minimal and classic detail to your wardrobe. In addition to navy and gray, a classic camel coat, or a lined Burberry may be a good addition. This will work for a sophisticated city meeting, or a more casual rural meeting.
- Casual attire is appropriate when you are not working. The weather and activity will dictate what you will be wearing. Build a casual wardrobe using the classic colors (camel is additional color for casual). You will look professional, even though relaxed.
- The "V for Victory" sign is an insult if your palm is facing yourself. If you must use this sign, face your palm outward.

Behavior

- Be punctual for meetings and appointments, as promptness is valued. In French areas, time is more relaxed. However, you will be expected to arrive at the appointed time, even if the French attending the meeting don't.
- Always maintain a reserved demeanor, and follow good rules of etiquette. Traditions and gracious manners are part of the culture, even in more rural areas. If you travel to different cities or areas, pay attention to local customs. By being observant, you will respect the pace and nuances of each area.
- Do not eat while walking in public. Plan your time so you can stop in a café or restaurant to

enjoy your snack.

- Gifts are not routinely given. If you do give a gift when you arrive or when you are leaving, make it a modest one. A lavish gift, though accepted, would be frowned upon.
- Gifts *are* given to celebrate finalizing a negotiation, a contract, or a project. Gifts for the office, a nice bottle of wine or liquor would be appropriate.
- Taking a business associate to a nice meal or an evening sporting event, play, or symphony is always a nice gesture.
- Invitations to private homes are rare. Occasionally, in the western provinces, you may be invited to someone's home. If you are invited, you may take candy, flowers, or liquor to the host or hostess.
- Wait for your host to start a business conversation during or following a meal. Traditionally, business is not discussed during dinner; however, this is slowly changing.
- Personal space and body movement or gestures differ between the English and the French provinces and cities. In English areas, body movement is minimal, there is rarely touching other than handshakes, and personal space - how close someone stands - is about two feet. In French areas, people stand closer together, people will frequently touch, and gestures are more expressive.

Communications

- Use a firm handshake with good eye contact when meeting and leaving. Both French and English areas use and expect a firm handshake.
- Men will wait for a woman to extend her hand for a handshake.
- French Canadians will shake hands more frequently, even with a subsequent encounter the same day. Others may just nod or smile at a subsequent encounter on the same day.
- Use a person's title if he or she has one. Otherwise, use Mr., Mrs., Miss and the surname.
- English is spoken in most of Canada. French is spoken in Quebec, and some area of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick
- French Canadians may use their first name when talking to you on the telephone, but will generally use their full name when meeting you in person.
- Be open and friendly in your conversation. If you are naturally reserved in your behavior,

you will appear confident and credible. If your natural tendency is large sweeping arm gestures, restrain yourself when meeting and talking with Canadians - other than with French Canadians.

- French Canadians stand closer and are more demonstrative when talking.
- For French Canadians, print all material in French and English.
- Don't be boastful, and don't overstate your product or service's capabilities. You could implicate your company in a legal situation.
- If you are from the U. S., don't say, "we Americans", inferring you are including your Canadian hosts or guests in your reference. Canada is a distinct country with its own wonderful history and culture.