



STUDY IN CANADA PRE-DEPARTURE GUIDE FOR MEXICAN STUDENTS

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**Gouvernement du Canada
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1. Introduction

Dear Student,
Congratulations on your decision to study in Canada! You join a growing number of Mexican students who have wisely chosen to attend Canadian educational institutions, world-renowned for their quality programs.

Canada is a culturally diverse nation with a valued tradition of embracing newcomers. You will find it a wonderful place to live: a safe, modern and prosperous society, rich in natural beauty. We encourage you to look beyond the superficial to explore the uniqueness of Canadian culture, to get involved and to truly make the most of what is sure to be an enriching life experience.

2. Canada: The Basics

2.1 Overview

Canada is best known abroad for its natural beauty. For many people in other countries, Canada is wide-open spaces, mountains, trees and lakes. Throughout the world, Canada is known as a modern, progressive nation with an open and generous society and a country that upholds its international commitments. Canada is also regarded as a nation that respects the contributions and individuality of different cultures.

Canadians are widely regarded by foreigners as honest, friendly, polite, well-educated, interesting and healthy. They also enjoy a high standard of living and Canada consistently ranks in the top eight of the United Nations' list of the best countries in the world in which to live (UN Human Development Index, 1994 to 2004).

2.2 Geography

Occupying the northern half of the North American continent, Canada's land mass is 9,093,507 square kilometers, making it the second-largest country in the world after Russia. In addition to its coastlines on the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, Canada has a third sea coast on the Arctic Ocean, giving it the longest coastline of any country. To the south, Canada shares an 8,891 kilometer boundary with the United States. To the north, the Arctic islands come within 800 kilometers of the North Pole. Canada's neighbor across the Arctic Ocean is Russia. Because of the harsh northern climate, only 12 percent of the land is suitable for

agriculture. Thus, most of the population of 32 million live within a few hundred kilometers of the southern border, where the climate is milder, in a long, thin band stretching between the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans.

Among Canada's most distinctive features are the vast mountain ranges, including the Torngats, Appalachians and Laurentians in the east; the Rocky, Coastal and Mackenzie ranges in the west; and Mount St. Elias and the Pelly Mountains in the north. At 5,959 meters, Mount Logan in the Yukon is Canada's tallest peak.

There are also some two million lakes in Canada, covering about 7.6 percent of the Canadian landmass. The main lakes, in order of surface area located in Canada (many large lakes are traversed by the Canada-U.S. border), are Huron, Great Bear, Superior, Great Slave, Winnipeg, Erie and Ontario. The largest lake situated entirely within Canada is Great Bear Lake (31,328 km²) in the Northwest Territories. The St. Lawrence River (3,058 km long) is Canada's most important river, providing a seaway for ships from the Great Lakes to the Atlantic Ocean.

2.3 Population

Canada has a population of approximately 32,270,500 people, of which roughly 80 percent are concentrated in cities and towns (Statistics Canada, 2006). The population density ratio is one of the lowest in the world at 3.23 persons per square kilometer.

As of 2006, the largest Canadian cities are:

- Toronto (5.75 million)
- Montréal (3.6 million)
- Vancouver (2.2 million)
- Ottawa region (1.1 million).

Canada is a multicultural and diverse country. In 2001, more than one third of Canadians reported multiple ethnic origins and just over 7 percent of Canadians classified themselves as visible minorities.

Most Canadians are of European ancestry, primarily descendants of the early French and British colonists, as well as later immigrants from eastern and southern Europe. There is also an aboriginal population comprising First Nations (Indians), Inuit and Métis. As patterns of immigration have shifted over the years so has the ethnic mix of the Canadian population. The second half of the 20th Century saw a great influx of people from Asia, the Caribbean and Africa.

More than 70 percent of Canadians are Christian (44% Catholic, 29% Protestant). Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism and Buddhism are all practiced as well. However, according to the 2001 Census, 16.5 percent of Canadians claim to have no religious affiliation.

2.4 Language

Canada has two official languages, English and French. English is the mother tongue for 58.5 percent of the population and French is the mother tongue for 23 percent. All Federal Government institutions and many businesses offer bilingual services. Canada is becoming more and more a multilingual society in the wake of growing numbers of immigrants whose mother tongue is neither English nor French. Chinese is the third most common mother tongue in Canada, followed by German, Italian, Punjabi and Spanish (2001 Census, Statistics Canada). The most common Aboriginal languages reported as mother tongue are Cree (80,000 people), Inuktitut (29,700) and Ojibway (23,500).

2.5 Provinces and Territories

Alberta - Edmonton	3,256,800
British Columbia - Victoria	4,254,500
Manitoba - Winnipeg	1,177,600
New Brunswick - Fredericton	752,000
Newfoundland and Labrador - St John's	516,000
Northwest Territories - Yellowknife	43,000
Nova Scotia - Halifax	937,900
Nunavut - Iqaluit	30,000
Ontario - Toronto	12,541,400
Prince Edward Island - Charlottetown	138,100
Québec - Québec City	7,598,100
Saskatchewan - Regina	994,100
Yukon Territory - Whitehorse	31,000

Source: Statistics Canada 2006

2.6 Political System

Canada is a constitutional monarchy and a federal state with a democratic system of government. This means Canadians recognize the Queen as their Head of State. Canada's Governor General carries out Her Majesty's duties in Canada on a daily basis and is Canada's de facto Head of State. Like many other democracies, Canada has clearly defined the difference between the Head of State and the Head of Government (the Prime Minister).

The Parliament of Canada, in Ottawa, consists of the House of Commons, whose 301 members are elected, and the Senate, whose 105 members are appointed. On average, Members of Parliament are elected every four years. The Prime Minister, who normally is the leader of the party with the largest number of seats in the House of Commons, is the Head of Government. The Prime Minister appoints some 25 members of Parliament as ministers who make up the Cabinet. The Cabinet develops government policy and is responsible to the House of Commons. Headed by Cabinet, the Government of Canada performs its duties through the intermediary of the federal departments and agencies, boards, commissions and state-owned corporations.

2.7 Education System

In Canada, there is no federal or national department of education. Each province and territory has exclusive responsibility for elementary, secondary and postsecondary education within its borders. Nonetheless, the Canadian education system is comprehensive and well-recognized internationally for its quality.

2.7.1 Elementary and Secondary Education

Kindergarten to Grade 12 education is publicly funded and free to all Canadian citizens and permanent residents until the end of secondary school. Mandatory school age, or compulsory schooling, varies across Canada, but is generally between ages 5-7 and 16-18. Preschools or kindergartens provide pre-elementary education for 4-5 year olds. Elementary education in most provinces and territories covers the first 6 or 8 years of compulsory schooling. Secondary schooling generally commences with grades 7 or 9. Some areas have a two-tiered secondary school system with junior high school (usually grades 7-9) and senior high school (grades 10- 12). The school year at most elementary and secondary schools is September to June.

2.7.2 Universities and University Colleges

Canada offers a wealth of higher education options and life enriching opportunities at its universities and university colleges. Canada's more than 90 universities and university colleges are diverse and range in size from less than 1,000 students to over 40,000 students and are located across the country. Canadian universities consistently appear in rankings of world-class institutions, with a 2006 world university ranking placing seven Canadian universities in the top 200 (*The Times*, UK). Canada invests highly in post-secondary education. Indeed, with 2.4 percent of its GDP devoted to tertiary education, Canada stands one percentage point above the OECD average (Education at a Glance 2006 Report, OECD). Canada is also a well-educated nation at the tertiary level. The proportion of Canadians aged 25 to 65 with a tertiary degree is 45 percent, the highest in the OECD (OECD, 2004). For the age range 25 to 34 years, this proportion increases to 60 percent for females and 47 percent for males (1st highest and 3rd highest in the OECD, respectively).

Universities offer undergraduate degrees (bachelor's and honors) and graduate degrees (master's degrees and doctorates). The length of most undergraduate (bachelor) degrees is four years, when undertaken on a full-time basis. Bachelor of Laws (LL.B) programs are usually three years in duration, but require at least three years of prior undergraduate study for admission. Similarly, degrees in medicine are usually four years in duration, however admission to medical schools in Canada requires three years of prior undergraduate study. Postgraduate degrees from Canadian universities, including master's and doctoral degrees, are highly regarded internationally and generally offer competitive tuition fees.

University colleges also offer academically oriented undergraduate degrees, as well as more practically oriented college degrees or diplomas (see also Colleges and Technical Institutes, below). They often have the feel of a university campus and strong support systems.

University semesters generally run as follows:

- Semester 1: early September to Mid December
- Holiday Break: mid December to early January
- Semester 2: early January to early May
- Summer holidays/ summer courses: May to September.

2.7.3 Colleges and Technical Institutes

Colleges and technical institutes offer vocationally-oriented programs of study leading to certificates and diplomas and some degree programs (e.g. applied arts degrees). These institutions are very similar to “Universidades Tecnológicas” in Mexico and generally tend to focus heavily on training and skills development through hands-on experience. Some colleges offer transfer programs that enable the participant to complete a course through the college and then later transfer into a university or university college, sometimes with credit already earned towards their university degree.

3. Immigration Procedures

3.1 Overview of Canadian Immigration Procedures

As a Mexican passport holder, the documentation you require to study in Canada is dependent upon the length of time you plan to stay in the country, the province in which you will be studying and the academic institution you will attend. As regulations may change, **this section is only to be used as a guide.**

More information

- www.canada.org.mx (Visas and Immigration)
- www.cic.gc.ca/english/study/index.html

3.2 Study Permits

Note: Study permits must be applied for at a visa office outside of Canada before you depart for Canada.

You **require** a study permit if any one of the following is true:

- You are engaging in study at an educational institution in Canada for a period of more than six months.

You **do not require** a study permit if:

- Your course of study is less than six months

Applying for a Study Permit

1. Obtain a Letter of Acceptance from the institution in Canada that you plan to attend. This letter must include:
 - the name of the institution
 - confirmation of your acceptance and/or registration as a student
 - the course of study
 - the duration of the academic program
 - the registration deadline.

2. For an application form please visit the Canadian Embassy (Mexico City) website at www.canada.org.mx
Visa Tel: 57247983
Visa Email: re-mexico-im-enquiry@international.gc.ca

3. Gather the required documents:
 - Letter of unconditional acceptance from the institution in Canada
 - CAQ (only for students going to Québec, see section 3.4)
 - Legible copy of valid passport
 - 4 identical recent passport photos (50mm x 70mm)
 - proof that you have sufficient funds to pay tuition fees and your cost of living in Canada (see section 5.7)
 - medical examination
 - proof of custodianship (only required if you will be a minor in the province in which you plan to live).

4. Submit your completed application form and all of the relevant documentation, along with the non-refundable processing fee of CA\$125:
 - Payment can be made in Canadian or Mexican funds but must be in the form of a certified cheque (cheque de caja) in Mexican Pesos or money order in Canadian dollars. Cheques in **Mexican pesos** should be made payable to **Embajada de Canadá**. Cheques or money orders in **Canadian dollars** should be made payable to **The Receiver General for Canada**. Only "money orders" that have the name and complete address of the Canadian bank will be received.

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- Allow 14 working days for the Canadian Embassy in Mexico City to process your application.
 - If approved, you will be mailed a Letter of Introduction which you will be required to present at the Port of Entry in Canada.
5. At the Port of Entry in Canada:
- Present the required documentation (Letter of Introduction, passport, Letter of Acceptance, proof of sufficient finances).
 - An immigration officer will examine your documentation and question you prior to issuing your study permit.

NOTE: Whether you are permitted to enter Canada is at the discretion of the officer at the Port of Entry.

3.3 Temporary Resident Visas

Mexican passport holders are not required to obtain a Temporary Resident Visa (TRV). For a list of countries whose passport holders do require a TRV visit: www.cic.gc.ca/english/visit/visas.html

3.4 Certificat d'acceptation du Québec

The province of Québec requires foreign students at all levels of study to obtain a Certificat d'acceptation du Québec (CAQ). If you plan to attend an educational institution in Québec, you must have a CAQ before you can be issued a study permit. The institution you plan to attend should provide you with detailed information on how to submit an application for a CAQ to Québec Immigration Services.

You **do not require** a CAQ if one of the following is true:

- You are not studying in the province of Québec.
- You have a valid Certificat de sélection du Québec (CSQ) and have been authorized by CIC to apply for permanent resident status within Canada or have applied for a permanent resident visa through a visa office.
- You are exempt from requiring a study permit (for a period of six months of study or less).

NOTE: Regulations may change and policies may vary from one institution to another. It is highly recommended that you contact the institution you plan to attend to confirm whether or not you require a CAQ.

Applying for a CAQ

Should you require a CAQ, you must submit an application to the regional office in Québec that is responsible for the territory in which your intended educational institution is situated.

To process a CAQ for you, Québec Immigration Services require that you have the following:

- a CAQ application form (available from the institution)
- a certified photocopy of your Letter of Acceptance (keep the original for Canadian Immigration)
- C\$100 processing fee payable in Canadian funds
- Legible photocopy of the identification pages of your passport
- Recent passport-size photo (3,5 cm X 4,5 cm)

Upon receipt by Québec Immigration, your application will be processed, following which confirmation of your approved CAQ will be sent to you by mail.

Students under 18 Years of Age

CAQ rules require individuals under the age of 18 (at the time studies commence) to have a guardian living in the Province of Québec. In such cases, the following documentation must be submitted with your CAQ application:

- a sworn declaration (certified by a notary or lawyer) by your parent(s) or legal guardian(s) authorizing you to stay and study in Québec, and delegating parental responsibilities to a resident of Québec for the length of your stay in Québec or until you turn 18
- a declaration by the Québec resident confirming that he/she accepts legal guardianship.

More information on the CAQ

<http://www.immigration-quebec.gouv.qc.ca/es/educacion/index.html>

3.5 Working in Canada

Under certain conditions, you may be able to work in Canada.

Students who do not have a study permit are not eligible to work in Canada.

Provided you hold a study permit, you can work for up to 20 hours per week on the campus of any publicly funded, degree granting institution that you are attending (no separate work permit is required). The employer can be the institution, the faculty, a student organization, a private business or a private contractor providing services to the campus. This provision also allows for working as a graduate, research or teaching assistant at an 'off campus site' that has a formal affiliation with the institution (e.g. teaching hospitals, clinics or research institutes).

Some full-time students who have obtained a study permit may also be eligible to apply for an off-campus work permit that allows them to work for any employer. They can work for up to 20 hours per week during the term, and full-time during holidays.

The following students are ineligible for off-campus work:

- part-time students
- visiting or exchange students
- students who come to Canada under the Fellowship plan or under the Government of Canada Awards Program
- students enrolled in English-as-a-second-language or French-as-a-second-language programs
- students receiving funding from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)
- students who have previously held an off-campus work permit and failed to maintain their eligibility or comply with the conditions of their work or study permit.

More information on working in Canada

www.cic.gc.ca

3.6 U.S. Visa Regulations

Students who plan to travel both to and/or from Canada via the United States are advised to apply for either a U.S. transit visa or a U.S. tourist visa. **This applies even if you are simply changing planes and will not be leaving the transit areas of international airports.**

All Students

The application process and fee of US\$100 is the same for both the U.S. tourist visa and the U.S. transit visa. However, the tourist visa is likely to

be the most beneficial because it enables you to pass through the United States as well as to visit for short trips during your stay in Canada.

More information in Mexico

<http://www.usembassy-mexico.gov/smxvisitar.html>

3.7 Summary

Contact the Canadian education institution you plan to attend to clarify what documentation is required of you to study in Canada. When in doubt, ask questions! Also, regardless of whether or not you require a study permit, ensure that when traveling to Canada you carry with you your Letter of Acceptance from a Canadian institution. Students who plan to travel both to and/or from Canada via the United States should also read the section on U.S. Visa Regulations (see section 3.6 U.S. Visa Regulations).

4. Travel Information

4.1 Traveling to Canada

When you are ready to make your travel plans, then talk to your travel agent about your options or investigate the many online offers available.

Some important travel arrangements to consider are:

- **Type of airline ticket:** Are you sure of your dates of travel or will you want a flexible ticket which allows you to change your return flight?
- **Travel insurance:** Insurance is mandatory (see also Section 5.3).
- When do you need to **be at the airport**? For international flights you will usually need to check-in for your flights at least two hours prior to the scheduled departure time.
- How will you **get to the airport** and how long will it take you to get there?
- Do you have a **current passport**? Is it valid until at least 6 months after your return date?
- Do you need a **study permit or other visas** (see also Section 3. Immigration Procedures)?
- Where will you stay **when you arrive in Canada**? How will you get there from the airport?
- Do you have some **local currency** for any transit destinations? Some countries require you to pay airline taxes in transit, which

have not already been included in your ticket cost. You may also find local currency useful to purchase a snack or magazine along the way.

- Do you have **Canadian currency**, including cash and traveler's cheques (if using)?
- Do you know the airline's **baggage limitations**? Check how much baggage you are allowed to take with you. Check which items are restricted or prohibited, remembering that some seemingly harmless goods can be dangerous on board an aircraft and should not be packed in either checked or carry-on baggage. When packing your carry-on baggage, remember to prepare for any delays in your flights or checked baggage, by packing basic toiletries (if permitted) and a change of clothes.
- Remember that **customs control** also prohibits or restricts the import of certain goods to Canada. People found in contravention of these regulations face stiff penalties. There are restrictions on alcohol, tobacco, firearms, food, animals and plant products.
- Remember to **clearly tag ALL of your baggage** noting your name and the complete address of your destination in Canada (your new address or the international office of the educational institution you will be attending). Also, pack a card inside your luggage with your Canadian contact details.
- When you **check in for your flights**, ask whether your baggage will be checked through to your final destination in Canada, or whether you must claim and transfer your baggage at any stage. Also check whether you can be issued with the boarding passes for all of your connecting flights, or whether you will need to go to the check-in desks at each airport en route.
- Remember to keep all **important documents, medications and high value items** (e.g. cameras, jewellery, electronic devices and cash) with you – do not pack these items in your checked baggage.
- You must keep **important documents** with you at all times when traveling. You should also make photocopies and pack these away in your baggage, as well as leaving copies at home with someone you trust. Important documents for travel to Canada include:
 - passport
 - airline tickets
 - travel insurance certificate
 - Letter of Acceptance for your Canadian institution
 - key addresses and phone numbers

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- o a bank statement showing proof of funds
 - o Letter of Introduction from Canadian immigration (if relevant)
 - o prescriptions or a letter from your doctor for any medication you are carrying
 - o traveler's cheques (if using)
 - o medical and immunization records (may be useful if you need medical care while abroad)
 - o Academic history and university transcripts (may be needed to obtain credit transfers, as evidence of pre-requisites for exchange students, or to obtain work if relevant).
 - o Use the **Pre-Departure Checklist**

4.2 Tourism in Canada

From the 'English' city of Victoria on Vancouver Island, through the Rocky Mountains in Alberta, across the lakes and plains of the prairies, to the breathtaking Niagara Falls in Ontario, Canada offers many incredible sights to see. Each region of the country is unique and well worth exploring.

Here is an overview of the regions and just some of the many sightseeing highlights in Canada. For more information, visit the provincial tourism websites, listed in Section 4.3 below.

Ontario

Home to Toronto and Ottawa, Ontario is the most populous province in Canada. An incredibly diverse region, it offers something for everyone, from vibrant and multicultural cities to vineyards and museums.

Major Cities: Toronto, Ottawa, Kingston.

Major Attractions: Niagara Falls, CN Tower, Algonquin National Park, Toronto International Film Festival, Niagara wine region, holiday homes in the Muskokas, the Big Nickel, the Rideau Canal Skateway, St. Jacobs Farmers' Market.

Québec

Canada's French-speaking province has a rich heritage and was the first area in the country to be settled. Experience the European flair of historic Québec City, attend one of Montréal's many festivals or try one of Montréal's many restaurants.

Major Cities: Montréal, Québec City.

Major Attractions: Montréal jazz festival, old Québec city, Château Frontenac, Montréal botanic gardens, Québec-Canada Ice Hotel, Mont Tremblant, sugar shacks, Laurentian Mountains, Canadian Museum of Civilization.

British Columbia

This province is world renowned for its breathtaking, unspoilt natural scenery of mountains, oceans, and rainforests. A sport-lovers' paradise, BC has an activity for every season, from mountain biking to sailing to skiing. Make sure that you carve up the slopes skiing or snowboarding at Whistler.

Major Cities: Vancouver, Victoria.

Major Attractions: Vancouver, Victoria, Whistler, Cariboo-Chilcotin Coast, Vancouver Island, Okanagan Valley.

Alberta

A must-see province for nature-lovers, Alberta is home to the Rocky Mountains, Banff and Jasper. It is also known for its legendary western roots, pioneering spirit and as the home of the world famous Calgary stampede.

Major Cities: Calgary, Edmonton.

Major Attractions: Rocky Mountains, Calgary, Edmonton, Southern Alberta, Fort McMurray for the Northern Lights, Dinosaur Provincial Park, Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump, Calgary Stampede.

Prairies (Manitoba, Saskatchewan)

A land of wide open spaces and welcoming people, the prairies is a must-see destination. During summer, the provinces are also home to fantastic fishing and canoeing, perfect for nature enthusiasts. It is also home to polar bears and the world-famous Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Major Cities: Winnipeg, Regina, Saskatoon.

Major Attractions: Fishing in one of 10,000 lakes, Wanuskewin Heritage Park for Plains Indian history, see the polar bears in Churchill (Manitoba), Wascana Centre, Big Muddy Badlands – a part of Butch Cassidy's "outlaw trail", Inuit art at Winnipeg Art Gallery.

Maritimes (Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland & Labrador, New Brunswick)

Home of legendary hospitality and spirit, the Maritime Provinces boast quaint fishing villages and eco-adventures galore. Make sure that you sample some of the fantastic seafood and legendary lobster dinners.

Major Cities: Fredericton, Saint-John, Moncton, Halifax, St. John's, Charlottetown.

Major Attractions: The Bay of Fundy, Gros Morne National Park, fantastic seafood dinners, Anne of Green Gables' House, drives along the coast, Cabot Trail, Peggy's Cove, Fortress Louisbourg, the Halifax Citadel.

Up North (Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Yukon)

Experience the true north; breathtakingly beautiful, cold, snowy and everything that you have heard about Canadian winters. See moose, polar bears, grizzly bears and caribou and take a ride in a dogsled or build an igloo.

Major Cities: Whitehorse, Yellowknife, Iqualuit.

Major Attractions: Eco-tourism adventures, Mackenzie Mountain, Baffin Island, dog sledding and snowmobiling, explore Dawson city's gold rush heritage, Chilcoot trail, see the Northern Lights.

TOP TEN THINGS TO DO IN CANADA!

1. Watch the water rush over **Niagara Falls**
2. Go skiing in **Whistler**
3. Experience **Carnival**, Québec City's vibrant winter festival
4. Watch ridin', ropin' and ranglin' at the **Calgary Stampede**
5. Visit one of Canada's many **national parks** and see the leaves change colour in the fall, go camping, canoeing, hiking or skiing
6. Visit **West Edmonton Mall**, with over 800 stores the mall is amazing retail therapy
7. Skate on the **Rideau Canal Skateway** in Ottawa, the world's longest skating rink
8. See the **Northern Lights** illuminate the night sky in Canada's north
9. Have a legendary **lobster dinner** in a coastal fishing village in the Maritimes
10. Watch the **whales** play in New Brunswick's Bay of Fundy

4.3 Useful Travel Links

Government Services

- Going to Canada: Information and Services for Non-Canadians and Newcomers:
www.canadainternational.gc.ca/gtc/Going_To_Canadaen.aspx
- Canada Border Services Agency: Advice to Travellers:
www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/travel/menu-e.html

Canadian Tourism

- Canadian Tourism Commission: www.travelcanada.ca
- Parks Canada: www.pc.gc.ca
- Alberta: www.travelalberta.com
- British Columbia: www.HelloBC.com
- Manitoba: www.travelmanitoba.com
- New Brunswick: www.tourismnewbrunswick.ca
- Newfoundland & Labrador:
www.newfoundlandandlabradortourism.com
- Nova Scotia: www.novascotia.com
- Nunavut: www.nunavuttourism.com
- Northwest Territories: www.explorenwt.com
- Ontario: www.ontariotravel.net
- Prince Edward Island: www.gov.pe.ca/visitorsguide/
- Québec: www.bonjourquebec.com
- Saskatchewan: www.sasktourism.com
- Yukon Territory: www.touryukon.com

International Airlines

- Air Canada: www.aircanada.com
- Mexicana: www.mexicana.com
- United Airlines: www.united.com

Domestic Airlines

- Air Canada: www.aircanada.com
- West Jet: www.westjet.com

Discount Student Travel

- Travel CUTS (Canada and the USA): www.travelcuts.com
- International Student Card: www.isiccard.com

Rail Travel

- VIA Rail (Canada): www.viarail.ca
- Rocky Mountaineer Vacations: www.rockymountaineer.com
- Whistler Mountaineer: www.whistlermountaineer.com

Bus Travel

- Acadian Lines (Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island): www.acadianbus.com
- Banff Airporter (Calgary-Banff): www.banffairporter.com
- Brewster Transportation & Tours (Rockies): www.brewster.ca
- Coach Canada (Toronto/Montréal): www.coachcanada.com
- DRL Coach Lines (Newfoundland): www.drlgroup.com
- Gray Line Canada: www.grayline.ca
- Greyhound (Canada and USA): www.greyhound.ca
- Orléans Express (Québec): www.oleansexpress.ca
- Pacific Coach Lines (BC): www.pacificcoach.com
- Quick Shuttle (Vancouver-Seattle): www.quickcoach.com

Ferries

- BC Ferries: www.bcferries.com
- Victoria Clipper (Victoria-Seattle): www.victoriaclipper.com
- Alaska Marine Highway (Prince Rupert-Alaska): www.akferry.org
- Marine Atlantic (Nova Scotia-Newfoundland): www.marine-atlantic.ca
- Northumberland Ferries: www.nfl-bay.com

5. Finances

5.1 Canadian Currency

The currency of Canada is the Canadian Dollar. There are one hundred cents to one dollar.

The Canadian Dollar is available in \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50 and \$100 notes. The notes are colored and are difficult to counterfeit. Canadian coins come in denominations of 1 cent (Penny), 5 cents (Nickel), 10 cents (Dime), 25 cents (Quarter), \$1 (Loonie) and \$2 (Toonie). You will rarely see a 50 cent piece, although these are minted for special occasions.

For further information visit:

- Royal Bank of Canada: www.bankofcanada.ca
- Royal Canadian Mint: www.mint.ca

5.2 Banking

Canadian banks are quite similar to Mexican ones in many respects. Most charge a fee for service and offer a variety of packages. A basic bank account will cost approximately C\$5 per month. It is your choice whether to open one in Canada or not. However, Canada's major banks offer great student accounts and services, so it may be worth your while to consider opening an account, as it may help you save on international transaction charges and make managing your money easier.

The majority of stores accept a variety of payment methods, including cash, credit card and debit cards. Cheques are used fairly frequently for large amounts, such as rent and bill payment. Your bank should issue you with personalized cheques when you open an account. Internet banking is offered by all the banks and is a widely accepted method of bill payments and other transactions. However, it is uncommon to transfer money between individuals using internet banking.

Please note that when shopping in stores it is unlikely that you will be able to use your Mexican issued debit card for payment.

Credit Cards

Visa and Mastercard are the two main credit cards and are accepted by most major businesses. American Express is accepted, although not quite as widely. Your Mexican credit card will be accepted in Canada, however be aware of exchange rates and any foreign transaction fees charged by your credit card provider.

ATMs

In Canada, ATMs (**automatic teller machines**) are readily available and very easy to find. They are located in most shopping centers, tourist attractions and banks, as well as on the street.

Most ATMs are operated by one of the major banks (see list below).

It is possible to make a withdrawal from an ATM that is not operated by your bank, but you will be charged a fee (usually between C\$1-2 for withdrawal from a local account, or more to withdraw from a foreign bank). You should check with your bank in Mexico to find out what kind of international withdrawal fees it charges before attempting to use your ATM card to withdraw from Canadian ATMs.

All ATMs can be used for cash withdrawals and many also accept deposits of cash or cheques, allow you to pay bills, print account statements and transfer money between accounts.

Bank Trading Hours

Most banks are open from 10am and close around 4.30 or 5pm, Monday to Friday. Many branches close later, usually at 7pm, one day a week. Most banks are open reduced hours on Saturday and are closed on Sunday.

Money transfers from Mexico to Canada

An easy way to transfer money to Canada is using traveler's cheques. They can be purchased at most banks and come in a variety of denominations. They are secure and can be immediately cashed at any Canadian bank or currency converter. Do not forget to make photocopies of your traveler's cheques in case they get lost or stolen.

It is also possible to transfer money using a bank draft, but allow 6-8 weeks for it to clear in the Canadian bank and be aware that you will likely be charged a fee for the service.

You can withdraw money from your Mexican bank at most Canadian ATMs, provided that the networks used by both banks (e.g. cirrus, plus etc.) are compatible. Your bank can tell you which network it uses, as well as the fees that it charges for international withdrawals. Some Mexican banks have reciprocal agreements with a Canadian related bank. For example, Scotiabank Inverlat customers can withdraw money at a Scotiabank ATM for free. Money can also be withdrawn from your credit card at any Canadian ATM. Fees and interest rates can be high, so find out the details from your credit card company before you leave Mexico.

Canada's major banks are:

- Scotia Bank: www.scotiabank.com
- Royal Bank of Canada: www.royalbank.com
- Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce: www.cibc.com
- Bank of Montréal: www.bmo.com
- TD Canada Trust: www.tdcanadatrust.com
- HSBC Canada: www.hsbc.ca

5.3 Health and Travel Insurance

As a result of joint federal and provincial government efforts, Canadian health policies are well developed. In 1958, universal hospital care was

introduced and in 1968, a universal medical insurance program was launched to fund physicians' services.

Each province has its own health insurance provider and virtually all Canadian post-secondary institutions have medical insurance plans available to international students. Note that certain institutions require their foreign students to have study permits in order to access coverage. You must **contact the Canadian institution you plan to attend for information about insurance coverage.**

Regardless of whether or not you plan to purchase coverage from a Canadian institution, it is highly recommended that you purchase travel insurance for your stay in Canada. For more information on travel insurance contact your travel agent or visit the following providers for affordable student packages:

- Ingle International Insurance: www.ingleinternational.com

5.4 Tipping

In Canada, it is customary to tip service providers such as bartenders, waiters, hairdressers, concierges and cab drivers. A tip is a sign of appreciation for service provided and the amount given should reflect that, usually 15 to 20 percent is sufficient.

5.5 Sales Taxes

A national tax of six percent is added on to the price of most goods. The tax is not included in the price of the item, but rather is added on at the time of payment.

Most provinces have an additional sales tax:

- British Columbia - 7%
- Saskatchewan - 7%
- Manitoba - 7%
- Ontario - 8%
- Québec - 7.5%
- Prince Edward Island - 10%
- Alberta, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick, Nunavut, Yukon and Northwest Territories do not have sales taxes.

5.6 Some Typical Costs in Canadian Dollars

Item Cost

Milk (1 Litre)	\$ 1.80
Eggs (dozen)	\$ 2.50
Potatoes (4.5 kg)	\$ 5.50
Music CD	\$ 20.00
Litre of gas	\$ 1.00
Public transit fare	\$ 2.50
Restaurant meal	\$10 - \$ 20.00
Cup of coffee	\$ 2.00
Internet (1 month, high speed)	\$4 0.00
Cable television (per month)	\$ 20.00 - \$ 50.00
Postage stamp (within Canada)	\$ 0.51
Postage stamp (international)	\$ 1.49
Youth hostel	\$ 20.00 per night
Rent (bachelor apartment, large city)	\$700 - \$1000 per month
Rent (bachelor apartment, small city)	\$500 - \$700 per month

5.7 Sample Budget

The following sample budget is **based on a one year stay** in Canada. Please note that costs may vary significantly depending on lifestyle, the city in which you live and the institution you attend.

Estimated Expenses for 12 Months Undergraduate Study in Canada*

Description of Expense CA\$

Study permit (application fee)	\$125
Return airfare (average lowest fare)	\$750
Tuition (average undergraduate program) – excludes exchange students**	\$9,000 - \$14,000
Living expenses	\$10,000 - \$12,000
Travel and health insurance	\$500 - \$700
Total Expenses for 12 Months	\$20,375 - \$27,575

* The figures in this table will vary with fluctuations in international exchange rates. This table was last updated using exchange rates current as at 10/01/2007.

** Exchange students do not pay tuition fees to the Canadian university, but do continue to pay any fees due to their home institutions.

6. Living in Canada

6.1 Climate

Canada's climate is characterized by its diversity, both from region to region and from season to season. While it is true that in the extreme north temperatures climb above 0°C for only a few months a year, most Canadians live within 300 kilometers of the country's southern border, where mild springs, warm summers and pleasantly crisp autumns prevail at least seven months of the year. Generally, Canada has four very distinct seasons: spring (March-May); summer (June-August); fall (September-October); and winter (November- February).

For more detailed weather information visit:

www.weatheroffice.ec.gc.ca

Average Temperatures in Canada (°C)

Average Daily Temperature (Celcius)												
City	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Vancouver	3.0	4.7	6.3	8.8	12.1	15.2	17.2	17.4	14.3	10.0	6.0	3.5
Calgary	-9.6	-6.3	-2.5	4.1	9.7	14.0	16.4	15.7	10.6	5.7	-3.0	-8.3
Edmonton	14.2	-10.8	-5.4	3.7	10.3	14.2	16.0	15.0	9.9	4.6	-5.7	-12.2
Saskatoon	-17.5	-13.9	-7.0	3.9	11.5	16.2	18.6	17.4	11.2	4.8	-6.0	-14.7
Regina	-16.5	-12.9	-6.0	4.1	11.4	16.4	19.1	18.1	11.6	5.1	-5.1	-13.6
Winnipeg	-18.3	-15.1	-7.0	3.8	11.6	16.9	19.8	18.3	12.4	5.7	-4.7	-14.6
Toronto	-4.5	-3.8	1.0	7.5	13.8	18.9	22.1	21.1	16.9	10.7	4.9	-1.5
Ottawa	-10.7	-9.2	-2.6	5.9	13.0	18.1	20.8	19.4	14.7	8.3	1.5	-7.2
Québec City	-12.4	-11.0	-4.6	3.3	10.8	16.3	19.1	17.6	12.5	6.5	-0.5	-9.1
Halifax	-5.8	-6.0	-1.7	3.6	9.4	14.7	18.3	18.1	13.8	8.5	3.2	-3.0
Charlottetown	-7.2	-7.5	-3.0	2.7	9.2	14.8	18.8	18.4	14.0	8.6	3.1	-3.6
St. John's	-4.0	-4.6	-2.0	1.8	6.4	11.3	15.8	15.6	11.8	7.3	3.3	-1.4
Fredericton	-9.6	-8.5	-2.5	4.0	10.8	16.2	19.3	18.3	13.0	7.3	1.2	-6.6

6.2 Winter Survival Tips

Here are a number of tips that may prove useful if you are going to one of Canada's colder regions.†

- Develop a habit of listening to weather forecasts so that you are not caught out in a blizzard or other active weather system.
- Do not consider warm winter clothing a luxury: you will need it to stay warm and enjoy your stay in Canada (e.g. a good winter jacket, gloves, earmuffs or a warm hat, a scarf and boots).
- Dress in layers so that you can adjust to the variable temperatures indoors and outside.
- Be sure to eat a nutritious breakfast: you will be warmer if your body has "fuel to burn".
- Prevent dehydration in cold weather and dry indoor heat by drinking water regularly and using a moisturizer on your skin.
- Wear sunglasses and sunscreen in the snow as sunlight reflecting off snow can be very intense.
- Remember the wind chill factor: high winds blowing on a cold dry day lower the temperature further (-20°C with a wind of 16 km/hr can feel like -25°C).
- Be alert about frostbite! Ears, fingers, toes, or cheeks exposed to very cold temperatures for even just a short period of time can become frostbitten. Should any part of your body feel numb or become pale or slightly blue, seek medical assistance immediately.
- Should you find yourself in an emergency situation and become stranded in the cold, do not hesitate to seek help. If, for example, you find yourself caught outdoors in a blizzard, with no transportation or public shelter in sight, knock on the closest door and ask if you can come in for a short time in order to warm up. Prolonged exposure to freezing temperatures can be life threatening!

† Adapted from *International Students Handbook: A Guide to Study in Canada*, 8th Edition. Canadian Bureau for International Education, 2001.

6.3 Communications

Canada has a comprehensive and modern communications network that offers easy access to a wide variety of technology. The penetration rate of basic telephone service, internet and cable television in Canada is one of the highest in the world.

Internet usage is widespread in Canada, with approximately 60 percent of homes and 80 percent of businesses being connected. Penetration is greatest among people with higher incomes, the young and those in cities. A large percentage of people have high-speed internet connections and cities have invested significant efforts in strengthening their wireless networks. Cellular (mobile) phone usage is extensive and constantly increasing, with over 54 percent of households owning a cell phone.

Calling Mexico

Contacting Mexico from Canada is relatively easy to do by phone, fax, email or regular post.

To call or fax Mexico from within Canada, dial: 011 + 52 + Area Code + Local Number

International calling cards offer reduced rates and can be purchased from most news agencies or convenience stores.

Internet Services

Internet service is readily available at all academic institutions and you will be provided with a free university email account once you begin your studies. Internet cafés are also common, particularly in metropolitan centers, and offer reasonable rates.

Postal Services

Canadians enjoy one of the lowest basic domestic letter prices among comparable industrialized countries. Lettermail prices are based on size and weight. A standard domestic letter starts at C\$0.51 (up to 30g). A standard international letter to Mexico costs C\$1.49 and takes two to six weeks to deliver.

For more information, visit: Canada Post: www.canadapost.ca

Cell Phones

A large percentage of young people have cell phones (mobiles), and they are an important part of life in Canada. In Canada, both the recipient and the sender of a call or text pay, making owning a phone somewhat more expensive than in Mexico. Those choosing to get a phone in Canada can either go on a plan (starting at about C\$20 per month) or use the pay-as-you go option (20-40c per minute). The minimum term for most phone plans is 12 months. New phones can be purchased for under C\$100.

Major mobile companies in Canada are listed below:

- Rogers: www.rogers.com
- Bell: www.bell.ca
- Telus: www.telusmobility.com
- Fido: www.fido.ca

You may be able to use your existing mobile phone in Canada, if it is compatible (for example GSM 1900MHz will operate in Canada) and you have international roaming activated. Contact your mobile phone service provider in Mexico for more information.

6.4 Time Zones

The table and maps below show Canada's six time zones and the number of hours they are behind Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) during Standard Time and Daylight Time. Daylight Time is observed during summer (first Sunday in April to last Sunday in October) in most of Canada.

Time Zone Standard Time Daylight Time

Pacific GMT -0800 GMT -0700

Mountain GMT -0700 GMT -0600

Central GMT -0600 GMT -0500

Eastern GMT -0500 GMT -0400

Atlantic GMT -0400 GMT -0300

Newfoundland GMT -0330 GMT -0230

- There is a + 1 hour time difference between the Eastern Time zone (Toronto, Montréal, Ottawa) and Central Mexico.
- There is a - 2 hour time difference between the Pacific Time zone (British Columbia) and Central Mexico.
- There is a - 1 hour time difference between the Mountain Time zone (Alberta and parts of Saskatchewan) and Central Mexico.
- There is a + 2 hour time difference between the Atlantic Time zone and Central Mexico.

6.5 Accommodation

Residence/Dormitory

Many post-secondary institutions have accommodation conveniently located on or near campus. Rooms tend to vary in size, quality and cost. Dorms generally have shared kitchen, bathroom, and laundry facilities. Some dorm accommodation offers optional cafeteria meal plans whereby students, having paid a set price up-front, are issued two or three meal tickets per day.

If you are going to Canada for just a single semester, university residence may prove to be the simplest way to arrange your accommodation, as it is often less time consuming and simpler than finding your own private, off-campus housing. If you will be staying in Canada for a longer period of time, you may want to rent university accommodation for your first semester and then make other living arrangements for future semesters. For more information please contact the housing or residence office at the academic institution you plan to attend in Canada.

Private Accommodation‡

A current listing of private accommodation for rent near the institution you plan to attend is often available at the housing office or the student union office on campus. You should note that tertiary institutions do not normally inspect any of the accommodation that is listed. Therefore, it is up to you to decide the type of place you want, to contact the landlord, inspect the premises and determine the suitability. When examining private rental housing, you will find that price, quality and availability vary greatly. Rent may be especially high in some cities. Expect to pay anywhere from C\$300 to C\$1000 per month, depending on the city and the particular area in which you choose to live. It is typical for the landlord to collect one month's rent up-front as a damage deposit, which will be returned to you when you move out, assuming that the place is left in good condition.

‡ Adapted from *International Students Handbook: A Guide to Study in Canada*, 8th Edition. Canadian Bureau for International Education, 2001.

If you decide to rent privately you will most likely be required to sign a lease; a legal document that states your responsibilities as a tenant. For example, as a tenant you are required to pay the rent on time, keep the premises clean, repair any damages caused by yourself or your guests and not to disturb other tenants. Landlords are in the position to add all types of rules and conditions to the lease. Be sure to read the document

very carefully before signing and ask your landlord to provide you with a copy of the document.

The landlord also has responsibilities, particularly with respect to keeping the premises in good repair. In emergency situations, the landlord may enter the dwelling; otherwise he or she must give you notice of his or her intention to enter. The landlord must also provide notice (generally 60 days) if he or she wishes you to vacate the residence. If you, the tenant, refuse to move, the landlord can go to court and obtain an eviction notice. Lastly, note that it is illegal for the landlord to discriminate on the basis of race, religion, nationality, sex or sexual orientation.

Remember to also check with your university to see if they offer any assistance in housing matters. Many institutions have or advertise paralegal lease review services. If you do have trouble with your landlord, you may be able to get free or reduced legal advice or assistance through your university.

6.6 Employment

Under certain conditions, you may be permitted to work in Canada. For information on visa regulations related to working in Canada see Section 3.5 or visit the Canadian Immigration and Citizenship website: www.cic.gc.ca.

Before deciding to seek employment during your studies, you should consider carefully the following:

- Do not expect to finance your study in Canada through a part-time job. This may be unrealistic and, in any event, it is wise to prepare savings or other sources of finance in case of difficulties.
- Be aware that you may not be able to find suitable employment or that your studies and other campus and/or social activities may not leave you much time for a job.
- If you do decide to look for a job, think carefully about how much time you can realistically commit and which jobs match your skills and experience.
- You should take some time to learn about the Canadian labour market, government legislation and your rights at work.

Here is some useful information about working in Canada:

Social Insurance Number (SIN)

You will require a Social Insurance Number (SIN) to work in Canada or to receive government benefits.

More information: www.hrsdc.gc.ca

Workers Rights and Benefits

Federal and provincial laws protect workers and employers by setting minimum wage levels, health and safety standards, and hours of work. They provide for maternity leave, annual paid vacation and protection of children who are working. There are also laws to protect workers from discrimination, including protection from unfair treatment by employers based on sex, age, race, religion or disability.

Workers in Canada must be paid at least the minimum wage as stated by the provincial government. The minimum wage rate varies depending on the worker's age and profession.

Your employer will legally deduct money from your pay cheque for income tax, Canada pension plan, employment insurance, and, where applicable, taxable benefits and union dues.

More information:

- www.jobsetc.ca
- www.hrsdc.gc.ca

General Tips

- You should not work for any employer without signing a contract. Without a document proving your employment, your rights will be severely reduced if anything goes wrong.
- Always ask for a pay stub and keep them together in a safe place.
- Check your pay stub to ensure that your employer is deducting the necessary taxes from your pay. Not deducting taxes is illegal and a criminal offence.
- Do not accept any "under the table" jobs, where you are paid cash-in-hand and are not registered as an official employee. This is illegal.
- Familiarize yourself with the basics of Canadian labour legislation so that you are aware of your rights and what you are entitled to by law.
- Ensure that you are paid the minimum wage or higher for your particular job and age group.

Finding Employment

You can find out about employment opportunities in your area by consulting your institution's careers centre, your local municipal government, newspapers or advertising in shop windows.

The following websites also provide job listings:

- www.jobbank.gc.ca
- www.youth.gc.ca
- www.monster.ca
- www.workopolis.com

6.7 Electricity and voltage

The same voltage is used in Canada as in Mexico.

6.8 Driving in Canada

Canada honors all valid foreign driving licenses. Therefore an International Driver's Permit is not necessary. However, learner's permits and provisional licenses may not transfer over to the Canadian equivalent. You should check with the Ministry of Transportation in the province or territory that you are visiting to determine if you are eligible to drive in Canada.

Car rental in Canada is available, however rental companies usually stipulate that drivers must be at least 21 years old and have a valid driving licence from their country of residence. Drivers between the ages of 21 to 25 may have to pay a surcharge.

Prior to leaving Mexico, visit your local motoring association for information about: international road rules, reciprocal membership with the Canadian Automobile Association (CAA), and an International Driver's Permit (if desired).

Road Rules and Driving Tips

- Throughout Canada and the United States all traffic drives on the right hand side of the road.
- Seat belts for driver and front seat passengers must be worn, and infants must be strapped into a safety seat.
- Speed limits in city areas are usually 50 km/h, except in the vicinity of schools where the speed limit is reduced to 30 km/h.
- Speed limits for rural driving vary, depending on the province, and are set according to local conditions. Generally, speeds are set at

90 to 100 km/h. Always check the speed signs when crossing into a neighboring province.

- Pedestrian crosswalks are clearly marked by overhanging yellow signs and an 'X' painted on the road surface. Pedestrians will stick out a hand to warn drivers that they wish to cross; cars must then stop.
- Toronto's famous streetcars should be given plenty of room. When a streetcar stops, allow space for passengers to board and alight from the rear doors. It is an offence to drive too close.
- Turning right on a red light is permissible at an intersection in every province except certain intersections in the province of Québec. Before making a turn, bring the car to a complete stop and make sure that there are no signs forbidding a right turn.
- At a four way stop, come to a complete stop before advancing through the intersection. Yield (give way) to your right.
- If you are required to stop by a police officer, remain seated in your car, switch off the engine and await instructions from the approaching officer. Most officers are firm, but courteous. They are more likely to let you off with a verbal reprimand if you are civil and prepared to understand the reason why they have stopped you. The majority of vehicle stop-checks are now recorded on video camera, with police officers wired for sound, so anything you say or do will be recorded.
- Always carry your license and vehicle documentation.
- Never attempt to bribe or pay a fine directly to a police officer; attempted bribery is a very serious offence in Canada.
- In the case of an accident involving personal injury, the police must be notified immediately. They will file an accident report. It is a crime to leave the scene of an accident involving injury without first giving details to the police.
- In the event of a breakdown, you should check the glove compartment of the car for information on who to contact (if a rental car). If it is your own car, then be aware that the Canadian Automobile Association (CAA) provides reciprocal assistance to members of international auto clubs. You should check with your local auto club for details on cover when driving in Canada.
- Should your car break down in a remote area, stay with the vehicle until help arrives. If you are traveling long distances, then it is always a good idea to let someone know the route you intend to use and your estimated time of arrival.

6.9 Business Hours

Most businesses are open from 9am to 5pm from Monday to Friday. Most retail outlets and grocery stores are open until 9pm between Monday and Friday.

The closing time for bars, clubs and restaurants varies from province to province.

6.10 National Public Holidays in Canada

The following public holidays are observed nationally:

- New Year's Day - January 1
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday
- Victoria Day - the Monday preceding May 25
- Canada Day - July 1
- Labour Day - first Monday in September
- Thanksgiving - second Monday in October
- Remembrance Day - November 11
- Christmas - December 25
- Boxing Day - December 26

There are also additional public holidays determined by the individual provinces and territories.

7. Leisure Activities

7.1 Entertainment and Media

Like large metropolitan areas around the world, Canadian cities offer a range of entertainment options. No matter where you plan to live in Canada, you will find that there are many activities available to suit your personal tastes. The following is a list of entertainment suggestions and the relevant contact information, where applicable.

Cinema

Canadian movie theatres are typically very large and modern, featuring stadium style seating. Given the close proximity to the United States, Canada tends to receive new movies immediately following their release dates. A standard adult admission costs approximately C\$13, though most theatres have a designated "cheap night" (often Tuesday) where tickets are sold at reduced prices (about C\$9). Student rates are usually

available on regular nights. Alternatively, most cities also have repertory cinemas. These are often older, smaller cinemas that show second-run movies at discount prices.

Theatre

Most Canadian cities have wonderful theatres showing a range of musicals and theatrical performances. Broadway shows, such as *Les Misérables*, *Cats* and the *Phantom of the Opera* circulate through the larger cities (Vancouver, Toronto and Montréal), though tickets for such productions tend to be quite pricey.

Major cities usually have a very active amateur theatre community. For those who are dramatically inclined, it is an excellent way to get involved in the local scene and meet new people. Shows are often advertised in local newspaper and tickets for the productions are usually very reasonable priced. Contact your local playgroup or theatre for more information (listed in the yellow pages).

More information on major events: Ticketmaster: www.ticketmaster.ca

Television and Radio

There are a number of television and radio stations in Canada, which cater to a variety of tastes.

The major Canadian networks are:

- Canadian Broadcasting Corporation: www.cbc.ca
- Canadian Television – www.ctv.ca
- Global Television – www.canada.com/globaltv/

Newspapers

Newspapers, particularly their entertainment sections, are a great way to find out what is going on in a city.

Canada's two national daily papers are:

- The Globe and Mail: www.theglobeandmail.com
- The National Post: www.canada.com/nationalpost/

Each city also has its own daily paper or sometimes several. A quick visit to the site of the Canadian Newspapers Association will enable you to find the paper(s) for the cities in Canada of interest to you: www.cna-acj.ca.

Newspapers are widely available from convenience stores and other retail locations. There are also numerous newspaper boxes located on streets and campuses.

Many Canadian cities also have alternative newspapers that offer a somewhat unique perspective on local happenings. They are often an excellent resource for classified advertisements, inexpensive things to see and do and news stories related to young people. Be on the lookout for such publications in the Canadian city in which you will be living.

7.2 Sports and Recreation

Canada has two national sports: (ice) hockey is the national winter sport, while lacrosse is the national summer sport. Other popular sports include: cross-country and alpine skiing; snowboarding; swimming; baseball; tennis; basketball; golf; soccer; and curling.

Professional Sports

Canada has a number of high profile sports teams competing in various Canadian and North American leagues and going to see a live sporting event is a popular pastime for many Canadians.

Major professional leagues in Canada:

- National Hockey League (NHL): www.nhl.com
- National Basketball League (NBA): www.nba.com
- Major League Baseball (MLB): www.mlb.com
- Canadian Football League (CFL): www.cfl.ca
- For more information on tickets to major events visit: www.ticketmaster.ca

Recreational Sports

Many Canadians play sport in recreational or competitive leagues throughout the country. Most universities hold their own house leagues for a variety of sports. Joining a sports league at your university is a great way to get involved in university life and stay fit. For information on how to get involved, contact the Sport and Recreation Office at your Canadian institution.

Skiing and Snowboarding

Skiing and snowboarding are both popular Canadian pastimes and it is well worth your while to give at least one of these sports a try while you are in Canada. Canadian ski resorts are renowned worldwide for their quality and beauty and they are generally quite accessible from major cities. For example, there are three local mountains within a half-hour drive from Vancouver (Cypress, Grouse and Seymour), while world49

famous Whistler-Blackcomb is about two hours away. Québec also has excellent skiing, including Mont Tremblant and Mont St. Anne. The slopes outside the city of Collingwood are one of the most popular skiing destinations in Ontario and are a 3 hour drive from Toronto. The ski season tends to last from early November to April, though this is dependent on weather conditions.

Full-day, half-day and night lift tickets are available and although prices vary from resort to resort, they all offer special rates for multiple day passes. For a full-day adult pass expect to pay anywhere from C\$29 (Mount Seymour) to C\$69 (Whistler- Blackcomb). All established resorts offer equipment rentals and lessons. Contact the facilities at the mountains you plan to visit for more detailed information.

Lastly, if you plan to ski or snowboard during your visit to Canada, make sure you bring lots of warm clothes, as temperatures on all of Canada's mountains can be very cold!

More information:

- See the provincial tourist sites (see Section 9.4)
- Canadian Ski Council: www.skicanada.org

Hiking

Hiking (also known as trekking or bushwalking) is a popular sport in Canada, particularly in the southwest of British Columbia where the climate is conducive to this activity virtually year-round.

The Trans Canada Trail, as the name implies, is a recreational trail connecting every province and territory in Canada. It is open to all cyclists, joggers and cross-country skiers (in winter). The trail already covers a large part of the country, and the target date for completion of the main trunk of the Trans Canada Trail is the fall of 2010. Given the geography of Canada, it is not a straight line but one that dips and curves to include as much of the population as possible.

Visit the local Tourist Office in Canada for help choosing areas and trails for hiking. Alternatively, local bookstores sell trail guides that are wonderful sources of information. For your own safety when hiking, let others know when and where you are heading and do not trek into unknown territory. Many universities also have hiking clubs, which offer a safe and fun way to explore the Canadian wilderness with knowledgeable guides in a supervised environment.

More information: www.tctrail.ca, www.canadatrails.ca

8. Culture Shock

It is one thing to travel to a country as a tourist, but it is quite a different experience to actually live there and immerse yourself in a new culture. As you adjust to your new surroundings you will experience a variety of emotions, ranging from excitement to frustration. This is completely normal and to be expected. This section will help to prepare you. §

8.1 What is Culture Shock?

“Culture shock” is a term used to describe the anxiety that you experience as you integrate yourself into a new society. Often characterized by physical and emotional discomfort, culture shock occurs as a result of the absence of familiar signs and symbols of social interaction. In other words, it triggers an identity crisis. When you immerse yourself in a new culture, you will typically go through five predictable stages of cultural adaptation. Although the length and intensity of each stage varies from person to person, everyone experiences culture shock at some point in their international experience. Moreover, as you progress along the stages, there may still be times when you regress back to previous stages. Do not consider yourself a failure; in time you will overcome the difficulties and move forward again.

8.2 The Five Stages of Cultural Adaptation

1. The “Honeymoon” Stage:
 - You feel optimistic, fascinated, excited and adventurous.
2. The “Hostility” Stage:
 - You are detached from the unfamiliar because you are still in your identity from home. You feel hostile, inadequate, disappointed and alienated.
 - As the novelty wears off you experience withdrawal, loneliness and depression.
 - Your new identity begins to emerge and the differences between your home and host culture are more noticeable.
 - You feel a sense of failure and try to avoid the differences.
3. The “Adjustment” Stage:
 - You view the situation in perspective as you are now sensitive to cultural differences.

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- Although you have a tendency to stereotype and make generalizations about the host culture, you can also have a laugh at the differences and you no longer let them get you down.
4. The “Interdependence” Stage:
- You feel comfortable and accepted.
 - Differences no longer dominate your identity and you have a high level of trust.
 - You understand the meaning of actions in the surrounding cultural context.
 - Your ultimate goal is to achieve a bicultural or multicultural identity.
 - It is important to note that very few people actually achieve the “interdependence” stage and you should not consider yourself a failure if you do not develop a bicultural or multicultural identity.
5. The “Re-Entry” Stage:
- Upon returning to your home country you will experience re-entry shock.
 - You are excited about your experiences and frustrated when no one understands.
 - You will realize that you have changed.
 - You will glamourize your time abroad.

§ Adapted from “Culture Shock”, UNESCO Co-ordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service, URL: <http://www.unesco.org/ccivs/New-SiteCCSVI/VolunteersInfo/Documents/Cultural-Shock.htm>.

8.3 Tips for Managing the Effects of Culture Shock

- Learn about Canadian culture prior to leaving home.
- Be prepared for the climatic changes, especially in the winter.
- Ask questions when you are unsure of something.
- Get involved and participate in group events.
- Be open to new experiences and ideas.
- Talk to other international students about their experiences in Canada.
- Use the professional support services available to you at your institution.
- Try to relax and not take everything too seriously or worry unnecessarily.

More information about culture shock

- www.destineducation.ca/intstdnt/crossingcultures_e.htm
- www.cie.uci.edu/world/shock.html#Shock

9. Make the Most of Your Experience!

This section is designed to get you thinking about all the ways that you can get the most out of your study experience in Canada. Whether you are in Canada for just six months on exchange, or for a full four year undergraduate degree program, your time abroad is an excellent opportunity to advance your career and make valuable contacts that open doors to jobs and future opportunities. The tips and information below are designed to help you to make the most of this time of personal development and self-discovery.

9.1 Before You Go

- **Think about your future:** Where do you want to be a year from now? What steps can you take while studying in Canada to get closer to this goal?
- **Establish goals:** Come up with some concrete personal and professional goals to accomplish while studying in Canada.

9.2 While You Are There

- **Keep a diary:** Writing about your experiences and emotions can ease homesickness, help you to track progress on your goals and remind you of your time abroad.
- **Volunteer:** Find an organization or cause that grabs your attention and get involved. Your efforts will be appreciated and the experience will look great on your résumé.
- **Network:** Make valuable contacts in your field of study through attending networking events and joining industry associations.
- **Take an interest in the local culture:** Try to better acquaint yourself with local politics, culture and customs by reading the newspaper, watching the news regularly, or taking a university course with a local focus.
- **Get involved:** Playing a sport or joining a team or club is a great way to meet new people and become part of the community.
- **Adopting the right mindset** can greatly enhance your study abroad experience:
 - Arrive with an open mind.
 - Be willing to try new things, new foods, and customs.
 - Remind yourself that differences are not necessarily bad.

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- Try to fit in with locals instead of rigidly holding onto your own culture.
 - Try to find similarities, not just differences, between your culture and the new one.

9.3 When You Return

- **Reflect:** Take time to think about your experience, including how you have changed and what you have accomplished. How can you use these changes to your benefit?
- **Stay in contact** with the friends that you made overseas.
- **Act as a resource on Canada:** Be a buddy for other exchange students or volunteer at your university's international centre.
- **Incorporate your international experiences** into your everyday and academic life. For example, choose topics for your class presentations, discussions and projects that draw on your experiences and knowledge from your study abroad.
- **Join or start** a returned exchange students association at your university.

9.4 Links

- Volunteer Canada: www.volunteer.ca
- Professional Associations in Canada (National and Provincial): www.cicic.ca/en/profess.aspx
- Canadian Chamber of Commerce: www.chamber.ca
- Toronto Board of Trade: www.bot.com
- Ottawa Chamber of Commerce: www.greaterottawachamber.com
- Vancouver Chamber of Commerce: www.vancouverusa.com
- Board of Trade of Metropolitan Montréal: www.ccmm.qc.ca

10. Personal Safety

Worldwide surveys show that Canada is a peaceful, safe and orderly country (Mercer Human Resource Consulting, 2004). Despite this fact, international students should follow the same common sense safety precautions in Canada as they would anywhere in the world. Listed below are a number of tips for keeping you and your belongings safe.

10.1 Register with the Mexican Consulate or Embassy

- Mexico offers a service for their citizens abroad whereby you can register your details with your local Mexican Consulate or Embassy. This is highly recommended as it enables your government to assist you in the case of emergency or natural disaster.

10.2 In an Emergency

- **Call 911 in any emergency situation**, if you are in trouble or if you are a witness to a crime. This is a central number for police, fire and ambulance throughout Canada. You do not need coins to dial 911 from a pay phone.
- If English is your second language, do not panic. Interpreters are available.
- If you are robbed, do not argue or fight. If you are assaulted, shout or blow a whistle to draw attention to your situation. Try to protect your body and distract the attacker so that you can escape. Call 911 immediately.
- If you are a victim of a crime, no matter how small, report it to the police.
- If you have a non-emergency issue or question for the police, you can visit or call the police station in the city in which you live. Police in Canada are very professional and willing to assist you and you should feel comfortable approaching them for help.

10.3 In the Community and on the Street

- Be cautious with strangers, just as you would in your home country.
- Be aware of who and what is going on around you.
- Trust your instincts and leave uncomfortable situations.
- Some areas of cities may have higher crime rates than others. Ask advice for the best routes to take when going out.
- Always tell someone where you are going and when you will return.
- At night always walk on well-lit, busy streets. If possible, travel with a friend and avoid isolated areas, such as parks or alleys.

10.4 On Campus

- Most universities will have campus security. This can take several forms, including patrol cars, 24-hour telephone lines and well-lit areas where you can contact the campus security office.
- Know the features of your campus security network and do not hesitate to use it if necessary.
- Some universities also offer a “walk home” service where qualified students will walk their peers home, or to another location, after dark.

10.5 On Buses, Subways and in Taxis

- Sit at the front of the bus near the driver.
- Know your bus route and schedule before you leave.
- Choose busy, well-lit bus stops after dark and if the bus does not come and you are in a hurry, do not hitchhike. Call a friend or taxi.
- Taxis are a good way to get home when it is late and dark. Know the number of a taxi company so you can easily phone one if necessary.
- Many public transportation systems also offer special assistance for those travelling alone at night, especially women.
- On the train, use the emergency phones on the platform or emergency button if you are ever harassed.

10.6 On the Road

- Be aware that North Americans drive on the right hand side of the road.
- Pedestrian crosswalks are clearly marked by overhanging yellow signs and an 'X' painted on the road surface. Pedestrians will stick out a hand to warn drivers that they wish to cross; cars must then stop.

For more information on road rules and driving tips in Canada, see Section 6.8.

10.7 On a Bicycle

- It is mandatory that you wear a helmet when riding a bike in Canada. At night, use front and rear lights and wear reflective clothing.
- There are many clearly labeled bicycle paths in urban areas. Try to take these as often as possible, as they are safer and more enjoyable to ride on. Your local government office or information centre will have maps.
- Otherwise, bicycles must ride on the road. The sidewalk is for pedestrians.
- Traffic rules for bikes are the same as those for cars - stop signs, red lights, etc. You must also remember to signal your turns.
- Lock your bike when leaving it unattended.

10.8 With Alcohol and other Drugs

- The legal drinking age varies in each province, but it is typically 18 or 19 years old.
- When going to bars or night clubs, go with friends. You will have help if you need it and it is more fun.
- Arrange a ride home beforehand if you plan to drink alcohol. Do not accept a ride home from a stranger in a bar.
- NEVER drink and drive. Doing so is not only dangerous and irresponsible; it is also a serious criminal offense.
- Know your drinking limit - do not drink too much alcohol.
- Do not accept drinks from strangers or let your drink out of your sight. If you do leave it unattended, order a new drink. Like in your home country, drugs can be put into drinks when you are not paying attention.
- Drugs such as cocaine, heroin, marijuana, ecstasy and GHB are illegal. Do not use or possess these drugs at any time.

10.9 With Street People

- Street people will occasionally ask for money. If you want to help them, contribute to a charity. Do not hand out money on the street as this encourages them to approach others. There are many community agencies throughout Canada that help panhandlers, offering free meals, shelter, and counseling.

10.10 With Your Accommodation

- When renting accommodation, deal directly with the landlord and pay the damage deposit directly to him or her.
- When possible, pay rent with a cheque, as it is easier to provide proof of payment, and always ask for a receipt.
- Do not let people into apartment buildings or "buzz" them in if you do not know them. If a repairman, delivery person or salesperson wants access to the building, refer them to the manager.
- Meet and know your neighbours.
- Keep your door(s) locked, even when you are home.

10.11 With Tutors

- Only use tutors who are authorized by a Canadian educational institution. Some people who claim to be tutors or conversation partners may not be qualified or may seek inappropriate relationships.
- Never pay tutors in advance.
- Do not hesitate to report any inappropriate behavior to your institution's harassment office.

10.12 With Other Relationships

- If you want to stop a friendship, make it clear to the person that you do not want to see him or her anymore. If they continue to bother you, tell a teacher or friend.
- Do not worry about hurting someone's feelings or being nice, you must be clear. If they continue to bother you, tell somebody nearby.
- Assault is illegal in Canada. A spouse cannot hit a spouse, a partner cannot hit a partner, and a roommate cannot hit you (nor can you hit him or her).
- BE SAFE. Always use protection when having sex.
- Sexual assault (or rape) is when someone forces or pressures you to have sex or touches you in a sexually inappropriate way when you do not want to be touched.
- Most sexual assaults occur with **someone we know** rather than with a stranger. You may feel embarrassed or ashamed,

but rape is **never** your fault. Seek medical treatment immediately and inform the police or a rape counsellor.

- You have the right to say **NO** to any unwanted sexual advance or behaviour that makes you uncomfortable, no matter what. Be direct and assertive, clear and firm.

10.13 General Precautions

- Purchase comprehensive travel and medical insurance for the duration of your stay in Canada (see Section 6.3).
- Keep your passport and other documents in a safe place, ideally somewhere at home.
- **Never** give or loan money to anyone who approaches you on the street. People will take advantage of your trust.
- When you buy something, ask for a receipt. If you pay by credit or bank card, make sure that your card is returned to you promptly. Never give out your credit card information unless you are ready to buy something.
- Do not share your credit or bank card PIN numbers with others.
- Do not carry large amounts of money and avoid showing off cash in public.

11. Important Contacts in Canada

The Embassy and Consulates are your representatives abroad. They can assist you with a variety of issues, including: lost or stolen passports, serious injury or illness, or incarceration or arrest.

OTTAWA

Embassy of Mexico en Canada

45 O'CONNOR, SUITE 1000

Ottawa, ON K1P 1A4

Tel: (613) 233 8988

Fax: (613) 235 9123

Website: www.embamexcan.com

TORONTO

Mexican Consulate General

Commerce Court West

199 Bay St., Suite 4440

Toronto, ON M5L 1E9

Tel: (416) 368-2875, 368-1847 and 368-8141
Fax: (416) 368-8342 and 368-9384
www.consulmex.com

VANCOUVER

Mexican Consulate General

710-1177 West Hastings Street

Vancouver, BC V6E 2K3

Tel: (604) 684-3547, 684-1859 and 683-0674

Fax: (604) 684-2485

www.consulmexvan.com

MONTREAL

Mexican Consulate General

2055 rue Peel, bureau 1000

Montreal, QC H3A 1V4

Tel: (514) 288-2502, 288-2707 and 288-4916

Fax: (514) 288-8287

www.consulmex.qc.ca

12. Returning to Canada

If you enjoyed your time in Canada and would like to return again, there are many opportunities to do so. In fact, why not join the more than 35 million people who visit Canada each year! Canada welcomes these visitors as tourists, students or temporary workers.

This section provides information on your options as a visitor, as well as permanent migration to Canada.

12.1 Visiting Canada as a Tourist

Mexican passport holders, with no criminal record, are permitted to stay in Canada for up to six months on vacation. For more information on traveling to and tourism within Canada, see Section 4.

To visit Canada as a tourist:

- You must have a valid passport.
- You may not be permitted to enter Canada if you have a criminal conviction, including a conviction for driving while impaired.
- You must respect Canadian laws while in Canada.

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- Non-Mexican passport holders may need a Temporary Resident Visa (TRV).
 - Remember that Canada does not pay for hospital or medical services for visitors: make sure you have travel and health insurance to pay your medical costs before you leave for Canada.

More information

- www.cic.gc.ca
- www.canada.travel

12.2 Postgraduate Study in Canada

Having already experienced the quality education available in Canada, you may decide to return for further postgraduate study. Postgraduate study in Canada offers:

- quality programs at world class universities
- degrees that are recognized around the world
- eligibility for the post-graduation work program (see Section 12.5 below), which is designed to provide graduating students with Canadian work experience in their field of study.

- **Degrees**

There are a wide variety of postgraduate programs available at more than 90 universities across Canada. Postgraduate degrees available in Canada include graduate diplomas, masters and doctoral degrees.

- **Masters degrees** are usually two years full-time, although some MBA programs are shorter (e.g. 15 months). Masters degrees may be offered as course-based degrees or research-based, which includes a thesis or dissertation.
- **Doctoral degrees** involve the completion and successful defense of a thesis that makes a substantial contribution to the advancement of knowledge in the student's chosen field of study. Doctoral degrees are usually completed within three years (maximum of six years) and include a 2-3 year full-time residency requirement.

Costs

Postgraduate programs in Canada offer excellent value for money and tuition fees are generally lower than most other international destinations, including the United States and the United Kingdom (see table below). Furthermore, the annual cost of living in Canada is the second-lowest in the top five English speaking study destinations worldwide: United Kingdom (US\$ 11,152), Australia (US\$ 9,519), United States (US\$ 8,989), Canada (US\$ 8,925) and New Zealand (US\$ 8,686).**

** *Comparative Costs of Higher Education for International Students 2004*. Media Briefing. IDP Education Australia, September 2004.

DESTINATION	TOTAL TUITION FEES IN U.S. DOLLARS (median annual fees X median length of course)		
	Master of Business Administration	Master of Engineering	Master of Information Technology
AUSTRALIA	\$19,346	\$25,794	\$25,106
CANADA	\$19,821	\$19,086	\$14,138
NEW ZEALAND	\$20,126	\$14,222	\$26,940
UNITED KINGDOM	\$31,718	\$20,167	\$19,984
UNITED STATES (public)	\$44,019	\$41,780	\$18,588

Financial Assistance and Scholarships

The majority of Canadian universities offer some form of financial assistance for international students studying at the graduate level. These awards may be in the form of:

- teaching/ department assistantships
- research funds
- university graduate scholarships
- external scholarships
- bursaries.

The value of these awards varies significantly and may differ by department as well as institution. For more information contact the institution you plan to attend. International students may also be eligible for Canadian government financial assistance or external scholarships. Here are some specific examples:

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- **Sauvé Scholars Program:** A unique, non-award, 8 month leadership program based at McGill University in Montréal. The program provides access to all McGill courses, weekly seminars by leaders in politics, journalism, the arts, etc., as well as group excursions and a stipend of C\$30,000. Applicants must be under 30, have demonstrated leadership potential and hold an undergraduate degree (in any discipline). www.sauvescholars.org
 - **Trudeau Foundation Doctoral Scholarships:** A highly competitive program offering doctoral scholarships for studies in social sciences and humanities, including a limited number available to foreign students. Candidates must be nominated by their university and in their first or second year of doctoral studies. www.trudeaufoundation.ca
 - **Ontario Graduate Scholarship Program:** Ontario Government reserves 60 of its Ontario Graduate Scholarships (OGS) for international students with high academic standing. <http://osap.gov.on.ca>
 - **ScholarshipCanada.com Entrance Awards Directory:** A listing of scholarships, bursaries and awards for students (not specifically for international students). www.scholarshipcanada.com or www.schoolfinder.com

More information

- www.canada.org.mx (Study in Canada)
- www.aucc.ca

12.3 Short Courses

Short courses are an excellent way to improve on a personal and professional level. Furthermore, you do not need a study permit to undertake a short course that is less than six months in duration, making short courses an ideal compliment to your tourist travel or Working Holiday Program.

There are numerous short courses available through more than 200 community colleges, technical institutes and language schools all over Canada. For example, as a bilingual nation, Canada offers excellent opportunities to learn French and English in an immersion atmosphere.

There are outstanding programs across the country for all skill levels, from beginners to advanced. As well as French and English language instruction, many programs include cultural activities and homestay with a francophone and Anglophone families, offering a true immersion experience.

Remember that if you want to enroll in a course that is longer than six months in duration, then you will need to apply for a study permit, see Section 4.

More information

- Association of Canadian Community Colleges: www.accc.ca
- National Association of Career Colleges: www.nacc.ca
- Canadian Language Council: www.c-l-c.ca
- Canadian Association of Private Language Schools: www.capls.com

12.4 Work Permit

Every year, over 90,000 foreign workers enter Canada to work temporarily to help Canadian employers address skill shortages. Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) and Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) ensure that these workers will support economic growth in Canada and create more opportunities for all Canadian job seekers. In almost all cases, **you must have a valid work permit** to work in Canada. These steps must be followed before you apply for a work permit:

- An employer must first offer you a job.
- HRSDC must normally provide a labour market opinion or "confirmation" of your job offer (some exceptions apply).
- After HRSDC confirms that a foreign national may fill the job, you apply to CIC for your work permit.

In special circumstances, you may be able to work in Canada without a work permit (e.g. foreign government representatives, military personnel, on-campus employment, news reporters, judges, clergy, etc.). For a full list of jobs exempt from work permits, visit the CIC website.

You should note that you cannot apply to immigrate to Canada with a work permit.

More information: www.cic.gc.ca

12.5 Post-Graduation Work Program

The post-graduation work program is designed to provide graduating students with Canadian work experience in their field of study for up to two years after their graduation. The work permit cannot be valid longer than the length of time the student studied. For example, students graduating from a four-year degree program might be eligible for a one-year work permit or, if they meet the criteria, a two-year work permit. Students graduating from an eight-month certificate program would only be eligible for a work permit of eight months. To be eligible for the program:

- You must have graduated from a Canadian public postsecondary institution (some private institutions also qualify).
- You must have studied full-time for at least eight months preceding the completion of your program of study.
- You must apply for a work permit within 90 days of receiving written confirmation from your institution indicating that you have met the requirements of completing your academic program (e.g. transcript, official letter from the institution, etc.).
- You must have a valid study permit when you apply for the work permit.
- You should have a job offer from an employer for a job that is related to your field of studies.
- For a two-year work permit, you must also have studied for at least two years in Canada and have graduated from an institution located outside of Montréal, Toronto or Vancouver.

You are not eligible for a post-graduation work permit if any of the following are true:

- You have previously been issued a post-graduation work permit following any other program of study.
- You have graduated from a distance learning program whether it is a degree, diploma or a certificate.
- You hold a scholarship funded by the Government of Canada.

More information: www.cic.gc.ca

12.6 Migration to Canada

Every year, Canada welcomes thousands of new residents. Coming to Canada as an immigrant is an exciting opportunity, but also a great

challenge. If you are interested in immigrating to Canada, you have a number of options when applying for permanent residence status. Here are some examples:

- **Skilled Workers Class Immigration:** Canada values the skills and experiences that foreign professionals and workers bring with them. Check the website to see if your skills and experience qualify you to come to Canada as a skilled worker.
- **Business Class Immigration:** Canada has a strong economic culture. If you have experience running or investing in businesses, you may qualify to come to Canada as a business immigrant.
- **Provincial Nomination:** Most Canadian provinces have programs that encourage immigrants to settle in those provinces and benefit their economies.
- **Family Class Immigration:** Family class immigration reunites families in Canadian homes.

More information: www.cic.gc.ca

13. Pre-Departure Checklist

- Apply to study in Canada (through your home university's Study Abroad office for exchange programs or check the Canadian university/college's admissions webpage to apply for admission to a full academic program).
- Accept your offer for study in Canada.
- Apply for a passport, or check that your current passport will be valid for at least six months beyond your return date.
- Apply for immigration documents, if required (see [Section 3](#)).
- Book airline tickets (see [Section 4.1](#)).
- Buy travel and health insurance (see [Section 6.3](#)).
- Arrange accommodation in Canada (see [Section 7.5](#)).
- Arrange transportation to/from airport at home and in Canada.
- Buy local currency - consider buying traveler's cheques for large denominations, as well as carrying a smaller amount of cash (see [Section 5](#)).
- Check baggage and customs limitations.
- Clear all paperwork with your home university (exchange students only).

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- Get your documents in order, including making photocopies to store in your baggage and keep at home (see also [Section 4](#)):
 - passport
 - airline tickets
 - travel insurance certificate
 - Letter of Acceptance for your Canadian institution
 - key addresses and phone numbers
 - a bank statement showing proof of funds
 - Letter of Introduction from Canadian immigration (if relevant)
 - prescriptions for any medication you are carrying
 - traveler's cheques (if using)
 - medical and immunization records (may be useful if you need medical care while abroad)
 - academic history and university transcripts (may be needed to obtain credit transfers, as evidence of prerequisites for exchange students, or to obtain work if relevant).
 - Find out about Canada and the town or city where you will be living and studying.
 - Contact your Canadian institution with any questions you may have.

14. Map of Canada



15. Disclaimer

The Canadian Education Center advises you that this guide is meant to serve as a general reference tool only. The Center accepts no responsibility or liability stemming from the use of the information contained within.

www.studyinCanada.ca/mexico