



Important: This document is for reference purposes only.

A 2026 Census questionnaire must be completed in English or in French, online or on paper.

2026 Census

2A Questions and reasons why the questions are asked

www.census.gc.ca

Introduction

Statistics Canada has produced multiple formats of the questions that appear on the printed version of the 2026 Census questionnaire. This is not an official 2026 Census questionnaire, but it contains the same content. Page numbers of the questions found in this document will not match those appearing on the official questionnaire.

This document is for reference purposes only. You may use it to familiarize yourself with the content of the 2026 Census questionnaire; however, your answers to the questions must be submitted to Statistics Canada either online at www.census.gc.ca using the secure access code that was provided in the letter you received in the mail, or by completing and returning a paper questionnaire by mail. If using the paper questionnaire option, please print using capital letters.

This document includes the following two parts:

Part 1

The first part contains the questions asked on the printed version of the short-form 2026 Census questionnaire. All information is collected under the authority of the *Statistics Act*, R.S.C. 1985, c. S-19.

Part 2

The second part contains the reasons why Statistics Canada asks the questions and provides the important data requirements met by the questions.

Message from the Chief Statistician of Canada

Thank you for participating in the 2026 Census. The information you provide is used to produce statistics that communities, businesses, and governments rely on to plan services, develop programs, and make informed decisions about employment, schools, public transportation, hospitals and more.

Your answers are collected under the authority of the *Statistics Act* and kept strictly confidential.

By law, your household must complete a 2026 Census of Population questionnaire. Statistics Canada makes use of existing sources of information, such as immigration, income tax and benefits data, to reduce the response burden placed on households.

The information you provide may be used by Statistics Canada for other statistical and research purposes or may be combined with other survey or administrative data sources.

Count yourself into Canada's statistical portrait—complete your census questionnaire today.

Thank you,

André Loranger
Chief Statistician of Canada

Part 1

2A 2026 Census questions

Step A

1. What is your telephone number?

Write-in field: Telephone number

2. What is the address of this dwelling?

Write-in field: Number (and suffix, if applicable)

For example, 302, 151 B, 16 1/2

Write- in field: Street name, street type, direction

For example, DR = "Drive" or N = "North"

Write-in field: Apartment or unit

Write-in field: City, municipality, town, village or First Nations reserve

Write-in field: Province or territory

Write-in field: Postal code

3. What is the mailing address of this dwelling, if different from above?

Write-in field: Mailing address

For example, Rural Route, P.O. Box, General Delivery

Step B

Whom to include in Step B

- All persons who have their main residence at this address on May 12, 2026, including newborn babies, roommates and persons who are temporarily away
- Canadian citizens, landed immigrants (permanent residents), persons who have claimed refugee status (asylum seekers), persons from another country with a work or study permit and family members living here with them
- Persons staying at this address temporarily on May 12, 2026 who have no main residence elsewhere.

Where to include persons with more than one residence

- CHILDREN IN JOINT CUSTODY should be included in the home of the parent where they live most of the time. Children who spend equal time with each parent should be included in the home of the parent with whom they are staying on May 12, 2026.
- STUDENTS who return to live with their parents during the year should be included at their parents' address, even if they live elsewhere while attending school or working at a summer job.
- SPOUSES OR COMMON-LAW PARTNERS TEMPORARILY AWAY who stay elsewhere while working or studying should be listed at the main residence of their family, if they return periodically.
- PERSONS IN AN INSTITUTION for less than six months (for example, in a home for the aged, a hospital or a prison) should be listed at their usual residence.

1. Including yourself, how many persons usually live at this address on May 12, 2026?

Include all persons who have their main residence at this address, even if they are temporarily away.

Write-in field: Number of persons

2. Including yourself, list all persons who usually live here on May 12, 2026.

Important: Begin the list with an adult followed, if applicable, by that person's spouse or common-law partner and by their children. Continue with all other persons who usually live at this address.

Write-in field: Person 1: Family name(s), Given name(s)

Write-in field: Person 2: Family name(s), Given name(s)

Write-in field: Person 3: Family name(s), Given name(s)

Write-in field: Person 4: Family name(s), Given name(s)

Write-in field: Person 5: Family name(s), Given name(s)

Write-in field: Person 6: Family name(s), Given name(s)

Write-in field: Person 7: Family name(s), Given name(s)

Write-in field: Person 8: Family name(s), Given name(s)

Write-in field: Person 9: Family name(s), Given name(s)

Write-in field: Person 10: Family name(s), Given name(s)

Step C

Did you leave anyone out of Step B because you were not sure the person should be listed?

For example, a student, a child in joint custody, a person temporarily away, a person who lives here temporarily, a resident from another country with a work or study permit, a refugee claimant, etc.

Response option 1: No

Response option 2: Yes → Please refer to the instructions on page 3 to determine if this person should be listed. If they should be listed, please add them to step B.

Step D

Copy the names in Step B to question 1, at the top of page 4. (This reference applies only to the paper questionnaire)

Keep the same order.

If more than six persons live here, you will need an extra questionnaire; call 1-833-663-2026.

If this address is:

Response option 1: a SECONDARY RESIDENCE (for example, a cottage) for ALL PERSONS who stayed here on May 12, 2026 (all these persons have their main residence elsewhere in Canada), select this option. Print your name and your telephone number in the space provided. Do not answer other questions.

Response option 2: a DWELLING OCCUPIED ONLY BY RESIDENTS OF ANOTHER COUNTRY VISITING CANADA (for example, on vacation or on a business trip), select this option. Print your name and your telephone number in the space provided. Do not answer other questions.

Response option 3: the HOME OF A GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ANOTHER COUNTRY (for example, an embassy or a high commission) and family members, select this option. Print your name and your telephone number in the space provided. Do not answer other questions.

Write-in field: Name

Write-in field: Telephone number

Mail this questionnaire in the enclosed envelope today. If you have lost the return envelope, please mail the questionnaire to:

Statistics Canada

PO BOX 99994 STN FED-GOVT

Ottawa, K1A 9Z4

Demographic information

1. Name (applies to paper questionnaire only)

In the spaces provided, copy the names in the same order as in Step B. Then answer the following questions for each person.

Write-in field: Family name

Write-in field: Given name

The following questions refer to each person's situation on May 12, 2026, unless otherwise specified.

2. What are this person's date of birth and age?

If the exact date of birth is not known, enter the best estimate. For children less than 1 year old, enter 0 for age.

Write-in field: Day

Write-in field: Month

Write-in field: Year

Write in field: Age

3. What is this person's gender?

Gender refers to an individual's personal and social identity as a man (or a boy), a woman (or a girl), or a person who is not exclusively a man (or a boy) or a woman (or a girl), for example, non-binary, agender, gender fluid, queer or Two-Spirit.

Response option 1: Man (or boy)

Response option 2: Woman (or girl)

Write-in field: Or please specify this person's gender

4. What was this person's sex at birth?

Sex at birth refers to the sex recorded on a person's first birth certificate. It is typically observed based on a person's reproductive system and other physical characteristics.

Response option 1: Male

Response option 2: Female

5. What is the relationship of this person to Person 1?

Common-law refers to two people who live together as a couple and who are not married, regardless of the duration of the relationship.

Person 1

No answer required for Person 1

Person 2

Response option 1: Married spouse of Person 1

Response option 2: Common-law partner of Person 1

Response option 3: Child of Person 1 and another person living at this address

Response option 4: Child of Person 1 only (mark if no other legal parent of this person lives at this address)

Response option 5: Stepchild of Person 1

Response option 6: Parent of Person 1

Response option 7: Grandchild of Person 1

Response option 8: Spouse or partner of child of Person 1

Response option 9: Parent of spouse or partner of Person 1

Response option 10: Sibling of Person 1

Response option 11: Foster child of Person 1

Response option 12: Roommate, lodger or boarder of Person 1

Write-in field: Other relationship—specify

For example, ex-spouse or ex-partner

Persons 3-6

Response option 1: Married spouse of Person 1

Response option 2: Common-law partner of Person 1

Response option 3: Child of Person 1 and Person 2

Response option 4: Child of Person 1 and another person living at this address

Response option 5: Child of Person 1 only (mark if no other legal parent of this person lives at this address)

Response option 6: Stepchild of Person 1

Response option 7: Parent of Person 1

Response option 8: Grandchild of Person 1

Response option 9: Spouse or partner of child of Person 1

Response option 10: Parent of spouse or partner of Person 1

Response option 11: Sibling of Person 1

Response option 12: Foster child of Person 1

Response option 13: Roommate, lodger or boarder of Person 1

Write-in field: Other relationship—specify

For example, ex-spouse or ex-partner

Questions 6 and 7 are asked only for persons aged 15 years and older (born before May 12, 2011).

6. What is this person's marital status?

Specify one option only.

Response option 1: Never legally married

Response option 2: Legally married (and not separated)

Response option 3: Separated, but still legally married

Response option 4: Divorced

Response option 5: Widowed

7. Is this person living with a common-law partner?

Common-law refers to two people who live together as a couple but who are not married, regardless of the duration of the relationship.

Response option 1: Yes

Response option 2: No

8. Can this person speak English or French well enough to conduct a conversation?

Specify one option only.

Response option 1: English only

Response option 2: French only

Response option 3: Both English and French

Response option 4: Neither English nor French

9. a) What language(s) does this person speak on a regular basis at home?

Response option 1: English

Response option 2: French

Write-in field: Other language(s)—specify

If this person indicates only one language in question 9. a), go to question 10.

9. b) Of these languages, which one does this person speak most often at home?

Indicate more than one language only if they are spoken equally at home.

Response option 1: English

Response option 2: French

Write-in field: Other language—specify

10. What is the language that this person first learned at home in childhood and still understands?

If the person no longer understands the first language learned, indicate the second language learned.

Response option 1: English

Response option 2: French

Write-in field: Other language—specify

The following questions collect information in accordance with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms to support education programs in English and French in Canada.

11. Is this dwelling located in Quebec?

Response option 1: No → Continue with question 12

Response option 2: Yes → Go to question 15

12. Did this person do any of their primary or secondary schooling in French in Canada (including immersion)?

Specify one option only.

Response option 1: Yes (previously or currently attending)

Response option 2: No → Go to Step E

13. In which type of program was this schooling in French done?

Response option 1: A regular French program in a French-language school

Response option 2: A French immersion program in an English-language school → Go to Step E

Response option 3: Both types of programs

Write-in field: Other program—specify

14. For how many years did this person attend a regular French program in a French-language school in Canada?

Write-in field: Number of years in primary schooling (including kindergarten and middle school) → Go to Step E

Write-in field: Number of years in secondary schooling → Go to Step E

15. Did this person do any of their primary or secondary schooling in an English-language school in Canada (including immersion)?

Specify one option only.

Response option 1: Yes (previously or currently attending)

Response option 2: No → Go to Step E

16. For how many years did this person do their schooling in an English-language school in Canada (including immersion)?

Write-in field: Number of years in primary schooling (including kindergarten)

Write-in field: Number of years in secondary schooling

Step E

Comments

Please use the space provided below if you have concerns, suggestions or comments to make about:

- the steps to follow or the content of this questionnaire (for example, a question that was difficult to understand or to answer)
- the characteristics of the questionnaire (for example, the design, the format, the size of the text).

Step F

If more than six persons live here, you will need an extra questionnaire; call 1-833-663-2026.

You have now completed your questionnaire. Please mail it today. If you have lost the return envelope, please mail the questionnaire to:

Statistics Canada

PO BOX 99994 STN FED-GOVT

Ottawa, K1A 9Z4

Thank you for your cooperation.

Part 2

Why we ask the questions

Steps A to C and question 1 are used to collect contact information and determine who should be included on the questionnaire. They help us ensure that we have counted everyone we need to count and that no one is counted twice.

Questions 2 to 7 provide information about the demographic characteristics of people in Canada. This information is used by all levels of government to make important decisions, such as planning community services and social programs, including Old Age Security and the Canada Child Benefit. It is also used by municipalities to plan a variety of services, such as child care, schools, hospitals and emergency services.

Questions 8 to 10 are used to provide a profile of the linguistic diversity of Canada's population. This information is used to estimate the need for services in English and French, and to better understand the current state and the evolution of Canada's various language groups, including official languages, Indigenous languages and other non-official languages.

Questions 11 to 16 collect information in accordance with the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* to support education programs in English and French in Canada.

The law protects what you tell us

The confidentiality of your responses is protected by law. All Statistics Canada employees have taken an oath of secrecy. Your personal information cannot be given to anyone outside Statistics Canada without your consent. This is your right.