

Process for Becoming a Citizen [L] (USCIS)



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[Should I Consider U.S. Citizenship?](#)[Naturalization Eligibility Tool](#)[Citizenship and Naturalization](#)

10 Steps to Naturalization

[The Naturalization Interview and Test](#)[Naturalization Ceremonies](#)[Commonly Asked Questions](#)

Apply for Citizenship

[Find Study Materials and Resources](#) [Resources for Educational Programs](#) [Civic Integration](#) [Outreach Tools](#) [Naturalization Statistics](#)

Home > Citizenship Resource Center > Learn About Citizenship > 10 Steps to Naturalization

10 Steps to Naturalization

Understanding the Process of Becoming a U.S. Citizen

In this section, you will find a general description of the naturalization application process. Before you apply, be sure that you meet all [eligibility requirements](#) and check if you qualify for any [exceptions and accommodations](#). USCIS has also developed responses to [commonly asked questions](#) about citizenship and the naturalization process.

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Step 1. Determine if you are already a U.S. citizen

What to do: If you are not a U.S. citizen by birth, or you did not acquire or derive U.S. citizenship from your parent(s) automatically after birth, go to the next step.

Step 2. Determine if you are eligible to become a U.S. citizen

What to do: Review the [naturalization eligibility worksheet \(PDF, 300.55 KB\)](#) to help you decide if you are eligible to apply for naturalization.

Step 3. Prepare your Form N-400, Application for Naturalization

This form is available to file online. Start by [creating your free online account](#).

What to do: Read the instructions to complete [Form N-400](#). Collect the necessary documents to demonstrate your eligibility for naturalization. If you reside outside the United States, get 2 passport-style photos taken. Use the [document checklist \(PDF, 178.19 KB\)](#) to make sure you collect all the required documents.

Step 4. Submit your Form N-400 and pay your fees

This form is available to file online. You may also pay your fees online.

Once you submit Form N-400, USCIS will send you a receipt notice. You can [check case processing times](#) and your [case status online](#).

Step 5. Go to your biometrics appointment, if applicable

What to do: If you need to take biometrics, USCIS will send you an appointment notice that includes your biometrics appointment date, time, and location. Arrive at the designated location at the scheduled time. Have your biometrics taken.

Step 6. Complete the interview

Once all the preliminary processes on your case are complete, USCIS will schedule an interview with you to complete the naturalization process. You must report to the USCIS office at the date and time on your appointment notice. Please bring the appointment notice with you.

Step 7. Receive a decision from USCIS on your Form N-400

USCIS will mail a notice of decision to you. If you filed your N-400 online, you can also access the electronic notice in your account.

- **Granted** - USCIS may approve your Form N-400 if the evidence in your record establishes that you are eligible for naturalization.
- **Continued** - USCIS may continue your application if you need to provide additional evidence/documentation, fail to provide USCIS the correct documents, or fail the English and/or civics test the first time.
- **Denied** - USCIS will deny your Form N-400 if the evidence in your record establishes you are not eligible for naturalization.

Step 8. Receive a notice to take the Oath of Allegiance

What to expect: If USCIS approved your Form N-400 in step 7, you may be able to participate in a [naturalization ceremony](#) on the same day as your interview. If a same day naturalization ceremony is unavailable, USCIS will mail you a notification with the date, time, and location of your scheduled ceremony. If you filed your N-400 online, you can also access the electronic notice in your application.

Step 9. Take the Oath of Allegiance to the United States

You are not a U.S. citizen until you take the [Oath of Allegiance](#) at a naturalization ceremony.

What to do:

- Complete the questionnaire on Form N-445, Notice of Naturalization Oath Ceremony.
- Report for your naturalization ceremony and check in with USCIS. A USCIS officer will review your responses to Form N-445.
- Turn in your Permanent Resident Card (Green Card).
- Take the Oath of Allegiance to become a U.S. citizen.
- Receive your Certificate of Naturalization, review it, and notify USCIS of any errors you see on your certificate before leaving the ceremony site.

Step 10. Understanding U.S. citizenship

Citizenship is the common thread that connects all Americans. Check out this list of some of the most important [rights and responsibilities](#) that all citizens—both Americans by birth and by choice—should exercise, honor, and respect.

Additional Resources

- [USCIS Policy Manual: Citizenship and Naturalization](#)
- [10 Steps to Naturalization brochure \(PDF, 790.4 KB\)](#)
- [2008 Civics Test and English Test Study Materials](#)
- [2020 Civics Test and English Test Study Materials](#)
- [Find Help in Your Community](#)
- [Free Naturalization Information Sessions](#)

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