



# FLYING TO CANADA:

## What you need to know

Canada's scenery and wide-open spaces offer recreational pilots the ideal backdrop for adventure. To ensure your experience is pleasant and memorable, review this summary of what to consider before you fly.

The following information is provided as a guide only. This is not a legal document and does not cover all Canadian and U.S. regulations.





## What you need to know before you fly

The *Canadian Aviation Regulations* (CARs) require the pilot-in-command of an aircraft to be familiar with available information appropriate to the intended flight.

This includes:

- charts, weather and Notices to Airmen (NOTAMs)
- class of airspace
- pilot and aircraft documentation
- aircraft equipment
- aerodrome information
- general differences between the CARs and the U.S. *Federal Aviation Regulations* (FARs)

## Pilot documentation

You will need:

- pilot licence
- valid medical certificate
- proof of citizenship (passport, birth certificate and photo ID)

For more information, refer to the Canada Border Services Agency web site: <https://cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/menu-eng.html>

**U.S. recreational pilot certificates and sport pilot certificates are not recognized in Canada.**

If your licence or certificate meets the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) standards, it is valid for operating aircraft between the U.S. and Canada.

## Aircraft documentation

You must be able to show:

- certificate of registration
- certificate of airworthiness or flight authority
- weight and balance information
- proof of liability insurance
- operating handbook or flight manual

The CARs require pilots to carry proof of liability insurance on board your aircraft when operating in Canadian airspace. This applies to all aircraft, including private, amateur-built and ultralight. The type of coverage is based on the aircraft's gross take-off weight (CARs 606.02).

## Weather, Notices to Airmen (NOTAMs) and flight planning

The FARs (Federal Aviation Regulations) require pilots to file and activate a flight plan for all flights crossing the U.S.–Canada border, including flights “with no landing” (FAR 91.707).

Pilots must:

- communicate with air traffic services at the time of the border crossing
- squawk an assigned discrete transponder code

NAV CANADA operates 7 flight information centres (FICs) across Canada. Contact your closest FIC for weather briefings, NOTAMs and help filing a flight plan.

Call toll-free within Canada and the U.S.:

- **Kamloops, British Columbia:** 1-866-541-4101
- **Edmonton, Alberta:** 1-866-541-4102
- **Winnipeg, Manitoba:** 1-866-541-4103
- **London, Ontario:** 1-866-541-4104
  - Note: VFR pilots in the Toronto area should call the London FIC
- **Québec, Quebec:** 1-866-541-4105
- **Halifax, Nova Scotia:** 1-866-541-4106
  - Halifax offers these services en route only
  - Note: phone briefings for the Moncton area are provided by the London FIC
- **Whitehorse, Yukon:** 1-866-541-4107
  - Services from the Whitehorse FIC provided en route only
  - Note: phone briefings for the Whitehorse area are provided by the Kamloops FIC
- **General:** 1-866-WXBRIEF (Canada only)

NAV CANADA is a private, not-for-profit corporation responsible for civil air navigation services in Canada. Through its coast-to-coast operations, it provides:

- air traffic control
- flight information
- weather briefings
- aeronautical information
- airport advisory services
- electronic navigation aids

## Visual flight rules (VFR) navigation

### VFR terminal area charts (VTA):

- scale: 1:250 000 (3.5 NM/in.)
- major Canadian airports

### VFR navigation charts (VNC):

- scale: 1:500 000 (7 NM/in.)
- similar to U.S. sectional aeronautical charts

**Canada Flight Supplement (CFS):** civil/military publication on Canadian and North Atlantic aerodromes.

**Canada Water Aerodrome Supplement (CWAS):** civil/military publication on water aerodromes shown on Canadian VFR charts.

## Instrument flight rules (IFR) navigation

**En route low (LO) and high (HI) altitude charts** provide IFR navigation and aeronautical information in:

- low and high airway structure of Canadian domestic airspace
- airspace over foreign territory and international waters for which Canada accepts responsibility for providing air traffic services
- other areas required for military use

**Terminal area charts** provide aeronautical radio navigation information for congested terminal areas.

### Canada air pilot (CAP) (IFR approach plates):

- contain aeronautical information related to IFR approach, arrival, departure and noise abatement procedures at Canadian airports
- have 7 volumes that provide coverage across Canada

**CAP general pages (CAP GEN):** explains the terminology, definitions and special procedures depicted on instrument approach procedure charts.

You can buy individual aeronautical charts and publications from NAV CANADA.

**Contact NAV CANADA:** 1-866-731-7827

## Canadian airspace

Canadian domestic airspace is divided into 7 classes.

Two-way radio communication is required:

- when operating in Class A, B, C or D airspace
- for Class E airspace during IFR flight

TYPE OF CLASS	DESCRIPTION
<b>Class A</b>	Controlled high-level airspace. IFR only.
<b>Class B</b>	Controlled low-level airspace (above 12,500 feet ASL, up to 18,000 feet ASL). IFR and CVFR only.
<b>Class C</b>	Controlled airspace. IFR and VFR permitted. ATC provides separation for IFR and VFR flights, when necessary.
<b>Class D</b>	Controlled airspace. IFR and VFR permitted. ATC provides separation for IFR aircraft only.
<b>Class E</b>	Controlled airspace. IFR and VFR permitted. ATC provides separation for IFR aircraft only.
<b>Class F</b>	Special-use airspace. May be controlled or uncontrolled. May be a restricted or advisory area.
<b>Class G</b>	Uncontrolled airspace.

For detailed information on terminal control areas (TCAs), control zones (CZ) and transition areas, refer to the:

- NAV CANADA *Designated Airspace Handbook*
- *Transport Canada Aeronautical Information Manual*

## Customs and the Canada Border Services Agency

If you are coming to Canada on a private or company-owned aircraft carrying up to 15 people, you have the option of reporting to the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) in 2 ways:

- by telephone through the Telephone Reporting Centre, or
- in person at staffed Airports of Entry

Find all Airports of Entry (list and map):  
[www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/do-rb/services/aoe-eng.html](http://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/do-rb/services/aoe-eng.html)

**Contact CBSA:** 1-888-226-7277





## Telephone reporting

If you choose to report to the CBSA by telephone, you must:

- provide advance notice of your arrival
- inform CBSA of your passengers and goods

**Telephone Reporting Centre:** 1-888-226-7277

Call a minimum of 2 hours but not more than 48 hours before you arrive. You must then land your aircraft at your reported AOE during regular CBSA office hours.

Upon arrival, call 1-888-226-7277 again. You will get further instructions at that time.

More information on telephone reporting: [www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/publications/dm-md/d2/d2-5-12-eng.html](http://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/publications/dm-md/d2/d2-5-12-eng.html)

## Airports of Entry

If you intend to report directly at an Airport of Entry, you must be aware of the policy for requesting access to airports.

Read the policy: [www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/publications/dm-md/d2/d2-5-1-eng.html](http://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/publications/dm-md/d2/d2-5-1-eng.html).

## Transponder requirements

The U.S. Government requires aircraft to be equipped with a Mode A and Mode C transponder to cross the U.S. border in either direction (inbound or outbound).

**If you do not have a transponder, you must contact the U.S. Transportation Security Agency (TSA) for a waiver.**

When operating in Canadian Class A, B, C, D and E airspace (CARs 601.03), you must equip your aircraft with a Mode C transponder (CARs 605.35).

For more information, see NAV CANADA's *Designated Airspace Handbook*: [www.navcanada.ca/en/products-and-services/pages/aeronautical-information-products-designated-airspace-handbook.aspx](http://www.navcanada.ca/en/products-and-services/pages/aeronautical-information-products-designated-airspace-handbook.aspx).

## Emergency locator transmitters (ELTs)

Canada has vast regions that are very sparsely populated.

ELTs are required for most general aviation aircraft (CARs 605.38) and satellites only monitor emergency beacons that operate on 406 MHz.

It is strongly recommended that visiting aircraft that do not have a 406 ELT should carry a 406 capable PLB (Personal Locator Beacon).



## Transport Canada contacts

**British Columbia:** 1-604-666-3518

**Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut:** 1-888-463-0521

**Ontario:** 1-888-231-2330 or 1-416-952-0230

**Quebec:** 1-514-633-3030

**Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island:** 1-800-387-4999 or 1-506-851-7131

When you call from within a certain province, dial the first number (toll-free). If you're calling from outside the province, dial the second number.

For general information, contact the Civil Aviation Communications Centre:

**Telephone (toll free):** 1-800-305-2059

**Telephone (local):** 613-993-7284

**Email:** [services@tc.gc.ca](mailto:services@tc.gc.ca)