

How to Become a U.S. Citizen

Becoming a U.S. citizen is a big deal! It means you have the same rights and freedoms as everyone else who was born in the United States. There are a few ways to become a U.S. citizen.

The most common way is to be born in the United States. This is called citizenship by birth. If you were born in the United States, you are automatically a U.S. citizen. This is true even if you were born in a U.S. territory like Puerto Rico or Guam.

Another way to become a U.S. citizen is through acquisition. This means you were born outside of the United States, but one or both of your parents were U.S. citizens. There are some rules about when this can happen. For example, if both of your parents were U.S. citizens when you were born, you can become a U.S. citizen.

You can also become a U.S. citizen through naturalization. This is when you are not born in the United States, but you move here and become a citizen. To become a U.S. citizen through naturalization, you have to be a lawful permanent resident for at least five years. This means you have a green card. You also have to be able to read, write, and speak basic English. You also have to know about U.S. history and government -and take a test to prove it!

Becoming a U.S. citizen is a long process. It can take over a year. You have to fill out a lot of paperwork and go through an interview. You also have to take a test about U.S. history and government. But it's worth it! Being a U.S. citizen means you have a lot of rights and freedoms. You can vote, travel freely, and bring your family to the United States.

Here are the steps to becoming a naturalized citizen. First, you fill out forms and give them to the government. You must pay a fee (money) to apply. Then, you must go to a biometrics interview. In the interview, they will measure your eyes and nose and copy your fingerprints so they can identify you. Next, you go to an interview. You tell the government why you want to be a citizen. You will also take an easy English test and social studies test. After that, you wait! The government will tell you if you can be a citizen or not. If they say yes, you finally take an oath (promise) to defend the United States. You are a citizen!

There are 2 other ways to become a naturalized citizen. One way is to marry a U.S. citizen. The other way is to serve in the U.S. military (army, navy, marines, air force, or Coast Guard.)

THINK!

Paragraph 1 tells you _____. Paragraph 2 tells you _____. Paragraph 3 tells you _____.
Paragraph 4 tells you _____. Paragraph 5 tells you _____.
Paragraph 6 tells you _____. Paragraph 7 tells you _____.

Now complete the graphic organizer on the next page.



2 Ways of Becoming a U.S. Citizen

Natural Born

Law of Soil

Law of Blood

Naturalized

Qualifications

Steps in Process

Other Ways

marry a U.S. citizen have good character live in the U.S. 5 years born in the U.S. serve in the military child of U.S. citizens
have a green card pass English test file the forms/papers know some English pay a fee biometrics measured
take the oath/promise go to an interview