

Pathway to U.S. Citizenship

For an adult immigrant to become a U.S. citizen, he or she must go through the process of naturalization. GENERAL requirements for naturalization call for the immigrant to:

Demonstrate a basic knowledge of U.S. history, government, and civic principles



Demonstrate an ability to read, write, speak, and understand basic English



Demonstrate an attachment to the principles and ideals of the U.S. Constitution



Have demonstrated good moral character



Swear an oath of allegiance to the United States



Be at least 18 years old at the time of filing the Application for Naturalization (Form N-400)



Be a lawfully admitted permanent resident of the United States

At the time of filing the application, have been a permanent resident in the United States for at least 5 years (or for at least 3 years if you meet all eligibility requirements to file as a spouse of a United States citizen)★

Receive a Certificate of Naturalization



Have demonstrated continuous permanent residence



Have demonstrated physical presence



Have demonstrated physical presence

Have lived within the State or USCIS District for at least 3 months prior to filing

Implementation Timeline

Which version of the test to take?

USCIS began administering a redesigned (new) naturalization test on October 1, 2008. The following guidelines will determine whether naturalization applicants will take the old test or the redesigned (new) test.

An applicant who:

- Files* the Application for Naturalization, Form N-400, **BEFORE** October 1, 2008, and is scheduled for his or her naturalization interview **ON or AFTER** October 1, 2008 up until October 1, 2009, can choose to take the old test or the redesigned (new) test.
- Files* the Application for Naturalization, Form N-400, **ON or AFTER** October 1, 2008, will take the redesigned (new) test.
- Is scheduled for his or her naturalization interview **ON or AFTER** October 1, 2009, regardless of when he or she filed* the Application for Naturalization, Form N-400, will take the redesigned (new) test.

NOTE: If an applicant fails the English and/or civics test during the first examination, the applicant will be required to take the same version of the test, old or redesigned (new), when the applicant is retested, even if the retest is scheduled on or after October 1, 2009.

For additional information about the old and redesigned (new) test, please visit <http://www.uscis.gov/citizenshiptest>.

*The Application for Naturalization, Form N-400, is properly filed with USCIS on the date it is received by the appropriate USCIS location with signature, correct fee, and the form is completed according to instructions.

Preparing for the Test

What study materials are available and how can I find English language, civics, and/or citizenship classes?

The USCIS Office of Citizenship has developed a variety of study materials for the redesigned (new) naturalization test. These materials include Civics Flash Cards, Vocabulary Flash Cards, Learn About the United States: Quick Civics Lessons, and translated versions of the civics questions available at <http://www.uscis.gov/newtest>.

For many applicants, adult education classes are an excellent place to learn English and prepare for the naturalization test. Many local school districts, community colleges, libraries, and other community-based organizations offer English language and civics classes. These opportunities, however, are not centralized in one place. To find an appropriate class, try these options:

- Visit <http://www.welcometousa.gov>.
- Look in the yellow pages of your telephone book under the heading "Language Schools."
- Contact your local public library and ask if they offer English language or citizenship classes.
- Call your local community college or school district and ask about adult education opportunities.
- Call or visit a local community-based organization or place of worship and ask if they offer English language or citizenship classes.

About the Redesigned (New) Test

Background

In the interest of creating a more standardized, fair, and meaningful naturalization process, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) redesigned the naturalization test. The redesigned test, with an emphasis on the fundamental concepts of American democracy and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, will help encourage citizenship applicants to learn and identify with the basic values we all share as Americans.

The major aim of the redesign process was to ensure that naturalization applicants have uniform, consistent testing experiences nationwide, and that the civics test can effectively assess whether applicants have a meaningful understanding of U.S. government and history. Following a basic U.S. history and civics curriculum, the redesigned test will serve as an important instrument to encourage civic learning and patriotism among prospective citizens.

To accomplish these goals, USCIS initially piloted a new test—with an overhauled English reading and writing section, as well as new history and government questions—in ten sites across the country. The feedback from this pilot was then used to finalize testing procedures, English reading and writing prompts, and a list of 100 new history and government questions. To ensure the pilot accounted for a representative sample of candidates with a variety of education levels, the test was also piloted at adult education sites nationwide.

For more information on the redesigned (new) naturalization test, please visit <http://www.uscis.gov/newtest>.

★ For Form N-400 and to learn more about specific eligibility requirements for naturalization, visit www.uscis.gov or call 1 800 375 5283



The Redesigned (New) Naturalization Test

Office of Citizenship



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

Components of the Redesigned (New) Naturalization Test

