

Election Day is **October 21**

# what to expect when you're ELECTING

Presented by **The Samara Centre for Democracy**

## 6 Getting to the Polls



Welcome to the sixth explainer in the What to Expect When You're Electing series! This week: **everything you need to know to vote on election day.**

For more explainers, go to [samaracanada.com/what-to-expect](http://samaracanada.com/what-to-expect)

### LEARN ABOUT:

- ✓ Registration and identification
- ✓ Accessibility services at polling stations
- ✓ Strategic voting

#### 1 When's the election again?

The federal election is next week on **October 21**. If you're a Canadian citizen who will be at least 18 years old on that day, you can vote. You will cast a ballot to choose the Member of Parliament (MP) for your local constituency. For more information about MPs and what they do, see our [first explainer](#).

#### 2 That's so soon! Don't I need to be registered? And where do I vote?

Most people are automatically registered when they file their taxes or access healthcare. If you are registered, you should have received a **Voter Information Card** in the mail from Elections Canada by now. It's a piece of paper that identifies your **polling station** (where you vote on election day) and when it is open. Your card *can* be used as a piece of ID (along with photo identification), but having it is *not* a requirement to vote.



If you didn't receive a Voter Information Card, then you might not be registered. But that's okay—you *can vote even if you're not registered in advance*. Find your constituency and polling station online at [elections.ca](http://elections.ca) and bring the right ID with you when you go to vote.

You can vote even if you're behind in your taxes!

#### 3 So what ID do I need to bring when I vote?

You have three options to prove your identity (who you are) and residence (where you live):

- Government photo ID with your current address
- Two pieces of ID or documentation (both with your name, and at least one with your address)



E-statements (printed or shown on your phone) also count!

→ Don't have ID? Declare your identity to an Elections Canada staff member at the polling station and have someone **vouch** (or swear) that the information is correct. (The person vouching for you must be able to prove their own identity using the other two methods and must also be assigned to your polling station. They can only vouch for one person.)

#### 4 It will be hard for me to get to the polls. How can I get help voting?

Election Canada partners with many organizations to make sure that everybody can vote, sometimes by setting up mobile polling stations. If you're in a hospital, prison, or long-term care facility, ask staff what the options are. You can [contact Elections Canada](#) ahead of time to ask about the **accessibility of your polling station** and to request additional services, like language interpretation. All polling stations have magnifiers, large-print and braille lists of candidates, and trained staff who can assist you in marking your ballot.

#### 5 I've heard some talk about strategic voting. What is that?

**Strategic voting** is voting for someone other than your preferred candidate to keep another candidate from winning. For example, if you prefer candidate A, but want to keep candidate B from winning, and believe that most people will vote for candidates B or C, you may think that voting for C is better than having B win. Just remember that national polls aren't good at predicting who will win in your constituency, so it's often difficult to predict who will win locally.

#### 6 I'm feeling nervous. How informed do I have to be to vote? Is it complicated?

If you're this far through the series, you're likely ready! But if you need a refresher on the voting system or where to look for trustworthy information, check out our previous explainers and our additional resources at [samaracanada.com/what-to-expect](http://samaracanada.com/what-to-expect).

Don't worry—voting is simple: you show your ID, your name gets crossed off the list, you receive a ballot, you go behind a voting screen for privacy, you make a mark beside a single candidate, and your ballot is inserted into the box. It's easy!

### Still have questions? Want to learn more?

Visit [samaracanada.com/what-to-expect](http://samaracanada.com/what-to-expect) or email [info@samaracanada.com](mailto:info@samaracanada.com)

**Coming up next:** Once the election is done, what's left to understand? Find out in our last explainer of the series!

The Samara Centre for Democracy is a non-partisan charity dedicated to strengthening Canada's democracy. To learn more, visit [samaracanada.com](http://samaracanada.com).

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