



Canada Homestay International

WELCOME TO CANADA!

We are very excited to meet you!

We want you to have a wonderful time with us, so we would like to help you prepare for some differences **in our homes** and **in our culture**. Here are a few things we thought you would like to know before arriving in Canada.

THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT OUR HOMES:

1. Our homes are different your homes in a lot of ways. For example, most Canadian bathrooms have a sink, toilet *and* a bathtub with a shower over the tub. Most family members will take just a shower in the morning. Some people prefer to bathe in the bathtub. We don't share bathwater and generally only bathe once a day. When you're using the shower, you will need to close a shower door or close a curtain inside the tub to keep the water from spraying over the bathroom floor.
2. Your family will appreciate it if you try to keep your bedroom clean and make your bed every day.
3. Heat, hot water and electricity are not unlimited, and a lot of families try to conserve energy as much as possible. Please turn down the heat in your room during the day, do not take long showers (more than 10 minutes) and turn off the lights when you're not using them.
4. It's ok to drink the water from the tap! Still, a lot of families prefer the taste of filtered or bottled water. Either way, please don't worry about the tap water.
5. Be positive - enjoy the good points of your home. Do not expect your homestay to be like the mansions you see in movies.

THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT OUR CULTURE:

1. PLEASE, **don't be shy**. Don't be afraid to say something if you have any questions. Your homestay family would like to get to know you, and will ask you lots of questions too. Try to speak English, and they will help you and give you encouragement.
2. If you dislike a particular food or have a food allergy, please tell your family.
3. After school, you will probably be quite tired. However, please try to spend the evening time with your Homestay family. **Join in their activities**, even if you feel shy about speaking English. They will appreciate your efforts.

4. If you'd like to do something with one of your friends, talk to your host family about it first. They may have made plans to do something fun with you.
5. Also, please **offer to help** the family with small tasks, such as clearing the table after everyone is finished eating, or washing the dishes, or putting the dishes in the dishwasher (if the family has one).
6. We want you to feel like **this is your home**, too. So, if you want to do something, like use the bathroom, you don't need to ask permission every time. Also, if you ask for something and your family says "help yourself", this is a friendly way of saying that you can feel free to take something by serving it to yourself. That way, you can give yourself the right amount of food or drink.
7. You will be having a lot of new experiences. We would like you to **try new things**, and don't be afraid. There will be a lot of new foods too, and if your family serves you a meal with something new in it, it is polite to try it at least once. It's ok if you don't like everything!
8. Your family would probably like to help you prepare a traditional dinner from your country. If you know how to cook a little bit, they can help you find the right food at the store and then help you to cook. This can be a lot of fun, and taste good too!
9. Make sure to thank the family for even small things such as helping with your homework or driving you to school. This makes them feel appreciated.

Most important: ask for help when you don't understand something!

THINGS TO BRING WITH YOU:

1. Bring family pictures from home. Your new Canadian family will be interested in you, your friends and your family.
2. You don't need to carry a lot of money with you during your stay. It's safe to leave your traveler's cheques in your suitcase, at your host family's home.
3. Make a photocopy of your passport and your medical insurance to carry on you at all times. Leave your passport in your suitcase at your host family's home.
4. Be prepared for the weather- it may be colder or warmer than you think, it may rain. You might want to go swimming (indoors or outside) so bring a bathing suit too!

Be prepared to have a wonderful experience! We'll see you soon!