

Flying to Canada

~ What you should know ~

Welcome! Canada is a great choice of destination for aviators from the United States. It is just different enough to make your trip interesting, but not *so* different that you would be uncomfortable. Our country is renowned for its thousands of square miles of pristine wilderness, ideal for all outdoor pursuits. We invite you to also experience our cities; they represent a unique and pleasant experience of their own. There's something for everyone.

In order to help with your plans for a trip to Canada, we present the following summary of information.

Remember: *It's not that different.*

We have developed our own aviation system and our own procedures in response to our climate and geography, which differ slightly from what you are used to, but they will not make flying unmanageable.

Transport Canada, Civil Aviation

The Civil Aviation directorate is part of the Safety and Security Group of Transport Canada. The FAA performs a similar function in the United States. Though we have the ability to carry a big stick, our role is to facilitate your visit to Canada to help you fly safely and ensure that you are aware of any regulatory differences that may affect your trip. This document tries to answer the most common questions, but if you are uncertain of anything, give us a call. Our numbers are listed at the end of this document.



Coming to Canada by small aircraft

Pilots must report to Canada Border Services Agency using the telephone reporting system. Call the toll free telephone number 1-888-226-7277 at least two hours, but no more than 48 hours prior to your arrival in Canada. A second call is required upon your arrival in Canada. You are required to bring photo I.D. and proof of Citizenship; i.e. Birth Certificate or Passport. All travellers can import goods for their personal use. Import restrictions apply to certain items. Handguns, pepper spray, stun guns and certain other weapons are prohibited. Calling 1-888-226-7277 arranges your Customs clearance only. It does not replace the requirements to file a flight plan with NAV CANADA. Designated ports of entry are listed in the Canada Flight Supplement, which is the official Canadian "Airports and Frequency Guide". Information on obtaining one is provided later. Need more information on reporting to Customs? Visit CBSA's website at: <http://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/menu-e.html>

When you return to the United States, you should consult the U.S. Private Flyers Guide for information about customs services at U.S. Airports. Contact the U.S. Customs Office for more information on this program.

Aircraft and Pilot Documentation

Generally, U.S. registered aircraft need only the documentation required by the Federal Aviation Administration. However, you should note the following:

1. Pilots of aircraft with a Special Airworthiness Certificate – Experimental for the purpose of operating a United States registered Amateur Built aircraft in Canadian airspace may obtain a Standardized Validation from Transport Canada's Internet website at:
<http://www.tc.gc.ca/civilaviation/maintenance/aarp/e/Recreational/menu.htm>;
2. Pilots of aircraft with a Special Airworthiness Certificate, for other than Amateur-Built aircraft, must obtain a validation from an Airworthiness contact at a Transport Canada Regional Office prior to entering Canadian Airspace. This applies even for overflights where no stop is intended. Check the list of Regional Office Contacts for the one closest to your point of entry into Canada; and
3. Ultra-light aircraft operating without any regulatory authority (e.g. CFR 103 in the United States) cannot be operated in Canada.

Insurance

Aircraft operated in Canada must subscribe to liability insurance and carry proof of that insurance on board the aircraft. Amount of coverage is based on the use of the aircraft and the maximum take-off weight. For example, a private aircraft owner must hold liability insurance covering risks of public liability in an amount that is not less than

- (a) \$100,000, where the maximum permissible take-off weight of the aircraft is 1 043 kg (2,300 pounds) or less;
- (b) \$500,000, where the maximum permissible take-off weight of the aircraft is greater than 1 043 kg (2,300 pounds) but not greater than 2 268 kg (5,000 pounds); etc.

Refer to the *Canadian Aviation Regulations*, Section 606.02, for full details.

Planning Your Flight

Not much different here. Canadian charts are similar in format and appearance to U.S. charts. Here is a quick summary:

VFR Charts

1. VNC (Visual Navigation Series) Charts - These are the equivalent of U.S. Sectional Charts and are produced at a 1:500 000 scale;
2. WAC (World Aeronautical Charts) - For pilots who prefer charts a 1:1 000 000 scale, these are basically the same as the U.S. version; and
3. VTA (VFR Terminal Area) Charts - These are terminal area charts produced for major airports at a 1:250 000 scale

IFR Charts

Canadian Enroute Low and High Altitude charts and IFR Terminal Area charts are available. These are equivalent to U.S. Jeppesen charts.

Canada Flight Supplement

This document is the official “Airports and Frequency Guide” for Canada. Not only does it include vital information about Canadian airports, but also airspace, local flight procedures, preferred IFR routings and more.

To Purchase

Individual aeronautical charts and publications can be obtained from a network of distributors and suppliers. They are listed on NAV CANADA’s Aeronautical Publications, Sales and Distribution Unit website: <http://www.navcanada.ca>. You can also call Aeronautical Publications at 1-866-731-PUBS (7827) for the distributor nearest you.

Flight Plans and Weather Information

Canada has a network of Flight Service Stations (FSS) to accept flight plans and provide weather information services. The Canada Flight Supplement contains the local telephone numbers or call 1-866-WXBRIEF (1-866-992-7433) to contact the nearest FSS to your location.

Transborder flights require a flight plan. Within Canada, for flights of more than 25 nautical miles, you have two options. You can either file a flight plan with one of our Flight Service Stations or you can file a flight itinerary with a responsible person. The Canada Flight Supplement provides more information.

Weather information is presented in the TAF/METAR format with some minor technical differences from what you may be used to. Canadian weather and NOTAMS can be accessed through DUATS or other on-line services at <http://www.navcanada.ca>

Airspace

Canada’s airspace is slightly different than the United States. We use an alphabet system, which basically works the same way.

Traffic Procedures

At controlled airports the procedures are the same; just be sure to obtain a clearance to enter the control zone PRIOR to operating within it. However, at *uncontrolled* airports you should be aware that joining the pattern at a 45° angle is not allowed. Some differences in radio reporting requirements also exist at uncontrolled airports. The general rule is: Use your radio to report your intentions on the correct airport frequency at all times.

Survival equipment

The *Canadian Aviation Regulations* require that you carry sufficient equipment to ensure the survival of all on board in the event of a forced landing. Remember, we have some very cold places, some very hot places, some very wet places and some very dry places. Some places afford shelter; others do not. We have some places with a large number of bothersome insects.

What you carry is up to you. Given Canada’s climate and geography, consideration must be given to:

- a) starting a fire;
- b) shelter;
- c) a signaling device;
- d) water purification;
- e) time of year and;
- f) location (e.g. December in Northern Manitoba).

Renting an Aeroplane in Canada with an American Pilot Licence

If you are visiting Canada and wish to rent a Canadian registered aircraft for recreational purposes, you will require a Foreign Licence Validation Certificate. You can obtain this document from a RecAv Contact at a Transport Canada Regional office. Check the list of Regional Office Contacts for the one closest to your point of entry into Canada.

You will be required to show proof of your licence and medical status and pay a fee. The Foreign Licence Validation Certificate will be issued for a period of one year.

We look forward to serving you!

Transport Canada Regional Office Contacts

Pacific

Vancouver RecAv: (604) 666-5575
Airworthiness: (604) 666-5595

Prairie and Northern

Edmonton RecAv: (780) 495-3885
Airworthiness: (780) 495-5224

Winnipeg RecAv: (204) 983-4341
Airworthiness: (204) 983-4234

Ontario

Toronto RecAv: (416) 952-0230
Airworthiness: (416) 952-0375

Quebec

Montreal RecAv: (514) 633-3581
Airworthiness: (514) 633-3370

Atlantic:

Moncton RecAv: (506) 851-7439
Airworthiness: (506) 851-7412

Headquarters

Recreational Aviation and Special Flight Operations

Telephone: (613) 990-1034
Facsimile: (613) 990-6215
E-mail: Recavsf@tc.gc.ca

Website:

www.tc.gc.ca/civilaviation/general/recavi/menu.htm

Airworthiness

Telephone: (613) 990-9490
Facsimile: (613) 952-3298

Civil Aviation’s Communication Centre

(National Capital Region)
Telephone: 1-800-305-2059
Telephone: (613) 993-7284