



## Badges and Insignia

### Overview

The badges and insignia that appear on the uniforms of RCMP regular members are used to visually indicate different details about the member in uniform. As you read about the different badges and insignia of the RCMP online, be sure to click on their names to be instantly linked to the images.

### The RCMP Regimental Badge

The RCMP regimental badge is the general symbol used to identify the organization. The principal elements on the early badges can still be seen today; a buffalo or bison head facing front-wise, the motto, maple leaves, a scroll containing the title of the RCMP, and a crown at the top of the badge over the name "Canada."

The title North West Mounted Police has changed twice since the organization's formation in 1873; in 1904, it became the Royal Northwest Mounted Police, and in 1920, it became the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

The precise circumstances under which the bison head was chosen are unknown, but the choice seems appropriate because of the close association of the RCMP with the prairie grasslands. It is in the Prairies that early RCMP members depended on the buffalo for food, fuel and clothing.

The adoption of a French motto, "Maintiens le droit" (defending the law), gave the badge a bilingual character from the very beginning. The exact origin of this motto, however, is not known. At first, the word "Maintiens" was spelled without the "s." In 1953, the badge was submitted to the College of Arms in England to be redesigned according to heraldic procedures. The newly designed badge, authorized by Order-in-Council in 1954, continues to include the motto "Maintiens le droit."

### Commissioned Officers

Commissioned officers are RCMP regular members who have been appointed their rank by the House of Commons. The three badges of the RCMP that indicate the commissioned ranks are: a crown, a star, and a crossed sword and baton. Depending on the dress, badges are worn on the shoulder as slip-ons, on shoulder boards, or directly on the epaulettes. The commissioned ranks of the RCMP are as follows:

Commissioner;  
Deputy Commissioner;  
Assistant Commissioner;  
Chief Superintendent;  
Superintendent; and  
Inspector.

### Quick Facts

- The first regimental badges appeared on RCMP uniforms about 1876.
- The crown at the top of the regimental badge has changed to represent that of the reigning monarch – St. Edward's crown was adopted for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.
- Badge - a decoration used to express a member's branch or the years of service.
- Insignia - an emblem that indicates a



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#### Non-Commissioned Officers

Non-commissioned officers are regular members who have not been appointed to their position by the House of Commons. Since 1990, the non-commissioned officers' rank insignia has been embroidered on the epaulette slip-ons and continues to be based on British army patterns. Non-commissioned rank badges are worn on the right sleeve of the scarlet/blue tunic and blue jacket. The non-commissioned ranks of the RCMP are as follows :

Corps Sergeant Major;  
Sergeant Major;  
Staff Sergeant Major;  
Staff Sergeant;  
Sergeant; and  
Corporal.

Constables do not wear any insignia to indicate their rank.

Other badges that can appear on the uniforms of RCMP regular members include:

#### Appointment Badges

Special Constable, Auxiliary, and Student.

#### Corps Identity

Officer's Cap Badge, Cap Badge, Collar Badge, Cloth Shoulder Badge, and Metal Shoulder Badge.

#### Flying Badge

Air Services.

#### Sharpshooter

Badge Cross Pistol Crown, Badge Cross Pistol, Badge Cross Rifle Crown and Badge Cross Rifle.

#### Service

Service Badge (5 years), which is a star-shaped badge. Long Service Ribbons (20, 25, 30, 35 years) are pins with blue and gold ribbons, each different to indicate the number of years served. For example, 20 years service consists of the pin and ribbon, 25 years includes one bronze star, 30 years has two silver stars, and 35 years has three gold stars. Long Service and Good Conduct Medal, which is a round silver medal attached to a ribbon and clasp.

#### Specialist, Branch and Qualifying

Musical Ride Badge, Emergency Response Team, First Aid Instructor, Rough Rider, Dog Handler, Instructor and Piper.

For more information, please visit [www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca](http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca).