

# Canadian National Censuses, 1871-1921

MSS-037 ([www.maplestarsandstripes.com/37](http://www.maplestarsandstripes.com/37))

## Head Count



Census records are a great resource for those who have traced their French-Canadian lines back into Canada. Searching these records is so much easier today because the records have been digitized and indexed.

## Census Notes

From 1871 on, people, except for those with no permanent home, were supposed to be enumerated where they normally resided, not where they were the day the census taker came around.

Some indexes are incorrect or incomplete. You might have to resort to a page by page locality search. To do that, or to use microfilm copies of the census, you need to know district and sub-district first. Check out the [Library and Archives Canada Census page](#), click on the census year you're working with, click on 'Districts and Sub-districts.' Since the lists are fairly long, here's a shortcut. Put your cursor at the top of the list. On a PC, hold down the control key while you press the F key. That will bring up a Find box or a Find window. Type in the name of your town and click Next, and it will take you directly to where your town is located on that page.

Use maps to check out changing provincial boundaries. Two helpful resources are the [Electoral Atlas of the Dominion of Canada from 1895](#) and the [1906 Atlas of Canada](#).

In the past, printed indexes were constructed for the microfilm version of the census. Some of these indexes as well as transcribed portions of the census were placed online. If you cannot find an ancestor in the index for a digitized version, do a Google search for the census index by year and location, or perhaps you will find success with one of the transcriptions. Some of these can be found at [census-online.com](http://census-online.com) and [censuslinks.com](http://censuslinks.com).

[Ancestry's interactive census map](#) includes not only a list of questions that were asked on every national census from 1871 to 1911, but it also includes maps showing provincial and territorial boundaries for each census, the population at that time, and other interesting facts.

The [Library and Archives Canada](#) website includes links to indexes and images for each national census except for 1921, which can only be found on [Ancestry](#).

To quickly locate censuses and their indexes, see FamilySearch's ['Online Canadian Census Indexes and Images.'](#)



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Before beginning research in any particular census, you should consider reading the documentation on the Library and Archives Canada website. The information there will help you interpret your findings.

### Library and Archives Canada About Pages for Each Census

<a href="#">1916</a>	<a href="#">1891</a>
<a href="#">1911</a>	<a href="#">1881</a>
<a href="#">1906</a>	<a href="#">1871</a>
<a href="#">1901</a>	<a href="#">1870 (Manitoba)</a>

Search Online Censuses			
Census Year	Website	Census Year	Website
1921	<a href="#">Ancestry</a>	1891	<a href="#">LAC</a>
1916	<a href="#">LAC</a> <a href="#">Ancestry</a> (.ca in Canada) <a href="#">FamilySearch</a> (index only)		<a href="#">Ancestry</a> <a href="#">FamilySearch</a> (index only) <a href="#">FamilySearch Microfilm</a> <a href="#">Finding Aid</a>
1911	<a href="#">Automated Genealogy</a>		Stephen Morse's ' <a href="#">Searching the 1891 Canadian Census in One Step</a> '
	<a href="#">LAC</a> <a href="#">Ancestry</a> (.ca in Canada) <a href="#">FamilySearch</a> (index only) Steve Morse's ' <a href="#">Searching the 1911 Canadian Census in One Step</a> '	1881	<a href="#">LAC</a> <a href="#">Ancestry</a> <a href="#">FamilySearch</a> (index only) Stephen Morse's ' <a href="#">Searching the 1881 Canadian Census in One Step</a> '
1906	<a href="#">LAC</a> <a href="#">Ancestry</a> (.ca in Canada) <a href="#">Automated Genealogy</a> <a href="#">FamilySearch</a> (index only)	1871	<a href="#">LAC</a> <a href="#">Ancestry</a> <a href="#">FamilySearch</a> (index only) Family Search <a href="#">Mortality Schedule</a>
1901	<a href="#">Automated Genealogy</a>	1870 Manitoba	<a href="#">LAC</a>
	<a href="#">LAC</a> <a href="#">Ancestry</a> <a href="#">FamilySearch</a> (index only) Steve Morse's ' <a href="#">Searching the 1901 Canadian Census in One Step</a> '		

Official Census Date	
Census	Date
1921	June 1, 1921
1916	June 1, 1916
1911	June 1, 1911
1906	June 24, 1906
1901	March 31, 1901
1891	April 6, 1891
1881	April 4, 1881
1871	April 2, 1871
1870	June 16, 1870

No matter when the enumerator knocked on a person's door, he or she was supposed to answer the question as it would have applied on the official census date.

Familiarity with the Enumerator Instructions can be crucial to properly interpreting information on the census record.

Enumerator Instructions	
Census Year	Website
1921	<a href="#">English</a>
	<a href="#">French</a>
1911	<a href="#">English</a>
	<a href="#">French</a>
1901	<a href="http://web.uvic.ca">web.uvic.ca</a>
1891	<a href="http://archive.org">archive.org</a>
1881	<a href="http://archive.org">archive.org</a>
1871	<a href="http://archive.org">archive.org</a>

### Online Census Forms

[1921 blank census forms in English](#)

[1916 blank census forms in English](#)

[1911 census forms in French and English](#)

[1911 A1 census form with column headings in both English and French](#)

[1901 census forms in French and English](#)

[1906 census forms for Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta](#)

[1901 census form from FamilySearch](#)

[1891 census form from FamilySearch](#)

[1871 & 1881 census form from FamilySearch](#)

[Census Tools \\$\\$: 1851 to 1901 national censuses](#)

[GenealogyGenius forms: 1901, 1906, 1911, and 1916 censuses](#)

[Brute Force Genealogy census family tracker form](#)