



GET TO KNOW THE
**HOUSE OF
COMMONS**



PARLIAMENT | PARLEMENT
CANADA

Q: What is the House of Commons?

A: It's one of three parts of Parliament.

The House of Commons is where Canada's elected representatives meet to discuss important issues and make new laws.

The other parts of Parliament are the Monarch (the King or Queen, who is represented in Canada by the Governor General) and the Senate. To become a law, a bill has to be approved by all three parts.

Q: Who sits in the House of Commons?

A: 338 Members of Parliament (or MPs for short) sit in the House.

Every MP represents a particular part of Canada, called a riding. During an election, the people who live in the riding vote to choose who will be their MP.



Ridings are based on population, not size. The smallest riding in Canada is only 9 km², while the largest is over 2 million km²!

Can you guess where these two ridings are found?

Q: What do MPs do?

A: They have many responsibilities, including making laws.

MPs are always very busy. In addition to debating and voting in the House of Commons, they help the people in their ridings, work in committees, go to meetings, talk to the media, and much more.

MPs can come from many different backgrounds. They may be lawyers, teachers, farmers, athletes or even students. Any Canadian citizen over the age of 18 can run in an election.



NOT SURE WHO YOUR MP IS?

Go to parl.gc.ca and enter your postal code to find out.

Q: How do I contact my MP?

A: You can phone or email them, send a letter, or contact them via social media.

MPs are always happy to hear from the people in their ridings. If you have a question, or an idea that you want to share, get in touch!

Q: Who's in charge of debates and votes in the House of Commons?

A: The Speaker, who acts as a referee when the House is in session.

The Speaker's job is to make sure that all the rules and traditions of the House of Commons are followed. Although the Speaker usually belongs to a political party, he or she is neutral and treats all MPs equally.



The Speaker sits in the biggest chair in the House of Commons.

Q: Why is the House of Commons green?

A: Green is the colour of the British House of Commons.

Our parliamentary system is based on the British one, and we've borrowed many of their traditions. The House of Commons in London has been decorated in green for over 300 years.

Did you know that there are dinosaurs in the House of Commons? Wall sculptures show some of the prehistoric plants and animals that have been found in Canada.



Q: Where does the Prime Minister sit?

A: In the front row, with other Government MPs.

Most MPs belong to political parties: groups with similar ideas about how the country should be run. Usually the party with the most MPs forms the Government, and its leader becomes the Prime Minister. All other parties (and any independent MPs) are called the opposition. The Prime Minister sits to the right of the Speaker, in the 11th seat.



There's no limit to how long someone can be Prime Minister in Canada. Can you name our longest-serving Prime Minister?

Answer: William Lyon Mackenzie King was Prime Minister for 21 years and 154 days.

Want to know more?

Follow us for videos, photos and more fun facts about Parliament.

 /parlyouth  /parlcanada  /parlyouth

Contact us if you have any questions:

info@parl.gc.ca
1-866-599-4999

Information Service
Parliament of Canada
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A9

Produced by:



LIBRARY of PARLIAMENT
BIBLIOTHÈQUE du PARLEMENT