



PARLIAMENT | PARLEMENT
CANADA

Welcome to Parliament



Welcome to the heart of Canadian democracy!

Although the main Parliament Building is closed for rehabilitation, you can still visit us at four unique sites. Each one offers a different experience, showcasing the people, history and art of Canada's parliamentary system. We hope you will enjoy your visit.

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What Is Parliament?

Parliament is Canada's federal legislature - the place where laws are made that affect the whole country.

Who's who at Parliament?

Parliament has three parts. Each one plays an essential role in creating laws and supporting Canadians.

Monarch	Senate	House of Commons
		
Head of State	Upper law-making chamber	Lower law-making chamber
Represented by the Governor General	Introduces, examines, debates and votes on bills	Introduces, examines, debates and votes on bills
Signs bills into law and more	Represents Canada by region	Represents Canada by population

Making Canada's Laws

The legislative process involves all three parts of Parliament: the Monarch, the Senate and the House of Commons.

How does it work?

1



A bill (proposed law) is introduced in either the Senate or the House of Commons.

Parliamentarians debate the idea behind the bill and vote to decide whether it should be studied further.



2

3



The bill is sent to a committee, which hears from witnesses and studies it in depth. The committee may suggest changes to the bill.

The bill goes back to the chamber for a final debate and vote.



4

5



If the bill passes the vote, it is sent to the other chamber, where it goes through all the same steps.

Once both chambers have passed the bill in identical form, it goes to the Governor General for Royal Assent.



6



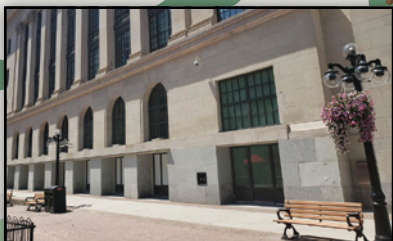
On which country did Canada base its parliamentary system?

Map of the Buildings

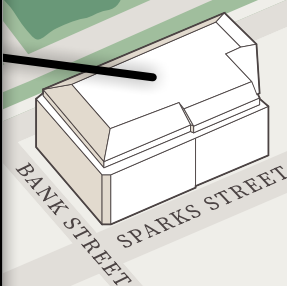
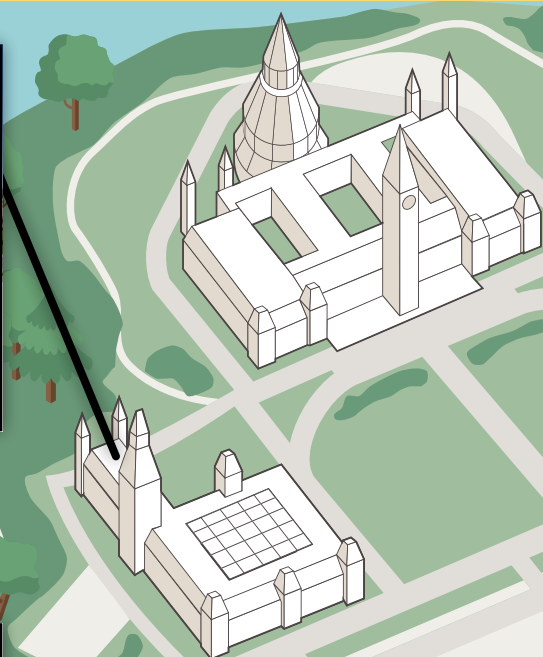
Free tickets for all sites are available at visit.parl.ca.



**House of Commons at
West Block**
111 Wellington Street

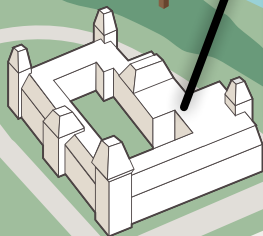


**Parliament: The
Immersive Experience**
211 Sparks Street

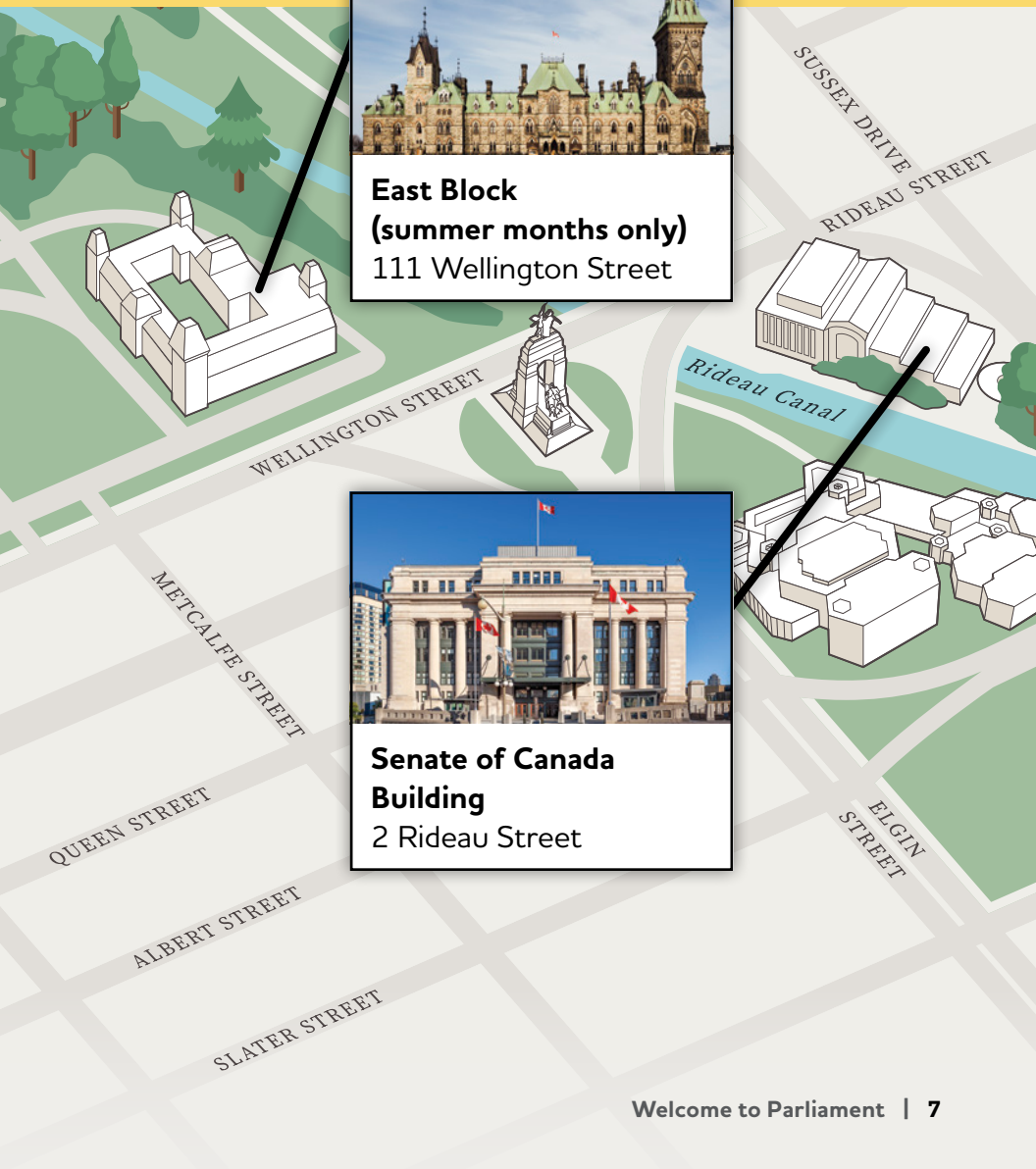
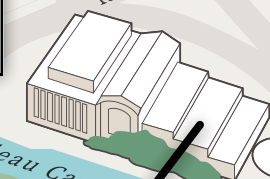




East Block
(summer months only)
111 Wellington Street



Senate of Canada Building
2 Rideau Street





Senate of Canada

The upper chamber is located in the Senate of Canada Building, a grand Beaux-Arts structure that was once a busy train station.

The Red Chamber

Within these walls, senators introduce, debate and vote on bills. They also represent the people in their regions, review bills passed by the House of Commons and advocate for underrepresented communities.



The Speaker of the Senate

Why is the Senate Chamber decorated in red?



The Speaker facilitates Senate proceedings and ensures that the chamber's rules and traditions are respected. They welcome foreign dignitaries, represent Canada abroad and have ceremonial and administrative duties. Like other senators, the Speaker also serves the people of their home region.

Canada's Senators

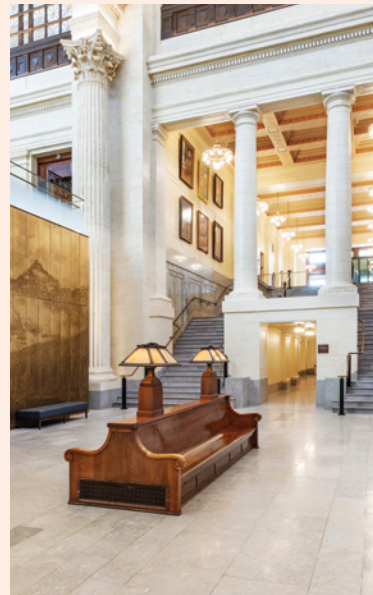
Senators are appointed to represent a province or territory. They come from many different backgrounds and have varying areas of expertise, giving them a wide range of perspectives on the questions discussed at Parliament.

Much of senators' work is done outside the chamber, in committees, where they hear from Canadians, study bills in depth and investigate important issues.

About the Building

The Senate of Canada Building – originally known as Grand Trunk Central Station – was built in 1912. It welcomed visitors to Ottawa for more than 50 years.

Although the building was transformed to house the Senate, it still showcases the train station's striking architecture – and many of its original features. Look out for heritage pieces including the concourse ceiling, station clock and an original wooden bench.





House of Commons

The lower chamber is located in West Block, one of three historic buildings on Parliament Hill.

The Green Chamber

The House of Commons is the elected law-making body in Parliament. Each of its members (usually called a Member of Parliament or an MP) represents a specific part of Canada called a constituency or riding.



The Speaker of the House of Commons

The Speaker is the impartial referee of the House, maintaining order and enforcing the rules of debate. The Speaker is also responsible for the administration and finances of the House.

Which former prime minister gave their name to the West Block tower?



MPs at Work

MPs are elected to represent the people in their riding. They also introduce, debate and vote on bills, and they study issues and bills in committees.


The prime minister and the leader of the Official Opposition are usually MPs. They sit face-to-face in the House of Commons, alongside the other members of their political parties.

About the Building

West Block is one of Parliament's – and Ottawa's – oldest buildings. It was completed in 1865 and was originally used as office space for Cabinet ministers and public servants. Today, modern additions blend with the original Neo-Gothic style. An interior courtyard has been converted into the House of Commons.

The Visitor Welcome Centre is attached to West Block. Inside, visitors can see the *Books of Remembrance*, which honour all Canadians who have lost their lives in military service.





Heritage Rooms at East Block

East Block offers a glimpse of life at Parliament in the late 19th century. Tours are available during the summer months only.

Inside History

Until the mid-20th century, East Block housed the offices of the Governor General, the prime minister and the Privy Council. Tours bring you inside four heritage rooms, which have been restored to their original 1870s appearance.



About the Building

Completed in 1865, East Block is a showpiece of Parliament's Neo-Gothic style. It was also built with technology in mind. Look out for innovations including running water, call bells and gas-powered chandeliers – all state-of-the-art features for their time.



Until when did the prime minister work from East Block?

(a) 1947 (b) 1957 (c) 1967 (d) 1977



Immersive Experience

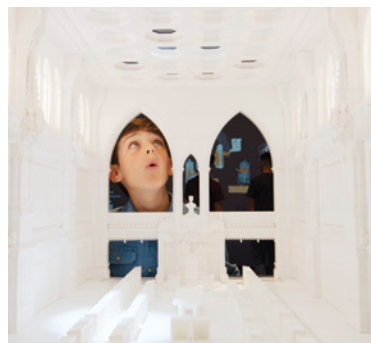
Take a virtual journey into the main Parliament Building through 360° sound and video.

A Story About a Building

Parliament: The Immersive Experience brings you inside the main Parliament Building (Centre Block), which is currently closed. With a multimedia exhibit and an immersive show, it is a one-of-a-kind way to discover the art and architecture of this landmark building.

A Story About Canada's Parliament

The Immersive Experience shines a light on the people and history of Centre Block. Learn how the laws passed within its walls impacted life in Canada for almost 100 years.





Centre Block Highlights

The main Parliament Building (Centre Block) closed its doors for rehabilitation in 2019. It can still be seen from the exterior.

Peace Tower

Centre Block's iconic tower was completed in 1927. It is a monument to peace and to Canadians who died during the First World War. Inside are the 53 bells of the carillon, as well as the Memorial Chamber, a solemn chapel that honours the people who gave their lives in the war.



Library of Parliament

As the only survivor of a fire that destroyed Centre Block in 1916, the Library is the oldest part of the building. Behind the scenes, it is also a busy working institution that supports the work of Parliament.





Rehabilitating a Landmark

The work under way at Centre Block will prepare it to meet the needs of a 21st-century Parliament.

The Centre Block Project

Constructed from 1916 to 1927, Centre Block has suffered damages over time. Rehabilitation will renovate, restore and modernize the building for use by future generations of Canadians.

The Centre Block Project aims to repair damages, improve systems and make the building more environmentally sustainable, while still preserving the heritage that makes it so unique.

True or false: the Canadian flag on top of the Peace Tower is changed every day.



The Interim Chamber Sites

The Senate and the House of Commons will continue meeting in their current buildings while the rehabilitation of Centre Block is taking place. Once the work is complete, the chambers will return to their former locations.


Contact Us

Visit us at **learn.parl.ca** to find out more about Parliament and to explore our videos, games and publications.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact us:

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Trivia answers

1. The United Kingdom
2. Red is a traditional colour of royalty
3. Alexander Mackenzie
4. (c) 1967
5. True!



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