Pathway to U.S. Citizenship

For an adult immigrant to become a U.S. citizen, he or she must go through the process of naturalization. GENERAL requirements for naturalization call for the immigrant to:

1. Demonstrate a basic knowledge of U.S. history, government, and civic principles
2. Demonstrate an ability to read, write, speak, and understand basic English
3. Demonstrate an attachment to the principles and ideals of the U.S. Constitution
4. Have demonstrated good moral character
5. Have lived within the State or USCIS District for at least 3 months prior to filing
6. Have demonstrated continuous permanent residence
7. Be a lawfully admitted permanent resident of the United States
8. Swear an oath of allegiance to the United States
9. Be at least 18 years old at the time of filing the Application for Naturalization (Form N-400)

Preparing for the Test

What study materials are available and how can I find English language, civics, and/or citizenship classes?

The USCIS Office of Citizenship has developed a variety of study materials for the redesigned (new) naturalization test. These materials include Civics Flash Cards, Learn About the U.S. Constitution: Quick Civics Lesson, and translated versions of the civics questions available at http://www.uscis.gov/newtest.

For many applicants, adult education classes are an excellent place to learn English and prepare for the naturalization test. Many local school districts, community colleges, libraries, and other community-based organizations offer English language and civics classes. These opportunities, however, are not centralized in one place. To find an appropriate class, try these options:

- Contact your local public library and ask if they offer English language or citizenship classes.
- Look in the yellow pages of your telephone book under the adult education category.
- Contact your local public library and ask if they offer English classes.

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About the Redesigned (New) Test

Background

In the interest of creating a more standardized, fair, and meaningful naturalization process, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) redesigned the naturalization test. The redesigned test, with an emphasis on the fundamental concepts of American democracy and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, will help encourage citizenship applicants to learn and identify with the basic values we all share as Americans.

The major aim of the redesign process was to ensure that naturalization applicants have uniform, consistent testing experiences nationwide, and that the civics test can effectively assess whether applicants have a meaningful understanding of U.S. government and history. Following a basic U.S. history and civics curriculum, the redesigned test will serve as an important instrument to encourage civic learning and patriotism among prospective citizens.

To accomplish these goals, USCIS initially piloted a new test—with an overlaid English reading and writing section, as well as new history and government questions—in ten sites across the country. The feedback from this pilot was then used to finalize testing procedures, English reading and writing prompts, and a list of 100 new history and government questions. To ensure the pilot accounted for a representative sample of candidates with a variety of education levels, the test was also piloted at adult education sites nationwide.

For more information on the redesigned (new) naturalization test, please visit http://www.uscis.gov/newtest.

Implementation Timeline

Which version of the test to take?

USCIS will begin administrating a redesigned (new) naturalization test on October 1, 2009. The following guidelines will determine whether naturalization applicants will take the old test or the redesigned (new) test.

An applicant who:

- Files the Application for Naturalization, Form N-400, BEFORE October 1, 2008, and is scheduled for his or her naturalization interview BEFORE October 1, 2008, will take the old test.
- Files the Application for Naturalization, Form N-400, BEFORE October 1, 2008, and is scheduled for his or her naturalization interview ON OR AFTER October 1, 2008 (up until October 1, 2009), can choose to take the old test or the redesigned (new) test.
- Files the Application for Naturalization, Form N-400, ON OR AFTER October 1, 2008, will take the redesigned (new) test.
- Is scheduled for his or her naturalization interview ON OR AFTER October 1, 2009, regardless of when he or she filed the Application for Naturalization, Form N-400, will take the redesigned (new) test.

NOTE: If an applicant fails the English and/or civics test during the first examination, the applicant will be required to take the same version of the test, old or redesigned (new), when the applicant is retested, even if the retest is scheduled on or after October 1, 2009.

For additional information about the old and redesigned (new) test, please visit http://www.uscis.gov/citizenship.


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For Form N-400 and to learn more about specific eligibility requirements for naturalization, visit www.uscis.gov or call 1 800 375 5283

The Redesigned (New) Naturalization Test
Office of Citizenship

HM-685 (rev. 06/08)
Components of the Redesigned (New) Naturalization Test

### Oral Test
An applicant will be asked to select one of 10 questions from the list below. Applicants must answer correctly at least six of the 10 questions to pass the civics test.

### Writing Test
Each writing test administered to an applicant contains no more than 3 sentences. Applicants must pass one out of three sentences correctly in order to demonstrate the ability to write in English. To help applicants prepare, USCIS released a writing vocabulary list containing all the words found in the English writing portion of the redesigned (new) test. The content focuses on civics and history topics.

### Reading Test
An applicant’s ability to speak English will continue to be determined by the USCIS interview on the Form N-400.

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### Civics Test

#### American Government
- **Principles of American Democracy**
- What is the supreme law of the land?
- What does the Constitution do?
- What is the idea of self-government in the first three words of the Constitution? What are those words?
- What is an amendment?
- What is the first amendment to the Constitution?
- What is the Second Amendment to the Constitution?
- What is the freedom of speech?
- What is the economic system in the United States?
- What is the rule of law?

#### Integrated Civics
- **Geography**
- Name one of the two longest rivers in the United States.
- Name one ocean in the East Coast of the United States.
- Name one U.S. territory.
- Name one state that borders Canada.
- Name one state that borders Mexico.
- What is the capital of the United States?
- Where is the Statue of Liberty?

#### American History
- **Colonial Period and Independence**
- Name one of the two longest rivers in the United States.
- What is the supreme law of the land?
- What does the Constitution do?
- Who is the Commander in Chief of the military?
- Who is the President during World War II?

#### Civics
- **Bill of Rights**
- What is the Bill of Rights?
- What are two rights in the Declaration of Independence?
- What are two rights in the Declaration of Independence?
- What happened at the Constitutional Convention?
- What was the Constitution written?
- What is the capital of the United States?

#### Civics
- **Symbols**
- Why does the flag have 13 stripes?
- Why does the flag have 50 stars?
- What is the name of the national anthem?

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