

Quick Start Guide

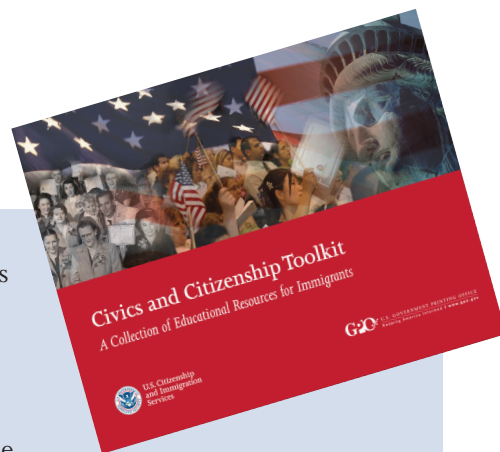
for the Civics and Citizenship Toolkit!

The *Civics and Citizenship Toolkit* is a collection of educational resources developed by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to help permanent residents learn more about the United States and prepare for the naturalization process. Many of the *Toolkit's* products can also serve as supplemental teaching tools for adult educators and volunteers in a classroom or community program setting.

This Quick Start Guide provides suggestions on how to use the *Toolkit* and its materials to support immigrants in your community. A detailed listing of each of the items included in the *Toolkit* is also provided. Many programs, especially those new to serving immigrant communities, will find the publication *Expanding ESL, Civics, and Citizenship Education in Your Community: A Start-Up Guide* to be a valuable

resource. This practical guide offers recommendations for organizations interested in establishing English as a Second Language (ESL) and citizenship classes for immigrants.

As an initial step, we encourage you to review both this Quick Start Guide and the more detailed *Expanding ESL, Civics, and Citizenship Education in Your Community: A Start-Up Guide*. You will find many uses for the *Toolkit* both as a supplement to classroom instruction and as a stand-alone resource for self-study. To explore some ideas, see the topics below.



Providing Basic Information to the Immigrant Community

Before starting a new class or program, try assessing the needs of the immigrant community and exploring the resources already available locally. To guide your research, browse through the publication *Welcome to the United States: A Guide for New Immigrants* and complementary web resources at uscis.gov/tools/settling-us to review topics of special interest for immigrants. Topics include:

- Life in the United States
- Education
- Finding a job
- Healthcare
- Immigration and citizenship
- Emergencies
- Starting a business

Consult with other immigrant-serving organizations to learn what services they offer and see if there are unmet needs in your community. If you find that there is little

or no knowledge of the resources already available in your community, consider creating a local guide for new immigrants as your first project.

Another suggestion is to host community information sessions, in partnership with local organizations that already serve the local community, on topics of interest to immigrants. For example, you could host a session on one of the following topics:

- Getting settled in the United States
- Education in the United States
- How to become a U.S. citizen
- How to navigate the local job market
- How to start a small business

Promoting the sessions in advance is key for success. Refer to *Expanding ESL, Civics, and Citizenship Education in Your Community: A Start-Up Guide* for ideas on how to inform the community about your programs.

Developing Content for Classes

Many of the products and publications included in the *Toolkit* can be used to enhance an ESL and/or citizenship class. Suggestions include the following activities:

- Use *Welcome to the United States: A Guide for New Immigrants* to identify vocabulary related to life in the United States. These vocabulary words may also be useful in

preparing students for the naturalization interview and test.

- Students can practice their English skills by reading aloud the questions and answers found in the *Civics Flash Cards*.

continued on the next page



**U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services**

Developing Content for Classes *(continued from previous page)*

- *Learn About the United States: Quick Civics Lessons* offers English language learners an opportunity to learn about U.S. history and government. Review each of the vocabulary words in the back of this booklet for the English reading and writing tests with the class. Following this exercise, ask students to write sentences using the vocabulary words and then read the sentences aloud.
- Use the *Toolkit* to create a collection of civics and citizenship study materials in your program's library or reference section.

Set aside time to review the materials in the *Toolkit*. This process may help you come up with your own ideas to use in ESL and/or citizenship classes.

Training Staff and Volunteers

The study aids and educational materials inside the *Toolkit* can serve as helpful training resources for both new and experienced volunteers. Refer to *Expanding ESL, Civics, and Citizenship Education in Your Community: A Start-Up Guide* for a step-by-step plan to build and support your volunteer network. Below are several suggestions on how to train and motivate volunteers:

- Effective citizenship instructors have a solid understanding of the fundamentals of U.S. history and government. Volunteers should review *The Citizen's Almanac* and *Learn About the United States: Quick Civics Lessons* to become familiar with the content covered on the civics test.
- Assign each volunteer to become an "expert" on one of the chapters from the orientation guide, *Welcome to the United States: A Guide for New Immigrants*. Ask each volunteer to provide a summary to fellow volunteers. If a student or client has a question about life in the United States that one volunteer cannot answer, he or she can direct the individual to the most knowledgeable source.
- Ask volunteers to review *Expanding ESL, Civics, and Citizenship Education in Your Community: A Start-Up Guide*. This will allow them to get a better understanding of the elements of an effective program. Hold brainstorming sessions to review program goals, ideas, and recommendations.
- Using the civics and citizenship resources in the *Toolkit*, ask volunteers to create a special program and exhibit during patriotic holidays or commemorations, such as the Fourth of July, Constitution Day and Citizenship Day, Flag Day, etc.

Exploring the Citizenship Resource Center

Visit the USCIS Citizenship Resource Center at uscis.gov/citizenship for additional free citizenship preparation materials. Individuals applying for citizenship can use these resources as a reference tool to prepare for the naturalization interview. Teachers and volunteers can use them to complement classroom instruction. Be sure to look for these helpful study tools:

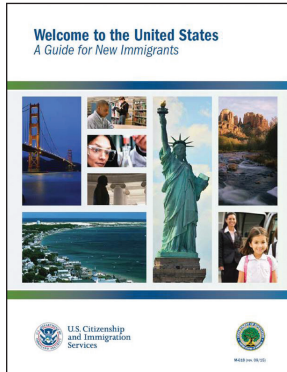
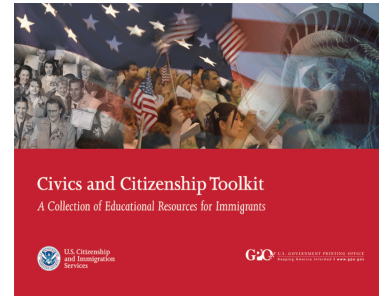
- The *USCIS Naturalization Interview and Test* is a 16-minute video that provides an overview of the naturalization process and testing requirements. The video highlights scenes from the naturalization interview, including the English and civics (U.S. history and government) portions of the naturalization test. These simulated situations provide a closer look into the overall process.
- Listen to audio MP3 files, available in English and Spanish, of the official list of civics questions and answers for the naturalization test.
- Use the online study tool, also available in English and Spanish, called the Civics Practice Test to help test your knowledge of U.S. history and government.
- *A Promise of Freedom: An Introduction to U.S. History and Civics for Immigrants* is a 12-minute film focused on the history and founding of our nation and the important rights and responsibilities of U.S. citizenship. *A Promise of Freedom* is an excellent way to begin a session on immigration or citizenship. The film is available with English, Chinese, and Spanish subtitles.
- Access lesson plans and activities with instructions and teaching strategies for novice and seasoned ESL instructors preparing students for U.S. citizenship.

We hope that you find the ideas presented in this *Quick Start Guide* useful for your program. For additional information and resources, please visit uscis.gov/citizenship.

Civics and Citizenship Toolkit

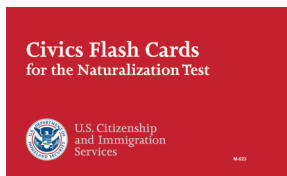
Products and Publications

The *Civics and Citizenship Toolkit* contains a variety of educational materials designed to help permanent residents learn more about the United States and prepare for the naturalization process. The following items are included in each copy of the *Civics and Citizenship Toolkit*. Electronic versions of these items are available at uscis.gov/citizenship unless otherwise noted.



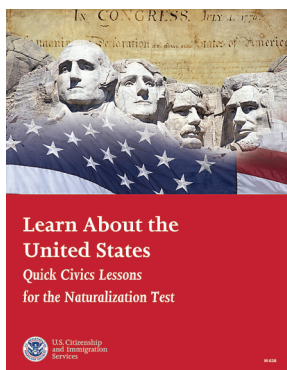
Welcome to the United States: A Guide for New Immigrants/ Bienvenido a los Estados Unidos de América: Guía para nuevos inmigrantes

USCIS offers a comprehensive guide containing practical information to help immigrants settle into everyday life in the United States, as well as basic civics information that introduces new immigrants to the U.S. system of government. English and Spanish versions are provided in the *Toolkit*. The guide is available in additional languages at uscis.gov.



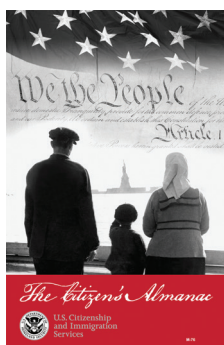
Civics Flash Cards

The *Civics Flash Cards* will help immigrants learn about U.S. history and government while preparing for the naturalization test. These easy-to-use flash cards contain each of the 100 civics (history and government) questions and answers on the naturalization test. Perfect for individual study or for use in the classroom, the *Civics Flash Cards* serve as a valuable instruction tool for citizenship preparation.



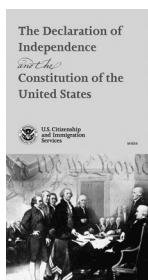
Learn About the United States: Quick Civics Lessons

Learn About the United States: Quick Civics Lessons contains short lessons based on each of the 100 civics (history and government) questions and answers on the naturalization test. This additional information will help immigrants learn more about important concepts in American history and government—moving beyond memorization—as they prepare for citizenship.



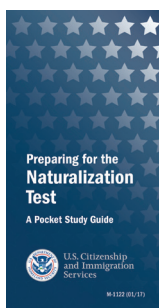
The Citizen's Almanac

The *Citizen's Almanac* is a collection of America's most cherished symbols of freedom and liberty, serving as a modern day lifeline to the rich civic history we all share as Americans. The booklet includes information on patriotic anthems and symbols, citizenship rights and responsibilities, the creation of our founding documents, biographical details on prominent foreign-born Americans, landmark decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court, and important presidential and historic speeches on citizenship.



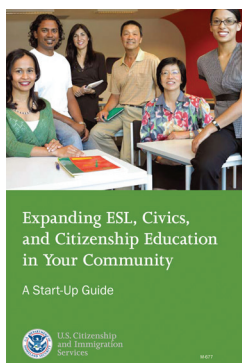
Pocket-Size Declaration of Independence and Constitution of the United States

A pocket-size booklet containing the complete text of these two core documents of American democracy.



Preparing for the Naturalization Test: A Pocket Study Guide/ Preparación para el examen de naturalización: Guía de Bolsillo

This pocket study guide contains the list of 100 civics questions and answers for the naturalization test as well as the English reading and writing vocabulary. English and Spanish versions are provided in the Toolkit.



Expanding ESL, Civics, and Citizenship Education in Your Community: A Start-Up Guide

Many community, faith-based, and civic organizations and employers would like to help immigrants adjust to life in the United States and prepare for citizenship, but do not know where to begin. Fortunately, the experience and practices of existing ESL, civics, and citizenship programs can help you get started. This guide offers suggestions and strategies along with a framework you can adapt to suit your community's needs and circumstances. The guide also includes basic recommendations and sample forms and materials to help begin an ESL and/or citizenship program.

For more information on the Civics and Citizenship Toolkit, please visit uscis.gov/citizenshiptoolkit.