

Persons with a Disability

People with special requirements should verify the availability of any facilities they need before visiting China. In general, people with disabilities can expect access to travel facilities and other public places to be more difficult than it is in Canada. You may have to make special arrangements to obtain amenities that you expect as a matter of course at home.

Learn About Your Destination

Before you go, take time to read about the social, political and economic environment in China. The Internet is a good source of information. The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade has brought together information on a wide range of programs and services related to China on the Canadian embassy site (www.beijing.gc.ca/splash/bj-splash.htm).

If possible, learn some basic Mandarin or Cantonese, depending on your destination. These languages are tonal, and you may find pronunciation more difficult than with Western languages. However, the Chinese people you meet will appreciate your effort to communicate with them in their own language, even if it is just a few phrases.

Dual Nationality and Canadian Consular Services

China, like many countries, does not recognize a person's right to have more than one nationality (citizenship). Under the laws of China, when a citizen of China obtains a second nationality, there is a loss of Chinese citizenship. In practice, however, recognition of Canadian citizenship is not automatic. There have been cases where Chinese authorities have refused to recognize the Canadian citizenship of persons who had travelled to Canada on a Chinese Public Affairs passport and not returned to China, or had travelled to Canada at state expense and not returned to China. In these cases, Chinese authorities consider you still to be a Chinese citizen until you have gone through an official process to renounce Chinese citizenship. The proper procedures for doing this are not entirely clear, and a Chinese embassy or consulate should be consulted for specific information.

Canadian citizens of Chinese background must take overt action such as consistently using a Canadian passport and obtaining a visa from the Chinese authorities for entry into China. Chinese authorities will usually consider you a citizen of the country (and only that country) that issued the passport you used to enter China.