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# **A Compendium of Canadianisms**

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Навчально-методичні матеріали підготовлено для самостійної та наукової роботи студентів-бакалаврів та магістрів вищих навчальних закладів з метою збагачення й удосконалення знань з канадознавства при вивченні теоретичних курсів “Лінгвокраїнознавство країн основної іноземної мови”, “Історія культури країн основної іноземної мови”, “Англомовна література Канади та країн Латинської Америки”, написанні курсових і магістерських робіт, роботі студентських наукових проблемних груп, роботі Центрів канадознавства тощо.

Для студентів і викладачів фахових інститутів і факультетів за напрямками підготовки “Філологія”, “Середня освіта” із спеціальності “Мова та література (англійська)”, для аспірантів-філологів, науковців та всіх, хто цікавиться канадознавством.

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## INTRODUCTION

Compiling a selection of usages and expressions that exist in spoken or written English in Canada presents a number of challenges. It was necessary to devise certain criteria for deciding whether specific words or expressions should be included in the compendium.

The criterion that we consider to be of the greatest importance is the degree to which a structure is used almost exclusively in Canada (or at least in some part of Canada), but is not widely used in the United States or in Britain. As a matter of fact, many of these expressions are mainly associated with certain regions, or at least are prevalent only in those regions. This is not surprising, considering vastness of Canada's geography, and the distance separating some of the country's main population centres.

In some cases, the 'regionalisms' that have evolved reflect the ethnic background of some of the largest immigrant groups present in an area, as we will see. This is particularly the case in Quebec and New Brunswick, where major concentrations of francophones exist and have existed for many years. A considerable exchange of lexical material has occurred in these areas.

For non-Canadians (and to some extent even for Canadians) seeking to assemble a collection of "Canadianisms", there is the additional difficulty of evaluating the sources from which information may be drawn. One individual can present his or her personal opinions or conclusions in an Internet article in a way that sounds quite authoritative, and yet those opinions and conclusions may not be based on very solid evidence. In other cases, rare and perhaps trivial examples can be 'elevated' to seem more significant than they really are. These aspects need to be kept in mind by the editors.

In various online sources dealing with locally distinctive vocabulary, expressions that are in the category of slang often receive more attention. This could be a result of the fact that much of the standard vocabulary of Canadian English is very similar to the forms used in the United States and/or in Britain, and it's particularly in the area of slang that forms develop which are the most distinctively Canadian.

There is one aspect of the process of selecting material for this compendium that we did not anticipate at the outset of the project: it eventually became very apparent that we needed to include a considerable number of words which appear to be part of the general English-language lexicon, but which have developed certain very specific meanings that are

unique to Canada. In such cases, we sought to make this point clear as we formulated our explanatory material.

The most comprehensive and authoritative compilation of Canadianisms that we have come across is unquestionably *A Dictionary of Canadianisms on Historical Principles*, Second Edition, published at the University of British Columbia under the editorship of Stefan Dollinger and Margery Fee. They based their work on the first edition of this same work, which was published in 1967.

An additional challenge that presents itself in the formulating of this work stems from the fact that it is designed for use by non-Canadians who are studying English as a second language. This means that many things need to be explained more fully than would be the case in compilations created in Canada: readers cannot be expected to have the background historical and cultural knowledge that Canadians have regarding their own country.

There are some subtle linguistic patterns that prevail throughout the English-speaking world, and extensive research would be needed to determine whether it is possible to single out a body of distinctively Canadian patterns. For example, in English in general there is a very widespread pattern of euphemism, avoiding terms that in some way seem offensive or inappropriate, even though for other language groups this is not a factor that is considered.

### **Canadian Spelling Patterns**

Traditionally, the spelling of English words as taught in Canadian schools reflected British English to a large extent, with some notable exceptions such as “tire” being used as in the U.S.A., rather than the British English “tyre.” However, due to the extensive interaction between Canada and its neighbour to the south, American patterns of spelling have an increasingly large influence on the way Canadians write English words. In recent times, the ‘borderless’ Internet has the effect of blurring the differences between British and American usages as well.

## Canadian Phonetic Patterns

At the end of the main compendium there is a table showing the phonetic transcription system that has been used in the pronunciation key given in certain cases. The majority of the words contained in the compendium are well known or can be found in many dictionaries, but we have provided transcriptions in those cases that would be likely to present pronunciation problems for students outside of Canada.

Mention could be made here of the fact that certain distinctive features have developed in the way Canadians pronounce certain sounds. James Harbeck discussed this at some length in an article which appeared on August 20, 2015 on BBC Online. Although some of the distinctive features relate mainly to particular words, there are a few generalized patterns to which Harbeck drew particular attention.

The first feature is commonly referred to as ‘Canadian raising.’ It involves two specific diphthongs, [aɪ] and [aʊ], when they occur prior to voiceless consonants, as found in words such as ‘ice’ and ‘out.’ A clear difference can be heard by comparison with the diphthong as heard in words such as ‘eyes’ and ‘found.’ In the pronunciation pattern that prevails in most regions of Canada, the first portion of these two diphthongs is raised by comparison with the pronunciation of the United States. American observers often contend that for “out and about”, Canadians say “oot and aboot”, but this characterization is somewhat irritating to Canadians, who consider it to be completely inaccurate.

Harbeck also makes reference to the “low back merger” which leads to words such as ‘cot’ and ‘caught’ being pronounced identically. Attention is sometimes also given to the ‘Canadian vowel shift’, which refers to the manner in which the pronunciation of words like ‘bit’ approaches the sound of ‘bet’, and ‘bet’ moves closer to ‘bat’. Similar patterns can be heard in some parts of the United States.

Historically, British English speakers would probably have considered the Canadian pronunciation of words like “tune” to be identical to that of American speakers, [tu:n], and this characterization would be essentially correct (in contrast to British English [tju:n]). In the past thirty or forty years, however, an interesting phenomenon has begun to appear in which Canadian speakers modify this vowel in words like “Saskatoon”, pronouncing it like a British speaker might do if it were spelled ‘Saskatune’.

## Phonetic Transcription Pattern

The words given as examples reflect the Canadian pronunciation of these words, which in some cases differs from that of British English. However, it should be noted that the vowels [i] and [u], which appear in more recent dictionaries of pronunciation, exist in both British and North American English. The symbol [ɛ] is used here, as in various modern dictionaries, as being superior to [e] for representing the sound in words such as "set", because it avoids some of the phonetic ambiguity of [e].

	<b>Words containing the sounds</b>		
<i>Vowels</i>		<i>Semi-vowels</i>	
[ʌ]	up, love, young, blood, does	[j]	you, use, beauty
[ɑ:]	father, car, lot, wash, thought	[w]	way, one, quick
[ɔ:]	sort, all, door, talk, salt, saw		
[æ]	cat, sang, class, half, ask, laugh	<i>Consonants</i>	
[ə]	comma, happen, about	[ŋ]	sing, English, hanging
[ <sup>ə</sup> r]	mother, collar, minor, future	[r]	ream, boring, sorry
[ɛ]	let, very, length, head, friend	[ʃ]	ship, sugar, tissue
[ɜ:r]	person, bird, journal, fur, learn	[tʃ]	cheap, patch, richest
[ɪ]	in, city, finish, crystal, busy	[ʒ]	vision, genre, mirage
[i]	penny, happiness, studying, elect	[dʒ]	agent, judge, soldier
[i:]	me, seen, feat, receive, key	[ə]	think, mouth, author
[ʊ]	good, look, put, could	[ð]	breathe, that, father, smooth
[u]	influence, graduation, actual		
[u:]	too, food, cute, new, true		
<i>Diphthongs</i>			
[aɪ]	sigh, try		
[aʊ]	now, house		
[oʊ]	home, go, boat, know		
[ɛ <sup>ə</sup> r]	air, bear, there		
[eɪ]	pay, race, eight		
[ɔɪ]	join, toy		
[ʊ <sup>ə</sup> r]	tour, poor		
<p>Not mentioned in the chart above are the IPA consonant symbols which are basically the same as the letters used in English: [b], [p], [t], [d], [k], [g], [f], [v], [s], [z], [h], [m], [n], [l].</p>			

## COMPENDIUM

### A

**A-tent:** a tent with no vertical wall, but which has the canvas sloping from the ridgepole down to the ground on both sides.

**ABM, bank machine:** common terms for automated teller machines.

**aboideau** [əbʊd'ɔʊ]: a sluice gate or dam (from French, used mainly in the Maritime provinces, on the Atlantic coast; also 'aboiteau' or 'abatteau').

**above:** an adjective or adverb use to refer to the number of degrees above zero Fahrenheit.

**aboriginal peoples:** the original inhabitants of any territory; in Canada, some specific terms have come into use for designating these population groups.

**acclamation:** used in Canada to refer to someone being elected to an office of some kind without contested voting.

**across the line:** has the meaning "in the United States" (on the other side of the boundary.)

**advance poll:** a Canadian expression referring to advance voting in an election.

**agricultural representative, or ag.rep:** a government official who provides advice to farmers and

workers in other agriculture-related occupations.

**agricultural research station:** *see* *EXPERIMENTAL FARM*.

**airtight heater:** a stove made of sheet iron in which wood is burned for heating rooms.

**alcool** [æ'l'ku:l]: a drinkable diluted form of ethyl alcohol, sometimes known as everclear; it is distilled from cereal grains.

**allophone:** a resident of Quebec whose first language is neither English nor French. Used only by linguistic specialists in other English-speaking countries, this word was first used with this meaning by journalists and broadcasters in the middle of the twentieth century, and then by the general public, even in some other parts of Canada.

**anglophone:** a person who speaks English as his/her first language. (The term is occasionally heard outside Canada, but enjoys the greatest currency in the Canadian setting.)

**antelope:** a term often used in Alberta and Saskatchewan to refer to a ruminant animal which is in actuality a pronghorn, of a different species than true antelopes.

**arborite:** the Canadian term, originating from a proprietary name, for a hard plastic laminate often applied to tabletops.



**ardox nails:** with a name that was originally proprietary, these nails have the form of a spiral shaft.

**arena:** a widely-used word in English which is often used in Canada with the specific meaning of an indoor hockey rink.

**auditor general:** in Canada, the official responsible for carrying out financial audits of all programs, activities and functions of government departments.

## B

**bachelor:** bachelor apartment/suite, as used in advertisements such as “bachelor for rent”.

**back bacon:** lean bacon made from pork loin; in the USA this is termed ‘Canadian bacon.’

**backcatcher:** in baseball, the player who stands near the batter’s plate and catches the balls thrown by the pitcher; known in the USA simply as a ‘catcher.’

**back east:** a geographical reference with specific meanings according to the user’s location: in British Columbia, it refers to anywhere east of the Rockies (also ‘out east’ or ‘down east’). In other western provinces, it suggests all

regions east of Manitoba. In Ontario or Quebec, the expression is used by Maritimers to designate their Atlantic home areas.

**badlands:** a dry wilderness area in southern Alberta and southwestern Saskatchewan where severe erosion has occurred, leaving unusual landforms. Many prehistoric fossils have also been discovered there.

**bagman:** used in Canada with the meaning of a person who raises funds for a political party.

**bailiff:** a word with various meanings in other countries, but used in Canada to refer to someone who repossesses property.

**bald prairie:** an expression that in the vast majority of cases has been used by Canadians to describe the treeless plains of southern Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta.

**Barr colonist:** a member of an expedition of British colonists who settled a large area adjacent to the Alberta border west of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

**Barrens:** the vacant and inhospitable tundra area of northern Canada.

**Bay Street:** a street in Toronto where the Toronto Stock Exchange and many other important financial institutions are situated, constituting the country’s financial centre; from this, the term “Bay Street” has come

to mean the nation's moneyed interests in a general sense.

**baywop:** a term used pejoratively (mostly in Newfoundland) to refer to a resident of a rural area centered around an ocean bay.

**bear-pit session:** a Canadian term for an event where political candidates or elected officials are subjected to severe questioning.

**BeaverTail™:** a trademarked name which has become a generic term for a dessert food basically consisting of a piece of pastry, usually covered with lemon juice and cinnamon sugar, the name suggesting its shape similar to that of a beaver's tail.

**bed chesterfield:** a sofa that can be converted into a double bed.

**bee:** a gathering of neighbours (especially in pioneer days) for the purpose of doing some type of a job, such as building a barn, which would often be followed by a party. Women sometimes held 'quilting bees'.

**below:** (used as an adjective or adverb), referring to the temperature below zero Fahrenheit.

**Bennett buggy:** a car that had the motor removed and was fitted with hardware permitting it to be drawn by horses, because of the fact that in the Great Depression (coinciding with the term of R. B.

Bennett as Prime Minister) many could not afford to operate their cars.

**berry pemmican:** food made by indigenous Canadians of the western prairies, consisting of pulverized buffalo meat with berries pounded into the meat.

**beverage room:** a room in a hotel or tavern in which alcoholic drinks are served.

**BFI bin:** a garbage container (or 'dumpster'), named after a prominent Canadian waste management company, in provinces where that company does business; in the same way, these containers are often referred to in Saskatchewan as "Loraas bins".

**big mucky-muck** (sometimes expressed as "high muckamuck"): the leading person in a group, or a so-called 'big-shot.'

**Bigfoot:** a legendary monstrous animal, like Sasquatch, in the Coast Range of the western mountains.

**Big O or Big Owe:** the Olympic Stadium in Montreal; the 'big owe' is a pun pointing to the fact that the construction of the stadium resulted in an enormous debt for the city of Montreal.

**Big Smoke:** a term applied to various large cities in Canada and even elsewhere.

**bird dog:** in Canadian usage, a small plane with the function of

guiding water bombers to their destination while fighting forest fires.

**bismarck:** a type of jelly-filled doughnut, for residents of the Prairie provinces and British Columbia (as well as for some Americans in Great Plains states.)

**blind line:** an invisible line in a surveyed area where, in keeping with the existing system, a road could theoretically be constructed if such were required, but which has remained vacant.

**blow in:** to become blocked with snow as a result of a snowstorm.

**blowdirt:** soil that has been carried by the wind and deposited somewhere, much like snow is blown into snowdrifts.

**blubber lamp:** a shallow dish made of soapstone in which Inuit people place oil or fat to burn for the purpose of having light and heat in their homes.

**blueberry buckle:** a cake filled with blueberries and which has a crumbly topping.

**bluff:** a clump or grove of trees on a prairie or other generally treeless area, in the jargon of Canadian prairie residents.

**bluenoser:** a term for a resident of Nova Scotia.

**board of trustees:** a group of (generally elected) officials who are

responsible for the administration of schools in a certain area.

**bombardier** [bɒmə'dɪr]: a vehicle manufactured by Bombardier Limited which can travel easily over snow and ice, being equipped with skis on the front and a system of tracks instead of rear wheels. (The English pronunciation of this vehicle's name differs greatly from the original French sound.)

**booze can:** an after-hours establishment where alcohol is served, often illegally.

**borrow pit:** a pit excavated near a road for the purpose of obtaining ballast for the construction of roads or railways.

**boston:** In First-Nations communities of the interior regions of B.C., this is a slightly derisive and sometimes hostile term for "white man", no doubt derived from the Chinook jargon term for an American, which was 'Boston man'.

**breaker plough:** a large plough designed for breaking new land.

**Brier:** the name of the final men's Canadian curling championship.

**bronco-buster:** the person who breaks the will of wild horses so that they will be willing to accept being harnessed or saddled.

**broomball:** a competitive game somewhat similar to hockey and

played on an ice rink, but using brooms instead of sticks, and a ball instead of a puck.

**brushland:** land covered with brush (small trees of various kinds.)

**bunny hug:** a term commonly used in Saskatchewan to refer to a hooded sweatshirt.

**bush, the bush:** commonly used in Western Canada as a generic term (like the Australian ‘outback’) that may be linked with less-developed districts associated with hunting and the outdoors or to employment in mines or forests.

**bush lot:** a holding of land that has not been cleared.

**bush pilot:** a pilot who flies commercial airplanes over the uninhabited northern wilderness.

**bushed:** used mainly in British Columbia and Yukon, the word is used to describe somebody who has been in “the bush” too long, and perhaps has become eccentric as a result of long isolation. It might also suggest that someone is lacking in civilized behaviour habits.

**b’y [bai]:** a contraction of ‘boy’, this term is used in the Maritime provinces (and especially in Newfoundland and Cape Breton Island) and corresponds more or less to words like “man,” “dude,” or “pal.” It might be used in a phrase such as “Go on, b’y”.

## C

**calendar:** a familiar word which has one unique meaning in Canada - a comprehensive guide to the programs and courses offered by a university, along with other important university-related information.

**call display:** the system by which a telephone displays information about incoming calls.

**camp:** used in northern Ontario when referring to a small house that is described elsewhere in Ontario (and to some degree in other provinces) as a ‘cottage’, or as a ‘cabin’ (more common in the West). It is also used, to a lesser extent, in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, as well as in parts of New England.

**Canada goose:** a large gray wild goose which has sometimes been given the name “Canada’s favourite waterfowl.”

**Canadarm:** a robotic arm that was developed and manufactured in Canada by SPAR Aerospace Ltd. for use with the NASA space shuttle program. Its function was to manipulate objects from the shuttle cargo bay.

**Canadian Red Ensign:** an adapted form of the British merchant navy flag which was used as Canada’s national flag from 1945

until the adoption of the present-day flag in 1965.

**Canadian Shield:** a huge area of pre-Cambrian rock structures.

**Canadian Wheat Board:** a marketing board set up by the Canadian government to control the sales of wheat and barley grown in western Canada.

**CanCon:** an abbreviated form of the expression ‘Canadian content’, which is used in referring to the proportion of Canadian songs, films, and programs that are aired by Canadian broadcasters, in compliance with guidelines.

**CANDU:** a type of nuclear power reactor built in Ontario as well as being sold to other nations.

**CanLit:** used to speak of Canadian literature, particularly when referring to literature that exists mainly through subsidies from the government; it can also imply a certain style of writing. Originally the expression was derogatory, but it was ultimately adopted by the Canadian literary establishment as a kind of shorthand for referring to itself.

**canola:** a variety of rapeseed developed in Canada which is a major source of edible and industrial oil.

**canuck** [kə'nʌk]: a slang term for “Canadian” in the U.S. and Canada. It sometimes means

specifically “French Canadian” and has an unfavourable connotation, especially when used in the northeastern United States and in English Canada. The term was adopted as the name of the National Hockey League team in Vancouver, and may also designate a player on that team NHL team. (A less common optional word for Canuck is Canucklehead.)

**Caper:** a resident of Cape Breton Island (located in the province of Nova Scotia).

**cariboozer** [kə'ri:buzər]: (a fusion of ‘boozer’ [drinker] and ‘Cariboo’) sometimes used to refer to a resident of BC’s Cariboo country, more jocularly than derisively. It is not applied uniquely to alcoholics, but definitely is related to the heavy-drinking culture of that region (which has one of southern Canada’s highest rates of heart disease and other drinking-related causes of mortality).

**catamaran, catamaran sledge:** in Canadian usage this refers to a wooden sled.

**cheechako:** a term used in Arctic regions to refer to people from the ‘outside.’

**cheezies:** cheese puffs. The name is a genericized trademark based on a brand of crunchy cheese snack produced and sold in Canada.

**chesterfield:** a term referring to a type of sofa or couch. Its use has been declining in recent decades, particularly among younger people in western and central regions; it might also be heard occasionally in northern California, but is obsolete in Britain, where it originated. Over the years, it was one distinctively Canadian term that was totally confusing for non-Canadians, although extremely commonplace within Canada.

**chinook:** a warm, dry wind experienced along the eastern side of the Rocky Mountains in the United States and Canada.

**chinook arch:** a cloud formation that foreshadows or accompanies the so-called Chinook winds referred to above, often visible as an arch-shaped strip of blue sky near the western horizon, in the areas of Alberta where this phenomenon occurs.

**chip wagon:** a large food cart, originally horse-drawn but sometimes later motor-driven, from which potato ‘chips’ and other fast foods and beverages could be sold to the public.

**chuck:** In British Columbia, the word ‘chuck’ is sometimes used under the influence of Chinook Jargon to refer to water, usually the straits and other inland waters

between Vancouver and Vancouver Island; the word has come to be used commonly in marine English and in weather forecasts. An alternate form is **salt chuck**.

**close the light:** a non-standard way of saying “turn off the light”, showing influence from structures present in Quebecois French.

**cloudhopper:** an air pilot, especially one who flies in remote or forested locations.

**coasting:** sliding down a snow-covered hill on a sled, toboggan, or some other object.

**coffee row:** a term that refers to informal gatherings of local people in a community’s coffee shops and diners, where topics such as sports and local happenings are discussed. (*This expression is most common in Saskatchewan.*)

**collegiate, collegiate institute:** this term is used in Ontario, Manitoba and Saskatchewan to refer to secondary schools with elements of curriculum, facilities, and teaching personnel that place them above the level of a regular high school.

**composite high school:** a term used in some provinces for high schools that offer a range of academic, commercial and vocational courses.

**concession road:** in southern Ontario and southern Quebec,

concession roads are situated on the dividing lines between the 'concessions' (land allotments), which were surveyed as standardized square blocks, each square being as close as possible to 1,000 acres (405 hectares). These roads provide access to residences and fields.

**Confederation:** the term which is used to describe the arrangement by which several provinces of British North America entered into an agreement for union that brought the Canadian nation into existence in 1867.

**constab** [kən'stæb]: this is a shortened version of the "Royal Newfoundland Constabulary", which provides policing services in cities of Newfoundland and Labrador.

**corduroy** [kɔrdəroɪ], **corduroy road:** a road made of logs fastened together to float on swampy ground, thus having the approximate appearance of large-scale corduroy fabric.

**correction line:** in western Canada, this expression describes a road situated on an imaginary east-west line where, in accordance with a prearranged surveying provision, correction is made for the curvature of the earth.

**cotton batten:** a Canadian form of the expression "cotton batting", a

layered fluffy form of cotton used in upholstery and packing, and sometimes for dressing wounds.

**country elevator:** (*see GRAIN ELEVATOR*)

**country store:** a general store located in a farming district, usually at some distance from any town or village, which catered to the needs of local farmers and residents.

**coureur de bois:** (*French, but often used by English speakers in the past*) an expression that described unaffiliated fur traders who moved throughout forest areas in search of furs.

**Cowichan (Indian) sweater:** a heavy sweater made of gray, unbleached wool; this name is given to those knitted by the Cowichan Indians of southern Vancouver Island, which have distinctive symbolic designs. The **Siwash** sweater is similar, but from an area on the lower mainland.

**CPR strawberries:** a colloquial term for the prunes or dried apples that were transported from eastern Canada to the impoverished residents in the West by rail (CPR being the initials for the Canadian Pacific Railway) during the Great Depression, when the multi-year drought made it impossible for people in the West to grow fresh fruit.

**crokinole:** a board game in which wooden discs are propelled toward the centre of the board or toward other discs. The game has reached beyond Canada, but users are much more prevalent in Canada than anywhere else.

**Crown corporation:** a company that is owned and operated by the Canadian federal government or by one of the provincial governments.

## D

**dainty:** a fancy cookie, pastry, or square served at a social event (usually used in the plural); frequently heard in western Canada.

**day parole:** short-term leave granted to imprisoned offenders who are nearing the completion of their prison term.

**dayliner:** a Budd Rail Diesel Car (no longer in service) - a self-propelled diesel passenger railcar on the former British Columbia Railway, also called "Budd Car" after the company who made them. This type of service also existed in some other provinces, serving on routes such as Edmonton-Calgary and Regina-Saskatoon.

**deke, deke out:** a verb (shortened from 'decoy') meaning to

feint, to trick or avoid someone, most often used in sports such as hockey, "to deftly manoeuvre around a sporting opponent." This usage was first observed in Canada, but has been adopted elsewhere since that time.

**dep:** corner (convenience) store, adapted from Quebec French word "dépanneur," especially by English-speaking Quebecers; sometimes used in the uncontracted form, *depanneur*.

**development road:** a road specially constructed to facilitate the development of natural resources in some inaccessible region.

**DEW line:** (based on the acronym for 'distant early warning') a line of radar stations and airstrips designed for the protection of North America for potential aerial attacks.

**diamond harrows:** a farm implement consisting of an array of metal prongs fastened to a steel frame, which can be dragged over the soil to smooth it and to destroy weeds. (The term is also known in Australia and New Zealand.)

**double-double:** a coffee with a double portion of cream and of sugar (especially, but not exclusively, from Tim Horton's), recently added to the Oxford Dictionary. Triple-triple and four-by-four (less common) are



corresponding coffees with three and four creams/sugars, respectively.

**downhomer:** a person from Newfoundland; sometimes refers to a person from any part of Atlantic Canada.

**droke:** a coppice or thicket (used especially in Newfoundland, most often by hunters).

**duffle moccasins:** a type of heavy ankle-length socks or liners made of duffle, worn under the outer footwear to provide warmth.

## E

**Eastern townships:** an area of Quebec situated south of the St. Laurence River and east of the Richelieu River which was settled mainly by Loyalists and other immigrants from the USA; in recent decades the region has come to be populated mainly by French speakers.

**eavestrough** (also used in northern and western U.S.): a channel that is attached to the underside of the roof edge (eave) of a house to collect rainwater; most American and British speakers refer to these as gutters.

**eh:** a spoken interrogative interjection to ascertain the comprehension, continued interest, or

agreement of the person or persons addressed (“That was a good game last night, eh?”). The word may have its origins in the French *hein*, which is pronounced in a somewhat similar fashion.

**elevator:** *see* *GRAIN ELEVATOR*

**equalization:** grants from the Canadian federal government to specific provinces which make it possible to provide comparable services in all provinces even though the level of economic prosperity differs from one province to another.

**Eskimos:** the term which was used to refer to northern indigenous peoples which are now described as the *INUIT*.

**experimental farm:** the everyday term for referring to agricultural research stations that have been established in various places across Canada.

## F

**factor:** a senior employee of the Hudson’s Bay Company in a fur trading post.

**Family Allowance:** a monthly payment issued by the federal government to parents or guardians

of each child in Canada under the age of 18.

**fifty-cent piece:** a large coin with a face value of fifty cents, or one-half of a Canadian dollar.

**fire hall:** another term for referring to a fire station, or firehouse; the headquarters of a fire brigade.

**First Nation:** a term for any of a number of Aboriginal population groups in Canada, with the exception of the Inuit.

**floor hockey:** an indoor team sport derived from hockey, in which the players use a long stick to carry and to pass a ball or a ring, aiming to put it into the goal as is done with the puck in ice hockey.

**flush:** a toilet, in the speech of older residents of the Maritimes.

**freezie:** a frozen flavoured sugar-water snack common worldwide, but known by this name exclusively in Canada.

**French immersion:** a method for teaching French which involves giving instruction in that language for all the school subjects.

## G

**garburator:** a high-speed motorized disposal unit for food garbage items which is placed below

the kitchen sink and is connected to the drain pipe.

**gas bar:** a filling station ('gas station') with a central island, having pumps under a fixed awning.

**gaspereau:** Canadian term for a fish also known as the alewife.

**ghetto:** an adjective adapted from the noun 'ghetto', to describe someone whose behaviour is perceived as projecting a gang-like image even if associated with a street gang; "Mike is ghetto" or a residence in a state of disrepair and very dirty "they live so ghetto", are growing usages in Ontario, although not unique to Canada.

**gitch:** see **gotch**

**give 'er:** a shortened form of "give her a go," this slang term is used to encourage someone on. In some contexts, the form "**givin' 'er**" is used to describe any act carried out with extreme exuberance or to its fullest potential. "We were just givin' 'er last night."

**goal suck:** In ice hockey, a player who stays in the vicinity of the opposing team's goal, waiting for an opportunity to score, and does not participate fully in defensive play.

**goalie:** In Manitoba, a term for someone of Icelandic descent.

**gopher:** a word used in Canada to refer to ground squirrels that actually belong to more than one

species; these rodents dig extensive tunnels and can do serious damage to cereal crops.

**Gostapo:** *coll.* GO Transit Enforcement Unit security staff in the Greater Toronto Area. They check for valid tickets or passes on GO Transit commuter trains and issue fines to offenders.

**gotch** (*pl.* **gotchies**), **ginch** or **gonch:** underwear, especially men's briefs. A "gotch-pull" or "gonch-pull" is another name for a wedge.

**governor general:** the official representative in Canada of the British Crown, who has responsibility of reading the official Speech from the Throne and carrying out various other ceremonial duties.

**grain elevator:** tall structures built in communities throughout the agricultural regions of Canada, and particularly in the western provinces, for the storage and transshipment of cereal grains.

**Gravol:** the name of an anti-nausea medication sold in Canada and very well-known with that name. (The brand is also known in S. Africa.)

**Grey Cup:** the trophy awarded annually to the winners of the Canadian Football League championship.

**grid road:** the term applied in Saskatchewan to a major road on a

road allowance designated by the original Dominion Land Survey.

**Grit:** a member of the Liberal Party of Canada. In British Columbia, a neo-Grit is a new-era BC Liberal (distinct in character from the pre-1970s BC Liberal Party), although Grit is commonly used in the media, though only in referring to the federal Liberals as a rule.

**guichet:** (Quebec English) automated teller machine.

**gyproc:** gypsum board, often called 'drywall' or 'sheetrock' in the USA; the name originated as a popular brand of gypsum board.

## H

**Habs:** a nickname for the Montreal Canadiens NHL team, based on the French "habitants".

**(have) had the biscuit:** to be dead, broken, or spent, "My old car has had the biscuit".

**half-section:** a portion of land composed of 320 acres, or half of a surveyed section according to the Dominion survey system.

**Haligonian:** a resident of Halifax.

**Hansard:** the official record of the proceedings of the House of Commons in Ottawa.

**hat trick:** the accomplishment of scoring three goals in a single hockey game.

**hay slough:** a low-lying area sometimes filled with water where there is a luxuriant growth of hay.

**height of land:** (continental) divide, water parting, watershed.

**Hill, the:** refers to the Canadian government, the House of Commons, and/or the Senate, a shortened form of 'Parliament Hill.'

**homo milk:** homogenized milk, particularly with a fat content greater than 2% (usually 3.25%, and generally referred to in the U.S.A. only as 'whole milk'.)

**hoodie:** A hooded sweatshirt with or without a zipper.

**hose:** used as a verb, 'to hose' means to trick, to deceive, or to steal.

**hosed:** broken or not working, used in cases such as when referring to the condition of a television set after a severe power surge. Another sense is 'inebriated' (drunk).

**humidex:** measurement used by meteorologists to reflect the combined effect of heat and humidity on the way that individuals experience hot weather.

**hydro:** (used more in some provinces than in others) is used to refer to the electricity utility service, or alternatively to AC electricity itself. This usage extends to some

compound expressions such as hydrofield (a line of electricity transmission towers), hydro lines (electricity transmission lines) and hydro poles (electrical transmission poles).

## I

**ice road:** a road which crosses the ice of a river or lake, used during the portion of the winter when the ice is strong enough to support vehicles.

**Inside Passage:** a term which is used to describe the marine passageway that passes from the south British Columbia coastal area to the central and northern coastal areas (including the city of Prince Rupert) via a chain of channels that is separated from the ocean by the coastal archipelago.

**interior, the:** in the Canadian context, a term used by residents of British Columbia when referring to most areas outside of the Fraser Valley, the islands and the north coast.

**Inuk:** the singular form of the plural word INUIT.

**Inuit:** the indigenous peoples of northern Canada, previously referred to as Eskimos.

**Island, the:** Vancouver Island, in common British Columbia usage.

## J

**jambuster:** a jelly-filled doughnut, generally covered with icing sugar (used mainly in Manitoba and western Ontario).

**jawbone:** a backcountry expression referring to giving credit at a store or bar. “He gave me jawbone” means the storekeeper or merchant allowed the customer to buy an item on credit.

**jib:** Canadian slang for methamphetamine.

**Jolly Jumper:** a device with a strong springy suspension above a simple seat, that can be attached at the top before a small child is placed in the seat, for the child to jump and exercise its legs; invented in Canada in 1910.

**Juno award:** an award presented annually to outstanding Canadian musicians.

## K

**kayak:** a lightweight canoe constructed by the Inuit, to be rowed with a double-bladed paddle.

**Kenora dinner jacket:** a plaid Melton jacket, typically red or green, once associated with residents of Kenora, Ontario; later popular with artists and fans of the grunge movement.

**Klondiker:** a person who participated in the Klondike gold rush in the Yukon Territory of northwestern Canada in 1896-99.

**kokanee** [ˈkoʊkəniː]: British Columbian name for a species of land-locked sockeye salmon. It is also the name of a popular beer made in the Kootenay district.

**Kraft Dinner:** the Canadian version of a popular brand of macaroni noodles; the term is often used broadly to refer to any dish based on macaroni or some similar type of pasta.

## L

**Lakehead, the:** this is a term which is applied to Thunder Bay, Ontario (formerly the twin cities of Port Arthur and Fort William), based on the fact that the community is situated at the head of Lake Superior.

**laneway:** an alley in an urban area, usually like a small street

running along the back of householders' properties.

**language police:** officials empowered by the government of Quebec to enforce laws concerning the predominance of French in various venues in the province.

**lieutenant-governor:** the representative of the Crown in each province, subordinate to the governor-general.

**liquor store:** a general term referring to a government-operated liquor store; (privately-owned liquor stores are uncommon or illegal in some parts of Canada.)

**loppy:** an adjective used in Newfoundland to refer to rough or choppy water due to windy weather conditions.

**Lord Stanley or Lord Stanley's Mug:** a slang reference to the Stanley Cup, the trophy awarded annually to the National Hockey League team which wins the championship.

**Lotus Land:** a nickname for British Columbia, and especially the Lower Mainland around Vancouver; vaguely linked with Homer's "Land of the Lotus-Eaters", the term sometimes suggests the theatrics of BC politics and political personalities. The term was originally

coined by Vancouver columnist Allan Fotheringham.

**Lower Mainland:** a term referring to the Greater Vancouver-Fraser Valley area of BC. It is connected with the fact that the area is virtually at sea level, in contrast to other regions of the province.

**loyalist:** *see UNITED EMPIRE LOYALISTS*

**lumber yard:** in Canada, this term often is used to refer simply to a lumber retail outlet. In various other countries, its primary meaning is a location where raw timber is processed.

**lunch:** in Newfoundland and some parts of western Canada, this word refers to snacks that are taken between meals or in the evening, but not for the midday meal.

## M

**mac:** a nickname for the popular McIntosh Red apple.

**mackinaw cloth, mackinac** [*mækənɔ:*]: a plaid Melton jacket, typically red or green, at one time a hallmark of the Canadian working man. One form of it was called a 'lumber jacket'.

**mainlander:** used (sometimes derogatorily) by Newfoundlanders, Prince Edward Islanders and Cape Bretoners to refer to a person from mainland Canada; also used similarly by Vancouver Islanders, especially Victorians, primarily referring to residents of the Greater Vancouver/Lower Mainland area.

**Maritimer:** a resident of the Maritime provinces on Canada's east coast - Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, or Prince Edward Island. (Newfoundland is not included, being different in its climate, geography and history).

**marriage commissioner:** an official who is authorized to conduct marriage ceremonies.

**matriculation:** in Canada, this term referred to the completion of secondary school studies which would be necessary for university entrance.

**matrimonial cake:** (mainly used in Saskatchewan) a dessert square with a base of oatmeal or pastry, a filling of dates, and a crumble topping.

**mickey:** a small bottle of liquor, shaped to fit in a pocket, much like a hip flask.

**Mountie:** a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

**mukluk:** a type of warm knee-high boot worn by the indigenous peoples in Yukon, Nunavut and the Northwest Territories.

**muni, the muni:** in British Columbia, a term describing municipal governments and their bureaucracy.

## N

**Nanaimo bar:** a confection (named after the city of Nanaimo, British Columbia) made of egg custard with a Graham-cracker-based bottom and a thin layer of chocolate on top; although originally Canadian, this term has become well-known in various other countries.

**New Ontario:** regions in northern Ontario which were added to the province's territory in 1912.

**Newfie, Newf:** a colloquial term used to describe a resident of Newfoundland and Labrador. Although once derogatory (especially from non-Newfies), its current usage is only mildly humorous.

**Norseman:** a light aircraft which was used extensively for

flying into remote areas of northern Canada.

**North Shore:** the northeastern region of New Brunswick which is adjacent to the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the Northumberland Strait.

**Nor'Wester:** a man who possessed experience in the fur-trading regions of the early northwest of Canada.

**notwithstanding clause:** a section of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms which grants the federal or provincial parliamentary bodies the right to override certain portions of the Charter.

**nuisance ground:** a Canadian colloquial expression which refers to a garbage disposal site, or 'garbage dump'.

## O

**Ogopogo:** a mythical monster reputed to be alive in Okanagan Lake, British Columbia.

**Oil Patch, the:** a colloquial term for the oil industry of Canada and particularly Alberta; it is applied most often to the exploration and production segments of the industry.

**Otter:** a well-known light monoplane which saw extensive service for bush flying in northern Canadian regions because of its ability to take off and land on very short runways or stretches of water. It was manufactured by DeHavilland Aircraft of Canada.

**out east:** a general term used mainly in British Columbia to designate anyone born and raised east of Manitoba.

**out West:** a term used by people in eastern Canada to refer to areas west of the Manitoba-Ontario border, and particularly the prairie provinces.

**outport:** any port along the coast of Labrador and Newfoundland other than St. John's.

## P

**Palliser('s) triangle:** a region extending from Manitoba to the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, as designated by Captain John Palliser during the course of an exploratory expedition from 1857 to 1860.

**papoose:** a child or baby belonging to North American aboriginal parents.



**parish:** a term once used in New Brunswick to refer to districts described as townships in other provinces. The term survives now only in connection with specific place names, and only in rare cases.

**park ranger:** an official provincial or federal employee possessing responsibilities connected with the maintenance and patrolling of national or provincial parks.

**parkade:** a term used in referring to a parking garage, especially in western Canada; it was probably coined by Hudson's Bay Company department store chain.

**Participation:** a long-term program set up by the federal government to promote health and physical fitness.

**patrol:** a term sometimes used in Canada when referring to road graders, used in maintaining roads or in clearing snow.

**pencil crayon:** a common term in Canada for a coloured pencil.

**pepper, pepsi:** in the 1950s, the term 'pepsi' began to be used by some English Quebecers in referring to French Quebecers, apparently assuming that they liked to drink Pepsi-Cola; this seemingly shifted to

'pepper', linked with the carbonated beverage "Dr. Pepper's".

**pharmacare:** a program created in several different provinces to provide subsidies for users of prescription medications.

**pickerel:** the name used by many Canadians for referring to the walleye (fish). Most are unaware that the real pickerel is actually a completely different species of fish.

**pitlamping:** the illegal practice of hunting or fishing at night, using a light to attract game. (This term is used primarily in B.C.)

**pogey:** social assistance, welfare (especially in Newfoundland), or employment insurance. In British Columbia, Prince Edward Island, and Nova Scotia pogey is the colloquial term always used to refer to employment insurance, as opposed to 'the dole' or some other term.

**pop:** the term which is most widespread in Canada for referring to carbonated beverages (also described in some areas as soft drinks.) In the USA, soda or soda pop are the most common terms.

**postal code:** the alphanumeric code appended to mailing addresses in Canada (the equivalent of the similar British 'postcode' and the American numeric ZIP code).

**postie:** letter carrier or postal worker in general; this term is used in Britain as well as in Canada.

**pot light:** a Canadian expression for a recessed light fixture (the term which is generally used in the USA.)

**poutine:** a dish consisting of French fries (potato chips) topped with cheese curds and covered with hot gravy/poutine sauce (Quebec) or a dumpling filled with ground meat (Maritimes).

**prairie lily:** the reddish-coloured lily which is the floral emblem of Saskatchewan (also known as the western red lily.)

**Precambrian Shield:** *see CANADIAN SHIELD.*

**premier:** the head of a provincial government in Canada (the provincial counterpart of the federal prime minister.)

**purple gas:** gasoline sold at a lower price for farm use, containing a purple dye to make it easy to distinguish from regular gasoline.

## Q

**quarter section:** the typical size of an original homestead land grant, consisting of 160 acres; it is one quarter of a square mile.

**Queen's Hotel:** a nickname for the local or county jail.

**quiggly hole and quiggly town:** remains of First Nations underground houses in the Interior of British Columbia

## R

**rancherie** [ræntʃə'ri:]: In British Columbia, an Indian Reserve, specifically its residential section and often specifically the oldest residential neighbourhood of a reserve; derived from a Californian Spanish word.

**Red Ensign:** *see CANADIAN RED ENSIGN.*

**Red River cart:** a strong two-wheeled cart made completely of wood, extensively used in western Canada in pioneer times.

**Red River cereal:** a unique hot cereal blend which generally contains cracked wheat, cracked rye and flaxseed.

**returned man:** a military veteran returned from overseas service. (This term is used in Australia and New Zealand as well as in Canada.)

**rez, the:** A First Nations reserve, and particularly its residential area. The term exists all across Canada, used by English-speaking First Nations people.

**riding:** used in Canada in the sense of an electoral district or constituency.

**ringette:** a team sport somewhat resembling ice hockey, but without physical contact; played most often by women and girls. The game was invented in Canada in the 1960s but has since spread to other countries.

**rink rat:** a term used to describe people who work at a hockey rink and maintain the building and the ice surface.

**Robertson screw:** a practical type of screw invented in Canada in 1909 and still primarily available there, with a square slot that fits the square shank of drivers designed for use with these screws.

**runners:** a term used especially in central Canada to refer to running shoes/sneakers; the term also occurs occasionally in Australian and Irish English.

## S

**saltchuck:** in British Columbia, the term ‘chuck’ is used in reference to the straits and other inland waters between Vancouver and Vancouver Island; it comes from the Chinook Jargon; see also CHUCK.

**saskatoon** [sæskə'tu:n]: a small fruit-bearing bush native to the

Prairie region of western Canada; the word is also used to denote the fruit that grows on these bushes.

**sasquatch** [skwɒtʃ]: A creature similar to Bigfoot or Yeti, from the Halkemeylem word ‘sesqac’. In British Columbia it is often used, especially in its shortened form ‘squatch’ [skwɒtʃ], to mean someone tall, large and shaggy or bearded.

**screech:** a particularly potent type of Newfoundland rum.

**scribbler:** a Canadian term for a school notebook.

**scrum:** an originally British word that has undergone a semantic change in Canada, and is used in referring to spontaneous interviews with politicians.

**sealer:** a word often used in Canada for glass jars used for preserving various types of food.

**separate-school system:** a school system within which schools associated with a religious denomination are permitted to operate alongside public schools, both with government funding but with separate administrations.

**serviette:** a term derived from British English, referring to a small square of cloth or paper used while eating. It deserves mention here because of the fact that it contrasts with the American word, ‘napkin’.

**shag:** is thought to be derived from a combination of “shower” and “stag”, to refer to a dance where alcohol, entry tickets, raffle tickets, and other things, are sold to raise money for the engaged couple’s wedding. This term is most often used in northern and northwestern Ontario and sometimes in Manitoba; the expressions “stag and doe” or “buck and doe” are used elsewhere in Ontario. The more common term for this type of event in Manitoba and some other areas is a “social”.

**ski-doo, skidoo:** originally a brand name for a snowmobile produced by the Bombardier company, the word came to be used generically to refer to any snowmobile, most often pronounced [skə'du:]. The word can also be used as a verb, and the activity as “skidooing”.

**skill-testing question:** an expression referring to a pattern of deciding the winner of a contest by asking some type of question, because of legislation restricting games of chance.

**skookum:** a term used primarily, but not exclusively in British Columbia and Yukon Territory as well as the U.S. Pacific Northwest, from a Chinook word meaning “strong, powerful, good, cool, superlative or first rate” but also

currently used to indicate “very good.”

**slough** [slu:]: a word used to refer to a pond, often such as one located in a farmer’s field.

**snowbird:** the name of a bird, but also (more specifically Canadian) a reference to people, often senior citizens, who leave Canada during the winter months to reside in the southern U.S.A. The name of the Canadian Forces aerobatics team is the Snowbirds.

**snowplough:** a term which denotes one of a number of different machines or devices for snow removal. Nowadays, snowploughs often take the form of heavy trucks with strong grader blades mounted on them. Specially-equipped train locomotives may also perform this function.

**Socred:** a combined shortening of the words “Social Credit”, the main words in the name of the Social Credit political party which dominated politics in Alberta and British Columbia for many years.

**sod shack:** a structure made of pieces of sod dug from the ground and stacked on top of each other to form the walls of a primitive shelter that sometimes served as a pioneer dwelling. The expressions *sod house* and *sod hut* are sometimes used to refer to such structures.

**soft drink:** a carbonated beverage such as Coca-Cola™, sometimes referred to as *POP*.

**Solomon Grundy:** a Nova Scotia term for pieces of salted herring which have been marinated in a mixture of pickling spices, vinegar and onions.

**spinny:** an adjective used in reference to a girl or woman who is rather talkative, dizzy, and maybe not completely sound mentally.

**squaw:** a term now considered offensive that refers to First Nations women.

**stage** [staʒ]: (Quebec English, from the French word and used with the same meaning) internship or apprenticeship.

**stagette** [stæ'gɛt]: the female equivalent of a stag party; sometimes called a 'hen party'.

**stat:** a Canadian informal clipping of the term 'statutory holiday.'

**States, the:** a term commonly used to refer to the United States (almost as frequently as "the U.S.").

**stook:** a structure of several grain sheaves awaiting harvest, placed vertically and leaning against each other. The word may also function as a verb that describes the process of making stooks.

**stubble-jumper:** a term referring to someone from

Saskatchewan or some other part of the Canadian prairies region; the word is connected with the stubble that remains after grain crops have been cut.

**stunned:** a colloquial adjective primarily linked with Newfoundland but which may be heard in western Canada, with the meaning of foolish or unintelligent.

**sugar pie:** A pie made with maple-sugar filling, similar to a butter tart; it is a staple in Québécois home cooking.

**superintendant of schools:** a supervisory officer who makes periodic visits to the schools in his jurisdiction to assess the general performance of teachers and principals.

**swish:** homemade low-quality liquor, made by swishing water in old liquor barrels to extract the alcohol from the wood.

## T

**Tensor bandage:** a general term in Canada for several different types of elastic bandages, often used to control swelling or to protect wounds.

**thongs:** summer sport sandals with a pair of straps anchored between the large and second toe,

then across the toes, sometimes referred to as ‘flip-flops’ in modern American and British English.

**timbit:** originally a brand-name product (from Tim Horton’s doughnut chain) for a round bite-sized treat made from the dough cut-out from the center of a doughnut, which has become a generic name.

**Tim’s, Timmy’s, Timmy Ho’s, Timmy Ho-Ho’s:** shortened versions of the name of Tim Horton’s doughnut chain.

**tipper:** A 3.75-litre bottle of liquor which is sold with a metal frame used to support the bottle while the user is pouring from it.

**toboggan:** a flat-bottomed sled that was originally used by indigenous people of Canada for transporting various items; the term has since spread to other countries.

**toonie:** *slang* term for the Canadian two-dollar coin, modelled after ‘loonie’, nickname for the one-dollar coin that bears the image of a Canadian bird, the loon. Other spellings of the word exist, such as tooney, twooney, twoonie, twonie, and twoney.

**townie:** a term used in Newfoundland to describe a resident of the capital city, St. John’s. The term may also be heard in BC, used by rural residents to refer to those living in nearby towns.

**TransCan, T-Can:** reference to the Trans-Canada Highway, also called Number One Highway, or Highway Number One. The term “Number One Highway” isn’t connected with the highway’s quality or importance, but rather with the fact that in each province through which it passes, its official highway number is 1. It begins in Victoria, British Columbia, and ends in St John’s, Newfoundland, extending a total length of c. 7821 kilometres, making it the world’s longest national highway.

**trilight:** the name used in Canada for a light with three levels of brightness.

**tuque:** a close-fitting woollen winter hat, similar to a stocking-cap. (Many Canadians use the spelling ‘touque’, or sometimes ‘toque’, although those words may have originally designated a different type of hat.)

## U

**United Empire Loyalists:** residents of the eastern colonies which wished to remain loyal to Britain at the time of the American Revolution, and who migrated to areas of British North America which later became eastern Canada.

**up-country:** a term used independently in at least two different regions of Canada. In Ontario, it refers to a large region north and west of Lake Superior. In British Columbia it may denote any area north of the lower mainland or the southern interior.

## V

**Van Doos:** a famous regiment in the Canadian Army (Royal 22nd), composed primarily of French-Canadians.

**Vancouver Special:** a type of house construction that was popular in Vancouver in the 1970s; such houses have two levels above ground (the living area generally being on the top level), but with no basement, as excavation into the bedrock is not feasible.

**Varsol:** a Canadian general term for paint thinners and solvents, based originally on the name of a product created in the U.S.A.

**Vi-Co:** the name once used by a company selling dairy products in Saskatchewan and Quebec, for chocolate milk. The usage has persisted in those areas even though the name no longer exists on any product now on the market.

**voyageur:** from French for ‘traveller’, this word refers to long-distance canoe boatmen involved in the fur trade in the region that is now western Canada.

## W

**wampum:** beads made from shells which were used as currency among indigenous peoples of the regions that now make up Ontario and Quebec.

**washroom:** a general term used in Canada for a public toilet; The word “toilet” is generally considered somewhat indelicate in Canada and is avoided.

**whiskyjack:** a typically Canadian term for a gray jay or Canada jay.

## Y

**young offender:** another term for a young person who commits a criminal act before reaching the age of majority.

## Appendix 1. Canadian Placename Nicknames

**Abby:** a nickname for Abbotsford, a city near Vancouver, British Columbia (commonly used by people throughout British Columbia, but especially in the Lower Mainland region).

**Abegweit:** an Indian name for Prince Edward Island, sometimes used in literary contexts.

**Bramladesh:** a fusing of the name of the South Asian nation Bangladesh and the Ontario city of Brampton, used to draw attention to that city's large East Indian population.

**British California:** a modified name sometimes applied to British Columbia, evoking similarities between that province and the American state of California, including its geographical location and climate relative to other regions; its liberal society and politico-cultural climate; and also because of the general similarity of the geographical shape of the state and the province.

**Bytown:** the original name of Ottawa before its designation as the national capital, which is often still used in similar contexts as Hogtown when applied to Toronto, or Cowtown for Calgary.

**Chuck, the:** sometimes used in referring to Edmonton, Alberta – a shorter form of the nickname Edmonchuck, which draws attention to the city's very significant proportion of residents with Ukrainian origins.

**Côte-Saint Jew:** a deformed version of the name of the Côte-Saint Luc district in Montreal, drawing attention to the fact that its residents are predominantly Jewish.

**Cowtown:** a nickname for Calgary, Alberta.

**Ditchland, also Ditchmond:** a nickname once applied to Richmond, British Columbia, where all streets were lined by deep (and dangerous) drainage ditches, now largely replaced by culverts or otherwise covered.

**Downhome:** used by Newfoundlanders to refer to their island.

**Edmonchuck:** a nickname for Edmonton, Alberta, suggestive of its large Ukrainian population.

**Gastown:** the name of the oldest part of Vancouver and the original colloquial name of the settlement; it is a contraction of "Gassy's town", named after a steamboat captain by the name of "Gassy" Jack Deighton. Now it is sometimes used to refer to Vancouver in general.

**Hali:** Halifax, Nova Scotia.

**Hammer, the:** Hamilton, Ontario

**Hat, the:** Medicine Hat, Alberta

**Hog Town or Hogtown:** Nickname for Toronto.

**Hollywood North:** a reference to Hollywood, California, used to describe Toronto and Vancouver as two major sites of Canadian film production.

**Hongcouver:** Derogatory reference to the large number of immigrants from Hong Kong in the city of Vancouver

**Hub City, the:** a nickname sometimes applied to three different Canadian cities: Moncton, New Brunswick, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, and Nanaimo, British Columbia.



**Loyalist province:** New Brunswick (due to the fact that so many of its original settlers were United Empire Loyalists.)

**New West:** New Westminster, British Columbia.

**Peg, the or Peg City:** Winnipeg, MB.

**Pile of Bones:** the original name of the site where Regina, Saskatchewan was eventually established as the capital of the North-West Territories.

**Peninsula, the:** Refers to New Brunswick's Kingston Peninsula, a rural stretch of land surrounded by the Saint John River on 2 sides, the Kennebecasis River on 1 side, and Kingston Creek on part of one side. Also used for the northern suburbs of Victoria, British Columbia, which are on the Saanich Peninsula.

**Poco:** Port Coquitlam, British Columbia, one of the "Tri-Cities" or "Northeast Sector", which includes Coquitlam, and Port Moody.

**PoCoMo:** the zone which includes Port Coquitlam, Coquitlam, and Port Moody, the "Tri-Cities" or "Northeast Sector".

**Queen City:** Regina, Saskatchewan.

**Rock, the:** Newfoundland. Residents of Victoria BC sometimes use the term when referring to Vancouver Island.

**Rocks, the:** The Hopewell Rocks, in Hopewell, New Brunswick, where the highest tides in the world are found. Also referred to as the Flowerpots.

**Royal City, the:** New Westminster, British Columbia. Often mistakenly used for Victoria, British Columbia. Also used when referring to the city of Guelph, Ontario.

**Sack Vegas:** Another name for Lower Sackville, a lower to upper middle class suburb of Halifax, Nova Scotia.

**Saskabush** [sæskəbʊʃ]: *slang* a name sometimes used to refer to Saskatchewan, or sometimes to Saskatoon (city).

**Sauga** [sɑgə]: a short form of the name of Mississauga, Ontario.

**Scarberia:** [skær'biəriə] *slang* term for Scarborough, Ontario (a suburban part of Toronto), a derogatory reference to its desolateness (combining 'Scarborough' and 'Siberia').

**Shwa, the:** Local slang (generally derogatory) for the city of Oshawa, Ontario.

**Speedy Creek:** Swift Current, Saskatchewan

**Steeltown:** Hamilton, Ontario, in reference to the city's main industry

**Terminal City, the:** Vancouver, BC.

**Van:** Vancouver, British Columbia. Local short form used to refer to certain districts and suburbs of Vancouver, such as East Van, North Van, or West Van.

**West Island:** Western portion of the Island of Montreal

**Winterpeg:** Winnipeg, Manitoba.

**The 905:** the suburbs to the west, north and east of Toronto which are within the 905 telephone area code district, including the Halton, Peel, York and Durham regions.

## Appendix 2. Specifically Canadian Abbreviations

**CCF:** Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, a moderate socialist political party which later was renamed the New Democratic Party.

**CBC:** an abbreviation which usually stands for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Canada's national radio and television network; in some contexts the abbreviation has been applied to 'Canadian-born Chinese', referring to the generation of Chinese born in Canada whose parents were landed immigrants.

**CFL:** the abbreviation of the Canadian Football League.

**CNR:** Canadian National Railways, sometimes referred to now as CN Rail.

**CPR:** Canadian Pacific Railways

**CRBC:** Canadian Radio Broadcasting Corporation

**CSL:** refers to the Côte-Saint Luc district of Montreal

**CUPE:** Canadian Union of Public Employees

**DDO:** refers to the Dollard-des-Ormeaux district of Montreal

**FLQ:** the French abbreviation for *Front de Libération de Québec*, a terrorist organization in the 1960s that aimed to make Quebec an independent country.

**GST:** Goods and Services Tax

**GTA:** frequently-used acronym for the Greater Toronto Area

**H.B.C.:** the Hudson's Bay Company.

**KV:** A term for the Kennebecasis Valley, which consists of two towns, Rothesay, New Brunswick and Quispamsis, New Brunswick, which are affluent suburbs of Saint John, New Brunswick.

**L.C.:** slang abbreviation for the liquor stores or the liquor commission in several Canadian provinces.

**MTL:** abbreviation for Montreal.

**NAFTA:** North American Free Trade Agreement.

**N.D.G.:** refers to the Notre-Dame-de-Grâce district of Montreal

**NDP:** New Democratic Party.

**NFB:** National Film Board of Canada.

**N.W.M.P.:** North West Mounted Police (the police force which preceded the R.C.M.P.)

**N.W.T.:** North West Territories.

**P.C.:** Progressive Conservative Party

**PMO:** the Prime Minister's Office

**P.S.T.:** provincial sales tax.

**RCMP:** Royal Canadian Mounted Police

**R.R.S.P.:** registered retirement savings plan.

**R.M.:** rural municipality.

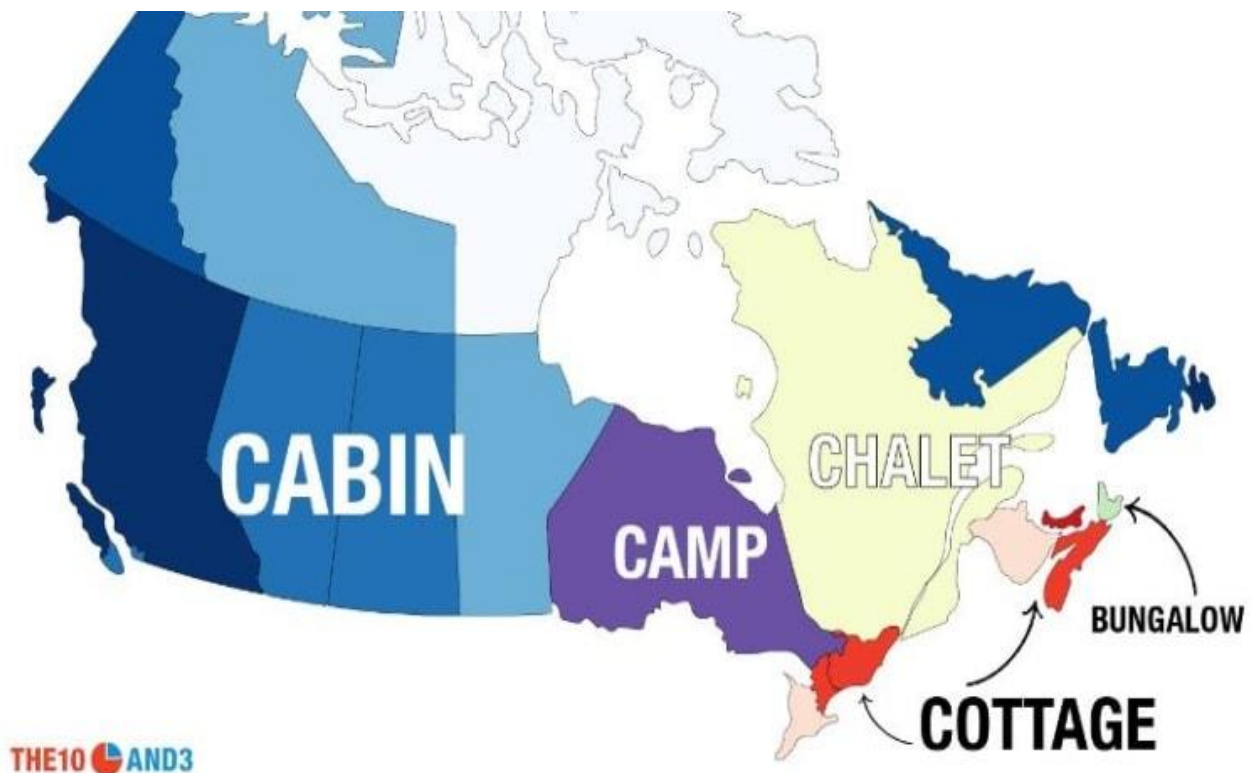
**T.O.:** Toronto, Ontario

**U.I.C.:** Unemployment Insurance Commission

### Appendix 3. Canadian Region-specific Variations

An interesting area of study has opened up in recent years, examining some variations in terms and expressions as found in different parts of Canada. In a country which spans such an enormous geographical distance and which encompasses regions with such significant historical, cultural and ethnic diversity, it is not surprising that such variations would have developed, but in many ways it is something of a mystery what produced the specific phenomena that can be observed.

Some specific examples of this type of variation were highlighted in an article placed on the CBC website in September 2017, entitled “Lost in translation: Study on Canadian slang draws strange dividing lines.” Interestingly, this article not only presents a discussion of this subject, but it also provides some excellent maps to illustrate the points it is making, created by the *10 and 3*, an online publication which deals with Canadian data. The map below demonstrates the variations in terminology within Canada in designating a small house in which people sometimes spend their vacation, for example.



The authors of this study mention the fact that certain areas are well known for their linguistic peculiarities, “But even in other places that have no obvious reason to talk differently, Canadians have developed strong regionalisms.” This characterization could certainly be applied to the variations of the term for a small local store that provides some basic necessities, usually having longer hours of opening than regular merchandisers. The map on the next page demonstrates this:



Any reader who finds these variations to be of particular interest will be motivated to access the *Ten and Three* website, which provides similar maps illustrating other phenomena of this kind. For example, when referring to carbonated beverages, the overwhelming majority of residents of British

Columbia, Alberta, Ontario and the Maritime provinces use the word 'pop'; anglophones in Quebec prefer the term 'soft drink' by a margin of 63%, on the basis of surveys that have been conducted. In Saskatchewan, the word 'pop' predominates, but 'soft drink' may often be heard as well. In Manitoba, the pattern is distinctly different: 21% prefer 'soft drink', and 20% prefer 'soda', which is the most common term in the USA.

A striking diversity can also be observed in terms of how Canadians refer to the evening meal. Speakers in British Columbia and southern Ontario generally call it 'dinner', whereas other regions of the country refer to it as 'supper'. In the Prairie Provinces of Alberta, Manitoba and Saskatchewan, the word 'dinner' very often is used to refer to the noon meal.

The team which conducted this research also noticed a few striking differences in the pronunciation of a few specific words; for example, in the majority of regions, the word 'caramel' is pronounced with three syllables, the first having the sound of 'care'; in Newfoundland and some other districts, the word has two syllables, pronounced like 'car-mel'.

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# NOTES

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