

List of prime ministers of Canada

The [prime minister of Canada](#) is an official who serves as the primary [minister of the Crown](#), chair of the [Cabinet](#), and thus [head of government of Canada](#). Twenty-three people have served as prime ministers. Officially, the prime minister is appointed by the [governor general of Canada](#), but by constitutional convention, the prime minister must have the [confidence](#) of the elected [House of Commons](#). Normally, this is the leader of the party caucus with the greatest number of seats in the house. But if that leader lacks the support of the majority, the governor general can appoint another leader who has that support or may dissolve parliament and call a new election. By [constitutional convention](#), a prime minister holds a seat in parliament and, since the early 20th century, this has more specifically meant the House of Commons.^[1]



Canada's prime ministers during its first century

Model

The office is not outlined in any of the documents that constitute the written portion of the [Constitution of Canada](#); [executive authority](#) is formally vested in [the sovereign](#) and exercised on their behalf by the governor general. The prime ministership is part of Canada's constitutional convention tradition. The office was modelled after that which existed in the [United Kingdom](#) at the time. [John A. Macdonald](#) was commissioned by the [Viscount Monck](#) on 24 May 1867, to form the first [government of the Canadian Confederation](#). On 1 July 1867, the [first ministry](#) assumed office.^[2]

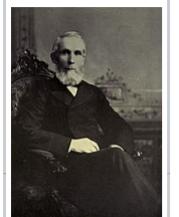
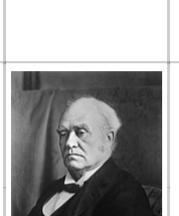
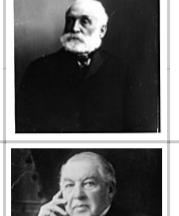
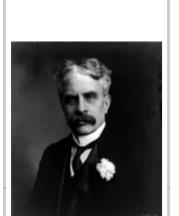
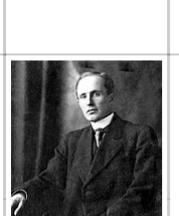
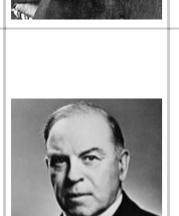
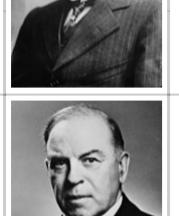
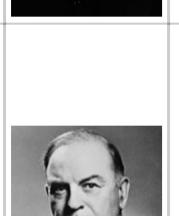
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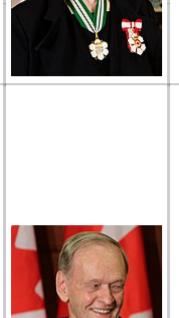
The prime minister begins their term has been determined by the date sworn into their [portfolio](#), as an [oath of office](#) as prime minister is not required.^[3] However, since 1957, the incoming prime minister has sworn an oath as prime minister.^[3] Before 1920, prime ministers' resignations were accepted immediately by the governor general and the last day of the ministries were the date he died or the date of resignation.^[3] Since 1920, the outgoing prime minister has only formally resigned when the new government is ready to be formed.^[3] The *Interpretation Act* of 1967 states that "where an appointment is made effective or terminates on a specified day, that appointment is considered to be effective or to terminate after the end of the previous day".^[3] Thus, although the outgoing prime minister formally resigns only hours before the incoming ministry swears their oaths, both during the day, the ministries are effectively changed at midnight the night before. Some sources, including the [Parliament of Canada](#), apply this convention as far back as 1917.^[4] Two prime ministers have died in office: [John A. Macdonald](#) (1867–1873, 1878–1891), and [John Thompson](#) (1892–1894). All others have resigned, either after losing an election or upon retirement.

Prime ministers

Canadian custom is to count by the individuals who were prime minister, not by terms.^[5] Since Confederation, 23 prime ministers have been "called upon" by the governor general to form [29 Canadian Ministries](#).^[5]

Abbreviation key:	No.: Incumbent number, Min.: Ministry, Refs: References
Colour key:	<input type="checkbox"/> Liberal Party of Canada <input type="checkbox"/> Historical Conservative parties (including Liberal-Conservative , Conservative (Historical) , Unionist , National Liberal and Conservative , Progressive Conservative) <input type="checkbox"/> Conservative Party of Canada
Provinces key:	AB: Alberta, BC: British Columbia, MB: Manitoba, NS: Nova Scotia, ON: Ontario, QC: Quebec, SK: Saskatchewan

No.	Portrait	Name (Birth–Death)	Term of office		Electoral mandates (Assembly)		Political party		Riding		Cabinet	Ref.			
1 (1 of 2)		John A. Macdonald (1815–1891)	1 July 1867	5 November 1873	Title created (caretaker government)					1st	[2][6]				
					1867 election (1st Parl.)	Liberal–Conservative		MP for Kingston, ON							
		Minister of Justice ; Integration of Rupert's Land and the North-Western Territory into Canada; Manitoba Act ; Red River Rebellion ; British Columbia and Prince Edward Island join confederation; Creation of the North-West Mounted Police ; Resigned over Pacific Scandal													
2		Alexander Mackenzie (1822–1892)	7 November 1873	8 October 1878	Appointment (2nd Parl.)			Liberal (Ldr. 1873)	MP for Lambton, ON		2nd	[7][8]			
					1874 election (3rd Parl.)										
		Pacific Scandal ; Creation of the Supreme Court ; Passage of the Indian Act ; Establishment of the Royal Military College ; Created the office of the Auditor General													
— (2 of 2)		John A. Macdonald (1815–1891)	17 October 1878	6 June 1891	1878 election (4th Parl.)			Liberal–Conservative	MP for Victoria, BC (1878–1882)		3rd	[9][10]			
					1882 election (5th Parl.)				MP for Carleton, ON (1882–1887)						
		National Policy ; Railway to the Pacific ; North-West Rebellion ; Hanging of Louis Riel . Died in office (stroke).													
3		John Abbott (1821–1893)	16 June 1891	24 November 1892	Appointment (7th Parl.)	Liberal–Conservative		Senator for Quebec		4th	[11][12]				
					Minister without Portfolio; Succeeded on Macdonald's death due to objections to the Catholic John Thompson . In ill health; retired. First prime minister born in what would become Canada, and first of only two prime ministers to serve while in the Senate.										
4		John Thompson (1845–1894)	5 December 1892	12 December 1894	Appointment (7th Parl.)	Liberal–Conservative		MP for Antigonish, NS		5th	[13][14]				
					Minister of Justice ; First Catholic Prime Minister. Manitoba Schools Question . Died in office (heart attack).										
5		Mackenzie Bowell (1823–1917)	21 December 1894	27 April 1896	Appointment (7th Parl.)	Conservative		Senator for Ontario		6th	[15][16]				
					Minister of Customs ; Minister of Militia and Defence ; Manitoba Schools Question . Last prime minister to serve while in the Senate and last prime minister not to be born in Canada or pre-Canada until Turner.										
6		Charles Tupper (1821–1915)	1 May 1896	8 July 1896	Appointment (caretaker government)	Conservative		Did not hold a seat in legislature		7th	[17][18]				
					Minister of Customs , Minister of Railways and Canals ; Oldest Canadian PM. Aimed to defeat Patrons of Industry , but dominated by Manitoba Schools Question . Never sat in parliament as Prime Minister.										
7		Wilfrid Laurier (1841–1919)	11 July 1896	6 October 1911	1896 election (8th Parl.)			Liberal (Ldr. 1887)	MP for Quebec East, QC		8th	[19][20]			
					1900 election (9th Parl.)										
		Manitoba Schools Question ; Boer War ; Alberta and Saskatchewan created; Creation of the Royal Canadian Navy ; Reciprocity with the US ; Department of External Affairs established; First French Canadian Prime Minister; Removed the right of status Indians to vote.													
8		Robert Borden (1854–1937)	10 October 1911	10 July 1920	1911 election (12th Parl.)			Government (Unionist) (Ldr. 1901)	MP for Halifax, NS (1911–1917)		9th	[20][21][22]			
					1917 election (13th Parl.)				MP for Kings, NS (1917–1920)						
		First World War ; Military Service Act ; Conscription Crisis of 1917 ; Union government; National Research Council ; Introduction of income tax ; Nickle Resolution ; Women's suffrage; Suppression of Winnipeg General Strike ; Canada sits at the Paris Peace Conference , signs the Treaty of Versailles and joins League of Nations .													
9 (1 of 2)		Arthur Meighen (1874–1960)	10 July 1920	29 December 1921	Appointment (13th Parl.)	Conservative (Ldr. 1920)		MP for Portage la Prairie, MB		11th	[23][24]				
					Solicitor General of Canada , Minister of Mines , Secretary of State for Canada , Minister of the Interior , Superintendent Indian Affairs ; Grand Trunk Railway placed under control of Canadian National Railways .										
10 (1 of 3)		William Lyon Mackenzie King (1874–1950)	29 December 1921	28 June 1926	1921 election (14th Parl.)			Liberal (Ldr. 1919)	MP for York North, ON (1921–1925)		12th	[25][26]			
					1925 election (15th Parl.)				MP for Prince Albert, SK (1925–1926)						
		Minister of Labour ; Chanak Crisis ; lower tariffs; reinstated Crowsnest Pass Agreement ; 1923 Imperial Conference; Halibut Treaty ; Continued after 1925 with third party Progressive support until resigning after his request for an election was refused by Governor General Lord Byng .													
— (2 of 2)		Arthur Meighen (1874–1960)	29 June 1926	25 September 1926	Appointment (15th Parl.)	Conservative		MP for Portage la Prairie, MB		13th	[23][22]				
					Appointed as a result of the King–Byng Affair .										
— (2 of 3)		William Lyon Mackenzie King (1874–1950)	25 September 1926	7 August 1930	1926 election (16th Parl.)	Liberal		MP for Prince Albert, SK		14th	[25][28]				
					Balfour Declaration ; Introduction of old age pensions ; first Canadian envoys with full diplomatic status sent to foreign countries (USA, France, Japan); Great Depression .										
11		R.B. Bennett (1870–1947)	7 August 1930	23 October 1935	1930 election (17th Parl.)	Conservative (Ldr. 1927)		MP for Calgary West, AB		15th	[29][30]				
					Minister of Justice , Minister of Finance ; Great Depression ; Imperial Preference ; Statute of Westminster ; Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission ; Canadian Wheat Board ; Creation of the Bank of Canada .										
— (3 of 3)		William Lyon Mackenzie King (1874–1950)	23 October 1935	15 November 1948	1935 election (18th Parl.)			Liberal	MP for Prince Albert						

16		Joe Clark (b. 1939)	4 June 1979	3 March 1980	1979 election (31st Parl.)	Progressive Conservative (Ldr. 1976)	MP for Yellowhead, AB	21st	[43]
Youngest Canadian PM. Defeated in a motion of no confidence on first budget.									
— (2 of 2)		Pierre Trudeau (1919–2000)	3 March	30 June	1980 election (32nd Parl.)	Liberal (Ldr. 1968)	MP for Mount Royal, QC	22nd	[48]
1980 Quebec referendum; Access to Information Act; Patriation of the Canadian Constitution; Montreal Protocol; Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms ; National Energy Program; Canada Health Act ; Western alienation.									
17		John Turner (1929–2020)	30 June	17 September	Appointment (32nd Parl.)	Liberal (Ldr. 1984)	Did not hold a seat in legislature	23rd	[49]
Minister of Justice , Minister of Finance ; Trudeau Patronage Appointments. Never sat in parliament as Prime Minister. First Prime Minister since Bowell not to have been born in Canada.									
18		Brian Mulroney (b. 1939)	17 September 1984	25 June 1993	1984 election (33rd Parl.) 1988 election (34th Parl.)	Progressive Conservative (Ldr. 1983)	MP for Manicouagan, QC (1984–1988) MP for Charlevoix, QC (1988–1993)	24th	[41]
Cancellation of the National Energy Program ; Meech Lake Accord ; Petro-Canada privatization; Canada-US Free Trade Agreement ; Introduction of the Goods and Services Tax ; Charlottetown Accord ; Gulf War ; Oka Crisis ; Emergencies Act ; Environmental Protection Act ; Privatization of Air Canada , North American Free Trade Agreement ; Nunavut Land Claims Agreement ; Airbus affair .									
19		Kim Campbell (b. 1947)	25 June	4 November	Appointment (34th Parl.)	Progressive Conservative (Ldr. 1993)	MP for Vancouver Centre, BC	25th	[42]
Minister of Justice , Minister of Veterans Affairs , Minister of National Defence , Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs ; first female Prime Minister of Canada. Defeated and lost her seat in 1993 election .									
20		Jean Chrétien (b. 1934)	4 November	12 December	1993 election (35th Parl.) 1997 election (36th Parl.) 2000 election (37th Parl.)	Liberal (Ldr. 1990)	MP for Saint-Maurice, QC	26th	[43]
Minister of Finance , Minister of Indian Affairs , Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources , Minister of Justice and Energy Minister , President of the Treasury Board , Minister of National Revenue , Deputy Prime Minister of Canada ; Privatization of Canadian National Railway ; Red Book ; Harmonized Sales Tax ; 1995 Quebec referendum ; Clarity Act ; Assassination attempt ; Kosovo War ; 1997 Red River flood ; Social Union Framework Agreement ; Creation of Nunavut Territory ; Youth Criminal Justice Act ; Operation Yellow Ribbon ; Invasion of Afghanistan ; Opposition to the Invasion of Iraq ; Sponsorship scandal ; Kyoto Protocol ; Gomery Inquiry .									
21		Paul Martin (b. 1938)	12 December 2003	6 February	Appointment (37th Parl.) 2004 election (38th Parl.)	Liberal (Ldr. 2003)	MP for LaSalle-Émard, QC	27th	[41]
Minister of Finance ; Minority government . Civil Marriage Act ; Kelowna Accord ; Rejection of US Anti-Missile Treaty ; Sponsorship scandal ; Gomery inquiry ; G20 ; Atlantic Accord ; Martin and his father Paul Martin Sr have the honorific title of Right Honourable.									
22		Stephen Harper (b. 1959)	6 February 2006	4 November 2015	2006 election (39th Parl.) 2008 election (40th Parl.) 2011 election (41st Parl.)	Conservative (Ldr. 2004)	MP for Calgary Southwest, AB	28th	[44]
Accountability Act ; Softwood Lumber Agreement ; Afghanistan Mission ; 2006 Ontario terrorism plot ; Québécois nation motion ; 2008 Financial crisis ; Coalition crisis ; Economic Action Plan ; Afghan detainee issue ; Parliamentary contempt ; Withdrawal from the Kyoto Protocol ; Repeal of the Long-Gun Registry ; Senate expenses scandal ; Anti-terrorism Act , 2015.									
23		Justin Trudeau (b. 1971)	4 November 2015	incumbent	2015 election (42nd Parl.) 2019 election (43rd Parl.) 2021 election (44th Parl.)	Liberal (Ldr. 2013)	MP for Papineau, QC	29th	[45]
Eldest son of 15th Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau ; also served as Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Youth ; Senate appointment reform; Paris Agreement ; 150th anniversary celebrations ; Canada–Europe Trade Agreement ; Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement ; legalization of cannabis ; United States–Mexico–Canada Agreement ; SNC-Lavalin affair ; 2020 Canadian pipeline and railway protests ; COVID-19 pandemic ; WE Charity scandal ; Convoy protest ; Emergencies Act ; weapon shipment for defence of Ukraine ; confidence and supply agreement with NDP .									

^{LS} Party won the election, but prime minister lost own seat

* The Interpretation Act of 1967 states that "where an appointment is made effective or terminates on a specified day, that appointment is considered to be effective or to terminate after the end of the previous day." Under the Act, prime ministers' tenures are therefore credited as having concluded at the end of their last full day in office, although their resignation was received by the governor general on the following day. This provision applies to P. Trudeau in 1979^[46] and 1984^[47] Clark,^[48] Turner,^[49] Mulroney,^[50] Campbell,^[51] Chrétien,^[52] Martin,^[52] and Harper.^[52]

See also

- [Fathers of Confederation](#)
- [Historical rankings of prime ministers of Canada](#)
- [List of joint premiers of the Province of Canada](#)
- [Leader of the Official Opposition \(Canada\)](#)
- [List of Canadian federal parliaments](#)
- [List of Canadian monarchs](#)
- [Spouse of the prime minister of Canada](#)

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