

SS.7.C.2.1

Define the term "citizen," and identify legal means of becoming a U.S. citizen.

SS.7.C.2.1 Benchmark Clarification 2: Students will describe the process of becoming a naturalized citizen.

If an **immigrant** wants to become a U.S. **citizen**, the immigrant must meet a set of conditions. The table below lists the basic conditions required for **naturalization**.

Immigrants must:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• be at least 18 years old.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• have been a resident of the United States for five years, without leaving for more than 30 months combined and for no more than 12 uninterrupted months throughout the five-year period.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• file for a petition for naturalization.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• take a test to show that they can read, write, and speak English, and demonstrate knowledge of American history and the U.S. Constitution.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• be able to prove that they are of good moral character.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• have two U.S. citizens confirm that the applicant will be of good moral character.

Once all of the conditions above have been met, the applicant must take the "Oath of Allegiance." The oath is the last step in the naturalization process and requires people seeking citizenship to pledge their loyalty to the United States.

citizen - a legal member of a state and/or country

good moral character - not participating in certain crimes or behavior

immigrant - a person who comes to a country to live there permanently

naturalization - the process by which an immigrant becomes a citizen

resident - someone who lives in a place for a minimum period of time