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## PRACTICE AREAS

### BUSINESS

L-1 Visas

H-1B

H-1B Transfers

Visas

TN Visas (NAFTA)

Special Visas for Other Countries

Australia

Chile / Singapore E-1

E-1 Visas

E-2 Visas

PERM Labor Certification

### HOSPITALS /HEALTHCARE

H-1C Visas

H-1B Visas for Doctors

### FAMILY

Spouse / Fiancee Visas

Permanent Residence for Family  
Within U.S.

Naturalization / Citizenship

### AMNESTY

TUESDAY, JANUARY 19 2010

## E-Newsletter

[CLICK HERE TO SIGN UP FOR OUR NEWSLETTER.](#)

## US Citizenship Exams

Upon meeting certain requirements, legal permanent residents can apply to become US citizens. This process is known as naturalization. In order to become a naturalized US citizen, applicants must pass English and Civics exams. These exams are administered during an in-person interview with an official from the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

## English Exam

Applicants are required to prove they can speak, read and write simple English. Normally, their ability to speak English is determined during the interview, as they answer questions about their application and desire to become a US citizen. To assess their ability to read English, applicants may be asked to read aloud portions of their application for naturalization or a couple of simple sentences from a list. To assess their ability to write in English, applicants generally are asked to write 1-2 sentences.

Some naturalization applicants may not have to demonstrate a proficiency in basic English. This includes those who:

- Are 50 years old and have been a legal permanent resident of the US for at least 20 years

- Are 55 years old and have been a legal permanent resident of the US for at least 15 years

- Have a medically determinable physical or mental impairment that affects their ability to learn English



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Those who fall into one of these categories still are required to take the Civics exam, but they may do so in a language of their choosing. However, the USCIS will not provide a translator for them, so they must bring their own translator with them to the interview.

Additionally, those with a physical or development disability or mental impairment may be exempt from taking both the English and civics exams. To qualify, the disability may not have been caused by illegal drug use and must be at least one year old or expected to last longer than one year. Applicants with eligible disabilities are required to file a Medical Certification of Disability form, which must be signed by a doctor.

## Civics Exam

The civics exam tests an applicant's basic understanding of US history, government and laws. Applicants may be asked to verbally answer a set of questions or take a short multiple choice exam. Applicants also may be asked to read aloud a set of questions and provide the answers to them to test both their English proficiency and civics knowledge at the same time.

Those who are over 65 and have been a legal permanent resident of the US for at least 20 years take a different civics exam than other applicants. The only applicants who may be exempt from the civics portion of the test are those with certifiable disabilities.

Some of the types of questions that may be on the exam include:

- Who is the current US President?
- What is the form of government in the US?
- What were the original 13 states?
- How many Supreme Court Justices are there?
- Who was the first US President?
- What are the branches of the US government?
- How many US Senators are there?
- What is the Bill of Rights?



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•Who has the power to declare war?

Applicants can obtain self-study materials for the civics exam from the USCIS Web site [here](#). Also, many public school systems and community colleges offer courses to help applicants prepare for the English and civics exams. USCIS field offices may also be able to provide a list of local community organizations that help applicants study for these exams.

## Getting Ready To Apply for a Visa

To read and print out a copy of the checklist, please follow the link below.

[Getting Ready to Apply for a Visa](#)

**DISCLAIMER:** This site and any information contained herein are intended for informational purposes only and should not be construed as legal advice. Seek competent counsel for advice on any legal matter.