



RELOCATION GUIDE

VICTORIA, BC

Thinking about moving to Victoria? Wondering where to live or what factors you need to consider when relocating? This comprehensive guide will provide you with an overview of Victoria and information about the relocation process.

Inside you'll find three sections; Contemplation, Preparation, and Action each broken down into sub sections outlining information about the city (ie. climate, culture, entertainment, etc.), living considerations, steps to take upon your arrival (ie. registering with Canadian Sport Institute Pacific, BC medical services, etc.) and tips to help you ease the process.

I wrote this guide because we all face a number of challenges when moving to a new location and the actual process should be the least of your concerns especially when you have commitments to your sport and goals to achieve.

Welcome to Victoria and I wish much success with your sport!



NATALIE O'LEARY, MSc | GAME PLAN ADVISOR



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTEMPLATION

Population & Geography	3
Climate	7
Culture & Lifestyle	9
Living	13
Local Cuisine	16
Medical	18
Education	21
Religion	23
Transportation	24

PREPARATION

Time Management	29
Language Training	30
Financial Management	30
Psychological Issues	31
Tips	32
Living Arrangements	33
Mail	36

ACTION

Moving to BC	38
Insurance	41
Canadian Sport Institute	46



CONTEMPLATION

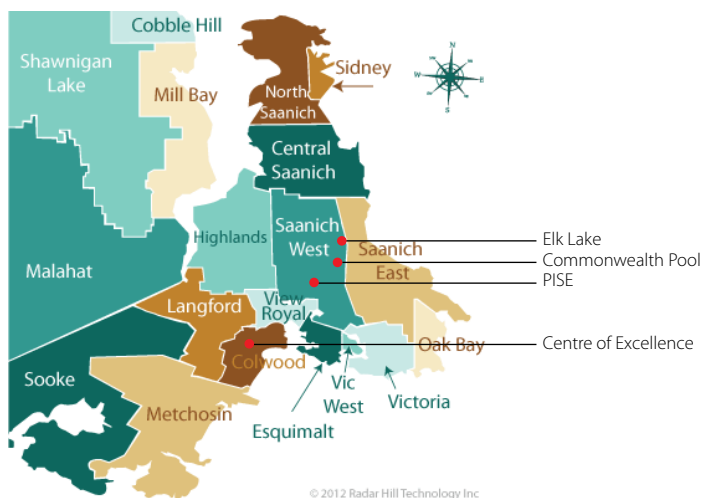
In Victoria and the Capital Region District (CRD), considerations for a place to live should include lifestyle preferences, such as 'walk scores' to amenities, proximity to transportation, parks and beaches. Rental prices, home values, and property taxes can vary quite a bit depending on the neighborhood. However, all offer a range of choices from condominium living to suburban streets, from hobby farm life to direct coastal access.



POPULATION & GEOGRAPHY

Victoria often brings to mind images of historic downtown streets, waterfront buildings along the Inner Harbour, Canadian flags on the lawn of the Parliament Buildings, and the majestic, vine-covered Empress hotel. Victoria is all this - and so much more. As the capital city of British Columbia, it is part of the CRD, an area encompassing the southern tip of Vancouver Island and counting a population of 330,000 inhabitants. In fact, the CRD also includes the Outer Gulf Islands (including Salt Spring Island) and represents nearly half of Vancouver Island's population in just 7 percent of its total landmass.

When you travel in and around Victoria, you will explore and experience a full thirteen different municipalities. The diversity of these areas means there are many different types of neighborhoods and environments (even variable micro-climates) to suit your lifestyle – all within a geographic region where no destination is much more than 30 minutes by car. In fact, the boundaries between most of these areas are indistinguishable except by signage, and the entire area can be traversed easily on foot or by bike via the popular Galloping Goose Trail.



- **North Saanich:** Located on the Saanich Peninsula, it consists of large rural and residential areas and, most importantly, the Victoria International Airport and the Swartz Bay Ferry Terminal.
- **Central Saanich:** Also located on the Saanich Peninsula, Brentwood Bay and Saanichton encompass many residential areas. You'll also find the famous Butchart Gardens tucked away among the area's hobby farms and vineyards.
- **Sidney:** With a population of nearly 12,000, Sidney has small-town charm and a popular seaside boardwalk that is 25 minutes' drive from Victoria via the Patricia Bay Highway (Hwy 17). People most often come across Sidney on the way to the airport and Swartz Bay terminal. More ferries, heading to Washington's San Juan Islands and Anacortes, depart from town.

- **Victoria:** The city itself has a population just north of 80,000 inhabitants. Neighborhoods include (but are not limited to) the downtown core, Fernwood, Hillside, James Bay, Oaklands, and Victoria West.
- **Oak Bay:** Also a seaside community, the area is known for its British heritage, well-maintained properties, and the local Oak Bay Village shopping area. Within Oak Bay is the Uplands neighborhood – home to some of the most expensive properties in Canada. There are also three golf courses and two marinas among a coastline of beaches and rocky areas.
- **Saanich:** Saanich covers a large area, and is the most populous region of the CRD. You'll find Cordova Bay and Cadboro Bay oceanfront neighborhoods here, as well as Mount Douglas Park, Mount Tolmie Park and part of the University of Victoria (which it splits with Oak Bay).
- **Esquimalt:** Home to the Pacific Fleet and the Royal Canadian Navy bases, the area has over 16,000 residents and is directly interconnected between Victoria West and the Town of View Royal.
- **View Royal:** With almost 11,000 residents, View Royal includes McKenzie, Pike, Prior and Thetis Lakes as well as many residential options that are close to, and in between, both the City of Victoria and the Langford/Colwood areas.
- **Colwood:** Home to Royal Roads University (including Hatley Castle) and the Fisgard Lighthouse (a National Historic Site), Colwood is home to roughly 15,000 people. Amenities include the Juan de Fuca Rec Centre, the Q Centre, golf courses, and library services for the community.

- **Langford:** One of the CRD's fastest-developing areas, it is considered the urban core of the West Shore. There are 29,000 inhabitants in the area who have access to major regional commercial amenities such as Costco and Superstore. It is also home to Rugby Canada Training Centre, and other sports' facilities as well as the popular Goldstream Provincial Park and the beginning of the Malahat drive towards Nanaimo.
- **Highlands:** The newest addition to the CRD, it is a developing area for residential expansion. The closest shopping amenities are in Langford, and it is home to many parks including Gowland Tod Provincial Park.
- **Metchosin:** A coastal community of 5,000 inhabitants, the area runs along the coast, connecting Langford to Sooke. There are many small farms and local businesses throughout the area, as well as a thriving little town site – all which is undergoing change as Langford continues to grow and expand.
- **Sooke:** This community is located about 45 minutes from Victoria and is the westernmost of the CRD's greater regions. It is a small but notable town, which is often appealing for its lower property costs. The Sooke Potholes swimming area are a popular destination.



CLIMATE

There is little wonder that Victoria is a popular tourist destination, Vancouver Island is considered to have the mildest climate in Canada, and the lowest rainfall on the West Coast. Contrary to popular belief, the area enjoys regular bouts of sunshine all year long. Key seasonal characteristics include:

- **Spring:** Spring plant growth and mild temperatures come fairly early in the year, when compared to the Canadian average. By March, you can expect daily highs of 11-15 degrees Celsius. Flower blossoms are already starting in February, and residents look forward to the cherry blossom blooms every year.
- **Summer:** The summer months of June to September are relatively dry, sunny and temperate – daytime temperatures range from low-to-mid 20s Celsius. Rarely will temperature extremes run higher than 30 degrees during the day, or lower than 10 degrees overnight.
- **Winter:** Temperatures rarely dip below freezing in the winter, which tends to be rainy and mild. Snow is an infrequent and a variable occurrence. Hiking, golfing,

cycling, fishing and other outdoor pursuits are enjoyed year round. (This doesn't mean winter sports are out of the question – you can head up the island to Mount Washington for skiing and snowboarding!)

- **Fall:** Summer warmth will often extend into September and October, with daytime temperatures cooling to an average 12-15 degrees. The rainy season officially arrives by November – up to 147mm of rain can fall over the month.

Victorians enjoy an outdoor lifestyle thanks to mild weather and an abundance of places to visit and activities to do, depending on the season. An investment in good wet-weather gear and layering clothing that can be adjusted for changing temperatures will make any season pleasant.



CULTURE & LIFESTYLE

Overview

Victoria has both a rich history and a vibrant, growing future. Local businesses and brands are celebrated, cultural events are plentiful, and local residents take a lot of pride in the identity of their city as one of the top tourist destinations in the world. There is an interesting paradox between Victoria's offerings as a major capital city and the close-knit community feel that comes from each individual municipality. Victoria has a very tolerant culture and works hard to be welcoming to the many visitors and tourists that come to the Island.

History

As one of the oldest cities in the Pacific Northwest, there is a lot of history on the island, from a diverse First Nations' legacy to early trading post commerce, the Fraser Valley gold rush, and the legacies of many different cultures coming to Canada for the first time through its most Western access point. Victoria has fostered a

distinct pride in its history by maintaining heritage homes, castles and architecture, artifacts, signage, and natural areas that can be visited and enjoyed alongside modern development.

The three main groups of aboriginal communities (each with a distinct dialect) are now known as the Songhees, the Saanich and the Sooke First Nations peoples. Captain James Cook was the first non-aboriginal man to explore Vancouver Island in 1778, starting off a long line of European trading and gold rush commerce through the late 19th century. Victoria evolved from a Hudson Bay Company trading post to Fort Victoria, and in 1862, to a fully-fledged city, finally being established as the provincial capital in 1871, when British Columbia joined the Canadian Confederation.

Other fascinating historical legacies unique to Victoria include its Chinatown areas (the oldest in Canada), its inspiration for well-known artistic (Emily Carr, Robert Bateman) and literary figures (Alice Munro) and even incidences of paranormal activity that are showcased on a walking ghost tour of the city!

Things to do

Victoria is home to an amazing array of festivals, sporting events, and cultural activities—especially during the summer months when tourism activity is at its peak. Repeatedly ranked as one of the world's top tourist destinations, and especially popular as a cruise ship port, you can expect to navigate an influx of visitors throughout the spring and summer seasons, as well as over holidays throughout the year. Simultaneously, Victoria and the Capital Region District (CRD) as a whole are very community-oriented and offer many resources, events and activities that prioritize local involvement. In fact, many tourist attractions offer local discounts and perks, and some offerings (such as complimentary downtown horse-drawn carriage rides during Christmas time) that are enjoyed as much by residents as by visitors. There is plenty of free tourist literature available with event information and dates, an easy place to start is

Tourism Victoria (tourismvictoria.com). A short summary of the wide range of popular, accessible activities in the area include:

Outdoor Activities:

- ***Nature Pursuits:*** Hiking, Biking, Camping, Zip-lining, Bungee Jumping, Wildlife Watching, Parks & Gardens, Winter Sports
- ***Sporting Activities & Leagues:*** Golf, Soccer, Baseball/Fastball/Slo-pitch, Lawn Bowling
- ***Water Activities:*** Sailing, Paddle Boarding, Surfing, Kite Surfing, Kayaking, Canoeing, Dragon Boating, Fishing, Diving, Whale Watching
- ***Coastal Activities:*** Beaches, Swimming, Bird Watching

Attractions & Entertainment:

- ***Festivals & Events:*** Victoria Day Parade, Canada Day, Dragon Boat Festival, International Buskers Festival, Ska Festival, Victoria Beer Week, Highland Games & Celtic Festival, Pride Week (*and so much more!*)
- ***Professional & Spectator Sports Victoria:*** Royals Western Hockey League (Men's Hockey), Grizzlies (Junior Men's Hockey), HarbourCats (Men's Baseball), Shamrocks (Men's Lacrosse), Rugby Canada (Men's and Women's)
- ***Touring & Sightseeing:*** Butchart Gardens, Fisherman's Wharf, Fort Rodd Hill & Fisgard Lighthouse, Craigdarroch Castle, Hatley Castle, Chinatown
- ***Shopping:*** Downtown, Oak Bay, Fernwood, The Bay Centre, Mayfair Mall, Uptown Centre, Hillside Centre

Arts & Culture

- ***Museums:*** Royal BC Museum, The Robert Bateman Centre, Point Ellice House, Shaw Ocean Discovery Centre
- ***Performing Arts & Music:*** McPherson Playhouse, Belfry Theatre, Ballet Victoria, Victoria Film Festival, Nightclubs, Movie Theatres
- ***Artistic Activities:*** Pottery, Painting, Improv Teams, Digital Arts, Writing Groups, Cooking Schools



LIVING

Whether you are planning to rent accommodations or purchase a property, the best first financial step is to research options across all 13 municipalities, as property taxes and average rental rates can vary significantly. Other considerations might include proximity to amenities such as shops and sports facilities, ease of access to public transportation or major roads and/or lifestyle features such as parks, beaches and bike trails. In Victoria and area, it is easy to locate customized options depending on your preferences and habits.

Rental Accommodations

Condominium living is available consistently throughout the Capital Region District (CRD) and house rentals are often provided as split suites, with two or more independent living quarters per property. Popular sources of online listings for rental accommodations include Craigslist Victoria (victoria.craigslist.ca), Kijiji (kijiji.ca) and Used Victoria (usedvictoria.com). You'll find a mix of rental property

managers and landlords personally managing their properties. Most will require a damage deposit equivalent to one month's rent and an optional pet deposit. Leasing agreements can vary depending on the landlord's preferences, with 1-year, 6-month and month-to-month contract lengths being the most popular options.

The Government of British Columbia has a Residential Tenancy Branch that can be reached online (gov.bc.ca), by email (HSRTO@gov.bc.ca) or toll-free at 1-800-665-8779.

Student Accommodations

The University of Victoria has a wide range of campus housing options. Royal Roads University offers short term and residency campus accommodations for distance and executive certification students only. Camosun College does not offer on-campus housing options. All of these institutions do offer assistance programs and online listings to help students find suitable off-campus housing (see 'Education').

Property Ownership

Finding a suitable home to purchase can be made significantly easier with the assistance of a licensed Realtor who is familiar with Victoria and the available listings. Websites like Realtor.ca and Zoocasa.com are custom tailored to providing detailed information about Realtors and listings, but you can also find posted properties on the same sites as those that include rental listings. Both the BC government and the Canadian Federal government offer a number of cost-saving programs for home buyers, like the First-Time Home Buyers' Tax Credit and the BC Home Owner Grant. It is also common practice to engage a mortgage broker, or a representative at your local bank, for financing eligibility and options. If you would like to learn more about buying a home in BC, you might be able to find seminars being hosted by the local library, government office or through meeting listings on Craigslist Victoria or Meetup Victoria

([meetup.com](https://www.meetup.com)), but do also research your sources if they are not officially provided by the municipality or local government.



LOCAL CUISINE

Victoria has a diverse and exciting “foodie” culture that caters to all diets and cuisines. There is a number of local media that cover the food scene; two popular and free options are EAT Magazine and Urbanspoon (urbanspoon.com). You can expect to see a lot of local West Coast ingredients and dishes being featured, as well as strong support for independent, local restaurants and eateries. Victoria even has a burgeoning food truck culture, including ‘food truck festivals’ hosted around town over the spring and summer months.

Sourcing basics and necessities

There is a plenitude of grocery stores available, ranging from local shops to large, national chains. Nationally recognized chains, such as **Walmart**, **Safeway** and **Loblaw’s Superstore** are also located in town – with one **Costco** location in Langford. All can be accessed by public transportation. Local and regional stores include **Fairway Markets**, **Market on Yates** (and **Market on Millstream**), **The Root Cellar**, **The Red Barn** stores and many small artisan shops. As British Columbia, and Vancouver Island in particular, enjoys

such hospitable growing climates, it is very easy to source fresh, local products year-round. You can easily source a variety of fruits, vegetables, eggs and other food products directly from local farms and roadside stands. One thing to note - it is common practice to bring reusable shopping bags.

Restaurants and eateries

Victoria offers a wide range of local and chain restaurants across all municipalities. A lot of the well-known eateries are located in the downtown core, and along the waterfront of the harbour. It is safe to say that all manner of food preferences, cooking styles, food cultures and approaches are represented.

Another interesting facet of foodie life in Victoria is its “cocktail culture,” with a number of distinctive artisan cocktail bars thriving in town. Coffee and teashops are also very popular, with Victoria being known for its tea offerings in particular. Many restaurants offer happy hour discounts and/or daily specials. It is widely accepted in Victoria to indicate food allergies or preferences to your server, if necessary.

Tipping is common practice, generally 20 percent of your bill before tax.

MEDICAL

Emergency Contacts

- **Call for immediate emergency help from ambulance, fire & police:** 911
- **Call Health Link BC to speak with a nurse at any time of day or night:** 811
- **BC Drug and Poison Information Centre:**
1-800-567-8911
- **Crisis Intervention & Suicide Prevention Centre:**
1-800-SUICIDE(784-2433)
- **Vancouver Island Crisis Line:** 1-888-494-3844
- **Kids Help Phone:** 1-800-668-6868
- **Youth in BC Distress Line:** 1-866-661-3311
- **Pregnancy Options Services of BC:** 1-888-875-3163

Medical plans & coverage

Basic medical services are provided for residents through the Medical Services Plan (MSP) of British Columbia. As per the Ministry of Health, the plan “insures medically-required services provided by physicians and supplementary health care practitioners, laboratory services and diagnostic procedures.” The BC government website (gov.bc.ca) details everything you need to know about enrollment, coverage and premiums in its “Health” section.

Additional medical coverage for things like prescriptions, optical, dental & travel coverage can be obtained through the Pacific Blue Cross (pac.bluecross.ca). It is common practice for employers to

offer salaried employees benefits that include coverage of medical plans, but they can also be purchased and managed individually at reasonable rates.

Important medical resources in Victoria

Specific to Vancouver Island, health services and care locations are listed in detail by Island Health (viha.ca). They can also be reached at:
1952 Bay Street

Victoria, BC

V8R 1J8

(t) 1-250-370-8699 (toll-free: 1-800-370-8699)

(e) info@viha.ca.

There are multiple major hospitals in the area, including the Victoria General Hospital and the Royal Jubilee Hospital.

There are also numerous medical clinics where individuals (whether residents or not) are able to walk in and see an attending physician on duty. If your medical issue is not life threatening, it is generally recommended to seek out assistance from a medi-clinic facility before attending an emergency services unit of a hospital.

Health Link BC is also a great resource for medical inquiries. Call **811** from anywhere in the province to speak with a nurse at any time, day or night. Pharmacists are available at night for medication questions, and dieticians can be reached during daytime hours. Online (healthlinkbc.ca), you will find “medically-approved information on more than 5,000 topics, symptoms, medicats, and tips for maintaining a healthy lifestyle.” The site includes a directory to find local health services.

At non-profit Island Sexual Health clinics (islandsexualhealth.org), sexual health needs can be addressed by drop-in or scheduled appointments (whether or not you have a regular family doctor). They also operate a pharmacy where you can obtain related

prescriptions and medications, and offer many birth control products for little-to-no charge.

Finding a family doctor

Obtaining a family doctor can take time. You can see if practicing family physicians in your area are accepting new patients by using the “Find a Physician” tool on the College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia website (cpsbc.ca/physician_search).



EDUCATION

Post-Secondary

Victoria has a large non-local post-secondary student population attending several nationally recognized institutions including the University of Victoria (uvic.ca), Royal Roads University (royalroads.ca) and Camosun College (camosun.ca). Both the University of Victoria and Royal Roads University offer a range of Bachelor's, Masters and PhD programs, while Camosun College offers Bachelor's Degrees, Associate Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates. Refer to their respective websites for admissions requirements and procedures. As mentioned in the above 'Living' section, there are a number of off-campus housing options available for all three institutions, with limited on-campus housing at Royal Roads and full on-campus housing options available at the University of Victoria.

Continuing Education

Continuing Education programs are offered both through the Greater Victoria School District and Camosun College. There are a number of private technical colleges located in Victoria as well, such as the CDI College of Business Technology, Insignia College, Q College and Sprott Shaw College (*Note: this is not an exhaustive list*).

Elementary-Secondary Education

The public education system for Kindergarten to Grade 12 school children is managed by the Greater Victoria School District No. 61 (sd61.bc.ca), providing services for nearly 20,000 students in 27 Elementary Schools, 10 Middle Schools and 7 Secondary Schools. French immersion, English Language Learner and Special Education programs are all offered. Registration information is listed in detail on their website.

RELIGION

Victoria is a safe community where inhabitants are free to hold any religious belief, and there are a wide variety of churches and official places for all types of religious observance. Many statutory holidays in B.C. are based on religious celebrations, such as Christmas and Easter. However, it is common practice for people to celebrate other holidays, such as Hanukkah, Diwali, Baisakhi and Ramadan. Many historical Christian and Catholic churches, particularly in the downtown area, boast period architecture and rich history, and are commonly frequented by tourists. The public education system is secular, but many religious communities in the area operate private schools based on their faith and tradition.

Other Resources

WelcomeBC (welcomebc.ca) is a government-led resource center that assists newcomers move, live and find employment in the province.

ICBC (icbc.com) is the province-wide department of motor vehicles. They provide driver licenses, vehicle registration and also run the centralized Autoplan Insurance program, which is mandatory for all motor vehicles in the province.

The Government of British Columbia offers a centralized look at all of its roles and responsibilities, as well as the services it provides for residents in terms of healthcare, employment, education and business at gov.bc.ca.



TRANSPORTATION

The City of Victoria, and Vancouver Island as a whole, offer a full range of transportation options for commuting, traveling and touring, no matter your budget. At 460 km long, you can travel the island end-to-end in approximately 5 hours by car. If you want to stay closer to home, the city, especially the downtown core, is very walkable and easy to navigate.

At a glance, all of the following transportation services are available:

- Buses & Transit
- Car & Truck Rental
- Scooter & Bike Rental
- Airplane & Helicopter
- Ferries & Boats
- Shuttles and Taxis
- Chauffeur & Charter Service

BC Transit

bctransit.com/victoria/home

BC Transit is widely used by students, commuters and tourists alike, offering one-time use tickets, day and monthly passes for fare. Bus service extensively covers all 13 municipalities, including service to ferry terminals, the airport and major tourist attractions, like Butchart Gardens. BC Transit buses are fully accessible for people of all abilities. Fun fact: You are able to bring a bike along on transit rides as all buses have front bicycle racks.

Vehicle Rental

Most major national vehicle rental outlets are available on Vancouver Island. You can rent directly from the airport, or pick up a car once in the city. National rental regulations apply: You must have a valid driver's license, be at least 21 years of age, and an underage surcharge may apply for renters under 25.

Scooter & Bike Rental

Road biking is a very popular mode of transportation in Victoria. In fact, you can travel most of the Capital Regional District by bicycle using the Galloping Goose bike path! Bikes and scooters can be rented from a number of cycling shops around town.

Air Travel

victoriaairport.com

The Victoria International Airport is located up the Saanich peninsula near Sidney. Locals may describe it as small, but accessible. You can fly to major hubs in Canada, the United States and Mexico. The following airlines have regularly scheduled flights to and from

Victoria (may be subject to change):

- Air Canada
- WestJet
- Alaska Air
- United Airlines
- Air Transat
- Sunwing
- Orca Airways
- Island Express

Airport shuttle services regularly depart from downtown and offer more affordable rates than a taxi. BC Transit bus service transfers in Sidney to deliver passengers to the airport.

Note: There is also an airport mid-Island in Nanaimo (nanaimoairport.com) that flies Air Canada, WestJet and Island Express flights within British Columbia and to Alberta.

Ferry & Boat

Ferries are plentiful off the island, and navigate to a number of different locations, including Vancouver, Seattle and surrounding smaller communities like Salt Spring Island. If you do decide to travel to the U.S. by boat, you will require a passport. Plan to arrive at the Canada-U.S. ferry up to two hours ahead of your departure time in order to clear customs. Major ferry services in Victoria include:

- BC Ferries: bcferries.com
- Black Ball Ferry Line (Victoria-Port Angeles, Washington): cohoferry.com
- Clipper Ferry (Victoria-Seattle): clippervacations.com/clipper-ferry

Not all ferries accept cars, so consult the service in advance. For example, with BC Ferries, car reservations can be booked on a first-come, first-serve basis, but it does not guarantee a spot on the ferry. Not all accept pets, but many do. You can walk on to all ferries, and bring along luggage and/or larger items like a bicycle.

You must have a boat license to rent and operate a watercraft. BoaterExam.com issues official Canadian watercraft licenses. The exam can be taken, and the fee processed, online. If you do get out in a boat, you may find yourself quite close to the American border - this is allowed, but be aware that it is illegal to dock on American shore.

Shuttle & Taxi

As noted above, airport shuttle services are available throughout the city. Taxi is also available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Chauffeur & charter service can also be booked instead of a general taxi.

The Victoria Harbour Ferry (victoriaharbourferry.com) is Victoria's well-known water taxi service: Small shuttle boats that regularly take passengers along a set route of stops around the Victoria water line. Fares vary depending on distance and route. Harbour ferries generally run from March through October.

Note: Uber, Lyft or other ride-share programs are not yet available on the island.



PREPARATION

TIME MANAGEMENT

Time management is an essential component in preparation for your move as there will be a number of tasks that you will need to complete. In order to manage your time appropriately below are a few examples of how to best prepare.

Prioritization

Make a list of the necessary tasks (eg. Reserve moving company/ flights, pack, change mailing address, etc.). Before prioritizing your tasks, be sure that you have delegated how long each task will take to complete. ***Note** – don't forget to allocate some time to adapt and settle into your new environment (ie. unpacking, etc.)

Create a timeline: Start with writing down your moving date and insert your remaining tasks in a reverse chronological order.

Long-Term vs. Short-Term Planning

For some it is helpful to plan for the coming months while some prefer to plan daily tasks. If you are long-term planning monthly calendars can be useful (daily/hourly calendars can be helpful). For short-term planning, these strategies will only take a small amount of time and can certainly help alleviate stress.

Resources:

- Phone (alerts, calendars, planning apps)
- Computer (alerts, calendars)
- Paper Calendars/Agendas

LANGUAGE TRAINING

Depending on your place of origin it may benefit you to learn the primary language in your new location. (In the Contemplation section of this guide the native languages are noted). There are a number of programs to help you learn the basics of your new language:

- Coursera ([coursera.com](https://www.coursera.com)) – offers a number of language courses for free
- Learn a Language ([learnalanguage.com](https://www.learnalanguage.com)) – free courses
- Quizlet ([quizlet.com](https://www.quizlet.com)) – free learning tool for several topics including languages
- Rosetta Stone – language learning software at a cost. *Note: you may have access to this service for free through your local Canadian Sport Institute Network.

If you are unable to take advantage of the preceding resources it would help to identify a support network upon arrival to your new environment. There you can communicate with teammates/CSI staff/coaches to help with your acclimation and translation.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

It is important to prepare for some of the financial burdens that accompany a move. Depending on the depth of your move (ie. selling homes, etc.) it may be of value for you to consult with a financial advisor to be sure that you are managing your finances to your best ability.

If your move does not require the selling of any major properties it is still important to budget the costs. Some of the charges you will likely incur include:

- Moving company
- Shipping/packing supplies
- Transportation costs (consider gas/flight/food, etc.)
- New residence deposits
- New provincial license and insurance purchases
- Set up charges for cable, hydro, etc.
- Cleaning supplies

PSYCHOLOGICAL CHANGES

The process of relocating can accompany emotions such as anxiety, stress, excitement, etc. It is important to recognize these and not to suppress them. Remember, you are tackling new experiences and it is completely natural to feel this way. If you find that your new emotions are having a detrimental effect on your life and planning please reach out. There are a number of people who are available and happy to respect your confidentiality and help. Some of the resources to help recognize your challenges or assist in managing them are as follows:

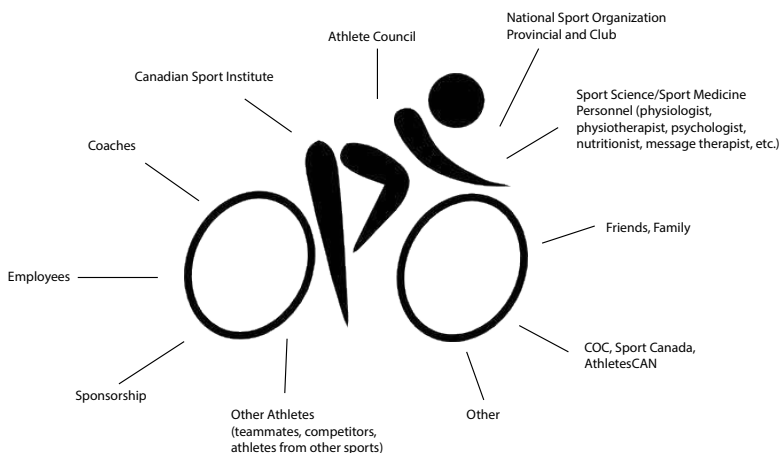
- Mind Check (mindcheck.ca) – website designed to help recognize challenges and resources
- Canadian Sport Institute: Athlete Career Transition Advisor can help you identify a proper provider and possible funding to assist
- Game Plan (mygameplan.ca) – mental health resources

TIPS

Support Network – recognize that there are many people surrounding you that can aid in your transition to your new lifestyle. Below are some suggestions of people who can be part of your network.

Meeting new people (outside of your sport)

Meet Up Victoria – various meetup groups around Victoria
([meetup.com/cities/ca/bc/victoria/](https://www.meetup.com/cities/ca/bc/victoria/))



LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

There are a number of housing options available when relocating to a new city and consulting with your new teammates or team manager can help you identify them. Some options include;

- Shared living with other teammates/athletes
(Game Plan; noleary@csipacific.ca & CSI Athlete Services; victoriaathletes@csipacific.ca can also help you connect with other athletes outside of your sport
- Condo/housing purchase
- Billeting with a family homestay- these options tend to be sport specific so please check with your new coach or support staff
- Rental properties – renting properties can be an exciting and daunting task. Below are some resources and tips

ONLINE RESOURCES:

1. padmapper.com
2. usedvictoria.com
3. victoria.en.craigslist.ca/search/apa select map option to view
4. rentalcompass.com

Rental Considerations:

1. What is your monthly budget for rent?
 - a. Housing prices in Victoria can vary widely depending on what you are looking for.

b. Sharing your place with a roommate can greatly decrease your costs.

2. Narrow down your search by areas you would consider living in.

a. How close is it to your daily training environment?

b. What kind of commute might you expect?

Consider morning and evening traffic

c. How easy is it to access public transportation?

3. What kind of amenities do you prefer/require in your new home?

a. In-house laundry?

b. Parking?

c. Furnished?

d. Accessibility features? (ie. elevators/ramps?)

e. Other?

4. What kinds of features are important to have in or around you?

a. Parks?

b. Shops?

c. Schools?

d. Public transportation?

e. Other?

5. When considering signing a lease, be aware of...

a. What is included in the monthly rent?

b. Who is responsible for paying utilities (water, electricity, gas, parking, etc.)?

c. What utility providers service the property?

Consider making a monthly budget as additions like this can increase your monthly costs.

d. What providers are available for Internet/Cable in your area?

In addition to your monthly costs, you may have to provide deposits for such services

e. Where is parking located/how is it accessed?

f. Where is the laundry located and how it is accessed?

g. Who will be responsible for the property maintenance (lawn care, fixing appliances, etc.)?

h. What are the up-front costs?

First and last month's rent are generally required but are there are any deposits (pet, storage, etc.)?

i. Is there anything in the lease that you are unsure of?

If so, ASK! Talk to a friend, parent, coach, Game Plan advisor, or lawyer.

j. Are pets allowed in the unit?

k. Other?

Don't judge a book by its cover. Photos can be deceiving! If you are unable to see the unit in person, have a friend or teammate view the unit prior to signing a lease.

MAIL

Now that you are moving you will need to change your mailing address! Below are some strategies on how to be sure you successfully change your address and avoid having lost mail

1. Canada Post provides mail forwarded for a cost
 - a. Must complete 3 – 30 days prior to your moving date.
2. As soon as you have confirmed you will be relocating, begin collecting the mail you receive and create a list. This will help you identify who you regularly receive mail from and can change your address.
 - a. The list may consist of
 - i. Doctors, dentists, etc.
 - ii. Government - income tax, property assessments, etc.
 - iii. Driving license
 - iv. Insurance companies
 - v. Subscriptions
 - vi. Car repair locations
 - vii. Utilities
 - viii. Sponsors
 - ix. Credit Cards
 - x. Banks

Don't forget to consider changing your address on your luggage and/or dog tags



ACTION

LICENSE & VEHICLE REGISTRATION

****all content taken from ICBC's website****

Upon arrival, be sure to update your vehicle information and insurance.

ICBC – Insurance Corporation of British Columbia:

Some important facts about your driver's license and car insurance:



You have 30 days to register, license and insure your vehicle after arriving in B.C.*

*Commercial vehicles must be registered/licensed/insured immediately.

Before you can insure your vehicle in B.C., there are a few steps you need to take. You can learn more about importing a vehicle into BC at [icbc.com/vehicle-registration/buy-vehicle/Pages/Importing-a-vehicle-into-B-C.aspx](https://www.icbc.com/vehicle-registration/buy-vehicle/Pages/Importing-a-vehicle-into-B-C.aspx).

Provincial safety inspection

In addition to meeting federal import rules, most vehicles must be inspected at a provincial designated inspection facility. This ensures they meet B.C.'s safety standards.

Required documents to bring to your broker

When you go to the broker's office, bring the following:

- Vehicle Import Form 1 with two stamps from Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA)
- CBSA document B15, or B3 or B4
- The vehicle's original Certificate of Title or Certificate of Origin
- The original bill of sale, and
- A "passed" inspection report, signed by the inspector, from a designated inspection facility.

When you have the documents you need, visit any Autoplan broker. There are more than 900 offices in B.C. to help you.

Insurance discount

Have you been driving **claim-free for more than a year**? If so, you may be eligible for a discount on your Autoplan insurance.

Insurance discount for new B.C. residents



You have 90 days to switch to a B.C. driver's license.

How to apply for a B.C. licence

To apply for a B.C. driver's licence, go to any driver licensing office in B.C. Bring the following to apply for your licence:

- required ID
- your current driver's licence
- fee for your licence
- proof of two years' driving experience

Don't have two years of driving experience?

If you don't have two years' driving experience (with a full-privilege, non-learner licence) or can't prove it, you can still get a B.C. licence by going through the graduated licensing program. You'll get credit for however long you have been driving.

Just visiting or going to school?

If you are just visiting here up to six months or are a full time student at a designated institution you may not have to switch your licence.

Giving up your previous licence

Please note that when you qualify for your new B.C. licence, you'll need to surrender your previous licence to ICBC. B.C. law requires that you only have one driver's licence.

Contact ICBC at 1-800-950-1498 for more questions

MEDICAL INSURANCE

MSP for B.C. Residents

Enrolment with the Medical Services Plan (MSP) is mandatory for all eligible residents and their dependents.

<http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/health-drug-coverage/medical-services-plan-msp/bc-residents>

Eligibility and Enrolment

Learn the definition of a resident, about coverage for dependents, and apply for enrolment in MSP.

Residents

An individual must be a resident of B.C. in order to qualify for medical coverage under MSP. A resident is a person who meets **all of the following conditions:**

- must be a citizen of Canada or be lawfully admitted to Canada for permanent residence;
- must make his or her home in B.C.; and
- must be physically present in B.C. at least six months in a calendar year, or a shorter prescribed period.*

Benefits

MSP covers the cost of medically required services provided by physicians and supplementary health care practitioners. Learn more about benefits provided by MSP as well as the services that are excluded.

Medical Benefits

Medically required services you receive from physicians and midwives are medical benefits of MSP, as are diagnostic services including x-rays and laboratory services. Learn about medical benefits covered under MSP.

- medically required services provided by a physician enroled with MSP;
- maternity care provided by a physician or a midwife;
- medically required eye examinations provided by an ophthalmologist or optometrist;
- diagnostic services, including x-rays and laboratory services, provided at approved diagnostic facilities, when ordered by a registered physician, midwife, podiatrist, dental surgeon or oral surgeon;
- dental and oral surgery, when medically required to be performed in hospital (excluding restorative services, i.e.: fillings, caps, crowns, root canals, etc.)*;
- orthodontic services related to severe congenital facial abnormalities.

* The removal of healthy wisdom teeth, even if impacted, is not a benefit. Surgical removal of an impacted third molar (wisdom tooth) is an MSP insured service only when hospitalization is medically required, due to the extreme complexity of the extraction and where there is associated pathology.

Supplementary Health Care Benefits

Supplementary benefits are different from medical benefits. These

services are provided by health care practitioners other than physicians or midwives. Learn about the range of supplementary health care benefits covered under MSP for eligible individuals. Read more to find out if you are eligible for assistance with the cost of these benefits.

When most patients in B.C. refer to supplementary benefits they are referring to the following services:

- acupuncture;
- chiropractic;
- massage therapy;
- naturopathy;
- physical therapy; and
- non-surgical podiatry.

Those who may be eligible for MSP coverage of these supplementary benefit services include:

- MSP Premium Assistance Recipients;
- Income Assistance recipients;
- Convention refugees;
- Inmates of B.C. Correctional Facilities;
- Individuals enrolled with MSP through the At Home Program;
- Residents of long term care facilities receiving the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS);

- Individuals enrolled with MSP as Mental Health Clients;
- First Nations individuals with valid B.C. Medical Plan coverage through the First Nations Health Authority.

Other Supplementary Services

Eye Exams

Medically required eye examinations are a benefit for all MSP beneficiaries when there is a medical necessity (for example, eye disease, trauma or injury, or health conditions associated with significant risk to the eyes, such as diabetes).

However, routine eye examinations are a benefit only for those 18 years of age and under and 65 years of age and over. *Optometrists are permitted to charge patients over and above what is payable by the Medical Services Plan for this service, as is the case with all supplementary health services.

Surgical Podiatry

Surgical podiatry services are a benefit for all beneficiaries.

*However, if a podiatrist is opted out, he/she may charge patients more than is insured by MSP.

Patients receiving surgical podiatry services may be responsible for:

- Operating room or surgical suite fees
- Surgical supplies
- Service charges over and above what is insured by MSP

Premiums

Premiums are required by MSP. Learn about payment options available to you, including premium assistance

In B.C., premiums are payable for MSP coverage and are based on family size and income.

Monthly Premium Rates (effective January 1, 2016)

Adjusted Net Income	One Person	Family of Two	Three or More
\$0 - \$22,000	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
\$22,001 - \$24,000	\$12.80	\$23.20	\$25.60
\$24,001 - \$26,000	\$25.60	\$46.40	\$51.20
\$26,001 - \$28,000	\$38.40	\$69.60	\$76.80
\$28,001 - \$30,000	\$51.20	\$92.80	\$102.40
Over \$30,000	\$75.00	\$136.00	\$150.00

Contact Us

If you have questions about your eligibility, how to enrol, changes to your account or MSP benefits, please contact Health Insurance BC at 1 800 663-7100.

CANADIAN SPORT INSTITUTE

The Athlete Coach Services (ACS) staff at Canadian Sport Institute Pacific is an athlete and coaches first point of entry into the Institute. The ACS team works to connect athletes and coaches with a wide variety of benefits and services to help them both on and off the field of play. Our mission is to: “Deliver World-Leading Benefits, Individual Support Services, and Programs to targeted athletes and coaches in order to enhance sport performance.” This includes, but is not limited to, free gym access at multiple facilities across the Province, discounts on sport retail products, and educational workshops and seminars.

It is essential for all High Performance athletes and coaches in BC to touch base with their regional ACS representative. ACS representatives can help get new arrivals acclimated to the local centre as well as explain and connect athletes and coaches to the support services available.

For those coming to Victoria, the first thing all athletes and coaches should do is reach out via email to ACS through the following address: victoriaathletes@csipacific.ca – the earlier the notice, the better. An ACS representative will respond as soon as possible and discuss a strategy to get you oriented to Canadian Sport Institute Pacific and your regional centre.

Initial Steps

1. Once you know you are relocating to Victoria, email victoriaathletes@csipacific.ca and alert them of your arrival

2. After confirming your eligibility, ACS will respond and determine a suitable time for both parties to meet.

a. *Note: Non-Sport Canada AAP carded athletes may require additional confirmation of eligibility; however, you will be notified if this is the case.

3. New athletes or coaches will need to participate in an 'intake session' where ACS will register you in the database and issue you an athlete/coach card in order to access the benefits, programs and support services.



GAME PLAN
PLAN DE MATCH

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