

Becoming a British Citizen

Specialist guidance on naturalisation as a British citizen



Overview

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"I have come back to Whytecroft Ford at each step of my five-year journey to becoming a citizen. The prices are fair, the process is broken into clear steps, and there is almost no delay in communication. My application for British citizenship was approved."

Susan, British Citizenship Client



Becoming a British Citizen

Naturalisation is the final step for many settled residents — securing a British passport, the right to vote, and the certainty of a permanent future in the UK.

What is naturalisation?

Naturalisation is the legal process of becoming a British citizen as an adult. Once approved, you can apply for a British passport, vote in elections, and live in the UK free of any immigration conditions — and you may be able to hold dual nationality, depending on your home country.

Who can apply?

You can usually apply once you have held settled status, normally for at least twelve months, and have lived in the UK for five years — or three years if you are married to a British citizen. You will also meet residence, English language, Life in the UK and good-character requirements.

Applying

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"If you're anxious about the path to British citizenship, this is the firm to choose. With specific advice and careful checking of every document, I got a positive result in five months. After years of dithering, I am now a fully fledged British citizen."

Madeleine, British Citizenship Applicant



How to Apply for Citizenship

Step 1 — Confirm eligibility

Check your qualifying period, your settled status, and your absences from the UK against the residence requirements.

Step 2 — Meet the requirements

Pass the Life in the UK test, meet the English language requirement, and arrange two referees to support your application.

Step 3 — Complete and submit

Apply online, pay the application fee, and enrol your biometrics. Children can be registered as British citizens alongside a parent's application. Standard processing takes up to 6 months. Priority service takes 6 weeks.

Step 4 — Decision and ceremony

Once approved, you are invited to a citizenship ceremony to receive your certificate — after which you can apply for a British passport.

Documents

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"My wife and I needed to apply for naturalisation and our case wasn't the easiest. With the right guidance we built a strong application, and it was successfully processed in less than a month."

AC, British Citizenship Applicant



Documents You Will Need

A well-prepared citizenship application is clear and complete from the outset. A typical application includes:

- ✓ Current passport and your Biometric Residence Permit or eVisa details
- ✓ Evidence of the date you were granted settled status or ILR
- ✓ Your Life in the UK test pass certificate
- ✓ An approved English language qualification at the required level
- ✓ Evidence of your residence and travel history across the qualifying period
- ✓ Details of two referees who meet the Home Office criteria

We check every detail against the good-character and residence rules before you submit, so nothing is left to chance.

Planning

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"Whytecroft Ford helped me successfully apply for my British citizenship — granted in just six weeks. I was impressed how fast it was when others waited months."

CB, British Citizenship Applicant



Good to Know Before You Apply

Three points smooth the path to a confident citizenship application.

Residence and absences

Most applicants must keep total absences within 450 days over the five-year route, or 270 days over the three-year route, and within 90 days in the final twelve months. You must be in the UK at the start of your qualifying period. All are assessed on the date your application is received.

Life in the UK and English

You will usually need a Life in the UK test pass and English at B1 level or higher, unless an exemption applies. If you settled this way before, your existing certificates can often be reused.

Once approved, you attend a short ceremony to make your affirmation and receive your certificate — the moment your British citizenship becomes official.

FAQs

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"I retained the firm to feel confident my citizenship application was complete and accurate. My application was successful — my dream of naturalisation became a reality."

AP, British Citizenship Applicant

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For The Future

Frequently Asked Questions

How long must I hold settled status first?

Usually twelve months before applying — unless you are married to a British citizen, when you may apply as soon as you hold ILR.

How many years of residence do I need?

Five years in the UK on the standard route, or three years if you are married to a British citizen.

What are the absence limits?

Generally up to 450 days over five years (or 270 days over three years) across the qualifying period, and 90 days in the final twelve months.

Can my children become British too?

Yes. Children can often be registered as British citizens alongside a parent's application.

Can I speed up the processing time?

Yes, as of July 2026, the Home Office introduced a Priority option to get a decision within 6 weeks for an additional £500, subject to availability.

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5.0 on Google

Based on 150+ reviews across Trustpilot & Google

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Why Families Choose Us

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Authorised by the Immigration Advice Authority



Member

Member of the Immigration Law Practitioners' Association



Rated Excellent

4.9 on Trustpilot and 5.0 on Google, across 150+ verified client reviews



London-based

Specialists in UK immigration and Indian legal services



Speak with our team

PHONE
020 8757 5751

OFFICE
450 Bath Road, Longford, UB7 0EB

EMAIL
info@whytecroftford.com

HOURS
Mon–Fri, 09:00–17:00

Book a consultation

whytecroftford.com/contact