



Canadian Postal Codes *NextGen* Documentation

Canadian
Postal Codes
Basic 

Canadian
Postal Codes
Geo 

Canada Plus
Basic 

Canada Plus
Geo 

Introduction:

Thank you for trying / buying our products! This document will explain the *NextGen* products and file layout. The *NextGen* products were introduced in May, 2012 and have an improved file format, along with fewer product combinations, making it a superior product.

Our legacy products required the use of a Windows-based Data Extractor and have had some formatting issues which we couldn't change because we have so many clients using the old format.

About GreatData:

We were the first company to sell postal code data on the Internet (since the mid-90s) and were the first company selling Canadian Postal Code data. Even after all these years, we continue to improve our products with every version.

Product Info:

We have four *NextGen* products: **Canadian Postal Codes Basic**, **Canadian Postal Codes Geo**, **Canada Plus Basic**, and **Canada Plus Geo**:

- All products contain the Base Product (postal code, province, city, telephone area code, a 4-digit time zone (offset in hours and minutes), and a Daylight Saving Time flag).
- The Geo versions also include Latitude / Longitude info.
- The Canada Plus files have more cities than the regular Canadian Postal Codes files. This is very helpful if you need to verify a city / postal code combination.

The Basic Products:

The base product consists of the following fields:

Accuracy Matters!



1. **Postal code:** this is a 7-character alpha-numeric field in the format of: A9A 9A9 (where A is an alpha character and '9' represents a number). Please note that there is a space in the 4th position.

2. **Province Abbreviation** is 2 characters long.

3. **City:** this is up to 30 characters long. We use our own upper and lower-case names which have been refined over the years to properly capitalize abbreviations (such as 'SMB' is used for Saint Mary's Bay).

We also lower-case some French words such as 'de', 'le', 'aux', etc.

If you compare us to competitive products that just upper-case the first letter and lower-case the rest, you will see the difference that this extra attention to detail makes.

We believe ours are the most complete and accurate city names available.

4. **Sequence number:** this is only in the **Canada Plus** versions. It's up to 2 digits long. This will be a '1' for the primary city for that postal code and would be a 2, 3, etc. for alternate cities for that postal code.

Note: in the **Canada Plus** product line, we include hundreds of thousands of alternate cities for validating postal code / city name combinations.

5. **Primary/Alternate Code:** this is only in the **Canada Plus** versions. It will be a 'P' if it's the primary city name for the postal code, or 'A' for an alternate city name.

6. **Area Code:** this gives you the Primary area code for each Postal Code. This is 3 digits long. Sometimes there may be an overlay where, for example, area code 111 was the original area code and now area code 222 covers the same area. The original area code will be included, since most people will have that code, not the new one. We can provide a current list of overlays, if needed.

7. **Time Zones:** the new format is: -HHMM (2-digit hours and 2-digit minutes). Note that all Time Zones in the Western Hemisphere are negative, just like longitudes. '-0500' hours is for the Eastern Time Zone, '-0600' is for the Central Time Zone, etc. **Note:** we list hours and minutes because Newfoundland *Island* (not the mainland) is minus 3 hours and 30 minutes before GMT. It shows as '-0330' in our files. The mainland of Newfoundland is '-0400' hours.

8. **Daylight Saving Time flag:** this will be 'Y' if the area observes Daylight Savings Time and 'N' if it doesn't.

Accuracy Matters!



The Geo Products:

For the **Geo** versions, we also include the following:

Latitude/Longitude: this is the approximate center of a Postal Code. This is commonly used in finding the nearest dealer or store. The format for Latitude is: 99.999999 and the format for Longitude is: -999.999999. Note that western hemisphere longitudes (all of the Canadian locations), contain a negative number.

For records where we have manually researched the coordinates, we assign a **population-based center point**, rather than a geographical center. The reason for this is that the physical center could be in a lake, airport, golf course, forest, business district, etc. ***This greatly improves the accuracy of store locators since the nearest location will be based on populated areas!***

Over the many years that we've been selling this data, we've manually verified tens of thousands of locations because government lat/long sources of data just haven't always been accurate (some off by hundreds of miles). ***This is something that you will only find in our data!***

The Canada Plus Products:

For the **Canada Plus** versions, we have multiple cities per postal codes for many of the codes, plus a 'Primary/Alternate' field that will have a 'P' if the city is considered to be the primary city for that postal code, or an 'A' if an alternate city.

Sample Data:

An example of the data included in the **Canadian Postal Codes Basic** product:

PostalCode	Province	City	AreaCode	TimeZone	DST
A0A 1A0	NL	Aquaforte	709	-0330	Y
A0A 1B0	NL	Avondale	709	-0330	Y
A0A 1C0	NL	Bay Bulls	709	-330	Y
A0A 1E0	NL	Bay de Verde	709	-330	Y
A0A 1G0	NL	Bay Roberts	709	-330	Y
A0A 1H0	NL	Bell Island Front	709	-330	Y
A0A 1J0	NL	Shea Heights	709	-330	Y

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An example of the data included in the **Canadian Postal Codes Geo** product:

PostalCode	Province	City	Latitude	Longitude	AreaCode	TimeZone	DST
A0A 1A0	NL	Aquaforte	47.0091	-52.9568	709	-330	Y
A0A 1B0	NL	Avondale	47.4054	-53.2163	709	-330	Y
A0A 1C0	NL	Bay Bulls	47.3255	-52.7835	709	-330	Y
A0A 1E0	NL	Bay de Verde	48.0965	-52.8876	709	-330	Y
A0A 1G0	NL	Bay Roberts	47.5946	-53.2667	709	-330	Y
A0A 1H0	NL	Bell Island Front	47.6402	-52.9381	709	-330	Y
A0A 1J0	NL	Shea Heights	47.5469	-52.709	709	-330	Y
A0A 1K0	NL	Brigus	47.6402	-52.9381	709	-330	Y

An example of the data included in the **Canada Plus Basic** product (note that 'P/A' is an abbreviation for 'PrimaryAlternate' and that the last record is an Alternate city):

PostalCode	Province	City	Sequence	P/A	AreaCode	TimeZone	DST
A0A 1A0	NL	Aquaforte	1	P	709	-330	Y
A0A 1B0	NL	Avondale	1	P	709	-330	Y
A0A 1C0	NL	Bay Bulls	1	P	709	-330	Y
A0A 1E0	NL	Bay de Verde	1	P	709	-330	Y
A0A 1G0	NL	Bay Roberts	1	P	709	-330	Y
A0A 1H0	NL	Bell Island Front	1	P	709	-330	Y
A0A 1J0	NL	Shea Heights	1	P	709	-330	Y
A0A 1J0	NL	Blackhead Road	2	A	709	-330	Y

An example of the data included in the **Canada Plus Geo** product:

PostalCode	Province	City	Seq	P/A	Latitude	Longitude	AreaCode	TimeZone	DST
A0A 1A0	NL	Aquaforte	1	P	47.0091	-52.9568	709	-330	Y
A0A 1B0	NL	Avondale	1	P	47.4054	-53.2163	709	-330	Y
A0A 1C0	NL	Bay Bulls	1	P	47.3255	-52.7835	709	-330	Y
A0A 1E0	NL	Bay de Verde	1	P	48.0965	-52.8876	709	-330	Y
A0A 1G0	NL	Bay Roberts	1	P	47.5946	-53.2667	709	-330	Y

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Additional Files:

The additional files included with this product are:

- **State file.** This file is called, '**states.csv**' and contains standard state/province abbreviations, the state/province name and the country code ('USA' and 'CAN').
- **Documentation.** This documentation file (**Doc-CanadianPostalCodes-NextGen.pdf**).

Abbreviations:

There are some abbreviations and names in the city field that need defining. Most are for locations on a particular bay and appears to be used to distinguish it from a place with the same name elsewhere in the province.

Arm	This is not an abbreviation, but is a term sometimes used to describe an inlet
BB	Bonavista Bay
BDV	Bay de Verte
BLP	Burgeo-LaPoile (Burgeo is a place and LaPoile is a bay)
BOI	Bay of Islands (used with Frenchmans Cove, NL)
CB	Conception Bay
Co	We've seen this used for an abbreviation for 'County'
FB	Fortune Bay
FN	First Nation - currently only used by Kettle and Stony Point FN in Ontario
GB	Green Bay (seems to be part of Notre Dame Bay)
LAB	Used with Charlottetown in Labrador, distinguishing it from Charlottetown in Newfoundland Island
NDB	Notre Dame Bay
PB	Placentia Bay
SAL	Salmonier Arm (St Josephs, NL uses this)
SMB	Saint Mary's Bay
RM	Used only for Portage La Prairie RM (a Rural Municipal office just outside of Portage La Prairie, MB)
TB	Trinity Bay
WB	White Bay