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Canada.ca design

# Latest changes to the Canada.ca design system

Expand All

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## ▼ May 15, 2025

Updated typography specifications in tandem with alignment activities for GCWeb and GC Design System. These specifications were updated in the following patterns:

- [Typography style](#)
- [Language toggle](#)
- [Minister or institutional head](#)
- [Most requested band](#)
- [Services and information](#)
- [Social media channels](#)

## ▼ September 25, 2024

Stabilized the [topic page template](#).

As part of this update, we have also made changes to several patterns.

Changes:

- [Introduction block](#): added a half-width image option

- Services and information: added ability to style the "Services and information" heading as invisible
- Social media channels: added an option to include a "More ways to connect" link
- Contributors: changed the design, this pattern replaces the institutional byline pattern

## ▼ August 28, 2024

Launched a new information architecture and new content for design.canada.ca.

Changes:

- Renamed the Content and Information Architecture Specification to the Canada.ca Specifications.
- Updated the Canada.ca Specifications to include the Canada.ca Content Style Guide and guidance on information architecture and findability, as well as a link to the GC Design System: Canada.ca Specifications.
- Created guidance on how to write metadata for Canada.ca pages: Improving titles and metadata for findability.
- Consolidated domain and URL guidance into one page: Government of Canada domains and URLs.
- Removed mentions of the Canada.ca Design System and replaced with Canada.ca design to clarify that departments have to comply with the mandatory elements of the Canada.ca design, but may use the design system that best fits their needs.
- Updated the About Canada.ca page to better reflect what users are searching for: About Canada.ca.

- Added a new page for summaries of research done on the design and user-experience of Canada.ca: [Research summaries](#).

#### ▼ April 3, 2024

Stabilized the [institutional landing page](#) (ILP) template and documented each component separately.

Updated guidance to reflect the banded style for the [most requested pattern](#).

#### ▼ February 19, 2024

Updated the [Typography style](#) to include design specifications for the new main page title (h1) style.

#### ▼ November 7, 2023

Updated the [Report a problem pattern](#) to inform users that it is being decommissioned. Stabilized the [GC Feedback pattern](#) and added content specifications and updated implementation instructions.

#### ▼ July 12, 2023

Updated the [Subway pattern](#) to remove "avoid sub-steps". This reflects that there may be instances where more complex processes would benefit from the use of sub-steps.

#### ▼ June 29, 2023

Updated the [Global header](#) pattern to reflect design changes from the Canada.ca trust study and wayfinding project. This includes documenting criteria for when the theme and topic menu can be removed, clarifying the colour of the flag in the Government of Canada signature and documenting that institutions can contextualize the search box. Also added guidance on what to avoid, research findings and policy rationale.

#### ▼ November 30, 2022

Updated the [Global footer](#) pattern to reflect design changes from the Canada.ca Wayfinding project, including modifications to the main footer band and sub-footer band, as well as a new contextual footer band

#### ▼ October 26, 2022

We clarified that the index page is required when you use the [subway navigation pattern](#)

#### ▼ August 17, 2022

We expanded the [Contextual Sign in button](#) guidance

#### ▼ May 10, 2022

We modified the [Contextual Alerts](#) and [Service disruptions alerts](#) guidance to:

- revise a heading to say “service disruption” rather than “crisis”

- add a recommendation to include dates in the alert and use the correct verb tense
- add a link to a blog post on alert fatigue
- adjust definition and implementation advice

#### ▼ October 7, 2021

We modified the Site footer guidance to specify that the following links can be contextualized to link to specific departmental pages:

- Contact us
- Terms and conditions
- Privacy

#### ▼ September 27, 2021

We published a new version of the Ministerial profile template.

#### ▼ July 26, 2021

We added a new section about Continuous improvement of web content.

#### ▼ June 17, 2021

We made a change to the Site footer documentation to make the Report a problem pattern optional.

#### ▼ May 21, 2021

We made the following changes:

- added a new beta version of the [Tables pattern](#) that is responsive on small screens
- removed the Promotional feature banner pattern

#### ▼ March 24, 2021

We added guidance on [Adding structured data on Canada.ca pages](#).

#### ▼ February 8, 2021

We added the [Labels](#) pattern to the library.

#### ▼ January 20, 2021

We made the following changes:

- added a new beta version of a [Subway navigation pattern](#) to break up long and complex content
- added a new beta version of a persistent sign-in button in the [Buttons](#) pattern
- replaced the disclaimer overlay with a new [Privacy disclaimer](#) pattern that uses an expand/collapse design

#### ▼ December 18, 2020

We updated the [Contextual alerts](#) pattern to reflect the new alert style.

#### ▼ December 17, 2020

We made the following changes:

- we updated the [design system landing page](#) to make it easier to find all the different pieces of guidance

- we added a new Designing content for Canada.ca section that ties together how to use the guidance to design content that help people

#### ▼ October 30, 2020

We made the following minor changes:

- we updated the guidance on the Buttons design pattern to provide coded examples and specify when to use which style
- we updated the guidance on the Carousels design pattern to specify when to use this pattern and when to avoid it

#### ▼ October 21, 2020

We made the following changes:

- we modified the Mandatory elements of the design system to specify that using the Canada.ca domain is mandatory
- we added a beta version of the Checkboxes and radio buttons design pattern

#### ▼ June 30, 2020

We added a new beta version of the Theme template and topic template.

#### ▼ June 25, 2020

We moved the detailed design and requirements for header and footer to the design system library, and modified the small screen version of the global header.

▼ April 17, 2020

We modified the Breadcrumb trail pattern: the first item in the breadcrumb trail was changed from "Home" to "Canada.ca".

▼ February 28, 2020

We made changes to the following templates to reflect the new *Policy on Service and Digital*:

- Institutional service performance reporting pages
- Service initiation pages

▼ February 12, 2020

Carousels are no longer mandatory on theme pages.

▼ February 3, 2020

We made the following changes:

- we've added Writing for inclusivity to the Writing principles for web content section of the *Canada.ca Content Style Guide*
- we modified the wording for the Access to Information and Privacy requests on the Transparency and corporate reporting template



## ▼ November 28, 2019

We made the following changes:

- Mandatory elements: we moved the detailed guidance on mandatory elements to the template and pattern library
- Institutional landing page: we are introducing a new beta template for the institutional landing page, merging the institutional and organizational profiles to better reflect the role and purpose of this mandatory template
- Report a problem: we modified the guidance to allow for some customization
- Transparency template: we are introducing a new suggested layout for transparency and corporate reporting information
- Basic page layout: we created examples that show how patterns can be combined in a basic page layout
- Contextual alerts: we are introducing a new beta pattern for contextual alerts
- Expand/collapse: we modified the guidance to allow the use of expand/collapse to present a choice between mutually exclusive answers

## ▼ August 27, 2019

We made the following minor change:

- we changed the Date modified pattern to reflect the format currently in use across Canada.ca: yyyy-mm-dd

## ▼ January 31, 2019

We've made major updates to the Canada.ca design system:

- the Canada.ca Specifications now contains only core requirements:
  - who must follow the Canada.ca design system
  - what elements are mandatory
  - how to organize content
  - how to design content
- the mandatory elements specify what departments must do to reflect the trusted digital brand of the Government of Canada
- the template and design pattern library contains all detailed information about specific templates and patterns
- a new interactive pattern selector makes it easier to find the right template or design pattern
- the organizing content section simplifies the direction on information architecture, user-need categories and the URL model
- the topic page template is now only mandatory for the first 2 topic layers, although it can be used at lower levels when appropriate
- the home page design reflects the recent changes to the live site

Overall, this update signals a shift in philosophy. We've shortened the list of mandatory elements, and shifted the focus to task success for users. Templates and design patterns will be changed and improved regularly, based on evidence. All changes will be documented on this page.

**Date modified:**

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