

What is a Citizen?

A citizen is a member of a community, state, or nation. Citizens have rights and responsibilities as family members, as students in a classroom and school, and as members of their community, state, and nation.

Being a good citizen means:

- Following rules and laws
- Being responsible and respectful
- Helping others

Rights: All individuals are given certain rights by the United States Constitution's **Bill of Rights** that cannot be taken away. A good citizen does not interfere with or take away the rights of their neighbors or other members of the community.

Rules and Laws: It is important for everyone to follow rules and obey laws. Laws create fairness and protect the health and safety of all individuals. They protect our freedom and democracy. We must obey laws or pay consequences. Good citizenship for adults also means serving on jury duty and paying taxes.

Responsibilities: As an adult, being an informed citizen about our government and community is an important responsibility. Voting in elections is just one responsibility of all good citizens. Volunteering to help in the community, joining worthwhile community events or organizations, and helping people who need assistance are other responsibilities. It is important for citizens to be active in their community and help others whenever possible. There are many ways for children to be good citizens too. Young people can volunteer to help clean up their community by adopting a street or highway, or cleaning up a vacant lot. They might visit hospitals or nursing homes and share their talents or simply chat with those who need a friend. Children might offer to help a neighbor, or mow a lawn or shovel a driveway for an elderly person. By volunteering and helping others, people build better communities. Being involved makes volunteers feel good too.