

North / Winter



Polar Bear

Polar bears are very special to Inuit. Polar bear fur is used to make warm clothing, and the meat is an important source of food. There are many stories and legends about "Nanuk".



Ulu Knife

The Ulu knife is an important Inuit tool. It is a shell-shaped knife made of flat stone or metal. This sharp knife is used to cut meat, animal hides and for many other purposes.



Seal

The seal is a very special animal to Inuit. Seal meat is very nutritious and its skin is waterproof. Seal skin can be used to make summer houses and clothing. In the past, seal oil was burned in lamps for light and heat.



Snowshoes

Snowshoes of many shapes and sizes have been used by Inuit and First Nations for a very long time! These special shoes make it easier to walk on snow and hunt during the long winter months.



Igloo

Igloos are houses made from blocks of tightly packed snow. There are no trees in the Arctic, so Inuit found their own way to build houses to keep warm and protected from the winter wind.

East / Spring



Tepee

Plains First Nations, such as the Blackfoot and Sioux, built triangular homes called tepees. These shelters could be taken down and moved as bands followed migrating bison herds – their main source of food.



Fiddle

The fiddle is a very important part of Métis culture. Traditional fiddlers made their instruments from maple wood and birch bark and played them at dances called “jigs”.



Maple Syrup

Maple syrup is made from the sap of maple trees. It starts to “run” in the spring. First Nations in Eastern Canada started collecting and boiling sap to make this sweetener hundreds of years ago.



Bison

Bison (sometimes called buffalo) were very important to Plains Cree and Métis. Herds were hunted for food and clothing. No part of the animal was wasted. Even the bison’s bones were used to make tools.



Drum

Drums are very important cultural and religious symbols in the Aboriginal community. Each community has its own way of making and style of playing the drum.

South / Summer



Canoe

There are many different kinds of canoes. Some First Nations built canoes with birch bark and strips of wood. Others carved canoes out whole from large cedar trees. Canoes are still a great way to travel!



Berry Bushes

The natural environment is very important to all First Peoples. First Nations have used plants to make food, teas and medicines for thousands of years.



Longhouse

Long houses were built by the Iroquois and Pacific Coast First Nations. They were made of wood and were large enough to house many families. Smoke from cooking fires escaped through holes cut in the roof.



Beaver

Beavers are a proud Canadian symbol. They were a very important part of the Fur Trade. First Nation and Métis hunters traded millions of beaver (and other animal) pelts with European traders.



Lacrosse

Lacrosse is a team sport that was first played by First Nations youth. It is Canada's national summer sport!

West / Fall



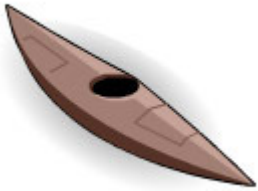
Totem Poll

Many West Coast First Nations, including the Gitxsan and Haida, raise totem poles. These poles are carved from large tree trunks, and use images of animals and people to tell important stories.



Red River Cart

Red River carts were stronger and easier to fix than regular wagons. They even floated! These sturdy carts were pulled by horses or oxen, and used by Métis fur traders to carry supplies and other items.



Kayak

A kayak is a one-person boat. These small crafts were traditionally made from whale bones covered in walrus or seal skin. A kayak is well suited for hunting and fishing because it moves very quietly through water.



Inuksuk

Inuit have used these stone formations for hundreds of years to mark trails and pathways in the North, where there are very few natural landmarks.



Sweat Lodge

A sweat lodge is a sacred building for many First Nations, including the Cree and Saulteaux. This sauna-like structure is where many First Nation people go to share stories, pray, and cleanse their bodies.