When you take the Oath of Allegiance at your naturalization ceremony, you make several important promises of loyalty to the United States. Loyalty means showing consistent support to something or someone. At your naturalization ceremony, you will raise your right hand and say the Oath. After the Oath, you become a U.S. citizen. As a new citizen, you have new responsibilities and duties that you promised in the Oath.

The complete Oath is below. You can watch the video of a USCIS Naturalization Oath Ceremony here or visit https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kuvBn8sduGE

You can use the closed captioning while you watch the video or pause the video and listen to a section at a time.

The Oath of Allegiance

“I hereby declare, on oath, that I absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty, of whom or which I have heretofore been a subject or citizen;

…that I will support and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States of America against all enemies, foreign and domestic;

…that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same;

…that I will bear arms on behalf of the United States when required by the law;

…that I will perform noncombatant service in the Armed Forces of the United States when required by the law;
The Oath of Allegiance

…that I will perform work of national importance under civilian direction when required by the law; and

…that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; so help me God.”

What are the Key Principles?

The key principles of the Oath of Allegiance mean the main ideas in each section or paragraph. You must understand the key principles of each section. The Oath has words that may be new to you. With your teacher, review the meanings and pronunciation of these words and phrases.

Key Principles in the Oath of Allegiance

Here are the key principles you will study in this lesson:

• I promise to completely give up all loyalty to leaders and governments of other countries where I was a subject or citizen before.

• I promise that I will protect the Constitution and all laws from all enemies, from other countries, or from inside the United States.

• I promise that my loyalty is to the United States only.

• I promise I will use a weapon if the U.S. government asks me to.

• I promise to serve in the military performing duties other than combat if the U.S. government asks me.

• I promise to do other non-military work that is important to the country if the U.S. government asks me.

• I promise, before God, all this without influence from anyone or hesitation.
The Oath of Allegiance

The next part breaks the Oath into seven sections. Here are steps to help you learn about the Oath:

1. Listen to each section on the video several times (or listen to your teacher read it out loud).
2. In pairs or a small group, discuss the key principle of that section.
3. Review the list of **New Words/Phrases** and their meanings with your teacher.
4. Practice the pronunciation of the words.
5. Practice reading the whole section out loud by repeating after your teacher.
6. Complete the activity at the end of each section.
The Oath of Allegiance

SECTION 1

“I hereby declare, on oath, that I absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty, of whom or which I have heretofore been a subject or citizen;

Key principle: I promise to completely give up all loyalty to leaders and governments of other countries where I was a subject or citizen before.

WORDS AND PHRASES IN THE OATH    MEANING

(to) declare absolutely and entirely (to) promise or announce something you believe completely

(to) renounce and abjure (to) give something up or (to) let go

fidelity loyalty

foreign prince, potentate, state, a king or queen, a royal person, a ruler of a or sovereignty country

heretofore before now

subject or citizen person who is controlled by a king or belongs to a country

DISCUSSION ACTIVITY

Renounce and abjure means to give up something important. A new U.S. citizen must renounce all loyalty to any king or queen outside the United States. Why do you think this is important?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
The Oath of Allegiance

SECTION 2

…that I will support and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States of America against all enemies, foreign and domestic;

Key principle: I promise that I will protect the Constitution and all laws from all enemies, from other countries, or from inside the United States.

WORDS IN THE OATH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WORD</th>
<th>MEANING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(to) support</td>
<td>(to) hold up as important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(to) defend</td>
<td>(to) protect, (to) fight for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>against</td>
<td>(to) be opposite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enemies</td>
<td>people who hurt or threaten you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>foreign</td>
<td>of another country or nationality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>domestic</td>
<td>of your own country</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MATCHING ACTIVITY

Match each word with its meaning. Do not look at the list above until you are finished.

1. defend          people who hurt or threaten you
2. foreign         hold up as important
3. against         of your own country
4. support         protect, fight for
5. domestic        of another country or nationality
6. enemies         to be opposite
The Oath of Allegiance

SECTION 3

...that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same;

Key principle: I promise that my loyalty is to the United States only.

WORDS IN THE OATH                  MEANING
(to) bear                           (to) make a promise
true faith and allegiance           complete belief and loyalty

DISCUSSION ACTIVITY

What are some people or things that you show allegiance to? How do you show allegiance? Why do you think it is important to show allegiance?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
The Oath of Allegiance

SECTION 4

…that I will bear arms on behalf of the United States when required by the law;

Key principle: I promise I will use a weapon if the U.S. government asks me to.

WORDS IN THE OATH

(to) bear arms
on behalf of the United States
required by the law

MEANING

(to) carry a gun or weapon
(to) do it for the United States
the law says you must do something

FILL IN THE CHART ACTIVITY

The U.S. Armed Forces has 7 different branches. Visit https://www.defense.gov/Our-Story/Our-Forces. Fill in the branches in the diagram below.
The Oath of Allegiance

SECTION 5

...that I will perform noncombatant service in the Armed Forces of the United States when required by the law;

Key principle: I promise to serve in the military performing duties other than combat if the U.S. government asks me.

(Some examples of noncombatant service are civilian work, such as doing administrative duties, cooking for the military, helping in a military hospital, working as a chaplain, etc.)

WORDS IN THE OATH

MEANING

(to) perform

(to) do or (to) act

noncombatant service

do something that does not include fighting in a war

armed forces

military

required by the law

the law says you must do something

FILL IN THE VERB ACTIVITY

Here are some things that are required by law. From the word bank, choose the correct verb for each phrase. Write the verb in the blank.

Word Bank

pay   file   register   obey   serve   stop

1. ________________ for a red light

2. ________________ for Selective Service

3. ________________ child support

4. ________________ on a jury

5. ________________ all laws

6. ________________ federal income taxes
The Oath of Allegiance

SECTION 6

...that I will perform work of national importance under civilian direction when required by the law; and

Key principle: I promise to do non-military work that the U.S. government says is important to the country.

(Some examples of this work are health care, taking care of young children or old people, etc.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WORDS IN THE OATH</th>
<th>MEANING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(to) perform</td>
<td>(to) do something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>national importance</td>
<td>something that the country needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>under civilian direction</td>
<td>the officials tell you to do something; not the military</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>required by the law</td>
<td>the law says you must do something</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Give Examples

Think about the current events in the United States. Work in pairs or small groups and discuss ways that people can help their community and their country, besides serving in the military?

1. ____________________________________________________________________

2. ____________________________________________________________________

3. ____________________________________________________________________

4. ____________________________________________________________________
The Oath of Allegiance

SECTION 7

…that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; so help me God.”

Key principle: I promise, before God, all this without influence from anyone or hesitation.

WORDS IN THE OATH

obligation
freely
without any mental reservation
(without) purpose of evasion
so help me God

MEANING

something you must do
by yourself; without being pushed or required
no question in your mind; free to think something
without lying or avoiding
before God

COMPLETE THE SENTENCE

Think about different obligations that people have. Finish each sentence.

Parents have an obligation to _______________________________________________________

Children have an obligation to ____________________________________________________

U.S. citizens have an obligation to ________________________________________________

I have an obligation to ___________________________________________________________
The Oath of Allegiance

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES
Vocabulary – Verb Practice

FILL-IN EXERCISE

Read the verbs in the Word Bank. Write the correct verb in the blanks for each sentence below.
Hint: Some words may be used twice.

Word Bank

perform  bear arms  defend
support  renounce  bear
declare  take

Fill in the Blanks

1. I hereby __________, on oath…

2. I absolutely and entirely ________________ and abjure all allegiance and fidelity…

3. I will __________ and __________ the Constitution and laws of the United States…

4. I will ___________ true faith and allegiance…

5. I will _______________ _______________ on behalf of the United States…

6. I will ________________ noncombatant services in the Armed Forces of the United States…

7. I will ________________ work of national importance…

8. I ________________ this obligation freely…
The Oath of Allegiance

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES
Why Do You Think? — Responsibilities

There are many responsibilities of U.S. citizens. Why do you think these responsibilities are considered important? Write a sentence about each one and discuss your ideas with the class.

Remember: These are your opinions – there is no right or wrong answer.

1. Be loyal to the Constitution.
   _______________________________________________________________________

2. Obey the laws of the United States.
   _______________________________________________________________________

3. Register for the Selective Service.
   _______________________________________________________________________

4. Pay federal taxes.
   _______________________________________________________________________

5. Serve on a jury.
   _______________________________________________________________________

6. Vote in elections.
   _______________________________________________________________________
The Oath of Allegiance

EXTENSION ACTIVITY – WRITING PRACTICE

Why do you want to become a U.S. citizen? What does the Oath of Allegiance mean to you?

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

EXTENSION ACTIVITY – SPEAKING PRACTICE

Use your cell phone to record yourself reading the Oath of Allegiance out loud. Send the recording to your teacher or classmate.

For more practice, visit Preparing for the Oath, U.S. History and Civics for Citizenship: https://americanhistory.si.edu/citizenship/learn/responsibilities/53/learn