

WORDS CONTAINING CANADIAN PROVINCE & TERRITORY ABBREVIATIONS

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The August 2020 edition of *Word Ways* ran my article *Words Containing US State Abbreviations*, where I sought the smallest set of words containing all 50 US state abbreviations. My search also extended to seeking the smallest set of words containing the abbreviations for the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the various US territories.

In this article, I repeat the exercise for the more modest group of abbreviations for the Canadian provinces and territories. There are just 13 of these:

AB	Alberta	NU	Nunavut
BC	British Columbia	ON	Ontario
MB	Manitoba	PE	Prince Edward Island
NB	New Brunswick	QC	Quebec
NL	Newfoundland and Labrador	SK	Saskatchewan
NT	Northwest Territories	YT	Yukon
NS	Nova Scotia		

As with the US state abbreviations, the challenge is to find the smallest number of words which contain all the abbreviations. Obviously, it's necessary to find some words which contain more than just one abbreviation. For example, FONT contains both ON and NT. Here's my best shot, with just 6 different words:

cantons dabchick moskonfyt openly qcepo unbenumb****

AB	Alberta	dabchick
BC	British Columbia	dabchick
MB	Manitoba	unbenumb
NB	New Brunswick	unbenumb
NL	Newfoundland and Labrador	openly
NT	Northwest Territories	cantons
NS	Nova Scotia	cantons
NU	Nunavut	unbenumb
ON	Ontario	cantons
PE	Prince Edward Island	openly
QC	Quebec	qcepo
SK	Saskatchewan	moskonfyt
YT	Yukon	moskonfyt

5 of the 6 words are in the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED). The sixth word, **QCEPO**, is worth comment. The OED does contain a couple of words with the QC digram, but both are capitalized - **KAQCHIKEL** and **Q'EQCHI** both appear in an OED quote at the main entry **QUICHÉ**, the Mayan language of a people inhabiting the western highlands of Guatemala. However, **QCEPO** appears uncapitalized in *Dorland's Illustrated Medical Dictionary*, 24th edition, where it is defined as 'the tubercle type of dermal leishmaniasis', a nasty chronic skin disease. For some reason, the word has disappeared from the more recent 28th edition of *Dorland's*.

The abbreviation NL for Newfoundland and Labrador was introduced in 2002, when it was changed from NF. The same 6 words would still have been a valid solution before that date as the NF digram appears in **MOSKONFYT**.

The QC abbreviation for Quebec was introduced in 1991. The abbreviation prior to that date was PQ, when **QCEPO** could have been swapped out for the OED's **UPQUIVERING** or *Webster's Third's* **POPQUIZ**.

If anyone can get the minimum set of words down to just 5, I would love to hear of the improved solution.