Numbered Treaties — Key

When were the numbered treaties signed?

Eleven numbered treaties in all (1871 - 1921)

- 1871 1877: seven treaties, mostly southern and central parts of today's Prairie provinces
- 1889 1921: four more treaties, mostly in the northern areas of Canada

What was the government's purpose in making these treaties?

- To obtain land and resources to build the railway and create farmland areas for immigrants.
- To extend Canada's nation sea to sea; to claim and use natural resources in northern Canada (oil, gold).

Why did many First Nations sign these treaties?

- As hunting and food supplies became scarce, Aboriginal peoples became more dependent on food rations from the government, trade with the new immigrants, and agriculture.
- Treaties promised reserve lands, hunting and fishing rights, money, annual payments, and assistance with education, medical care, and agricultural machinery.
- Not all promises were respected.

Which areas of Canada were covered by these treaties?

- Most of the Prairie provinces
- Northern Ontario
- Parts of British Columbia, Yukon, and the Northwest Territories.

What were the effects of these treaties on the lives of First Nations people?

- People were displaced to designated reserve lands, often the poorest areas for agriculture.
- Freedom of movement was restricted, and the people were confined to reserves rather than being free to follow their traditional migratory lifestyle.
- People designated Indians by the government did not having voting rights or participation in government.
- Relations with the North West Mounted Police deteriorated as a result of conflicts regarding treaties.
- The railroad, increase in immigrant population, and farms eroded hunting habitat and made it less possible to survive on hunting and fishing.
- The arrival of many immigrants brought European diseases (smallpox, tuberculosis, measles), which spread rapidly among First Nations.

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Name some peoples who were involved in signing treaties with the Canadian government in this period.

Not all Aboriginal peoples signed treaties; the Inuit, most of the peoples of British Columbia, and the Métis people were not approached by the government (refer to chart that follows for the names of some peoples who signed treaties).

Treaty Number and Date	Region and First Nations
Treaties 1 and 2, 1871	Southern Manitoba and Saskatchewan Ojibway and Cree peoples
Treaty 3, 1873	Southeastern Ontario (Lake of the Woods region) Saulteaux (Ojibway) peoples
Treaty 4, 1874	Southern Saskatchewan (Qu'Appelle region) Cree and Saulteaux (Ojibway) peoples
Treaty 5, 1875	Central-northern Manitoba Saulteaux (Ojibway) and Swampy Cree peoples
Treaty 6, 1876	Central Saskatchewan and Alberta Mostly Plains and Woodlands Cree peoples
Treaty 7, 1877	Southern Alberta Blackfoot and other nations
Treaty 8, 1899	Northern Alberta and northeast corner of B.C. Cree, Dene, Dogrib, and other nations
Treaty 9, 1905	Northern Ontario (James Bay region) Ojibway, Cree, and other nations
Treaty 10, 1906	Northern Saskatchewan (Peace River region) Primarily Dene and Métis peoples Provided Métis scrip (certificates to be redeemed for cash or land)
Treaty 11, 1921	Western part of Northwest Territories Primarily Dene and Métis of the Mackenzie region

Sources:

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Numbered Treaties: http://atlas.gc.ca/maptexts/map_texts/english/trytxt_e.html#NU>

Canada's Digital Collections, First Nations and Métis, Treaties - Overview: http://collections.ic.gc.ca/abpolitics/alberta/fn_metis/treaties.html>