

# Check before you buy: things you should know before purchasing mineral claims

This information sheet provides details on the process of purchasing mineral claims and things to consider before buying mineral tenure. It is important to know the following:

- Claims do not grant owners surface rights;
- Claims are not private property; and
- Claims are only used exclusively for the purpose of mining.

To avoid any surprises, contact your district mining recorder's office before buying a claim.

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*This information sheet is not legal advice and should not be relied upon for legal purposes. It is intended to summarize certain aspects of the Quartz and Placer Mining Acts related to mineral rights and, as such, does not attempt to present all aspects of the acts and regulation. This document may be amended from time to time. For complete information, the reader must refer to the Quartz and Placer Mining Acts and Regulations. The information in this document is for your convenience and guidance and is not a replacement for the legislation.*

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## Buyer beware

It is important to understand different claims grant ownership of different mineral rights. A **quartz claim** gives you the exclusive right to minerals in the bedrock within a claim's area. A **placer claim** gives you the exclusive right to minerals above the bedrock, but is below the surface within a claim's area.

You can acquire claims by either staking or by having a claim holder transfer their existing claims to you. To find which method of acquiring a claim is best for you, review the staking guidelines and the claim transfer process below.

- Guidelines for quartz claim staking: [Yukon.ca/guidelines-quartz-claim-staking-yukon](https://www.yukon.ca/guidelines-quartz-claim-staking-yukon)
- Guidelines for placer claim staking: [Yukon.ca/guidelines-placer-claim-staking-yukon](https://www.yukon.ca/guidelines-placer-claim-staking-yukon)

Claims in the Yukon are sold on a **buyer beware** principle. The Government of Yukon is not privy to and cannot enforce private agreements or transactions related to claim purchase or sales.

As a buyer, you're responsible for your own **due diligence** when purchasing a claim. Protect yourself from becoming a victim of fraud or a scam. Before buying or working on a claim, it's important to know its **status** and how to keep it active, its related **restrictions** (if any), its existing **permits** and the required permits you must secure. If it seems too good to be true, it is. If you think you've been a victim of a scam, contact local law enforcement or the RCMP.

Staff in mining recorder's offices can give you a variety of information on claim ownership. However, they cannot tell you how much a claim is worth, if it's a wise purchase or provide any other advice about purchasing claims or entering into mining contracts.

[Yukon.ca/mining](https://www.yukon.ca/mining)

## Check the status of claims

Ensure the claim is valid. If a claim is not valid, it cannot be sold.

Your local mining recorder's office can verify many details on claims – like their status – and tell you about any limits and restrictions in effect in the area.

You can also get an abstract of record at a mining recorder's office, for a fee. An abstract of record is like what you'd get from a land titles office when buying a surface lot. It lists all the recorded documents for specific claims.

To locate and contact a district mining recorder's office, visit [Yukon.ca/mining-recorder-office](https://yukon.ca/mining-recorder-office).

You can access a variety of claim-specific information through the online mining claims database at [Yukon.ca/maps-records-mineral-tenure](https://yukon.ca/maps-records-mineral-tenure).

You can also use the GeoYukon online map viewer available at [Yukon.ca/geoyukon](https://yukon.ca/geoyukon). The "Mining" layer collection allows you to search for claim grant numbers and other important details relevant to the claim. You can also activate layers that show other types of dispositions, such as First Nations Settlement Land, titled property or land use planning. These can help you understand the context and potential land use conflicts in the claim area.

## Prospecting leases

Prospecting leases follow different rules than claims. If you hold a prospecting lease, you do not have a mineral right. You only have a right to prospect. This means you can test an area larger than a placer claim for placer deposits. It also gives you the exclusive right to stake the lease into a contiguous set of placer claims if you meet specific conditions.

Claims and leases are treated differently. You can only sell (assign) leases after performing the first year of required work. Lease assignments happen at the discretion of the mining recorder. Contact your district mining recorder's office for more information on leases you wish to purchase.

You can find detailed information about how the mining tenure and regulatory systems work in the Yukon at [Yukon.ca/mining](https://yukon.ca/mining). You can also read the prospecting guidelines at [Yukon.ca/prospecting-lease-guidelines](https://yukon.ca/prospecting-lease-guidelines).



## Permits and work

Proper permitting must be in place before you can perform activities on a claim. This includes low-impact activities, such as camping or grassroots exploration. Permits do not transfer with claim ownership – this is a separate process.

As a claim holder, it's your responsibility to ensure you have all the required permits before performing activities on a claim. It is important to check the kind of permits you need, if a permit is in place and the conditions attached to the permits in place.

Your local mining recorder's office can help find the right permit for you. You can also find information on the following Yukon.ca pages:

- Determine the class of a placer operation: [Yukon.ca/placer-mining-class](https://www.yukon.ca/placer-mining-class)
- Determine the class of a quartz program: [Yukon.ca/quartz-mining-class](https://www.yukon.ca/quartz-mining-class)
- Placer schedule of representation work: [Yukon.ca/placer-schedule-representation-work](https://www.yukon.ca/placer-schedule-representation-work)
- Quartz schedule of representation work: [Yukon.ca/quartz-schedule-representation-work](https://www.yukon.ca/quartz-schedule-representation-work)

The Compliance, Monitoring and Inspections offices can also help you identify permits in place on a claim, site conditions and enforcement issues on a particular site. You can also request available inspection reports. You can find an office location online at [Yukon.ca/compliance-monitoring-inspections](https://www.yukon.ca/compliance-monitoring-inspections).

## Registering title

To secure ownership of a claim, you must complete a transfer document and be registered with the mining recorder's office. Otherwise, you will not hold any legal right to the claim. Contact your district mining recorder's office for details about the transfer process.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT YOUR DISTRICT MINING RECORDER'S OFFICE.

**Dawson** 867-993-5343  
[dawson.mining@yukon.ca](mailto:dawson.mining@yukon.ca)

**Whitehorse** 867-667-3190  
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**Mayo** 867-996-2256  
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**Watson Lake** 867-536-7366  
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