

# Super Citizen

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The other day my son and I were shopping for underwear for him. It took us quite a while to pick some, as he had so many characters to choose from (I'm proud to say he chose 'Star Wars'). As we shopped, I couldn't help but think about the Underoos underwear I had when I was my son's age.

Underoos were awesome underwear consisting of an undershirt and briefs that resembled the costumes of popular characters. I had sets to look like Luke Skywalker, Boba Fett and Aquaman. I even had a set of long underwear that looked like Batman's costume. My favorite pair, however, was easily Superman. While I loved 'Star Wars,' there was nothing quite like unbuttoning your shirt after a long day of school to expose that red 'S.'

After all, what could be cooler to a six-year-old than pretending to be the Man of Steel, who was faster than a speeding bullet, stronger than a locomotive and able to leap tall buildings in a single bound? I would dream about being able to fly and fight "the never ending battle for truth, justice and the American way." If my son would have settled on the Superman undies, however, he could only pretend to fight the never ending battle for truth and justice. Apparently the American way has gone up, up and away.

In issue 900, the latest release of DC's 'Action Comics,' Superman announces his intention to renounce his U.S. citizenship to prevent his actions from being construed as instruments of U.S. policy. His declaration comes after he's accused of causing an international incident by flying to Tehran amid a large protest. Iran's government refers to it as an act of war and accuses him of acting on behalf of the U.S. president.

Explaining his decision to the U.S. national security adviser, Superman states that, "Truth, justice and the American way' — it's not enough anymore. The world's too small, too connected." Superman, or more accurately, Clark Kent, presumably attained his U.S. citizenship after Kansas farmers Sam and Molly Kent discovered his crashed ship and adopted him. As U.S. citizens themselves, any child adopted by the Kents would also become a citizen.

Had the Kents not adopted the infant Kal-El, as an alien, he would have needed to apply for permanent residency so he could live and eventually work in the U.S. As proof of that status, he would have been granted a permanent resident card, commonly called a "green card." To qualify, Superman could have been sponsored by a family member or employer, but without that he would have applied through refugee or asylee status.

As a permanent resident, Kal-El would have most of the rights of U.S. citizens. He would not, however, have the right to: vote, serve on a jury, travel with a U.S. passport, bring family members to the U.S., obtain citizenship for children under 18 years of age, apply for federal jobs, become an elected official, or become eligible for federal grants, scholarships or other government benefits.

To be eligible for naturalization to become a U.S. citizen, applicants must be at least 18 years old, have been a permanent resident for at least 5 years and have been physically present in the U.S. for at least 30 months out of the 5 years immediately preceding application. In addition, hopeful citizens must be of good moral character, be able to pass a test proving they are able to read, write, and speak basic English and demonstrate they have a basic understanding of U.S. history, government and Constitution.

I'm sure wearing underwear that makes you look like a superhero can't hurt either.