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Australia Travel Tips - with Wired Destinations

Arrival

If you are not from New Zealand, you need a valid passport and a visa or an ETA (Electronic Travel Authority) to enter **Australia**. The ETA is equivalent to a visa, but there is no stamp or label in your passport and there is no need for you to visit an Australian diplomatic office to submit an application. Visit the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs' website for further information on tourist visas, working holidays, business visits, students, immigration, Electronic Travel Authority (ETAs), visas and other useful contacts. For the location of your nearest Australian consulate go to Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's website. There are strict laws prohibiting or restricting the entry of drugs, steroids, weapons, firearms, protected wildlife and associated products. If you are unsure about anything, declare it to Customs upon arrival. Aside from alcohol and tobacco products, other goods (including those intended as gifts), are eligible for a duty / tax-free allowance of \$A400 per person or \$A200 per person under 18 years of age. If you bring in or take out of **Australia** more than \$A10,000 cash or the equivalent in foreign currency (travellers cheques excluded), you must declare it to Customs. Failure to do is an offence. Medicinal products brought into **Australia** are subject to strict controls and should be declared on arrival. It is advisable to have a letter or prescription from your doctor describing your medical condition and the medication. Australia's Passenger Movement Charge (departure tax) is \$A38 per person and is normally pre-paid with your international airline ticket. Exemptions apply to children under 12 years and 24 hour transit passengers. There may be other government, airport and sea taxes and levies applicable, which are usually included in your ticket. Vaccinations are not required unless you have come from, or visited a yellow fever infected country or zone within six days before arrival. No other health certificate is required to enter **Australia**.



Great Barrier Reef

Climate



Ayers Rock

Tropical northern **Australia** is influenced by a monsoonal climate. Hot and wet during northwest monsoon (heaviest rainfall is February to March) and warm and dry during the southwest trade wind season. Beyond the tropical zone is the drier savannah leading to the desert region of western and central **Australia**. The southern temperate portion of the country has four seasons. Mid-winter (June and July) sees cool temperatures and snow on the Australian Alps of New South Wales and Victoria. Mid-summer (January and February) is hot and rain can be frequent. All southern states are exposed to hot, dry winds from the interior of the country. Much of the continent is subject to drought conditions and bushfires are a constant threat, particularly in southeastern



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Australia.

Currency

One Australian dollar (\$A) is equivalent to 100 cents. Notes come in \$100, \$50, \$20, \$10, and \$5 denominations. Coins come in 5, 10, 20, and 50-cent pieces, in addition to coins for \$1 and \$2.

The most commonly accepted credit cards are American Express, Bankcard, Diners Club, MasterCard, Visa and JCB. Banks and ATMs (Automated Teller Machines) are found everywhere. Credit cards may need to be enabled for international access so contact your credit card provider. Exchange facilities are available at international airports. Changing foreign currency or traveller's cheques can be done at most banks.

Time

There are three time zones in **Australia**: UTC / GMT (+10) Eastern Standard Time (EST) operates in New South Wales, Australian Capital Territory, Victoria, Tasmania and Queensland. UTC / GMT (+9:30) Central Standard Time (CST) in South **Australia** and Northern Territory. UTC / GMT (+8) Western Standard Time (WST) in Western **Australia**.

In New South Wales, Australian Capital Territory, Victoria and South **Australia** daylight savings time runs from the end of October through to the end of March. In Tasmania, daylight saving runs from the beginning of October through to the end of March. Northern Territory, Western **Australia** and Queensland do not have daylight savings time.

Business Hours

Normal business hours are Monday to Friday 8:30 am - 5:30 pm and Saturdays 9 am - noon. Most Thursday and Saturday evenings, shops stay open until 9 pm. In large cities, some shopping centres are open on Sunday. Banking is generally between 9:30 am - 4 pm weekdays. Extended hours for banking occur in major cities. Post offices are usually open 9.00 am - 5.00 pm Monday to Friday with some city post offices open on Saturday morning.

Communication

Australia offers modern and reliable telecommunication services. Telephone, post, email and Internet services are all readily available to visitors.

Australia has a modern and competitive telephone system. You can make local calls, long-distance calls within **Australia** as well as International Direct Dialling (IDD) calls. Local calls from public payphones cost 40 cents and are not timed. Public payphones accept Australian coins, pre-paid phone cards and major credit cards.

Mobile phones are available for rent, or you can bring your mobile phone with you. Australia's mobile network operates on the 900 and 1800 bands for GSM and 800 for CDMA. Contact your telecommunications carrier to activate international roaming while you are in **Australia**.

Internet access is available at any of the numerous internet cafes, hotels, hostels and libraries. Stamps are usually available from hotels and selected retail outlets. Travellers can arrange to collect mail at post



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offices throughout **Australia**. Mail is held for 30 days free of charge and should be marked 'Poste Restante'. A passport is required when collecting mail.

Electricity

Current in **Australia** is 220-240 volts, AC 50Hz. The Australian three-pin power outlet is different from some other countries so you may need an adaptor and a voltage converter if your appliances are 110V. Universal outlets for 240V or 110V shavers are usually found in leading hotels.

Language

English and various indigenous languages.

Dress Code

Australia is a modern western country with no particular constraints on fashion expression. Just don't walk about naked; you'll be arrested. Check with any establishment for dress codes if you are not sure. Many nightclubs in urban areas require men wear a collared shirt rather than T-shirt.

Transport

Australia is serviced by efficient and modern bus, rail and air routes. A good system of roads and highways link urban areas to rural districts. Taxis and ferries supplement the above in metropolitan centres.

Health Facilities

Excellent health care is widely available throughout **Australia**. Hygiene standards are high so there are few health hazards when travelling in the country. Comprehensive travel health coverage from your insurer is strongly recommended. Medicare is Australia's public health care system. Eligibility is generally restricted to permanent residents of **Australia** although reciprocal agreements are in place with Finland, Italy, Malta, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland. Be aware that from late October to early May, venomous box jellyfish, occur in the coastal waters of northern **Australia** and around many of the Queensland islands. In Western **Australia**, they are found along the Kimberley coastline. Beaches usually have warning signs during this time, and visitors are advised to swim where protective enclosures are provided. Crocodiles are also a potential hazard to your health in Northern **Australia**; observe all warning signs and do not take unnecessary risks in crocodile country.