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Australia

Official Name: *Commonwealth of Australia*

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Embassy Messages

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Quick Facts

- **PASSPORT VALIDITY:**
Must be valid at time of entry
- **VACCINATIONS:**
None
- **BLANK PASSPORT PAGES:**
One page required for entry stamp
- **CURRENCY RESTRICTIONS FOR ENTRY:**
Amounts over AUD 10,000, or equivalent, must be declared
- **TOURIST VISA REQUIRED:**
Yes – visa or Electronic Travel Authority (ETA)
- **CURRENCY RESTRICTIONS FOR EXIT:**
Amounts over AUD 10,000, or equivalent, must be declared

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Embassies and Consulates

[U.S. Consulate General Sydney](#)

MLC Centre

Level 10

19-29 Martin Place

Sydney, NSW 2000

Australia

Telephone: +(61) (2) 9373-9200

Emergency After-Hours Telephone: +(61) (2) 4422-2201

Fax: +(61) (2) 9373-9184

SydneyACS@state.gov

EMBASSY

[U.S. Embassy Canberra](#)

Moonah Place

Yarralumla, ACT 2600

Australia

Telephone: +(61) (2) 6214-5600

Emergency After-Hours Telephone: +(61) (2) 411-424-608

Fax: +(61) (2) 6214-5970

CONSULATES

[U.S. Consulate General Melbourne](#)

553 St. Kilda Road

Melbourne, VIC 3004

Australia

Telephone: +(61) (3) 9526-5900

Emergency After-Hours Telephone: +(61) (3) 9389-3601

Fax: +(61) (3) 9525-0769

MelbourneACS@state.gov

[U.S. Consulate General Perth](#)

4th Floor

16 St. George's Terrace

Perth, WA 6000

Australia

Telephone: +(61) (8) 6144-5100

Emergency After-Hours Telephone: +(61) (8) 9476-0081

Fax: +(61) (8) 9231-9444

PerthACS@state.gov

Destination Description

See the Department of State's [Fact Sheet on Australia](#) for information on U.S. - Australia relations.

Entry, Exit & Visa Requirements

You must have a valid U.S. passport and a visa to enter Australia. Most U.S. passport holders traveling to Australia for tourism or business purposes for less than 90 days can obtain an [Electronic Travel Authority \(ETA\)](#) . The ETA is an electronic label-free visa and can be obtained at the [ETA website](#) for a small service fee. Airlines and many travel agents in the United States are also able to apply for ETAs on behalf of travelers.

If you overstay your ETA or any other visa, even for short periods, you may be subject to exclusion, detention, and removal by the [Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection](#) (DIBP).

If you are, travelling on a valid U.S. [ePassport](#) (a passport that contains an electronic chip) and are 16 years of age or older, you are eligible to use Australia's automated border processing system, [SmartGate](#) , upon arrival in Australia. There is no additional enrollment process or fee to participate in SmartGate. Visit the [SmartGate](#) website for more information and for a list of participating airports in Australia.

Visit the [Embassy of Australia](#) website for the most current visa information.

HIV/AIDS restrictions: Some HIV/AIDS entry restrictions exist for visitors to and foreigners seeking permanent residence in Australia. Depending on the type of visa you apply for, the length of your stay, and your intended activities in Australia, you may be required to undergo a medical examination before the Australian Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) will issue you a visa.

If during the course of the application process, you are found to be HIV positive, a decision on the application will be considered on the same grounds as any other pre-existing medical condition (such as tuberculosis or cancer), with the main focus being placed on the cost of the condition to Australia's health care and community services.

Additional information about Australian immigration health requirements can be found [here](#) . Please verify this information with the [Embassy of Australia](#) before you travel.

Find information on [dual nationality](#), [prevention of international child abduction](#) and [customs regulations](#) on our websites.

Safety and Security

International and domestic-based terrorists have targeted, and will likely continue to target, Australia.

- The Australian government remains concerned by the threat of foreign fighters returning to the country from conflict areas abroad, who may seek to conduct an attack against Western interests if given the opportunity.
- Australia has an alert system for possible terrorist attacks. The threat levels range from "not expected" to "certain." The [Australian Attorney General's Office website](#) has up-to-date information regarding the current terrorism threat level. You may also contact the Australian National Security Hotline at 61-1-800-123-400.
- U.S. citizens in Australia should remain vigilant with regard to their personal security and exercise caution.
- Australian law protects the right of individuals and groups to engage in peaceful protest and to publicly express their views. Demonstrations and political rallies are generally approved by local authorities and well publicized. However, even demonstrations intended to be peaceful can turn confrontational and possibly escalate into violence. You should avoid the areas of demonstrations if possible, and be careful within the vicinity of any demonstrations. You should stay current with media coverage of local events and be aware of your surroundings at all times.

Crime:

- Although U.S. citizens are not specifically targeted for crime, you should be aware that robberies, burglaries, assault, and auto theft are common in Australia's larger cities.
- Foreign visitors in popular tourist areas are targets for pickpockets, purse-snatchers, and petty thieves.
- Be careful when visiting bars or clubs in the entertainment areas of major cities, as "bar brawls" and other assaults sometimes occur. Also, watch out for drink spiking when consuming alcohol with unfamiliar people.

Victims of Crime:

Report crimes to the local police at 000 and contact the U.S. Embassy at 9373 9200.

Remember that local authorities are responsible for investigating and prosecuting crimes.

See our webpage on [help for U.S. victims of crime overseas](#).

We can:

- assist you in reporting a crime to the police
- help you find appropriate medical care
- contact relatives or friends with your written consent
- explain the local criminal justice process in general terms
- provide a list of local attorneys
- provide information on [victim's compensation programs in the U.S.](#)
- provide information [about Australian Victim Assistance programs](#)
- provide an emergency loan for repatriation to the United States and/or limited medical support in cases of destitution
- help you find accommodation and arrange flights home
- replace a stolen or lost passport

Domestic Violence: U.S. citizen victims of domestic violence may contact the Embassy for [assistance](#).

For further information:

- Enroll in the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#) to receive security messages and make it easier to locate you in an emergency.
- Call us in Washington at 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the United States and Canada or 1-202-501-4444 from other countries from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays).
- See the [State Department's travel website](#) for [Worldwide Caution](#), Travel Warnings, and Travel Alerts.
- Follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) .
- See [traveling safely abroad](#) for useful travel tips.

Local Laws & Special Circumstances

Criminal Penalties: You are subject to local laws. If you violate local laws, even unknowingly, you may be expelled, arrested, imprisoned or deported.

- It is illegal to take pictures of certain buildings, such as inside certain areas of Australian airports, near prisons, and at military bases.

Some laws are also prosecutable in the U.S., regardless of local law. See our website on [crimes against minors abroad](#) and the [Department of Justice](#) website.

Alcohol and Drugs

- Penalties for possession, use, or trafficking of drugs are strict. Convicted offenders can expect lengthy sentences and fines.
- Driving under the influence of alcohol can result in jail time.
- Random breath testing of a driver's blood alcohol level is a common occurrence.

Scams:

- See our webpage on [International Financial Scams](#) for information on Drug Scams
- Also, see the [FBI](#) pages for information on scams.

Arrest Notification: If you are arrested or detained, ask police or prison officials to notify the U.S. Embassy immediately. See our [webpage](#) for further information.

Potential Health Screening: The 1908 Quarantine Law gives Australian authorities broad powers to prevent the entry of diseases and other materials into Australia that might pose a threat to its welfare. In the event of a public health emergency involving a communicable disease, passengers arriving in Australia may be subject to strict health screening measures, including testing, monitoring, and assessment for possible quarantine.

Customs: Australian customs authorities enforce very strict regulations concerning the importation from all countries of items such as agricultural, including plants and food products, and wood products, as well as very strict quarantine standards for other products, animals, and pets.

Contact the [Embassy of Australia](#) in Washington, D.C., or one of [Australia's consulates in the United States](#) for specific information regarding customs requirements, and visit [the Australian Government's Department of Agriculture website](#) [for additional information](#).

Natural Disasters:

Australia experiences a range of [natural disasters](#), including bushfires, floods, and severe storms. These events are difficult to predict and can result in loss of life. You should be aware of conditions around you and monitor local weather and safety reports so you can take appropriate action when needed.

See our [Natural Disasters](#) pages for information on storm preparedness and response.

Safety Concerns:

Outdoor Recreation/Adventure

- Be aware that Australian fauna can be dangerous. From jellyfish off the Great Barrier Reef to crocodiles, sharks, poisonous insects, and snakes, the continent and its waters host wildlife that merit awe and respect in equal doses.
- Visit the [Wet Tropics Management Authority visitor information guide](#) for information on Australian wildlife and marine life.
- Take important safety precautions when swimming, such as swimming only between the flags where a lifeguard is present, and never swimming alone.
- Further information on beach safety can be found on the [Surf Life Saving](#) website.
- Follow recommended precautions when snorkeling and scuba diving and never dive alone. Over the past few years, there have been numerous deaths related to snorkeling and scuba diving incidents.

Faith-Based Travelers: See the [Department of State's International Religious Freedom Report](#).

LGBTI Travelers: There are no legal restrictions on same-sex sexual relations or the organization of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) events in Australia. Australian federal law prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation.

- Same-sex marriage has not been legalized in Australia.
- Same-sex unions are recognized as de facto unions and are afforded many of the same legal protections and rights as opposite-sex couples.
- Australia grants temporary and permanent visas to same-sex partners of Australian citizens.

See our [LGBTI Travel Information](#) page of our [Human Rights report](#) for further details.

Travelers Who Require Accessibility Assistance.

- Australia enforces laws prohibiting discrimination with regard to access to premises, facilities, and accommodation.
- Many of the downtown areas of Australian [cities](#)^[4] were built in the 1800s. These areas often have narrow sidewalks crowded with pedestrians and [tourists](#)^[5].
- Generally, most public transit, parking, streets, and buildings are accessible to disabled travelers.
- Tourist spots at the beach or in the Australian outback can have varying degrees of accessibility.
- Many accommodations and venues provide accessibility information on their websites.

Students: See our [Students Abroad](#) page and [FBI travel tips](#).

Women Travelers: See our travel tips for [Women Travelers](#).

Health

Medical Care:

- Excellent medical care is available in Australia.
- Doctors and hospitals often expect immediate cash payment for health services.
- Serious medical problems requiring hospitalization and/or medical evacuation to the United States can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars.
- We do not pay medical bills.
- Be aware that U.S. Medicare does not apply overseas.

Medical Insurance:

- Make sure your health insurance plan provides coverage overseas.
- If your health insurance policy provides coverage outside the United States, remember to carry both your insurance policy identity card as proof of such insurance and a claim form.
- Although many health insurance companies will pay "customary and reasonable" hospital costs abroad, very few will pay for your medical evacuation back to the United States.
- See our webpage for more [information on insurance providers for overseas coverage](#).
- We strongly recommend [supplemental insurance](#) to cover medical evacuation.

Prescriptions:

- If traveling with prescription medication, check with the government of [Australia](#) to ensure the medication is legal in Australia.
- Always, carry your prescription medication in original packaging with your doctor's prescription.

Vaccinations: Be up-to-date on all [vaccinations](#) recommended by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Further health information:

- [World Health Organization](#)
- [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC)

Travel & Transportation

Road Conditions and Safety:

- Traffic operates on the left side of the road, and all vehicles use right-hand drive.
- Use caution when crossing streets and when driving.
- When crossing roads on foot, make sure you look carefully in all directions.
- Seat belt use by drivers and all passengers is mandatory, and fines apply for not wearing them.
- Motorcyclists must wear helmets.
- Speed limits and laws are rigorously enforced. Speed limits vary throughout Australia and are measured in kilometers, not miles. Be aware that speed cameras are everywhere and you will be ticketed for driving over the speed limit.
- Roads and streets are frequently narrower and less graded than U.S. highways.
- Outside major metropolitan areas, most highways are two-lane roads with significant distances between destinations.
- When driving in Australia, exercise caution while passing or merging with adjacent traffic.
- If driving in rural areas, be alert to free-roaming animals, such as kangaroos, and "road-trains" (several semi-truck trailers connected together).
- Passing road-trains is dangerous, and you should pull over to allow on-coming road-trains to pass to avoid being sideswiped.
- If you have no experience with a 4-wheel drive vehicle, you should exercise common-sense when driving in the Australian outback.

Traffic Laws:

- Each state/territory has different rules about using a foreign driver's license and the conditions under which a visitor might have to get an international driver's license. More information about [driving rules and regulations is available by state](#) .
- Texting or holding your phone while driving is against the law in Australia, but you can use a hands-free system to communicate while driving.
- For specific information concerning Australian driving permits, vehicle inspection, road tax, mandatory insurance, and the rental and operation of motor vehicles in Australia, visit the [Australian Tourist Commission website](#) .

Public Transportation:

Australia has an extensive and safe public transportation network consisting of buses, streetcars, trains, and subways. Metered taxis are also prevalent. Use common sense safety practices, such as guarding valuables and remaining aware of your surroundings, on all public transportation.

See our [Road Safety page](#) for more information.

Aviation Safety Oversight: The U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has assessed the government of Australia's Civil Aviation Authority as being in compliance with International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) aviation safety standards for oversight of Australia's air carrier operations. Further information may be found on the [FAA's safety assessment page](#) .

Please see Fact Sheet for this country.

Assistance for U.S. Citizens

U.S. Consulate General Sydney
MLC Centre
Level 10
19-29 Martin Place
Sydney, NSW 2000
Australia

- Telephone
+(61) (2) 9373-9200
- Emergency After-
Hours Telephone
+(61) (2) 4422-2201
- Fax
+(61) (2) 9373-9184
- Email
SydneyACS@state.gov
- [U.S. Consulate General
Sydney](#)



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