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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) 9373-9184SydneyACS@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) 9525-0769MelbourneACS@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) 9231-9444PerthACS@state.gov**Destination Description**

Australia is a highly developed, stable democracy with a federal-state system. Tourist facilities are widely available. Read the Department of State's [Fact Sheet on Australia](#) for additional 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). You can obtain more information about the ETA, other visas, and entry requirements from the Embassy of Australia at 1601 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20036, via the Australian Visa Information Service at 905-280-1437 (toll charges to Canada apply) or the [Embassy's website](#) .

If you are, travelling on a valid U.S. ePassport 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. For more information on using SmartGate and for information on participating airports in Australia, visit the website for [SmartGate](#) .

HIV/AIDS Entry 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.

Information about [dual nationality](#) or the [prevention of international child abduction](#) can be found on our website. For further information about customs regulations, please read our [Customs Information page](#).

Safety and Security

International and domestic-based terrorists have targeted, and will likely continue to target, the country. Authorities have conducted several counterterrorism operations in Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane since 2014, arresting multiple individuals suspected of being involved in attack planning. Also, 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. Like the United States, Australia shares its national threat levels with the general public to keep everyone informed and to explain the context for the various increased security measures. 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. Depending on the alert, you should maintain a high level of vigilance and take appropriate steps to increase your security awareness. 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 enforcement authorities continue to take actions to guard against a terrorist attack and are using a range of tactics to mitigate the threat. 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.

To stay connected:

- Enroll in the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program](#) so we can keep you up to date with important safety and security announcements.
- Follow the Bureau of Consular Affairs on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) .
- Bookmark the [Bureau of Consular Affairs website](#), which contains the current [Travel Warnings and Travel Alerts](#) as well as the [Worldwide Caution](#).
- Follow the U.S. Embassy in Australia on [Twitter](#) and visit the [Embassy's website](#).
- In the event of an emergency, contact us at 1-888-407-4747 toll-free within the United States and Canada, or via a regular toll line, 1-202-501-4444, from other countries.
- Take some time before traveling to consider your personal security and checking for useful tips for [traveling safely abroad](#).

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. Weapons are increasingly used in such crimes, which also may be associated with drug trafficking, gang activities, and drug or alcohol usage. Foreign visitors in popular tourist areas are targets for pickpockets, purse-snatchers, and petty thieves. Be careful when consuming alcohol with unfamiliar people, as drink spiking can occur; take appropriate security precautions, especially at night, to avoid becoming a target of opportunity. Also, be careful when visiting bars or clubs in the entertainment areas of major cities, as "bar brawls" and other assaults sometimes occur in the late hours of the night or early morning when patrons are intoxicated.

VICTIMS OF CRIME: If you or someone you know becomes the victim of a crime abroad, you should contact the local police and the nearest U.S.

embassy or consulate. We can:

- Replace a stolen passport.
- Help you find appropriate medical care if you are the victim of violent crimes such as assault or rape.
- Put you in contact with the appropriate police authorities, and if you want us to, we can contact family members or friends.
- Help you understand the local criminal justice process and direct you to local attorneys, although it is important to remember that local authorities are responsible for investigating and prosecuting the crime.
- Every state in Australia has an assistance program for victims of crimes and these programs will be able to generally assist you, even if you are only visiting Australia. For more information on local programs in Australia, [please visit the Victim Assistance Online website](#) .

The local equivalent to the "911" emergency line in Australia is: 000 (Triple 0). To call for fire/police/ambulance services throughout Australia, dial "000" for urgent assistance.

Please see our [information on victims of crime](#), including possible victim compensation programs in the United States.

Scams: Fraudulent schemes have increased dramatically in Australia. Scammers use social engineering to cultivate a relationship and build trust with a potential victim before asking the individual to send money or participate in what may seem like a legal enterprise, such as delivering a package or money for them, but which is actually associated with drug trafficking or money laundering. Other common scams include fake lotteries, dating and social networking scams, and fake assistance needed for loved ones or friends. Check out the Department of State's brochure on [International Financial Scams](#), which includes useful tips on how to avoid becoming the victim of a scam.

Local Laws & Special Circumstances

CRIMINAL PENALTIES: While you are traveling in Australia, you are subject to its laws even if you are a U.S. citizen. Foreign laws and legal systems can be vastly different than our own. In Australia, you may be taken in for questioning if you don't have your passport with you. In some places, it is illegal to take pictures of certain buildings, such as inside certain areas of Australian airports, near prisons, and at military bases. If you break local laws in Australia, your U.S. passport won't help you avoid arrest or prosecution. It's very important to know what's legal and what's not where you are going. In Australia, driving under the influence could land you immediately in jail. If you violate Australian laws, even unknowingly, you may be expelled from the country, arrested, or imprisoned.

There are also some things that might be legal in the country you visit, but still illegal in the United States. You can be [prosecuted in the United States](#) for engaging in sexual conduct with children or for using or disseminating child pornography in a foreign country regardless of the legality of these activities under that country's laws. Counterfeit and pirated goods are illegal in the United States and if you purchase them in a foreign country, you may be breaking local law as well.

Arrest notifications in host country: While some countries will automatically notify the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate if a U.S. citizen is detained or arrested in that country, others may not. To ensure that the United States is aware of your circumstances, request that the police and prison officials notify the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate as soon as you are arrested or detained overseas.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES:

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 and wood products, as well as very strict quarantine standards for other products, animals, and pets. These regulations also apply to items you bring with you, including small quantities of food such as fruit. Please 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.

Safety Concerns: 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. While swimming, take important safety precautions, such as swimming only between the flags where a lifeguard is present, and never swimming alone. Scuba diving can be a treacherous sport. Over the past few years, there have been numerous deaths related to diving incidents. We urge divers to follow recommended precautions and never dive alone.

WOMEN TRAVELER INFORMATION: If you are a woman traveling abroad, please review our travel tips for [Women Travelers](#).

LGBT RIGHTS: 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. While 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. For more detailed information about LGBT rights in Australia, you may review the [State Department's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#). For further information on LGBT travel, please read our [LGBT Travel Information](#) page.

ACCESSIBILITY: While in Australia, individuals with disabilities may find accessibility and accommodation very different from what you find in the United States. Australia has and enforces laws prohibiting discrimination for access of premises, facilities, and accommodation; however, please keep in mind that many of the downtown areas of Australian cities were built in the 1800s. These cities often have narrow sidewalks crowded with pedestrians and tourists. Also, many of the tourist spots at the beach or in the outback may have varying degrees of accessibility. Generally, most public transit means, parking, streets, and buildings are accessible to disabled travelers. Modern accessibility improvements include ramps, tactile indicators, and audible street crossing indicators. Many websites offer information on accessible hotels, motels, and rental properties. Parks, gardens, stadiums and other public venues often share accessibility information on their websites.

Health

Excellent medical care is available in Australia. Serious medical problems requiring hospitalization and/or medical evacuation to the United States can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. Most doctors and hospitals expect immediate cash/credit card payment for health services. Before you go abroad, learn what medical services your health insurance will cover 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. You may wish to consider purchasing travel medical insurance to cover the costs of medical care you may need while abroad.

You can find detailed information on vaccinations and other health precautions on the [CDC website](#) . For information about outbreaks of infectious diseases abroad, consult the [World Health Organization \(WHO\) website](#) . The WHO website also contains additional health information for travelers, including [detailed country-specific health information](#) .

Travel & Transportation

TRAFFIC SAFETY AND ROAD CONDITIONS: While in Australia, you may encounter road conditions that differ significantly from those in the United States. The information below concerning driving in Australia is provided for general reference only and may not be totally accurate in a particular location or circumstance.

Traffic operates on the left side of the road, and all vehicles use right-hand drive. Please use caution when crossing streets and when driving. When crossing roads on foot, make sure you look carefully in all directions. Wearing a seat belt is mandatory, and fines apply for not wearing them. Speed limits and laws regarding driving while intoxicated are rigorously enforced, and random breath testing of a driver's blood alcohol limit is a common occurrence. 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. 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.

When driving in Australia, exercise caution while passing or merging with adjacent traffic. If driving in rural areas, be cautious of 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. A number of fatalities have occurred in the Northern Territory where vehicles driven at high rates of speed have skidded and overturned after hitting loose gravel on the shoulder of the road. If you have no experience with a 4-wheel drive vehicle, you should exercise common-sense when driving in the Australian outback.

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](#) .

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. In some cases, you can apply for a driver's license from the state in Australia where you intend to remain for the duration of your stay in Australia. More information about [driving rules and regulations is available by state](#) .

Please refer to our [Road Safety page](#) for additional resources.

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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