



Fact Sheet: Living in Australia

The following information has been provided to help you begin to understand Australian customs and culture. You can also visit the following web site for information <https://www.immi.gov.au/living-in-australia/>

Multicultural Australia

Australia is a multicultural country and bound by laws to accept the cultures of all people from anywhere in the world.

Ethics and Equality

Australia accepts children, women and men as equal. Under Australian law all citizens are equal.

Politeness

In Australia, particularly when living in a private home, remember that a courteous and considerate attitude is always appreciated. It is important to smile and say "please" when you ask for something and "thank you" when you receive it.

Different Cultures

Combining the culture that you will bring with you and the new culture in Australia will be challenging, but will enrich your life experience and give you memories that will last a lifetime. Culturally, Australians are very relaxed and friendly but this openness should not be understood as being sexually inviting.

Arriving On Time

Australians often appear to be casual in their behaviour, however it is considered good manners and courteous to arrive on time for appointments whether for business or pleasure. If you are invited to join Australian friends for an outing it is best to arrive at the time indicated. It is especially important to arrive on time for your lessons at Australian Wings Academy.

Smoking

By law, smoking is not allowed in buses, public buildings, restaurants or in buildings at Australian Wings Academy.

Drinking Alcohol

You must be over 18 to drink alcohol in Australia. You will be fined if you drive after drinking alcohol. The blood alcohol reading if you are stopped by police must be less than 0.05%, which is equal to approximately 1-2 glasses of beer. There is a zero tolerance rule for students who are between 18 and 20 or on a provisional licence. All drivers can be stopped and tested by police at random to see if they have been drinking.





Hotels, Bars and Pubs

If you are in a hotel or bar with Australians you should expect to pay for each drink as you buy it. The Australian custom of “shouting” means that if someone buys you a drink, you are expected to buy them a drink in return.

Drugs

In addition to rules about drinking alcohol the use of illicit drugs and drug trafficking is illegal in Australia and carries heavy penalties.

Asking Personal Questions

Asking personal questions in Australia will cause embarrassment. It is considered impolite to ask a person’s age, religion or profession. It is also impolite to ask how much money is earned. To tell someone they are fat or ugly is considered extremely rude. Australians respect each other and recognise friends and relations as equals.

Pets

Dogs and cats in Australia are generally safe and respected as they form part of the family unit.

Having your Family Visit

If you plan to travel with other family members, it is your responsibility to organise hotel accommodation for them in advance. It is not appropriate to expect your home stay to accommodate members of your family.

Dinner Table Etiquette

You will notice that everyone either helps themselves to food from serving plates in the centre of the table or is served a meal already on the plate. If you are asked if you would like more it is best to say ‘yes please’ the first time you are asked, as you may not be asked a second or third time. It is polite to ask for a dish to be passed to you: ‘please pass the vegetables’ or ask for more: ‘may I have some more ice cream please?’ Complimenting the meal is considered good manners in Australia. Bad behaviour at the table is considered extremely rude.

Manners and Hygiene

In Australia, it is not acceptable to spit and is against the law to do so in public. If you need to spit, please leave the room and use the toilet. It is considered polite to blow your nose into a handkerchief or tissue but it is not polite to sniff. It is considered polite to eat your meal quietly without noise and with your mouth closed. Australians will be offended if you make noises when you eat or drink.



Showers and Baths

Australians usually shower although most houses have a bathtub. However, you will not be able to fill the bath or use as much water as you would in your home country as Australia is in drought.

Use of the Toilet

It is usual to sit on the toilet seat in Australia and leave the toilet clean and tidy as you find it. Always remember to flush the toilet after you have used it. Toilet paper is also flushed away down the toilet. Do not dispose of it in the waste bin. Leave the bathroom as you would wish to find it, dry and clean.

Sanitary Products

Ladies, please note that all sanitary products should be disposed of by wrapping and placing in the correct outside bin. Keep products out of sight of family members and dispose of immediately. It is not your hosts' responsibility to dispose of used products. Disposable bags are available from chemist shops or ask your hosts for advice.