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WridgWays Global

Guide to Living in Melbourne



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1. General Information



Geographic Location

Melbourne is the capital city of Victoria, and also encompasses the broader metropolitan region which spans 9,993 km². The outer suburbs of Melbourne offer a wide range of geographic features including the beachside suburbs around Port Phillip Bay, the hills and valleys of the Dandenong Ranges, the relatively flat inner suburbs and their many parks, and a variety of different riverside suburbs along the famous Yarra River.

Melbourne City

Melbourne's CBD or Central Business District is an economic and political hub which features a heavily built up 36.5km² and is home to retail, financial, legal, administrative, recreational, tourist, and entertainment facilities, serving a wide variety of residents, workers and visitors.

In recent years the CBD has experienced a period of rapid residential growth. CBD residents are typically students and young professionals, while families are often more attracted to suburban living which offer a quieter lifestyle in more spacious surrounds.

Melbourne's close proximity to the Yarra River, the Melbourne Botanical Gardens, state-of-the-art sporting venues and historically significant landmarks are just some of the reasons that Melbourne has been named [Most Liveable City](#) for seven years in a row.

Climate

Melbourne temperatures can vary widely, and while the city may sometimes experience four seasons in one day, the weather is generally predictable based on the time of year.

Melbournians have become used to preparing for all eventualities and have grown accustomed to layering their outfits, and keeping an umbrella nearby, just in case.

Summer - December to February

Average minimum temp 14°C (57°F)

Average maximum temp 25°C (77°F)

It is important to note that while these average temperatures for summer seem generally pleasant, Melbourne will often have many days of 35-40 degrees over the summer period, with the warmest weather occurring towards the end of January and beginning of February.

Autumn - March to May

Average minimum temp 11°C (52°F)

Average maximum temp 20°C (68°F)

Winter - June to August

Average minimum temp 7°C (45°F)

Average maximum temp 14°C (57°F)

Spring - September to November

Average minimum temp 10°C (50°F)

Average maximum temp 20°C (68°F)



Population

The population of Melbourne is close to 4.5 million people, based on data from the 2016 Census, while the state of Victoria is home to approximately 6.2 million people, making it the second largest population of any state in Australia.

The population of the entire country is 24.13 million people, with the majority of these people living in closer to capital cities, especially Melbourne and Sydney.

Melbourne Time Zone and Daylight Savings

Australia has three standard time zones, with Melbourne (and the rest of Victoria) operating on Australian Eastern Standard Time (AEST) during the colder months of the year, which is 10 hours in front of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT).

On the first Sunday of October, Victorians turn their clocks forward one hour for Australian Eastern Daylight Saving Time (AEDT), allowing them to enjoy more of the nicer weather in the afternoons and evenings. The time reverts to normal after summer is over, with Victorians changing their clocks back on the first Sunday in April.

To see more information on the current time and date for Melbourne, as well as other local information, visit:

<https://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/australia/melbourne>

2. Culture, Lifestyle and Language



Melbourne Lifestyle Overview

The Melbourne lifestyle is centred around the natural beauty of the city, taking advantage of the river, the parks and the generally pleasant weather.

Brunch culture is one of the most universally enjoyed features of the Melbourne lifestyle, and is in its element on weekend mornings when people will flock to their local cafés for some of the world's best coffee and an eclectic range of breakfast foods.

Lovers of food, fashion, sport and the arts are all brought together in the inner suburbs of Melbourne, and specifically the city with its amazing shopping and entertainment precincts which will cater to every taste.

Melbourne has many theatres which are home to often sold out shows from both Broadway, and closer to home. There is a strong appreciation for culture in Melbourne, with the idea of "dinner and a show" being a popular pastime on both weeknights and weekends.

Galleries, museums and live music are also integral to the Melbourne lifestyle, with exhibits designed to excite the entire family. ACMI (Australian Centre for the Moving Image), and the NGV (National Gallery of Victoria) are both located within walking distance of Melbourne's Federation Square which is a hub for tourists and locals in search of entertainment.

In the warmer months, the parks, bike trails and beer gardens of the city and its surrounds come alive with people from all backgrounds, eager to enjoy the sunshine.

Southbank, a trendy precinct along the Yarra River which borders the CBD, has bars, restaurants and street performances all year round, with myriad offerings reflecting the diversity of Melbourne and its inhabitants.

For those who prefer to entertain at home, there is nothing more "Aussie" than a backyard barbecue, which often involves a very relaxed afternoon or evening with friends and family, who will often bring an offering for the "barbie", as well as a salad or dessert.

A Typical Australian?

With such a rich cultural background of Australians who have migrated from overseas, as well as our Indigenous population who have occupied Australia for over 50,000 years, it is difficult to define a typical Australian.

While British colonisation of Australia didn't occur until the late 1700s, it is Western culture that has had the most influence over its inhabitants, with many similarities between Canadian, American, and English ways of life.

On the whole, Australians like to view themselves as accepting and welcoming of all, and in many cases this is certainly true. The concept of a "fair go" is a quintessentially Australian ideal, which centres around giving equal opportunities to anyone, from any background or walk of life.

The Australian identity is often associated with our unique sense of humour which is as eclectic as our cultural make-up. Sarcasm and irony are key to this appreciation for the comedic, as well as a love for observational humour, and in finding the light side of any situation.

People of Victoria

Victoria is home to one of the most culturally diverse societies in the world, and is also among the fastest growing and most diverse states in Australia.

Almost one half of Victoria's population were born overseas, and come from over 200 countries, speaking over 260 languages/dialects and follow over 130 religious faiths.

There are more than 175,000 international students studying in Victoria at any given time.

Languages

English is the official language of Australia, however, languages other than English are also valued. Almost 30% of Australians speak languages other than English at home.

The most commonly spoken languages after English are Italian, Greek, Cantonese, Arabic, Vietnamese and Mandarin.

Australian English

While English is Australia's national language, there are certain words and expressions that have become regarded as uniquely Australian through common usage.

The use of these colloquial or slang words, often coupled with an Australian sense of humour that is characterised by irony and irreverence, can sometimes cause confusion for international visitors. There are a number of books on Australian colloquialisms and slang, including the **Macquarie Book of Slang**.

Religious worship

Australia is a predominantly Christian country, with around 52% of all Australians identifying as Christians. However, most other major religious faiths are also practised, reflecting Australia's culturally diverse society.

Australia's earliest religions or spiritual beliefs date back to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, who have inhabited Australia for between 40,000 and 60,000 years. Indigenous Australians have their own unique religious traditions, languages and spiritual values.

Australia has no official state religion and people are free to practise any religion they choose, as long as they obey the law. Australians are also free not to have a religion with close to a third of Australians identifying as having no religion in the most recent Census.

Vibrant Arts Scene

Australia has a vibrant arts scene that reflects both the nation's Indigenous cultural traditions and its rich mosaic of migrant cultures. All forms of the visual and performing arts have strong followings, including film, art, theatre, dance and music.

Visual artists have played an important role in shaping and reflecting Australia's image. They range from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, to the nationalist painters of the Heidelberg School in Victoria, symbolic surrealists such as Sidney Nolan, Arthur Boyd and Albert Tucker and modern artists reflecting issues confronting contemporary Australia.

Australia has a strong literary tradition, which started with the storytelling of Indigenous Australians and continued with the oral stories of convicts arriving in Australia in the late 18th century.

Australia has one Nobel Prize for Literature to its credit, with novelist Patrick White receiving the award in 1973 for his novel *Eye of the Storm*. Other recent Australian novelists whose work has a particularly Australian flavour include Peter Carey, Christos Tsiolkas, Bryce Courtenay, Kate Grenville, Elizabeth Jolley, Thomas Keneally, Christopher Koch, David Malouf, Colleen McCullough, Christina Stead, Morris West and Tim Winton.

A Sporting Culture

Australians love sport, and enjoy participating in a wide range of sporting activities for both recreation and fitness. There is also a strong support base for spectator sports, and many Australians have a fierce passion for their chosen teams and favourite athletes.

The 10 most popular physical activities include walking, aerobics/fitness, swimming, cycling, tennis, golf, running, bushwalking, football (often referred to as soccer in Australia) and netball.

Other popular sporting activities include Australian Rules Football (AFL), rugby, hockey, basketball, baseball, car racing, horse racing, sailing and skiing.

The most watched sports in Australia include Australian Rules Football (a uniquely Australian game with roots traceable to early forms of rugby and Gaelic football), rugby league, rugby union, basketball and cricket.

Major sporting events held in Melbourne include The Australian Open (one of four tennis Grand Slam events), the AFL Grand Final, and The Melbourne Cup, which is Australia's most famous horse race and also known as "the race that stops the nation".

Celebrations and Holidays

Melbourne has a range of public (bank) holidays throughout the year, some of which are unique to Melbourne, while others exist across Australia and many other Western countries. The dates of these holidays for 2020 include:

Date	Holiday
1 January	New Year's Day
27 January	Australia Day
9 March	Labour Day
10 April	Good Friday
11 April	Day following Good Friday
12 April	Easter Sunday
13 April	Easter Monday
25 April	Anzac Day
8 June	Queen's Birthday
25 September	AFL Grand Final Friday
3 November	Melbourne Cup Day
25 December	Christmas Day
28 December	Boxing Day

Cultural Awareness

Greetings

In most contexts within Australian culture, first names are the preferred method of greeting others, even upon first meeting. Older generations of Australians, and people from different cultural backgrounds may be less comfortable with this, but will let you know their own preference if it differs.

Professional titles are not prominent in Australian business culture, and are sometimes dismissed as pretentious. Announcing your title when meeting an Australian may be perceived as a form of pompousness.

A handshake is the preferred greeting. It is customary to shake hands at the beginning and end of a meeting. With the exception of handshakes, it is important to read verbal and non-verbal cues before making physical contact with others, until you are confident that it is appropriate.

When speaking to an Australian, keep an arm's length distance from the person. Maintaining personal space is important in Australian culture.

The unique Australian vernacular can make initial conversations a little confusing, but you will soon get your head around commonly used phrases, for instance if somebody asks you "How are you going?" they are asking "How are you?"

Keeping Appointments

While Australians are generally quite relaxed by nature, it is still considered bad form to be late to an appointment or to cancel without giving enough notice. Most people will be responsible for their own calendars, and it is customary to quickly check by phone or email before setting up a meeting request unannounced.

Business hours in Australia are 9:00am – 5:00pm, and while some meetings outside of hours are unavoidable, it is bad form to schedule meetings in the early morning or evening without good reason.

Depending on the level of formality, there are a wide range of meeting styles in Australia, with the more important ones being held in a boardroom or office, and more casual meetings held in cafés or restaurants over lunch or coffee. There has also been a rise in the popularity of the "walking meeting" which addresses the problems associated with the sedentary lifestyles of most office workers, giving them a chance to leave the office.

Dress Codes

In most scenarios, Australians adopt a neat-casual approach to dressing, and unless a specific dress code is referenced, you should assume this to be the case. In warmer climates and during the summer months, it is considered perfectly acceptable to wear cooler clothing options when appropriate.

In business settings, corporate attire is generally expected, which can include suits, and a wide range of other professional clothing variations. Some offices can be more casual, but it is best to dress more conservatively until you have established the nuances of a particular workplace, and it is considered good form to wear suits to important meetings.

Eating

Most Australians will generally have three main meals throughout the day, breakfast, lunch and dinner, but will often have snacks for morning tea and afternoon tea as well.

Defining the typical Australian diet, is just as difficult as defining the typical Australian. A wide range of foods from a wide range of cultures are celebrated in homes and restaurants across the country, with chefs being influenced by the many types of foods that have now become the norm in Australian society.

Australians will generally eat home cooked meals most nights of the week, but have a strong appreciation for restaurant and café culture, which means that dining out is a treat for some and regular occurrence for others. The Aussie barbecue is one of the most popular options for feeding large groups of people at home, where people will often be encouraged to bring food to share, and to provide their own beverages.

Gift Giving

Gift giving is generally not a part of Australian culture (apart from Birthdays, Christmas and Anniversaries). However, if you are invited for dinner, it's permissible to bring a token gift of flowers, chocolates, or wine.

3. Visa and Migration



Obtaining the correct visa for your pending relocation can often be time consuming and confusing. Allow us to remove this burden and handle your visa requirements - we do it for our valued clients every day. Our registered migration consultants offer extensive experience in visa and immigration matters and can provide advice and reassurance every step of the way.

General Visa Information

Non-Australian citizens require a valid visa to enter and spend time in Australia. With the exception of New Zealand citizens, all foreign nationals must obtain a visa before travelling to Australia. New Zealand citizens are issued with a visa upon arrival in Australia. Australian visas are all electronically attached to your passport so you don't need a label or stamp.

Standard three-month tourist visas, valid for multiple entries over one year, are issued free in some cases. Six-month visitor visas incur a fee. If you hold a three-month visa and want to stay longer, you can normally extend your visa while you are in Australia. Please contact our registered consulates for advice.

If you are under 31 years of age, depending on your country of passport you may also be able to obtain a 12-month working holiday visa. In some cases a second working holiday visa can be obtained where the applicant has completed three months of 'specified work' in regional Australia. If you are interested in the second working holiday visa program you should contact our registered advisors to discuss.

Employer sponsored visas allow companies to sponsor applicants for full-time positions in Australia. The position is usually skilled in nature, and the applicant must possess the necessary skills to fill the position. An employer sponsored visa will allow you to travel freely to and from Australia, and to take up a full-time position with the sponsoring company. The visa can be valid for up to 4 years, and may be extended in some cases. As this visa is granted on the basis of sponsorship, you will need permission from the Department of Immigration if you wish to change employer or occupation. Applications may be made in overseas countries or whilst temporarily in Australia, provided your existing visa will allow it.

Visas should always be arranged several months prior to travel to Australia, plan well ahead.

4. Housing



Housing Options

Temporary Accommodation

Typically, fully furnished serviced apartments, or similar styles of accommodation, ranging from 1 to 3 bedrooms are available in both city and suburban locations depending on requirements.

Long term Accommodation/Rental/Tenancy

There are a wide variety of housing styles to choose from in Melbourne from modern apartments and homes through to period style character cottages.

External looks can sometimes be deceiving as many of the older style homes may be fully renovated and refurbished with modern fittings and fixtures. The rental price is a good indicator of what the condition of the property will be, and whether the property has been recently updated/renovated.

There are no 'expat' specific areas in Melbourne and new arrivals in Melbourne choose to reside in numerous and varied locations around Melbourne's vast suburbs.

Inspecting a property

Before you apply to rent a property, you will need to inspect it.

Inspections are arranged with the real estate agent or landlord. These can be arranged directly with them or the property may be open for inspection – where anyone can attend at a set time and date.

If you are entitled to Home Search assistance with WridgWays Global your Relocation Consultant will assist you to liaise with the agent or landlord to arrange an inspection.

It is recommended that you take a photocopy of your documents (see below applying for a rental property) and a pen so you can complete an application straight away if you need to. Many properties are in high demand, so filling out an application as soon as possible will help you to secure the property you want.

You may be able to get an application form from the agent or landlord before the inspection. Ask them for a copy or see if there is one on their website.

Applying for a rental property

If you like a property, you will need to fill in an application form and provide the documents Real Estate Agent/Landlord ask for. These could include:

- + Your identification, including photo identification (driver license or passport), bank card or birth certificate
- + Names and contact details of people who will give you rental or personal references
- + Your rental history
- + Rent payment receipts or statements
- + Employment details and history
- + Proof of income, like current payslips from your employer or income statement
- + Bank details and copies of your bank statements

You will have to give the agent or landlord permission to contact anyone listed for references. Before you submit applications, tell the people you have listed as your references that agents may contact them.

The agent or landlord has access to a tenant database that shows if you have not paid your rent in the past. If you apply to rent the property, tell the agent if you are listed on a tenant database and why this happened, as they will find out when they check.

When you are successful in obtaining a property, you will need to agree to a date to move in. This date will be when your tenancy starts and you begin paying rent.

The landlord or agent will then ask you to sign a residential tenancy agreement – this is also known as a lease.

The lease describes the rights and responsibilities you have as a tenant, as well as the rights of your landlord.

All leases provided by an agency in Victoria are a standard lease as set by the Real Estate Institute of Victoria (REIV). As such, all the conditions in the lease are standard, except for the 'Special Conditions', or 'Additional Clauses', and these may vary from agent to agent.

Ensure you read through the Special Conditions and Additional Clauses particularly carefully. If you believe a special condition or clause is unfair or may be illegal, especially one that contravenes the conditions stated earlier in the lease, you can contact REIV for advice on the legality of the demands. It is important to know your rights.

Other details in the lease include:

- + The rental property address
- + The amount to be paid as bond
- + How much rent is to be paid and its frequency of payment
- + The commencement and duration of the agreement
- + The name and address of the landlord

It is a good idea to request a copy of the lease for review prior to signing the document. Please ensure you carefully review all the conditions in the agreement, prior to signing.

Remember that a lease is legally binding once signed by you and your landlord/agent, therefore make sure you understand and agree with every word on the lease. Ensure you retain a signed copy of the lease.

Rental Bond

In addition to paying rent, at the commencement of the tenancy you are also required to pay a 'Bond'.

A bond is a payment made in advance by you (as the tenant) to cover any costs for which you may be liable at the end of the tenancy, such as damage to the property or chattels, outstanding water usage charges or unpaid rent. Accordingly, the bond is often referred to as a security deposit.

If the rent is \$350 a week or less, the bond cannot be more than the equivalent of one month's rent.

A landlord or estate agent may charge a bond that is more than one month's rent if:

- + The tenancy agreement states that the premises are the landlord's principal residence and the landlord intends to resume living there at the end of the tenancy, or
- + rent is more than \$350 a week

The bond is submitted to the Residential Tenancies Bond Authority (RTBA) and held in trust until the end of the tenancy. There is no interest earned on these funds during time it is held in trust.

Landlords/Agents are required to lodge the bond, with the completed bond form to the RTBA within 10 business days of them receiving it.

When a tenancy ends you may receive the whole bond, or only a part of it, if the landlord claims the money to cover any damages caused to the property. You will need to discuss with the landlord/agent how the bond money will be divided. This discussion may include resolving issues that arise from, for example, any damage to the property or bills owing.

Note: You cannot pay your final rent using the bond. The bond and rent are separate payments. You may be fined for treating any part of the bond as rent. This includes if the rental agreement is in its last month.

The agreed division of the bond should be set out on the completed Bond Claim form, which is sent to the RTBA.

For further tenancy information visit:

www.consumer.vic.gov.au/housing/renting

Furniture and Electrical Appliance Rental

Rental of furniture and electrical appliances is available on both a short and long term basis. Clients may request full kits including all furniture, linen, appliances and cooking utensils or select individual items.

There are several companies in Melbourne, the main operators include:

- + Living Edge - www.livingedge.com.au
- + Guests Furniture Hire - www.guestshire.com
- + Mr Rental - www.mrrental.com.au
- + Radio Rentals - <https://www.radio-rentals.com.au/>

5. Banking Services

Australia has an advanced banking system, comprising a number of operators covering the whole of Australia, plus other banks who specialise in individual states. Almost all Australian banks operate country-wide, and you will be able to access their facilities wherever you are in Australia.

Each bank will offer their own mix of accounts and facilities, and associated fees.

Currency

Australia was the first country in the world to have a complete system of bank notes made from plastic (polymer). These notes provide much greater security against counterfeiting. They also last four times as long as conventional paper (fibrous) notes.

The innovative technology with which Australian bank notes are produced - developed entirely in Australia - offers artists brilliant scope for the creation of images that reflect the history and natural environment of Australia. At the same time, the polymer notes are cleaner than paper notes and easily recyclable.

Australia's currency comprises coins of 5, 10, 20 and 50 cents and one and two dollar denominations; and notes of 5, 10, 20, 50 and 100 dollar denominations.

ATMs (automatic teller machines) are located outside banks, and at most shopping centres. It is usually free, with most major banks having recently eradicated fees which were charged if you used a different bank's ATM.

EFTPOS (electronic funds transfer at point of sale) i.e. paying for goods using your bankcard. Most banks and retail outlets offer this facility and the funds may be taken from your current, savings or credit account. The larger retailers normally let you draw extra cash out as well, with no charge. Almost all EFTPOS machines now allow you to use Pay Wave or Tap and Go functionality for purchases under \$100, meaning that you do not need to provide a PIN or signature, and speeding up transactions.

Credit/Debit Cards American Express, MasterCard, Visa and Diners Club are widely accepted, however American Express cards are accepted in fewer places than Visa and MasterCard.

Internet banking is now offered by most banks, enabling you to check balances, transfer money between accounts, pay bills (BPAY system) and so on.

Opening a Bank Account

When you arrive in Australia, opening your bank account is straightforward. You will need to show your passport and resident's visa. You will also have to provide a Tax File Number at some stage so that any interest paid to you is not taxed before you receive it.

The Australian Banking sector is dominated by the following four major banks: ANZ, Commonwealth Bank, National Australia Bank and Westpac Banking Corporation.

For other banking options see:

www.onlymelbourne.com.au/banks-in-melbourne

It is possible to open an Australian bank account before leaving your home country. The following Australian banks have Migrant Banking Services available:

- + National Australia Bank - www.nab.com.au/movingtoaustralia
- + ANZ Bank - www.anz.com/aus/personal/Moving-To-Australia
- + Commonwealth Bank - www.commbank.com.au/movingtoaustralia
- + Westpac - <https://www.westpac.com.au/personal-banking/bank-accounts/moving-to-australia/>

6. Medical Services



Medical Emergency Checklist

Prepare a medical emergency checklist based on the following (as a guide):

- + Emergency services numbers
- + Emergency contact person information
- + Doctor's name and contact details
- + Dentist's name and contact details
- + Health Insurance Information (plan/policy number, etc.)
- + Medical history (allergies, medicines, medical problem, etc.)
- + Special instructions (diet restrictions, etc.)
- + Other emergency info (including home address/ phone number)

What do I do in case of a Medical Emergency?

DIAL 000 for Ambulance, Fire or Police

A full list of emergency care can be found within the first few pages of the telephone directory or for further information visit:

www.australia.gov.au/information-and-services/public-safety-and-law/emergency-services

Health Direct provides free trusted health information and advice, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Registered nurses are available to provide information and advice when you're not sure what to do – whether you should see a local GP, manage the condition at home, or go to an emergency department.

Free call: 1800 022 222 or visit www.healthdirect.gov.au/healthdirect for more information.

Major public hospitals around the Melbourne metropolitan area provide 24-hour emergency care which is free to all Medicare card holders. A list of public hospitals that provide emergency and accident care can be found in the front of the telephone book, or by visiting <http://performance.health.vic.gov.au/Home/Emergency-department-status.aspx>

Ambulances should only be called in case of an emergency, and the ambulance will transport you to the nearest available emergency hospital appropriate to your circumstances.

The Ambulance Service operates on a membership basis, with members entitled to free ambulance transport anywhere in Australia.

Cost of ambulance transportation to non-members is very high and it is advisable to take out membership immediately on arrival. The minimal subscription fee varies according to family or single status and may be applied for through your private health insurance fund.

If you are not in a private health fund you may apply for ambulance cover directly with Ambulance Membership.

www.ambulance.vic.gov.au

Phone: 1800 64 84 84

Australia's Health System

The Australian healthcare system is mixed. Responsibilities for healthcare are divided between the federal and state governments, and both the public and the private sectors play a role.

Government programs underpin the key aspects of healthcare. Medicare, which is funded out of general tax revenue, pays for hospital and medical services. Medicare covers all Australians and Permanent Residents, pays the entire cost of treatment in a public hospital, and reimburses for visits to doctors.

Australians and Permanent Residents are entitled to free treatment as public patients in public hospitals. Patients with private health insurance can access public hospitals but they will be charged out of pocket expenses. Private patients have the option to choose doctors responsible for their care, and the doctors charge the patient directly for their medical care.

Who is eligible to access Medicare?

Medicare is Australia's publicly-funded universal health care system, operated by the government authority Medicare Australia. Medicare is intended to provide affordable treatment by doctors and in public hospitals for all resident citizens and permanent residents except for those on Norfolk Island. Residents with a Medicare card can receive subsidised treatment from medical practitioners who have been issued a Medicare provider number, and fully subsidised treatment in public hospitals. Visitors from countries which have reciprocal arrangements with Australia have limited access to Medicare.

For further information see:
<https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/medicare>

Which countries have a Reciprocal Health Care Agreement (RHCA) and access to Medicare? How Do I Enrol?

If you come from one of the countries listed, you are entitled to limited subsidised health services for medically necessary treatment while visiting Australia.

- + Belgium
- + Finland
- + Italy
- + Malta
- + Netherlands
- + New Zealand
- + Norway
- + Ireland
- + Slovenia
- + Sweden
- + United Kingdom

For more information on enrolment process, entitlements, coverage and other related information, go to <https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/enablers/rhca-medical-care-visitors-australia>

Private Health Insurance

Private health insurance is an important component of funding of health care in Australia. Being a private health insurance member allows you to be treated in a private or public hospital as a private patient. This means that you may be able to choose the doctor that treats you, the hospital you are treated in and a time for treatment that suits you. Private health insurance also provides cover for services not covered by Medicare such as physiotherapy, dental, optometry and podiatry services. Many people rely on private health insurance to access services they would otherwise be unable to afford.

For further details, please refer to <https://www.privatehealth.gov.au>

I have applied for a 457 visa, who is responsible for arranging Health Insurance?

All subclass 457 visa applicants are required to show that they have made adequate arrangements for health insurance prior to the approval of their visa. The level of coverage is specified by the Department of Immigration particular to the 457 visa. There are a number of Australian health insurance companies that provide a tailored package to meet these requirements.

As well as being a criterion for the approval of the visa it is also a condition on all subclass 457 visas that the holder must maintain this level of insurance while holding the 457 visa. Visa holders who fail to comply with this condition during their stay in Australia may have their visas cancelled.

Some countries have reciprocal health agreements with Australia and can access Australia's Medicare system once they arrive. Applicants in this situation can satisfy the condition of having to maintain health insurance once they are enrolled in Medicare. WridgWays Global registered migration advisors can help you understand the health insurance requirement as it applies to your individual situation.

Private Health Insurance Options for Overseas Visitors

A number of private health insurers provide health cover for overseas visitors. Benefits available, membership costs and eligibility can vary between insurers. Most overseas visitors' health cover products have limited cover for pharmaceuticals. Overseas visitors may face significant out of pocket costs if they need treatment with pharmaceuticals, particularly oncology (cancer treatment). Lifetime Health Cover and the private health insurance rebate are not applicable for overseas visitors' health cover. Goods and Services Tax (GST) of 10% is applied to overseas visitors' health cover.

For further information, go to <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/private-1>

Child Immunisation

Childhood immunisation is highly recommended but not compulsory and is carried out at various stages of the development of the child. The Australian Standard Vaccination Schedule is a free immunisation program and provides inoculation against diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, polio, mumps, measles and rubella. All are also available for children and adults.

The service is offered through all municipalities and a record of the procedure noted in your public records. For before-school immunisations, parents will generally take younger children to any of the public immunisation sessions held at local council offices. Once children reach school age, the local council's immunisation nurse will visit your child's school to carry out the immunisation program.

It is necessary to show proof of all immunisations before entrance is allowed into schools, so bring your child's immunisation records with you when enrolling.

The Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (the Immunisation Register) is a national online database containing information on the immunisation status of all children living in Australia who are under the age of seven years.

Further details regarding the national childhood immunisation schedule can be found at <http://www.immunise.health.gov.au/>

Ambulance Cover

In Victoria, you are required to pay for ambulance services which can be quite expensive (several thousand dollars per trip). If you do not have private medical insurance which covers this cost, you should consider becoming an ambulance member with an annual membership fee payable which are very affordable.

Further details see: www.ambulance.vic.gov.au
Membership Enquiry: 1800 648 484

The Sun and Skin Cancer

Australia has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world, mostly caused by over exposure to UV radiation. Around 750,000 people are treated for skin cancer and over 2,000 people die from the disease every year.

Most Australian medical practitioners are experienced in checking for signs of skin cancer, which can include irregular moles or skin abnormalities. Regular checkups can help with early-detection and prevention of skin cancer, and your GP will be happy to discuss any concerns with you.

When should I use sun protection in Victoria?

Whenever ultraviolet (UV) radiation levels reach 3 (moderate) and above, sun protection is required. At that level UV radiation can damage your skin and eyes and lead to skin cancer.

In Victoria from September to April, UV radiation levels are usually 3 and above for most of the day. Particular care should be taken between 10am - 4pm (11am - 5pm daylight saving time) when UV levels reach their peak.

From May to August, average UV Index levels are usually low (below 3). Therefore, sun protection measures aren't as important during these months unless you are in alpine regions, or near highly reflective surfaces like snow or water.

To see what the UV levels are for the day and the times sun protection is needed, go to SunSmart UV Alert in the weather section of the daily newspaper or visit www.bom.gov.au/announcements/uv

During high UV periods, ensure you have adequate sun protection including clothing, sunscreen, sunglasses, hats, and seek shade.

For further details see: www.sunsmart.com.au

Hospitals and Medical Practitioners

Public Hospitals	
The Royal Melbourne Hospital	www.mh.org.au 300 Grattan Street (corner of Royal Parade) Parkville, Victoria Ph: 03 9342 7000
The Royal Women's Hospital	www.thewomens.org.au 20 Flemington Road Parkville, Victoria Ph: 03 8345 2000
St Vincent's Hospital	www.svhm.org.au 41 Victoria Parade Fitzroy, Victoria Ph: 03 9231 2211
The Alfred Hospital	www.alfred.org.au 55 Commercial Road Melbourne, Victoria Ph: 03 9076 2000
Royal Children's Hospital	www.rch.org.au 50 Flemington Road Parkville, Victoria Ph: 03 9345 5522
Mercy Hospital for Women	https://health-services.mercyhealth.com.au/our-locations/mercy-hospital-women/ 163 Studley Road Heidelberg, Victoria Ph: 03 8458 4000
Other public hospitals	www.yellowpages.com.au search 'Hospitals public'

Private Hospitals	
Resources for list of private hospitals	www.health.vic.gov.au/privatehospitals/ www.yellowpages.com.au search 'Hospitals private'
Chiropractor	
The Chiropractors' Association of Australia	www.chiropractors.asn.au Ph: 02 8844 0400 National Office Toll free: 1800 075 003
Dentist	
Australian Dental Association - Victorian Branch	www.adavb.com.au Level 3, 10 Yarra Street South Yarra, Victoria Ph: 03 8825 4600
Doctor	
Australian Medical Association - Victoria	www.amavic.com.au AMA Victoria House 293 Royal Parade Parkville, Victoria Ph: 03 9280 8722 Toll Free Ph: 1800 810 451
Massage and Natural Medicine Therapists	
Australian Traditional Medicine Society	www.atms.com.au Toll Free Ph: 1800 456 855
Australian National Therapists Association	https://www.australiannaturaltherapistsassociation.com.au/ Toll Free Ph: 1800 817 577
Optometrists	
Optometrists Australia - Victoria Division	www.optometry.org.au/victoria 28 Drummond Street Carlton, Victoria Ph: 03 9652 9100

7. Schooling



Australian education has a strong international reputation for excellence. Whether you study at a university, school, vocational or English language institute, you will receive a quality education that will form a strong foundation for your child's future success.

Schooling in Australia starts with a kindergarten or preparatory year followed by 12 years of primary and secondary school. Children between the age of six and fifteen must attend school. In the final year of secondary school, Year 12, you can study for a government-endorsed certificate (in Victoria, the VCE) that is recognised by all Australian universities and vocational education and training institutions. This Senior Secondary Certificate of Education is also recognised by many international universities.

Information and ratings on all schools in Australia (public and private) is available at www.myschool.edu.au

Victorian is well served by good schools throughout all communities. Schools belong in one of three main sectors:

- + Government (Public) Schools
- + Catholic Schools
- + Independent Schools

Government schools (also commonly referred to as public schools)

Government Schools make up the largest sector, with just under two thirds of enrolments. The great achievement of government schools throughout Australia is to provide high quality, democratic education for everyone in the local region, irrespective of their means or background. There are public schools available to all residents, where education is free, however, parents must supply their children with books, uniforms and study material, and are often asked to pay "voluntary" annual fees. The majority of public schools are co-educational (both boys and girls).

Catholic Schools

Catholic Schools form the next largest sector and provide Catholic education across the state to any Catholic students enrolled, regardless of their means. Most Catholic schools belong to a system like government schools, and attempt to provide Catholic education evenly across the states through mainly co-education (both boys and girls) schools. These schools are also known as systemic. Systemic Catholic schools are funded mainly by government and have low fees. There are also a large number of independent Catholic schools, often single-sex, usually run by established religious orders. Catholic Schools are bound by the same regulatory and curriculum requirements as all other schools. Schools may be co-educational (both boys and girls) or single sex. Some of the single sex schools may have a 'brother' or 'sister' school to share in after-hours activities.

Independent Schools (also commonly referred to as private schools)

Independent schools are also often referred to as 'private schools'.

Independent Schools are non-government schools, i.e. fee paying or 'private' schools. Most have their own boards responsible for the operation of the school including fundraising, spending, staff employment and disciplinary code. Many are under the auspices of religious foundations such as Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Church of England. However, many of these schools do not expect families to subscribe to any particular faith or religious allegiance. All independent schools receive some government funding; however, there are a broad range of fees which can be quite high.

Schools may be co-educational (both boys and girls) or single sex schools. Some of the single sex schools may have a 'brother' or 'sister' school to share in after-hours activities.

International Baccalaureate

The International Baccalaureate Diploma Course is the premier course for internationally mobile students throughout the world. It is valued everywhere for its portability. Successful students are sought by every major Australian and overseas University.

Based in Switzerland, the organisation has almost 1000 schools worldwide offering the two-year Diploma Course. There are a number of schools offering the course in Melbourne and throughout Australia.

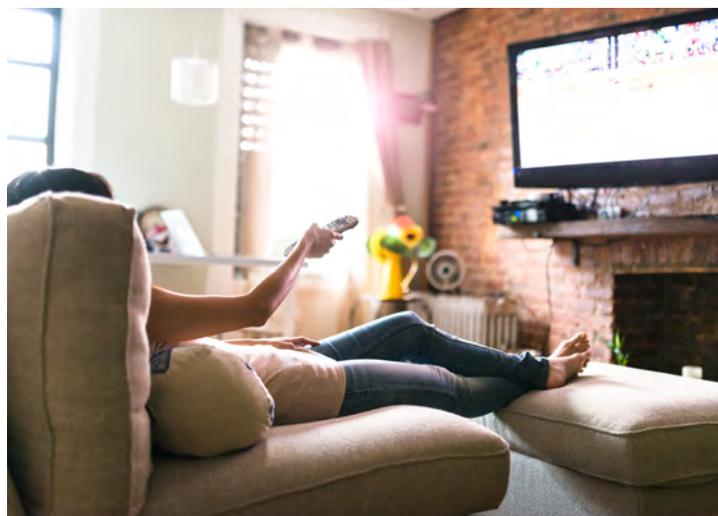
For those International Baccalaureate students wishing to do Tertiary studies in Australia, Universities have made special provisions within their selection procedures to incorporate requirements specifically related to the International Baccalaureate Diploma Course.

There are 24 government and non-government schools in Australia offering the International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO). Only schools officially approved by the International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO) are authorised to offer the two-year pre-university curriculum for students aged between 16 and 19 years of age.

Many students within and outside of Australia take the IB Diploma for admission to leading universities in the Asia-Pacific region. However, students considering a vocational career path should discuss their options with the school.

Further information is available at: www.ibo.org

8. Utilities



Electricity and Gas Suppliers

In Melbourne, consumers are able to select which electricity and gas supplier they would like to obtain their energy from. You can either use the same company for both, or separate companies for gas and electricity. Some suppliers require consumers to take a contract for 12 or 24 months, whereas others do not lock you into any contractual arrangements, but you may find that their energy costs are slightly higher.

WridgWays Global can assist with outlining the utility options available and arranging the connection of the utilities. Please contact your WridgWays Global Relocation Assignment Manager to discuss this further.

Electricity is supplied throughout Australia at 230 volts (50 hertz). You will likely need an adaptor/converter for your devices, chargers, and other electronic equipment. Most electrical stores in Melbourne will be able to help you with these requirements once you arrive, if you have not acquired the necessary adaptors already.

Water and Sewage

Melbourne Water, wholly owned by the Victorian State Government, manages Melbourne's water supply catchments, sewage, rivers and major drainage systems.

To learn more about water suppliers for your locality, you can visit <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/water/drinking-water-in-victoria/water-suppliers>.

Pay TV

There are a few options available for subscription based television in Melbourne, with Foxtel and Netflix being the most popular. For further details see:

- + Foxtel - www.foxtel.com.au
- + Optus Yes TV - www.optus.com.au
- + Fetch - www.fetchtv.com.au
- + Netflix - www.netflix.com/au/
- + Stan - www.stan.com.au

9. Telecommunications



Phoning in/out of Melbourne

The Australian country code is +61 and the Victoria STD area code is 03.

When calling from outside of Australia, leave out the leading '0' from the STD area code or from the mobile telephone number.

Fixed line example calling Melbourne from outside Australia:
+61 3 (local eight digit number).

E.g. +61 3 1234 5678

Example calling a mobile from outside Australia:
+61 4 (following eight digits of the mobile number)

E.g. +61 4 1234 5678

The outgoing IDD access code from within Australia is 0011.

Telephone and Internet

Some of the major telephone and internet providers include:

- + Telstra - www.telstra.com.au
- + Optus - www.optus.com.au
- + Iprimus - www.iprimus.com.au
- + Dodo - www.dodo.com.au
- + Virgin Mobile - www.virginmobile.com.au
- + Netspace - www.netspace.net.au
- + iinet - www.iinet.net.au

Mobile Phone Providers

There are hundreds of choices of mobile phone plans and packages, and you will need to assess which is the best package to suit your personal usage and requirements. Some of the major mobile phone providers include:

- + Telstra - www.telstra.com.au
- + Optus - www.optus.com.au
- + Vodafone - www.vodafone.com.au
- + Virgin - www.virginmobile.com.au
- + Dodo - www.dodo.com.au

Many operators provide bundle discounts if you put all your services with them i.e., internet, home phone and mobile phone services. It is also important to note that the two primary carriers, Telstra and Optus will be used by almost all of the other providers, with Telstra having slightly better coverage than Optus. If you plan to spend time in regional areas you may want to ensure you use one of the many providers utilising the Telstra network.

10. Public Transport



Public Transport Overview

Melbourne's public transport system is unique. It offers three modes of transport - trains, trams and buses, with Melbourne being the only city in Australia to operate an extensive tram system as part of its public transport network. Public transport offers a convenient alternative to the car and is a cost effective, simple, and environmentally friendly way to travel. In addition to the city and suburban network, Victoria also offers country trains to many regional destinations.

Flinders Street Station, on the corner of Flinders and Swanston streets, is the hub of Melbourne's train system, it serves the entire metropolitan network. Melbourne also enjoys an underground, partly surface-level and partly elevated train system, known as the City Loop, with five stations servicing the CBD: Southern Cross Station, Flagstaff, Melbourne Central, Parliament and Flinders Street, with several new additions currently under construction. There are 16 different train lines servicing the outer suburbs, and these lines are all linked to bus and tram services.

The primary station for catching regional and interstate trains is from Southern Cross Station which has undergone a massive facelift and is now a major attraction in itself. The cutting edge design and vast open spaces, has made catching a train to Victoria's outer reaches even easier.

Melbourne's public transport has changed in the past 5 years. More services have been introduced providing improved frequency. There is also better connectivity between trains, trams and buses, helping people get from A to B even quicker. There is still more work to be done to improve the overall efficiency of the train system to reduce late or cancelled trains.

Existing vehicles have been extensively refurbished to present a new modern feel, while new vehicles have been introduced which feature increased customer comforts and security measures. Low floor trams and buses also make it easier for people with special needs to board and disembark the vehicles.

For comprehensive information on public transport visit: <https://www.ptv.vic.gov.au/>

Public Transport Ticketing System

Melbourne and selected regional towns in Victoria use a universal ticketing system known as 'Myki'. The smart card payment system allows travelers to use any of the transport options and use the same smart card to cover the fare.

Tourists can obtain Myki cards from a number of locations, including premium stations and many corner stores, as well as online. It is important to note however, that cash is no longer a form of payment when onboard public transport, you must be travelling with a pre-loaded Myki which can be topped up at all train stations and many tram stops, or risk a substantial fine if caught without one.

An approved Public Transport Victoria Concession Card is required before purchasing concession tickets, and information regarding different ticket types, as well as other information regarding travelling on Melbourne's public transport network can be found at the Myki website:

<https://www.ptv.vic.gov.au/tickets/myki>

Air Travel

Melbourne Airport (MEL), also known as Tullamarine Airport, is the primary airport serving Melbourne with four terminals, handling domestic and international flights.

Major Domestic Airlines

Qantas, Virgin Australia and Jetstar are the major domestic carriers and are housed within the main terminal at Melbourne Tullamarine Airport. Jetstar also flies from Avalon Airport near Geelong. The airlines operate regular services throughout the day from Australia's major cities.

Another budget airline, Tiger Airways, has commenced business in Australia providing further options for travelers.

For airline travel within Victoria you can choose from several regional airlines, such as Qantas Link and REX (Regional Express), which fly to Melbourne and larger regional centres including Mildura, King Island and Mount Gambier. Smaller airlines also operate out of these regional centres.

The Qantas Group operates an extensive network under its two airline brands Qantas and Jetstar serving Australia and other countries in Asia and the Pacific, the Americas, the UK, Europe and Southern Africa. Jetstar is one of Australia's low fares airline with the aim to provide consistent low fares to Australian and New Zealand leisure travelers.

Virgin Australia commenced operations in August 2000, with headquarters in Brisbane. Virgin Australia has grown to become one of the largest, low cost price airlines in Australia.

International Travel/Airlines

Melbourne Airport is serviced by many international airlines. Peak times for airfares are in the summer months – between November and January – and especially around Christmas. If you are planning a summer trip, book well in advance.

From London, you can fly direct to Melbourne – the journey takes around 21 hours. There are also indirect flights, making the journey longer but considerably less expensive.

From North America, you can catch a direct flight to Melbourne, as well as a number of single-stop services. Excluding stopovers, flying time to Melbourne is around 23 hours from New York or Toronto, 18 hours from Vancouver, or 15 hours from Los Angeles.

From New Zealand, there are a range of flights available to Melbourne, with those from Auckland taking approximately 3.5 hours.

The airport, which affords easy access to connecting interstate and international flights, has baggage lockers in the international terminal, foreign exchange counters, restaurants, bars, a children's playground, information desks, major car rental companies and, for departing travelers, a refund booth to reclaim the Goods and Services Tax (GST) on some goods. There is also ample parking for private vehicles.

A departure tax is charged on leaving the country but it is usually incorporated in your airline ticket. If in doubt, ask at the information desk.

Main Airport Locations

Tullamarine Airport is approximately 25km (15 miles) north of the city centre – approximately a 25 minute drive.

Street address: Departure Drive, Melbourne Airport Victoria, Australia 3045

For further details regarding Melbourne airport including services, parking, etc.

See www.melbourneairport.com.au

Avalon Airport is located in Avalon, Victoria 55km (34 miles) south-west of the Melbourne city centre and 20km (12 mile) north-east of the city of Geelong.

Street address: 80 Beach Road, Lara Victoria, Australia 3212

For further information please visit

www.avalonairport.com.au/getting-to-avalon

What transport options are available to and from the airport?

When travelling to and from the Airport, there are a number of options available:

- + Taxi
- + Airport Limousine Service
- + SkyBus, which operates four services from Melbourne Tullamarine Airport providing passengers fast airport transfers to Melbourne City, Docklands and Southbank, St Kilda and Frankston and surrounding bayside suburbs.

For further information visit www.skybus.com.au

How do I catch a Taxi (cab)?

Melbourne taxis are numerous and easy to spot and are either yellow or silver. Drivers must always wear a neat uniform and have an identity card on show at all times. Melbourne taxi can also be booked online or via your mobile app. For more information, see <https://www.13cabs.com.au>.

Hailing a cab

Cabs often wait in designated ranks that are clearly signposted at central locations like major hotels in the CBD, or busy spots such as Flinders Street Station. You can also hail a taxi in the street if the rooftop light is illuminated, it means the taxi is available for hire. Or you can book a taxi online or by telephone.

Outside Melbourne, taxis widely operate in Geelong, Ballarat and Bendigo, with additional cabs at country towns throughout the rest of the state.

Fares and surcharges

Taxi meters are usually clearly visible, so you can keep track of your fare.

Melbourne cabs attract additional charges like a late night surcharge from midnight to 5am, a fee for phone bookings, a fee for using the Citylink freeway and even a fee for taxis waiting at the airport rank.

Uber is another common option for transportation. Whether you're headed to work, the airport, or out on the town, Uber connects you with a reliable ride in minutes. Once you have downloaded the app and created an account, you can use this whenever you like to book a car which comes directly to you. Your driver will know exactly where to go, and you will know the cost of the ride before it even begins, with the fee deducted from your account once the ride is complete. For more information, see <https://www.uber.com/en-AU/cities/melbourne>

11. Driving

Driving Overview

Melbourne is an easy city to drive in due to its wide thoroughfares and simple grid city plan that is well sign-posted. Melbourne's three major freeways: the West Gate, the Monash and the Tullamarine; are conveniently linked by CityLink, a non-stop expressway.

The most important rule for travelers in Australia is that you drive on the left-hand side of the road. You must also wear a seatbelt, adhere to speed limits, avoid intoxication, and have your license with you when you're driving (you will be fined if you don't).

Which Street Directory should I purchase?

The 'Melways' is the most commonly used Street directory in Melbourne, followed by the UBD. In addition to providing comprehensive maps of Melbourne and its suburbs, the publication also includes coverage on Greater Melbourne, Geelong, Phillip Island, Healesville, Gisborne, Lorne, Bacchus Marsh, Wallan, and the Bellarine and Mornington Peninsulas.

Extended information includes the most comprehensive public transport routes information, including detailed train, tram and bus routes as well as walking and bicycle tracks. Detailed maps of all major universities are included, as well as Melbourne Airport, the Arts Precinct, Federation Square, and a Flemington Racecourse enlargement. Country touring maps extend as far west as Adelaide, and as far north as Sydney.

The Melways can be purchased from newsagents, bookstores, petrol stations, corner stores such as 7-Eleven stores, or online at www.melway.com.au

Many visitors to Melbourne will also choose to use GPS and mapping apps on their phones or smart devices to navigate the city and its surrounds, which is often the most efficient way to get around. Please note that there are areas in more regional areas of Victoria, and Australia that do not have 4G coverage, meaning that maps may not always be available if you have not downloaded them. You may want to pick up physical maps which are regularly provided for free from visitor centres before adventures in more remote areas.

I am an International Driver, do I need a local Victorian license?

Your overseas home driver license or international driver license (provided it is a current license) will be sufficient for the first six months in Victoria, as long as it has photo ID and is for the same class of vehicle you intend to drive. It also needs to be in English or you must have an English translation attached to the license. If you're staying more than six months, check the website below to determine whether you'll need to get a Victorian license.

<https://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/licences/renew-replace-or-update/new-to-victoria>

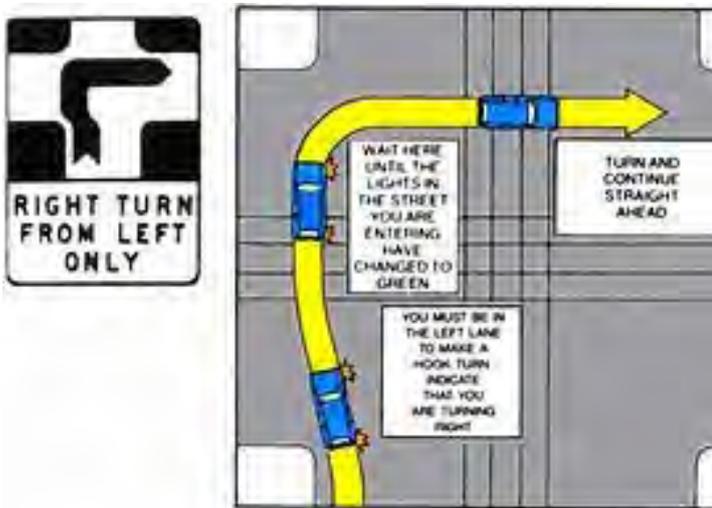
What are the road rules with trams?

Some roads in Melbourne have tram lanes. Tram lanes are designated by a tram lane sign (which may indicate hours of operation) and a continuous yellow line. A driver must not drive in a tram lane during the times it is operational, except for up to 100 metres before turning, so long as they do not obstruct the progress of a tram.

When a tram stops, vehicles travelling behind them stop also. This is because as soon as the tram stops the doors are flung open and people start to disembark and head for the footpath at the side of the road. To avoid hitting anyone you must stop your vehicle at the rear of the tram when it stops.

There are several rules about driving in Melbourne that relate to trams:

- + Drivers may only overtake a tram on the left.
- + Do not drive past the rear of a stopped tram
- + Drivers must stop level with the rear of the tram and wait for people to get on and off. Drivers may only drive past if a red traffic light ahead turns to green, or if a uniformed tram employee signals them through. However, this is only if the road is clear of pedestrians and provided that they drive at 10 km/h or less.
- + If drivers are already passing when the tram stops, they must give way to pedestrians on the road between the tram and the far left side of the road.
- + Drivers must drive to the left of a safety zone, and slowly enough to be able to stop and avoid pedestrians.
- + Drivers must make a hook turn at intersections where indicated to ensure a clearway for trams



What is a hook turn?

Hook Turns are unique to Melbourne and exist due to sharing the road with trams. To ensure that the trams get a clear way through some intersections, drivers turning right must do so from the left-hand lane. It's known as a hook turn and will be clearly marked if it applies to an intersection (as per the sign shown below). It is most commonly practised in the city. To make a hook turn, simply move forward in the left-hand lane and wait on the far left-hand side of the road. When the lights turn orange/red, and the road is cleared of oncoming traffic, make a wide turn to the right along with the green light.

To do a hook turn a driver must:

- + Approach and enter the intersection from, as near as practicable, to the far left side of the road.
- + Move forward, keeping to the left of the intersection and clear of any marked foot crossing until the driver is as near as practicable to the far side of the road the driver is entering.
- + Wait until the traffic lights on the road they are entering into turns green before completing the turn.

You can watch an animation of a hook turn in action at:

archive.bigben.id.au/victoria/melb/hook_turn.html

What are the speed limits and road rules?

An indication of speed limits in Melbourne are as follows:

School Zone	40 km/h
General City Driving	50 - 60 km/h
Major City Arterials	80 - 90 km/h
Highways	100 km/h
Freeways	100 - 110 km/h

- + Remember that in Australia, vehicles drive on the left-hand side of the road.
- + If you are not used to these conditions, please be careful especially as a pedestrian.
- + Speed detection and red light cameras operate in the State of Victoria.
- + Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs is an offence in Victoria and penalties for exceeding the Blood Alcohol Content laws are tough, and will almost always result in a loss of license as well as a fine. The acceptable Blood Alcohol Content is .05 for full license holders and .00 for learner and probationary drivers.
- + It is illegal to travel in a vehicle unless using a correctly fitting seat belt or child restraint.

For more information on licenses and Victorian road rules, visit the VicRoads website www.vicroads.vic.gov.au

What is the law regarding seat belts and child restraints?

National child restraint laws

- + Children up to the age of six months must be secured in an approved rearward facing restraint.
- + Children aged from six months old but under four years old must be secured in either a rear or forward facing approved child restraint with an inbuilt harness.
- + Children under four years old cannot travel in the front seat of a vehicle with two or more rows.
- + Children aged from four years old but under seven years old must be secured in a forward facing approved child restraint with an inbuilt harness or an approved booster seat.
- + Children aged from four years old but under seven years old cannot travel in the front seat of a vehicle with two or more rows, unless all other back seats are occupied by children younger than seven years in an approved child restraint or booster seat.
- + Children aged from seven years old but under 16 years old who are too small to be restrained by a seatbelt properly adjusted and fastened are strongly recommended to use an approved booster seat.
- + Children in booster seats must be restrained by a suitable lap and sash type approved seatbelt that is properly adjusted and fastened, or by a suitable approved child safety harness that is properly adjusted and fastened.

If your child is too small for the child restraint specified for their age, they should be kept in their current child restraint until it is safe for them to move to the next level. If your child is too large for the child restraint specified for their age, they may move to the next level of child restraint.

*Source: <http://roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au/stayingsafe/children/childcarseats/index.html>

Do we need a child restraint in a Taxi?

- + Taxi drivers are exempt from making sure all passengers over 16 are restrained
- + Children aged under 1 year must travel in the back seat, but do not have to use a child restraint
- + Children aged 1 year and over must be in their own seat, with their own properly fastened seat belt if there is no child restraint or booster seat available.

In Victoria, taxis do not have to provide child restraints or booster seats for customers. However, they must have at least one anchorage point if passengers want to bring their own child restraint. If possible, it is recommended that you take your child's restraint or booster seat with you.

* Source: <https://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/safety-and-road-rules/road-rules/a-to-z-of-road-rules/seat-belts-and-child-restraints>

Tollways in Melbourne

In Melbourne, there are two toll road operators, Transurban who manage CityLink, and ConnectEast who manage EastLink.

For information on toll roads, go to <https://www.travelvictoria.com.au/victoria/tollroads/>

Parking

Melbourne has thousands of parking meters and parking lots, though in peak times (Monday-Friday) it can be hard to find space for your vehicle. Most CBD streets and inner suburban shopping strips have coin-operated meters and there are hefty fines if you let the meter expire.

For information on where to park in Melbourne and how much it will cost, go to <http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/parking-and-transport/parking/parking-locations-fees/>

Parking Signs

There are a range of parking signs that you will see in Victoria and around Australia. Australian Standard parking signs that are easier to read and understand have been introduced in Victoria and progressively to the rest of Australia.

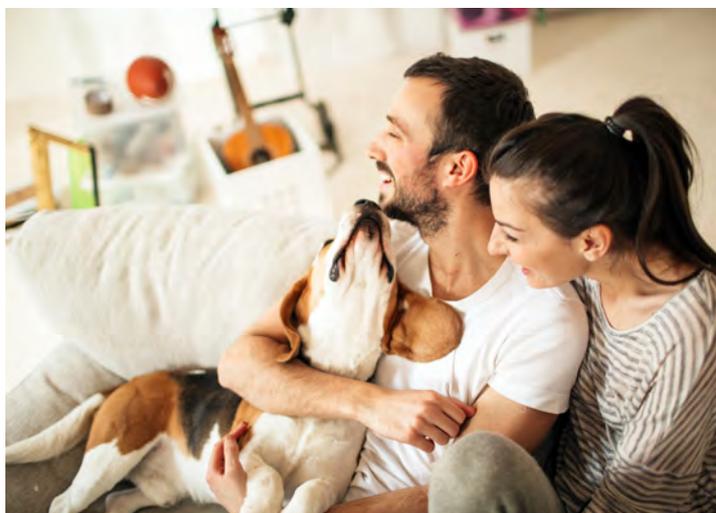
Local Councils are responsible for parking signs. You should contact your Council regarding any parking issues. Parking ticket inspectors are widespread so it is important to follow all parking signs and restrictions – not doing so could get you a hefty fine.

For an explanation of all the parking signs, and how to read them, please review the following document produced by Vic Roads. www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/

Car Rental Options

Melbourne and larger regional centres have plenty of local and international car rental firms, offering a variety of vehicles and deals. The minimum age to rent a car in Victoria is generally 25 years old, however some outlets will hire cars to under 25s, with surcharges and restrictions which may apply. The main rental companies are Avis Budget, Delta, Europcar, Hertz, National and Thrifty.

12. Moving your Pet



Pet transport

Bringing your pet into Australia can be quite involved and requires serious consideration. The regulations pertaining to pet importation to Australia vary, depending on the country of origin.

WridgWays Global can arrange our trusted pet relocation partner to carefully plan your pet's relocation anywhere worldwide. If you require this assistance let your WridgWays Global Consultant know and they will arrange our pet relocation specialist to contact you to provide advice, guidance and reassurance every step of the way.

Information on importing dogs and cats into Australia, including information sheets, quarantine fees, application process, approved countries, and quarantine accommodation is available from <http://www.agriculture.gov.au/cats-dogs>

Do I need to register my Pet?

State Government law requires every dog and cat to be registered with their local Council. A range of fees apply and typically discount fees apply for de-sexed cats and dogs. A registered animal is given an identification tag that should be worn at all times.

Further information can be found at <http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/pets/registration-legislation-and-permits>

What is Pet Micro-chipping?

Microchipping is a permanent form of identification for your pet. Inserting a microchip is like a vaccination, it only takes a few seconds. The procedure is very safe and your pet will feel little pain. Once done, your pet's details, your contact address and phone numbers are entered on a national database.

Collars can fall off or be removed and details on pet tags can fade or become outdated. Inserting a microchip means your pet can be easily identified by a ranger, animal shelter or veterinarian regardless of the situation. Once identified, you can be contacted immediately and informed of the location of your pet.

If your pet has been stolen and then later recovered, ownership of your pet can be challenged. Microchipping is the only way you can prove ownership of your pet (and yes this does happen).

Microchips are inserted at veterinary clinics. Some councils will also run pet micro-chipping sessions.

Do I need to have my Pet Vaccinated?

It is not compulsory to vaccinate your pet, however, to safeguard your pet from potentially serious diseases, vaccinations are recommended. Dogs are typically vaccinated against: Distemper, Infectious Canine Hepatitis, Parvovirus and the serious respiratory infection, Canine Cough. Your dog may require two vaccinations so that they are fully protected. Adult dogs often require an annual vaccination booster.

13. Household Goods Shipment and Customs Information



Quarantine - Prohibited items into Australia

Due to strict Australian quarantine and customs regulations, there are various items that are prohibited from entering Australia. We have listed some of these items to assist you.

Should you have any specific questions relating to prohibited items into Australia, please ask your WridgWays Global consultant.

When importing goods into Australia all foodstuffs should not be included. Equally important, all traces of soil and other foreign matter should be removed from items such as vacuum cleaners, lawn mowers, golf clubs, garden tools, wheelbarrows, etc., prior to your removal uplift day.

The Australian Quarantine Inspection Service (AQIS) maintains a high level of physical inspections on incoming consignments into Australia of personal and household effects. AQIS applies a fee for services accordingly and these fees are recovered from the importer upon arrival of the consignment in Australia. Fumigation and other AQIS inspection treatments will also attract a fee.

To clear your goods through Australian Customs you will need to complete the relevant form and provide a photocopy of your current passport. This can be done either in Australia or at your point of origin.

Prohibited Goods - The following goods must be declared:

- + Seeds and nuts - includes commercially packaged seeds, seed ornaments and necklaces (some seeds are prohibited), nuts out of shell such as salted nuts, in foil or roasted. Also includes raw unroasted nuts, raw peanuts, chestnuts and popping corn
- + Plant products - straw packaging, wooden articles, artifacts, handicrafts and curios - includes wreaths and decorations made of cereal or grain, articles stuffed with seeds or straw, carvings, items made from palm fronds or leaves (items made from banana leaves are prohibited)
- + Animal products - includes any items made with rawhide, such as drums, shields, artifacts, dog chews; and any treated skins, hides, furs, hair or feathers (some may be prohibited under international wildlife legislation)
- + Food - includes cooked, uncooked and ingredients
- + Dried or fresh fruit and vegetables. Includes all fresh and frozen fruit and vegetables
- + Herbs and spices of any kind - includes herbal medicines and remedies, tonics and teas
- + Biscuits, cakes and confectionery - includes chocolate, sweets, crisps, nuts and pretzels
- + Noodles and rice - includes processed and instant meals (noodles containing meat are prohibited)

- + Teas, coffees, and milk based drinks
- + Bamboo, cane or rattan basket ware and mats - including coconut carvings and cane baskets
- + Wooden articles - includes painted and lacquered items
- + Dried flower arrangements and fresh flowers and leis - (flowers that can be propagated such as roses, carnations and chrysanthemums, are prohibited)
- + Pine cones and potpourri - includes natural and decorative products such as wreaths
- + Shells or coral in any form - includes jewelry, curios and souvenirs (some may be prohibited under international wildlife legislation)
- + Feathers, bones, horns and tusks - must be clean and free of blood, skin, dung or soil
- + Stuffed animals - must be accompanied by a certificate stating that they have been prepared by a taxidermist (some may be prohibited under international wildlife legislation)
- + Wool (unprocessed) and animal hair - includes yarns, crafted rugs and clothing. Wool must be scoured and hair cleaned
- + Animal equipment (used) - includes clothing, footwear, grooming and veterinary equipment, saddles, bridles and birdcages
- + Sporting and camping equipment - includes tents, footwear, hiking boots, golfing equipment and bicycles
- + Bee products
- + Dairy, eggs and egg products includes whole, dried and powdered egg and some products with egg as an ingredient (infant formula accompanying an infant, and NZ dairy products are allowed)
- + Live animals includes birds, birds' eggs, fish, reptiles and insects
- + Meat and meat products includes all uncanned or fresh, dried, frozen, smoked or salted meat
- + Live plants includes cuttings, roots, bulbs, corns, rhizomes and stems
- + Handicrafts and souvenirs that contain or are made from seeds
- + Salmon and trout products - ask about special import conditions (canned salmon is allowed)
- + Biological materials - includes human/animal vaccines and therapeutic goods (ask about special import conditions)
- + Deer horn/velvet, edible birds nest packaged products - deer horn and/or antler from NZ are allowed (with certification)
- + Soil and sand - includes items filled with soil or sand (rocks free of soil and sand are allowed)

NOTE: Information in this guide is correct at the time of publishing. Quarantine conditions may change without notice. For accurate and detailed information, please visit <http://www.agriculture.gov.au/>

Vehicle Transport

When importing a vehicle into Australia, you are required to obtain a Vehicle Import Approval which is a document issued by the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development that grants permission for a road vehicle to be imported into Australia. It is required to enable the vehicle to clear Australian Customs.

Further information is available from:

<http://www.agriculture.gov.au/import/goods/vehicles-machinery>

https://infrastructure.gov.au/vehicles/imports/process_overview.aspx

https://infrastructure.gov.au/vehicles/imports/how_to_apply.aspx

14. Shopping



Shopping in Melbourne Overview

In Australia, Melbourne is synonymous with shopping, and for decades, the city has been known as the country's shopping capital with just about everything you could possibly want, on offer in its numerous shopping precincts.

You can choose from large department stores and sprawling markets, direct factory outlets, and snazzy basement boutiques. Whether you're searching for designer labels or vintage clothing, children's toys or high-tech gadgetry, Melbourne has it all.

From the large department stores David Jones and Myer, through shopping centres such as the Galleria, Australia on Collins and Melbourne Central, to the network of lanes and arcades; every turn reveals a new shopping space with its own personality, all within a short walk or a tram stop or two.

Walking is the best way to shop, especially along Melbourne's delightful arcades and laneways. Outside the city centre, visit shopping precincts like Chapel Street in South Yarra, Acland Street in St Kilda and Brunswick Street in Fitzroy, especially on weekends.

Usual Opening Hours

Trading hours differ from store to store so be sure to check individual stores for their opening hours online.

Store hours in Melbourne vary, but in the city, and inner suburbs shops generally open from 9am to 5pm with some having hours of 10am till 6pm, Monday to Friday.

On Thursday and Friday, many shops in the CBD and suburban shopping centres remain open late, until 9pm.

On weekends, the hours in the CBD and shopping centres are generally 9am-5pm. Shopping hours change close to Christmas, when shops remain open in evenings all week round.

Furniture Purchase

There are numerous large chain furniture shops across Melbourne as well as many independent furniture retailers. A current trend in Melbourne is the emergence of 'Homemaker' centres where numerous furniture and electrical stores are all based in the same location so that shoppers can easily browse through all the stores to make a selection. Some of the main furniture retailers include:

- + Harvey Norman - www.harveynorman.com.au
- + Freedom - www.freedom.com.au
- + Ikea - www.ikea.com.au
- + Adriatic - www.adriatic.com.au
- + Furniture Galore - www.furnituregalore.com.au
- + Oz Design - www.ozdesignfurniture.com.au
- + Fantastic Furniture - www.fantasticfurniture.com.au
- + Bedshed (Beds) - www.bedshed.com.au
- + Forty Winks (Beds) - www.fortywinks.com.au
- + Snooze (Beds) - www.snooze.com.au

Electrical Goods and Appliances

There are several large chain electrical goods and appliance retailers as well as many independent retailers. The major players include:

- + The Good Guys - www.thegoodguys.com.au
- + JB Hifi - www.jbhifi.com.au
- + RetraVision - www.retravision.com.au
- + Betta Electrical - www.betta.com.au
- + Harvey Norman - www.harveynorman.com.au

Food Shopping

There are two main supermarket chains in Australia – Coles and Safeway/Woolworths, and a further three smaller operators – Aldi, IGA (Independent Grocers of Australia) and Foodworks.

Coles and Woolworths are the biggest supermarkets and will typically offer the largest selection of items. You are typically able to purchase all food items at the supermarket and could in effect do all your shopping at these stores.

Many consumers buy fresh produce at local fruit and vegetable shops, butchers, bakers etc, or at markets. Each main shopping strip will typically have a green grocer, butcher, and bakery.

The main supermarkets are:

- + Coles - www.coles.com.au
- + Safeway/Woolworths - www.woolworths.com.au
- + Aldi - www.aldi.com.au
- + IGA - www.iga.com.au
- + Foodworks - www.foodworks.com.au



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The consultative approach of our customer service representatives ensures that they fully understand the dimensions of a project and the needs of customers before recommending the best solutions - after all we have a strong respect for our customers' property and personal circumstances and we know that no two relocations are ever the same.