

International Destination Guide
Perth | Australia



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1. Introduction to Perth

Perth is a vibrant and modern city located on Australia's western coast. Perth is situated on the Swan River, with the Indian Ocean to the west and the Darling Ranges to the east. Perth is Australia's sunniest capital and enjoys a Mediterranean climate, with warm to hot summers and cool, wet winters. The city is famous for its relaxed and friendly atmosphere and isolation from the rest of the country.

Perth is surrounded by wonderful beaches creating a "beach culture" enjoyed by all. With an average of eight hours sunlight per day it is not surprising that this outdoor lifestyle is quite popular. Many restaurants and cafes overlook the ocean and sitting down to dinner while watching the sun set over the water is a perfect way to spend the evening.

The official language spoken in Australia is English, however the use of colloquial terms or "slang" is very common and is used by Australians to liven up the language.

History of Perth

Captain James Stirling founded the City of Perth as part of the Swan River Colony in 1829. Stirling thought the natural environment around Perth was "as beautiful as anything of this kind I had ever witnessed" and advocated that a colony be established there. The British Government agreed to found the colony as the first free settlement in Australia and the first settlers arrived in Western Australia in June 1829. On August 12 of that year, the felling of a tree marked the official foundation of the City of Perth.

Although the territory was claimed on behalf of Britain, explorers from nations including Holland and France had been visiting the Western Australian coastline since the early 1600s and the land had been populated by indigenous people for approximately 50,000 years.

In the 1890s, Western Australia gained its first constitution and its first Premier, Sir John Forrest. The discovery of gold prompted incredible growth, with many major public works undertaken and the population swelling. In 1901, Federation saw Western Australia transform from an independent colony to a state of the Commonwealth of Australia, with the City of Perth gaining increased importance as the capital of the new state.

The population of Perth changed in size and character as immigration after World War II brought new cultures and traditions to the city. A major phase of development spurred on by the mineral boom of the 1960s and 1970s, saw skyscrapers built and the city take on a more modern character.

Today the City of Perth continues its evolution into one of Australia's most distinctive and welcoming cities with a friendly, multicultural population. Ideally positioned as a business and tourism gateway for the world, yet protected by enough distance to retain its unique appeal.

Statistics

Population of Perth	1,507,900
Population of Western Australia	2,010,113
Population of Australia	20,619,195
Land mass of Australia	7,682,300 kms ²

Australia is approximately the size of mainland USA, excluding Alaska, and about 24 times the size of the British Isles.

Climate

Perth is blessed with beautiful weather and a lifestyle second to none. The American Consul to Western Australia once said "Perth has the kind of weather California thinks it has"!

With more hours of sunshine than any other Australian capital city, Perth enjoys a true Mediterranean climate with long hot summers (December – February) and mild cool winters (June - August).

Temperatures

Perth's summer averages are 18 degrees C (minimum) to 29 degrees C (maximum) with February the hottest month. Winter averages are 8 degrees C (minimum) to 18 degrees C (maximum).

Rainfall

Perth summer average is 11mm and winter average is 164mm per month.

We observe four seasons - Summer (Dec, Jan, Feb), Autumn (Mar, Apr, May), Winter (June, July, Aug) and Spring (Sep, Oct, Nov).

Dressing for Perth's Weather

You should plan to wear light, cool cloths in summer to combat the humidity. You should wear a sun hat and sun block-out cream at all times when in the direct sunlight. Children often wear UV suits at the beach to protect against sun damage and schools regularly enforce the wearing of hats at playtime during the summer months. In winter, most wear warm winter clothes including a coat – it's easy to become acclimatised!

Time Zones

Perth operates on Western Standard Time (WST). Time zones around the World are published in the front part of your white Pages telephone directory.

Australia has three standard time zones;

1. EST Eastern Standard Time
Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania
2. CST Central Standard Time
South Australia and the Northern Territory
3. WST Western Standard Time
Western Australia

Calendar Dates

Calendar dates in Australia, when abbreviated, are written with the day of the month preceding the month. For example March 4, 2008 would be written 4/3/2008.

Initially this can be confusing, especially if you come from North America where the month precedes the day of the month, so it is wise to confirm dates where there is potential for confusion.

Public Holidays in Perth

Holiday	2008	2009
New Year's Day	Tuesday 1 January	Thursday 1 January
Australia Day	Monday 28 January	Monday 26 January
Labour Day	Monday 3 March	Monday 2 March
Good Friday	Friday 21 March	TBA
Easter Monday	Monday 24 March	TBA
ANZAC Day	Friday 25 April	Saturday 25 April (Public holiday Monday 27 April)
Foundation Day	Monday 2 June	Monday 1 June
Queen's Birthday	Monday 29 September	TBA
Christmas Day	Thursday 25 December	Friday 25 December
Boxing Day	Friday 26 December	Saturday 26 December (Public holiday Monday 28 December)

Quarantine & Customs

Australia has strict quarantine and customs regulations. Our Mobility Coordinator will help you with any queries you have regarding quarantine and customs.

Currency

Australian currency consists of coins with values of 5, 10, 20 and 50 cents and one and two dollars. Notes are issued at values of Five, Ten, Twenty, Fifty and One Hundred Dollars. This is based on the decimal system where one hundred cents equals one dollar.

2. Shopping

Perth has a wide variety of shopping choices both in the city centre and in the suburbs. Within the city centre Murray and Hay Street Malls are the two main shopping malls, both lined with shops and often featuring live street entertainment. Leading off these malls are several large shopping arcades, including Forrest Chase, London Court Arcade and City Arcade. These arcades contain a wide variety of shops featuring everything from international designer stores to major department stores, souvenir shops and food courts. The choices are endless and there is something to suit almost everyone.

Renowned for their shopping precincts are the areas of Subiaco, Claremont and Fremantle while large shopping centres can be found throughout Perth. These shopping centres are host to many specialty stores and large supermarkets such as Woolworths, Coles and Dewsons. Most shopping centres, plazas and arcades are open from 9am till 5pm Monday to Friday and 9am till 4pm on Saturdays. There is also one night during the week designated to late night shopping. On this night shops can stay open until 9pm. Perth does not participate in Sunday trading, except in the city centre. Around Perth you will also find many convenience stores and petrol stations open 24 hours a day.

Standard Shopping Hours

Mon, Tues, Wed, Fri 9 am – 5.30pm

Thursday 9 am – 9 pm

Saturday 9 am – 5 pm

Food Shopping

Major supermarket chains for grocery shopping are Woolworths, Coles and Dewsons. Trading hours will vary but, in some areas, large supermarkets are open to midnight. Local, suburban shopping centres may also have small supermarkets and local corner stores known as 'milk bars'.

Delicatessens supply specialist foodstuffs, meats and cheeses from local producers and many countries around the world.

Tipping

Tipping is not as widespread in Australia, as it is in North America, as full wages are paid to employees working in the hospitality and service related industries. You can tip a taxi driver, waiting staff at restaurants, a hotel porter and other service staff in first class hotels. The recipient will generally appreciate your tip. Ten percent is a fair tip and recognises excellent service.

3. Banking

Banks

Normal banking hours are:

9.30 am to 4pm – Monday to Thursday

9.30 am to 5pm – Friday

Banks in the Central business District have more liberal trading hours and Automatic Teller Machines (ATM's), are also available for after hours withdrawals and deposits. The major banks have local branches in the suburbs. Many different types of savings and cheque accounts are available.

Opening a bank account

To open a bank account in Australia you need to provide "100 points" of identification. Items such as your passport, driver's licence, Medicare card etc. Can all contribute to the '100 points'. If you currently hold a bank account in another state of Australia you may simply transfer your account to a local branch, of the same bank, in your state.

If you have arrived from overseas and wish to open a bank account you can open an account with only your passport as identification providing you do so within 6 weeks of your arrival in Australia. After the 6 weeks you will need to provide '100 points' of identification and should therefore take your passport and drivers licence with you when you go to open the account.

ANZ	131 314
Citibank	132 484
Commonwealth Bank	132 221
National Australia Bank	132 265
St George Bank	133 330
Westpac	132 032

ATM – Automatic Teller Machines

ATM's allow you to deposit and withdraw cash sums during and after bank trading hours. You will find ATM's in front of most bank branches and increasingly they are being positioned in shopping malls, airports, hotel lobbies and other convenient locations. On request your bank will issue you with an ATM card, which will be linked to one of your accounts.

Do not write your PIN (personal identification number) in your wallet or purse and notify your bank immediately if you lose your ATM card. Many banks ATM's are interchangeable, i.e. you can withdraw cash from a commonwealth Bank ATM with a Westpac card, but you may incur an additional fee for this type of transaction.

EFTPOS – Electronic fund Transfer Point of Sale

EFTPOS allows you to pay for goods and services by making a direct transfer from your bank account to the service provider. EFTPOS is a convenient and increasingly common way to pay for groceries, petrol and a wide range of retail products.

Credit Cards

Visa, MasterCard, Bankcard and American Express credit cards are widely accepted in Australia. Many credit cards are linked to loyalty systems where you can accrue frequent flyer points and other awards.

Cheque Accounts (Check Accounts)

Many savings accounts offer a cheque account option, although cheques will attract additional bank fees. Cheque cashing privileges may be arranged at some grocery stores. To '**cross a cheque**' means to make a cheque '**not negotiable**'. This measure prevents any person, or company, from cashing the cheque at a bank counter. The cheque must be paid into a bank account. Two lines and/or the words 'not negotiable' are written across the face of the cheque. Cheques should always be made 'not negotiable' are written across the face of the cheque.

Cheques should always be made 'not negotiable' for safety purposes unless you wish to exchange the cheque for cash at the bank. When you deposit a cheque to your bank account the funds are typically not available to you until the cheque has been processed or 'cleared'. This takes three business days.

Telephone Banking

Many banks provide telephone-banking facilities that allow you to transfer funds between accounts, pay bills and pay credit cards by telephone. Contact your bank for details.

Bill Pay (Bpay)

Is a telephone banking service that allows you to pay bills by direct transfer from your bank account. Bpay is a convenient method for paying utility bills such as telephone, power, gas and water.

4. Driving and Motor Vehicles

Road Regulations

Australian cars are right hand drive and travel on the left side of the road. Generally speed limits are 50 or 60 kilometres per hour in built up areas and up to 110 kilometres per hour on highways and freeways.

All local speed limits, and other traffic indicators, are well sign-posted. Suburbs and freeways are also sign posted. Directions to tourist attractions are displayed on signs with brown backgrounds.

Road rules specific to Australia

In WA it is legal to overtake on the inside lane as well as the outside lane, which can often confuse international drivers. It is also legal to turn left at some traffic lights when the lights are red, providing the way is clear and there is a sign permitting you to do so.

It is compulsory for a driver, and all passengers, to wear seat belts whenever the vehicle is in motion. Children must be suitably restrained at all times. Children's seats and baby capsules must be correctly attached to the vehicle and must conform to Australian Safety Standards.

'On the Spot' fine

Police Officers will issue an 'On the Spot' fine for minor traffic infringements such as speeding. You do not pay the policeman, however you are expected to pay the fine to the relevant authority within a specified time. The courts handle major traffic offences, such as drink driving or dangerous driving. Some offences will incur demerit points, which can ultimately result in licence suspension.

Push bikes and Motor Cycles

It is compulsory to wear a helmet when riding a bicycle or a motorcycle.

Drink Driving

'Drink Driving' is a local term for driving a motor vehicle whilst under the influence of alcohol. Offenders face strong penalties including licence disqualification and a possible jail term.

Blood Alcohol Limit

Drivers on a full licence 0.05%

Drivers under 25 years of age who have held licence less than 3 years 0.02%

Drivers on a learner's permit of P1/P2 0%

Police may ask a driver, at any time, to pull off the road and undertake a Random Breath test to measure blood alcohol level. WA police have mobile Random Breath Test units, commonly called 'booze buses' which set up beside the road to test passing drivers.

Parking

In the city, blue signs indicate multi-level parking stations. On-street meter parking is available in the city area for a fee. Major suburban shopping centres offer free parking and most residential areas offer free on street parking.

In some high-density residential areas, free on-street parking may be limited to local residents. In these areas you will need to obtain a parking permit from the local municipal council and affix it to your vehicle.

Registration & Compulsory Third Party Insurance (CTP)

All motor vehicles on WA roads must have current registration with the Department for planning and infrastructure current Compulsory Third Party Insurance (CTP). CTP can be purchased from most insurance companies that offer car insurance. In addition to the CTP (green slip), it is necessary for cars over 3 years old, to have a roadworthy inspection, (pink slip). This can be obtained from most service stations for a cost of around \$30. The pink and green slips can then be taken to the Department for Planning and Infrastructure when motor registration fees are paid.

Registration fees are based on the type of car, for example a four-door sedan will cost around \$250 for twelve months registration plus CTP. It is more expensive to register a car for business use than for private use. CTP insurance cost will vary depending on whether you live in a high or low risk area for motor accidents. Most metropolitan areas are considered high risk and insurance will be around A\$300.00.

All Drivers

If you have relocated to Perth, from overseas or interstate, it is **strongly recommended** that you apply for a WA driver's licence at the earliest opportunity. This will avoid difficulties in regard to insurance claims, should you be unfortunate enough to be involved in a motor vehicle accident. Holding a local driver's licence will also facilitate obtaining car insurance.

Driving Instruction

If you wish to have professional driving instruction prior to taking your driver's licence examination there are many good driving schools such as the ABC Driving School group who have schools throughout Australia – check www.abcdrivingschool.com.au for details. Other driving schools are listed in the Yellow Pages telephone directory. Driving lessons may be particularly useful if you are not experienced with right hand drive motor vehicles.

Motor Vehicle Insurance

Extended Third Party Property Insurance covers damage you may cause to a motor vehicle driven by another person or 'third party'. Full comprehensive insurance covers damage caused to your own motor vehicle. Both types of policies are available through a range of insurance companies. Rates will vary depending on your age, driving history, who other than yourself drives the vehicle and what type of vehicle you are driving. Some insurance companies will not cover drivers under the age of 25 or drivers with a history of being involved in accidents and therefore can offer more competitive rates to mature drivers with good driving records. It is advisable to shop around for the best deal on insurance.

Insurance Companies offering motor vehicle insurance

GIO	Personal Insurance	131 010
Allianze	Insurance Enquiries	131 000
NRMA	Insurance Enquiries	132 132
AAMI	Insurance Enquiries	132 244

If you are transferring to Adelaide from another state of Australia make sure you advise your insurance company immediately of your change of address.

Car Hire

Several car hire companies operate in Adelaide and have branches in other Australian states. Rates vary depending on type of vehicle required and the length of hire. It is recommended that you contact the company directly to ascertain current hire rates.

Major car hire companies rent new or late model motor vehicles however there are hire companies that rent older vehicles at a discount rate. See the Yellow Pages telephone directory for a full listing. Major car hire companies:

Avis	136 333
Europcar	1300 131 390
Hertz	133 039
Thrifty	1300 367 227

Importing a Motor Vehicle into Australia

If you are considering bringing your own car with you to Australia it is important to carefully check current customs' requirements and consider the costs, and possible risks, of importing a motor vehicle. Australia motor vehicle safety standards are higher than many other countries and your car may not meet safety criteria for registration. Duties to be paid upon importation will depend on the age and value of the car.

Further costs will include transportation, insurance whilst in transit, any modifications required to meet Australian Safety Standards, registration and insurance in Australia. The vehicle must also obtain a quarantine clearance before it will be released from the port of entry. For further information on importing a motor vehicle phone:

Australian Customs Service Customs Information Centre on 1300 363 263. Or visit their web site: www.customs.gov.au

Petrol

Petrol prices are around \$1.50 per litre but fluctuate frequently. All new and late model cars use unleaded fuel. Leaded fuel, previously known as 'super' is still used in older motor vehicles.

5. Public Transport

Transport

The most common form of transportation in Perth is the car. Almost all households own a car and often more than one. Perth has major freeways stretching to both the north and south of the city. If you are driving in Perth, please note that Australians drive on the left-hand side of the road.

While personal (ie: car) transport is the most common and popular way of travelling around the city, Perth has an extensive public transport system that is both convenient and affordable. The trains, buses and ferries that constitute the public transport system are well integrated and user-friendly. All main rail lines meet in the city, while a free bus service known as CAT (Central Area Transit) operates within the central city area. Bus routes also extend into the suburbs and the ferry crosses the river regularly.

Cycling is a popular form of transport in Perth with numerous bicycle routes around the city. Cycling and public transport are inexpensive when compared to the cost of running and insuring a car. Difficult and expensive parking options in the city coupled with peak-hour congestion on the roads make public transport preferable. Though more expensive, taxis and rental cars are also available.

Airlines

Perth has its own International and Domestic airport.

Major Air Service Providers from Perth Airport are:

Qantas Airways

Domestic & International Reservations 131 313

Today's Flight Information 131 223

Or visit their web site: www.qantas.com.au

Virgin Blue

Domestic Reservations 136789

Or visit their web site: www.virginblue.com.au

JetStar

Domestic Reservations 131 538

Or visit their website www.jetstar.com

An airport tax covering security etc. is levied on each traveller departing overseas, the cost of which is collected by the airlines and included in the cost of your ticket.

6. Homes and Residential Areas

Almost three-quarters of Perth's houses are detached with varying sizes of garden. The average prices we mention below are for houses and not apartments. Apartments / flats are cheaper.

Generally speaking, the north and west of the city are the most highly regarded areas to live. Many British migrants have chosen to settle in the northern suburbs around half an hour north of the city centre. In suburbs such as Beldon, Connolly, Edgewater, Heathridge, Joondalup, Mullaloo and Ocean Reef, British immigrants make up around one quarter of the population. In early-2008, median house price in these areas ranged from low \$400,000's in Heathridge to the mid \$400,000s in Joondalup and the high \$400,000s in Beldon and Edgewater, low \$600,000's in Connolly, mid \$600,000s in Mullaloo and \$730,000 in Ocean Reef.

The northern and central suburbs of Perth are where people with the highest salaries tend to live.

Houses in top suburbs close to the central city, such as Nedlands and Dalkeith, situated on the beautiful Swan River, command median prices of around \$900,000 to \$3 million.

All over the world, beachside properties are in demand and fetching very high prices. Perth has followed this trend - an evening stroll along the beach and a dip in the sea is a very attractive prospect. Less obvious advantages of living near the sea in Perth include less extreme summer heat and fewer flies than can be found farther inland.

There are, however, some disadvantages to buying beachside property in Perth. High winds can become annoying. When they are strong, they can blow garden umbrellas around and bring sand into gardens and houses. Suburban developments close to the coast also tend to have houses packed more densely than those elsewhere.

In early-2007 the median house price in the City Beach suburb was over \$1 million. In the coastal suburbs of Scarborough and Wembley Downs, to the north west and west of the city centre, the median house prices were \$540,000 and \$950,000.

Some of the south eastern suburbs, such as Maddington, Gosnells, Lynwood, and Thornlie are less well regarded than Perth's other areas. The median house prices in these suburbs ranged between \$320,000 - \$380,000 in early 2008.

Perth is a very clean city although, sadly, graffiti and "hoons" are becoming an issue in many locations –

even some of the better suburbs. Hoons are youths causing problems such as vandalism and reckless driving.

A major attraction of Perth is its many parks and play areas for children. Perth is an ideal location for people who enjoy an outdoor lifestyle.

Rates and Utilities for Residential Properties

Council Rates

Local Government authorities (also known as 'Councils') issue rates notices for residential premises based on the unimproved land value of the property. Rates will vary depending on the local council issuing the rate notice and are paid by the owner of a property, not the tenant. Garbage collection and sewerage services are generally included in the rate assessment.

Water Rates

Accounts for water usage are issued quarterly (every three months). Water usage is usually charged to the tenant however it is sometimes included in the weekly rental. When you enter your Residential Tenancy Agreement your lease should clearly state who is responsible for water payments.

Electricity

Domestic electricity supply throughout Australia is 240 volt, AC50 cycles. Standard three pin plugs are fitted to domestic appliances. Transformers are required for 110-volt appliances, such as a hairdryer or a contact lens steriliser.

Company Name Contact Areas Covered

Energy Australia	131 535
AGL	131 245

Electricity companies will require your name, telephone number and address for electricity to be connected. A security deposit must also be paid. If the premises are rented then the name and address of the real estate agent must also be supplied. In a rental property all electricity usage charges are the responsibility of the tenant unless expressly stated in the Residential Tenancy Agreement.

Gas

Perth has a natural gas supply. Government regulations stipulate that AGL and Energy Australia can both supply electricity and gas.

If a consumer does not have an existing account with the company, there is a connection fee of \$22.00 plus a security deposit of \$100.00.

Telecommunications

Telephone

Perth telephone numbers have eight digits. To dial Perth from another state of Australia dial 08 + local 8 digit number. To dial Perth from another country dial 61 + 8 + local 8 digit number. Telstra Corporation Ltd (Telstra), and Optus provide local telephone services.

Telstra

In the front pages of your white Telephone book you will find information about the telecommunication services provided by Telstra. These services include direct international dialling, mobile telephone services and paging systems, which they also provide. For Telstra telephone connections phone:

Telstra (Residential connections) 132 200
Telstra (Business connections) 132 000

Optus and Foxtel

A relative newcomer, Optus now has cable in many areas, and costs will vary depending on line access to your area. They provide the full range of telecommunication options.

Optus (Enquiries) 133 937

The following information will be required for connection of your telephone service: Full name, residential address, date of birth, driver's licence number, occupation and employer's name and address.

Fax or Internet

If you require an additional telephone line into your home for a facsimile (fax) machine or internet access then you should contact Telstra on 132 200. If you are renting a property you will need your landlord's permission to have a new line installed. Fax machines manufactured outside Australia are not always compatible. Foxtel is the main provider of cable TV and the internet can be connected through Foxtel if using broadband or Telstra is using phone dial-up.

Emergency Calls

Life threatening emergencies:

Dial 000 and state whether you require assistance from Fire, Police or Ambulance.

Post Office

Australia Post is the national postal organisation and provides a wide range of postal and related services. Addresses in Australia are identified by four digit postcodes, which should be used whenever addressing mail within Australia. The majority of WA post-codes begin with the digit six (6). Perth City centre is postcode 6000.

Postcodes for suburbs and towns are listed in the back of your White Pages telephone directory. Postcode booklets are available, free of charge, from any Australia Post Office.

Australia Post Customer Services 131 318

Home Contents Insurance

If you are a tenant in a rented home the house will be covered by insurance held by the owner of the home however you are responsible for insuring your own possessions. This insurance is called Home Contents Insurance and you should co-ordinate a cover note BEFORE your effects are placed in your home. Don't forget your transit insurance does not cover your effects once they are placed in the home.

Contact individual insurance companies to obtain quotations. Major insurance companies include (please check the Yellow Pages for a complete list of companies):

AAMI, AMP, FAI, NRMA, GIO

Some insurance providers offer discounts if you take both your Home Contents and Motor Vehicle insurance through the one company. If you are transferring to Perth from another state of Australia make sure you advise your Home Contents Insurer immediately of your change of address.

7. Education and Schools

The education of your children is probably one of the most important considerations you will undertake during your relocation process. In WA, attendance at a school is compulsory for children between six (6) and sixteen (16) years of age. You may choose to enrol your child in either the government or private school system. Please see the table below for a comparison of ages for entry into Programs in Australia (note: there may be some variations between schools):

State/Territory	Entry age into program two years before Year One	Entry age into program one before Year One	Entry age into Year One	Compulsory starting age	Primary School age(s)	Secondary School age(s)
Western Australia	Entry age – 4 by 30 June. Single entry point at beginning of school year (Kindergarten)	Entry age – 5 by 30 June. Single entry point at beginning of school year (Pre-primary).	Entry age – 6 by 30 June. Single entry at beginning of school year.	The beginning of the school year in which the child reaches the age of 6 years 6 months.	6 – 12	12 – 17 (years 8 – 12)
New South Wales	4 by 31 st July (Pre-school)	5 by 31 st July (Kindergarten)	6 by 31 st July	6 th Birthday	6 – 12	12 – 18 (years 7 – 12)
Victoria	4 by 30 th April (Pre-school)	5 by 30 th April (Prep)	6 by 30 th April.	6 th Birthday	6 – 12	12 – 18 (years 7 – 12)
Queensland	4 by 31 st December (Kindergarten)	5 by 31 st December (Pre-school)	6 by 31 st December	6 th Birthday	6 – 12	12 – 17 (years 8 – 12)
South Australia	Continuous entry after 4 th Birthday	Continuous entry after 5 th birthday (Reception)	Single entry in January after 2-5 terms in Reception depending on initial entry	6 th Birthday	5 – 13	12 – 18 (years 8 – 12)
Tasmania	4 by 1 January in year of entry (Kindergarten)	5 by 1 January in year of entry (Prep)	6 by 1 January	6 th Birthday	5 – 12	11 – 18 (years 7 – 12)
ACT	4 by 30 th April in year of entry (Pre-school)	5 by 30 th April in year of entry (Kindergarten)	6 by 30 th April	6 th Birthday	5 – 12	11 – 18 (years 7 – 12)
Northern Territory	Continuous entry after 4 th birthday (Pre-school)	Continuous intake (Jan, April, July) after 5 th birthday in Transition	January – entry after 2 – 4 terms in Transition. System will change in 2004	6 th Birthday	5 – 13	12 – 18 (year 8 – 12 except in Alice Springs is 7 – 12)

The school year varies a little from state to state in Australia but generally begins in late January and ends in December just prior to Christmas. The school year reflects the reversal of seasons found in the Southern Hemisphere. The year is divided into four terms with holiday breaks in between. Children arriving from the Northern Hemisphere will either lose or gain six months in their grade placement. Schools try to place a child in their closest age group. Most schools favour the wearing of school uniforms. Students are required to purchase their own textbooks and school supplies.

Public, State and Government Schools

Public schools are also known as State or Government schools, as they are run by the State Government and are listed alphabetically by suburb in the Yellow Pages under 'Schools'. State or Government schools are run by the State Department of Education.

'Private' or Independent Schools

Pre-Schools

Most Australian children attend one to two years of pre-school, usually at 3-4 years of age, before going to primary school. Pre-schools are also known as Kindergarten, 'kindys' or nursery school. An increasing number of kindergartens are now providing classes for three year olds where children have an opportunity to interact with other children of their own age.

Play Groups

Most residential communities will have local playgroups for young children. The local city council will have information on local playgroups and other activities of interest for children.

Tertiary Education

University & Open Learning

Information on University degree courses may be obtained by phoning the Universities Admissions Centre or www.uac.edu.au or by phoning individual university campuses which are listed in the Yellow Pages under Universities and Tertiary Education Colleges.

University courses are also available by correspondence through the Open Learning Australia program. Its head office is in Melbourne so contact (03) 9903 8900 for information on courses and fees.

TAFE

Technical and Further Education (TAFE) offer trade, business and hobby diploma courses from several city and suburban locations. For course information phone 131 601.

8. Religion

Australia's multicultural heritage ensures that virtually every major religion is practised. Your

Yellow Pages telephones directory can provide a range of contacts.

Some religions are listed below:

Atheism / Humanism / Rationalism

Christianity – Anglicanism

Christianity – Pentecostalism

Christianity – Protestantism

Christianity – General

Christianity – Orthodox

Christianity – Roman Catholicism

Buddhism

Christian Science

Confucianism

Hare Krishna

Hinduism

Indigenous Traditions - Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

Islam

Jehovah's Witnesses

Judaism

Mormons

Scientology

Shinto

Spiritualism

9. Leisure and Recreational Activities

Perth is a vibrant and modern city with a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. This beautiful city is host to numerous attractions offering visitors and residents alike a wide variety of things to see and do. Whether you are dining at one of Perth's exceptional seafood restaurants, enjoying a family picnic at the magnificent King's Park, cruising on the Swan River, or visiting the nearby wineries you will experience the warm, laid back way of life. Perth residents have the pleasure of experiencing a unique beach culture, vibrant and exciting nightlife and year round social and cultural events.

Some of the sights and attractions that Perth is famous for include King's Park offering splendid views of the city and the Swan River; the Swan Bells which light up every hour on the hour; and Rottnest Island offering an escape from city life. Perth is also home to numerous museums including the **Western Australian Maritime Museum** and the **Berndt Museum of Anthropology**. During the year there are a variety of activities with entertainment for the whole family. These include the Festival of Perth, the Northbridge Festival, West Week, the Perth Royal Show and the Artrage Festival.

Most areas of Perth have tennis courts, golf courses, parks, libraries and recreation clubs that you can join. Swimming, surfing, diving, fishing and other water sports are a favourite pastime for Perth locals. There is indeed an abundance of activities to participate in.

Sport Clubs

Botanic Golf
Mounts Bay Sailing Club
Cockburn Ice Arena
Fremantle Sailing Club
South Perth Lawn Tennis Club
Metropolitan Riding School
Stirling Squash Centre
Hillarys Yacht Club (Inc)
Hoddywell Archery Park

Free to Air Television

Perth has 5 free to air television channels includes Channels 2, 7, 9, 10 and 0/28. Channel 2 is the ABC or Australian Broadcasting Commission, government funded station and Channel 0/ 28 is SBS the multicultural television station.

Pay Television

Pay or cable television is provided through Foxtel and Optus. For information on connections and cost contracts: **Foxtel** (Cable) Enquiry Line 131 999 **Optus Vision** (Cable) Enquiry Line 133 399

If you are renting a home you will require the landlords permission to connect pay television. If you require access to pay TV, you should check the availability before you sign the lease as not all properties currently have access to this facility.

Beaches

Sun Protection and Skin Cancer

You will hear the saying 'Slip, Slop, Slap'. In Australia we have very high UV Rays and as a consequence unprotected skin will burn very easily, even on a cloudy day. The Cancer Council recommends that when outside we slip on a tee shirt, slop on some sunscreen and slap on a hat. Use sunscreen with a high protection factor and do not spend extended periods in direct sunlight during the middle of the day.

Special UV protection swimsuits are now available for children.

Learn to Swim

Learn to Swim programmes are conducted at swimming pool centres throughout Perth. Check your Yellow Pages telephone directory or contact your local council for further information.

10. Health Care

Perth has a wide range of health care facilities including local suburban General Practitioners, 24 hour Medical Centres, private and public hospitals and specialist doctors. Telephone numbers for Doctors may be found in the Yellow Pages telephone directory under M for Medical Practitioners.

Health Insurance

Medicare is a Government health insurance scheme that takes a percentage of annual taxable income from all employed in Australia. Medicare covers the cost associated with being treated as a public patient in a public hospital. To be treated as a private patient in a hospital you will have to pay associated costs or obtain private health insurance.

Medicare also offers private health insurance through a subsidiary group known as Medicare Private.

Private hospital costs vary from hospital to hospital, but like many countries private hospitals are expensive.

Fees are based on a daily rate with extra charges levied for doctors, medications and operating theatre charges. If you are not certain of your eligibility for coverage ascertain your visa status (that is the visa classification under which you entered Australia and the contact a Medicare office to check your eligibility).

It is strongly recommended that overseas visitors take out private health insurance for the term of their assignment in Australia. If you are transferring to Perth from another state in Australia you should advise Medicare of your new residential address as soon as possible.

International transferees that have health insurance at home may be able to transfer to a local fund, without penalty, at a similar level of cover with an Australian fund if your home health fund is a member of the International Federation of Health Funds.

Remember in a medical emergency – **Dial 000** for an ambulance.

Major Hospitals

Royal Perth Hospital
Bethesda Hospital
Fremantle Hospital
La Salle Hospital
Kind Edward Memorial Hospital
Princess Margaret Hospital for Children
Woodside Maternity Hospital
Hollywood Private Hospital
Mercy Hospital

Baby Health Care Centres

Many residential areas will host a local baby and infant health care centre that provides free health care information for families. Contact your local council to find out further information on services available and hours of operation.

Pet Care

Veterinary Surgeons and Animal Hospitals can be found in many residential areas. Check the Yellow

Pages locality guide for Veterinary Surgeons to find a clinic close to your new residence.

11. Regulatory

Income Tax

Income tax must be paid on all income and interest earned in Australia, including wages and profits made on the sale of most kinds of property. Every person who earns income in Australia should have a Tax File Number, or TFN. Upon your arrival you should lodge an application with the Taxation Office to obtain a personal Tax File Number. The amount of tax due is assessed at the end of financial year, which runs from 1 July to 30 June.

A professional taxation consultant will be able to assist you in arranging your financial matters. It is an offence to fail an income tax return or to refuse to answer questions asked by the Taxation Office. Penalties may be imposed for late lodgement of returns, late payment of tax assessed, understatement of income and overstatement of deductions.

Personal Tax Enquiries

Australian Taxation Office 132 861

Voting

Voting is compulsory for Australian born and Naturalised Australian in all Federal, State and Local Government elections. British subjects on the Electoral Roll prior to January 1984 are also eligible to vote.

Forms for enrolling on the Electoral roll may be obtained from any Australia Post office. Enquiries regarding voting and enrolling on the electoral roll may be directed to the Electoral Roll Enquiries 132 326 or the Australian Electoral Commission.

Total Fire Ban Days

Bushfires can be extremely dangerous particularly in the timbered outer suburbs, especially at the end of a long, dry summer. When the risk of bush fires is high the Country Fire Authority may declare a Total Fire Ban Day. It is an offence to light a fire in the open on a Total Fire Ban Day and heavy penalties apply. If you are caught in a bush fire area you should follow instructions of fire fighting personnel in the area.

Pet Registration

Local Councils strongly enforce the registration of cats and dogs in residential areas and may also limit the number and types of animals you may keep. Pet registration fees are cheaper for de-sexed pets.

Fines apply for unregistered pets, pets that disturb neighbours and pets that are not confined in accordance with local legislation. Severe penalties, including destruction of the dog, apply should your dog attack people or property. Contact your local council for specific pet regulations in your area. Some councils do not require registration if the pet is microchipped.

12. Additional Information

Dealing with Culture Shock

Culture shock can be defined as a sense of disorientation and the accompanying anxiety and stress that result from being transported from one culture to another. It is important to remember that it is normal, even in the most seasoned expatriates, and usually follows quite recognisable states. It particularly affects the nonworking partner of a relocated executive.

The initial excitement and euphoria at the prospect of living in a new state or country often gives way to confusion and frustrations as the settling in process begins. Clues given out by the locals may be unfamiliar and difficult to read. Local customs, language and messages conveyed by body language will need to be learned and interpreted before the appropriate responses can be given.

This can lead to discouragement and despair and generally negative and critical attitude to the new environment (and even your loved ones) unless steps are taken to move into the next stage.

It is important to:

- Become familiar with your immediate surroundings.
- Resist making negative comparisons between the old and new environment.
- Become involved in the local community – join a tennis or golf club or local fire bridge group.
- Get out and about (look in your local newspaper for activities that interest you).
- Set goals and targets to acquire new skills and interests (for example, collecting antiques, attending local history or pottery classes).
- Find a balance between physical activity, rest and relaxation.
- Be prepared to ask for advice when necessary.
- Retain a sense of humour.

Above all, it is vital to communicate with your family, to be open and accepting of each other's thoughts and feelings, and to listen to and support each other. Allow each other time and space to grieve for what has been left behind. Acceptance is reached when the behaviour of the locals no longer seem strange, when there is pleasure from new opportunities and experience and joy from new friendships – when you finally feel in control.

Being relocated is an opportunity for personal growth, for expanding horizons both physically and emotionally. It is a chance to enjoy a new closeness with family through shared experiences.

Australian Terms and Phrases

Australian Term	Explanation
Baths	Public swimming pools
Beaut	Very good
Billy	Tin can used to boil tea on open fire
Blinds	Window shades
Block of flats	Apartment house
Block	Parcel of land
Bonnet	Hood of the car
Bookings	Reservations
Boot	Trunk of car
Bottling	Canning
Braces	Suspenders
Chemist	Druggist
Chooks	Chickens
Cistern	Toilet tank
Coffee crystals	Unrefined brown sugar served with coffee
Costumes, bathers, togs	Swim suit
Cotton wool	Cotton
Crook (adjective)	No good
Crook, to be	To be sick
Cut lunch	Snack lunch
Dear	Expensive article
Devonshire tea	Tea and scones, jam and whipped cream
Docket	Sales check
Drawing pins	Thumb tacks
Dust bins, rubbish bin	Garbage can, trash
Entry	To charge
Estate agent	Real estate agent
Fair dinkum	For real, the best, on the level
Fairy lights	Coloured lights
First floor	Second floor
Flat	Apartment
Footpath	Sidewalk
Footy	Football (Australian Rules)
Fortnight	Two weeks
Fridge	Refrigerator
Fringe	Bangs
Full stop	Period
Gaol	Jail
Garbo	Garbage collector
Garden	Yard
Globe	Light bulb
Grog	Alcoholic beverage
Ground floor	First floor
Hire purchase	Instalment plan buying
Holiday	Vacation
Jumper	Pullover, sweater
Kilo	2.2 pounds
Kiosk	Small novelty and food stand
Lid	Cover or hat
Lift	Elevator

Australian Term	Explanation
Lounge	Living room
Mate	Good friend
Middy	285 ml glass of beer
Nappy	Diaper
Nought	Zero
Noughts and crosses	Tic-tac-toe
Oldies	Parents
Overtaking lane	Passing lane
Pegs	Clothes pin
Pelmet	Valance
Petrol	Gas
Pikelets	Small pancakes
Pillar box or post box	Mail box
Plaits	Braids
Pommy	Englishman
Postie	Postman
Pot	285ml glass of beer
Power point	Electrical outlet
Queue up	Line up
Reel of cotton	Spool of thread
Right, to be	To be satisfied
Ring, to	To call on the telephone
Rug	Lap robe
Sandshoes	Sneakers
Schooner	425ml glass of beer
Serviette	Table napkin
Shiela	Young girl
Shout, to	To buy you a drink
Singlet	Man's undershirt
Sister	Registered nurse
Skiting board	Mouldings
Spanner	Wrench
Spencer	Lady's undershirt
Supper	Light meal after the evening entertainment
Surgery	Doctor's office
Suspenders	Garters
Tariff	Rate
Tea	Early evening meal
Tick	To check
Tingle	To call on the telephone
Torch	Flash light
Truck call	Long distance
Tucker	Food
Tunic	Uniform
Unit	Apartment
Wash up	Washing the dishes
Windscreen	Windshield
Wireless	Radio
Wog	Virus
Wool	Yarn for knitting
Zed	z

International Clothing Sizes

Men's Clothing

Suits, Jackets, Sweaters

Australia	12	14		16		18		20	
United States	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42
Great Britain	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42
Continent	44	46	48	49 ½	51	52 ½	54	55 ½	57

Shirts

Australia	37	38	39	41	42	43	44	45
United States	14 ½	15	15 ½	16	16 ½	17	17 ½	18
Great Britain	14 ½	15	15 ½	16	16 ½	17	17 ½	18
Continent	37	38	39	41	42	43	44	45

Shoes

Australia	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
United States	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Great Britain	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Continent	40	41	42	43	44 ½	46	47

Women's Clothing

Dresses, Suits, Coats, Sweaters

Australia	10	12	14	16	18	20
United States	8	10	12	14	16	18
Great Britain	10	12	14	16	18	20
Continent	38	40	42	44	46	48

Shoes

Australia	5	5 ½	6	6 ½	7	7 ½	8	8 ½	9
United States	5	5 ½	6	6 ½	7	7 ½	8	8 ½	9
Great Britain	3 ½	4	4 ½	5	5 ½	6	6 ½	7	7 ½
Continent	35	36	36	37	37	38	38	39	39
France	35	35	36	37	38	38	39	39	40

All size equivalents are approximations only

Metric Conversions

Length

Metric to Imperial		Imperial to Metric	
1 centimetre (cm)	=0.394 inch	1 inch	=2.54 centimetres
1 metre (m)	=3.278 feet	1 foot	=0.305 metre
1 metre (m)	=1.094 yard	1 yard	=0.914 metre
1 kilometre (km)	=0.621 mile	1 mile	=1.609 kilometres

Weight

Metric to Imperial		Imperial to Metric	
1 gram (g)	=0.0353 ounce	1 ounce	=28.35 grams
1 kilogram (kg)	=2.205 pound	1 pound	=456.3 grams
1 tonne	=0.984 long ton		

Area

Metric to Imperial		Imperial to Metric	
1 square metre	=10.76 square feet	1 square mile	=2.59 square kms
1 hectare	=2.471 acres	1 acre	=0.405 hectares
1 square kilometre	=0.386 square mile		

Traffic Speed Limits

Metric to Imperial		Imperial to Metric	
40 kilometre/hour	=24.84 mph	20 mph	=32.18 kilometre/hour
60 km/h	=37.29 mph	30 mph	=48.28 km/h
80 km/h	=49.72 mph	40 mph	=64.36 km/h
100 km/h	=62.15 mph	50 mph	=80.45 km/h
110 km/h	=68.37 mph	60 mph	=96.54 km/h

Liquid Measures

Metric to Imperial		Imperial to Metric	
1 millilitre (ml)	=0.0352 fl oz	1 pint	=0.568 litre
1 litre (l)	=1.76 pints	1 gallon	=4.546 litres
1 litre (l)	=0.22 gallon		

Temperature

Celsius to Fahrenheit	
0 degrees Celsius (C°)	= 32 degrees Fahrenheit (F)
25 degrees Celsius (C°)	=77 degrees Fahrenheit (F)
35 degrees Celsius (C°)	=94 degrees Fahrenheit (F)
40 degrees Celsius (C°)	= 103 degrees Fahrenheit (F)

Please Note

At the time of printing, the information contained herein was true and correct. However, we will not accept liability for any misinformation contained herein and all interested persons must undertake their own investigation into specific items.

Notes

Emergency Phone Numbers

EMERGENCY – AMBULANCE, POLICE, FIRE – **DIAL 000**

Service	Name	Number
Local Doctor		
Local Hospital		
Local Police		
Local Fire		

Other Useful Number

Service	Name	Number
Relocation Consultant		
Local Crown Office		
Local Post Office		
Local Council		

