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# Sydney & New South Wales

## International Student Guide

### INSIDER GUIDES

BY LOCAL EXPERTS  
FREE  
2021

2019 NSW International Student Award  
finalists: Daniel Carpentier, Sergi Toda Galan  
and Maram Magdi Abdelaziez Mohamed.



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## Connect with Study NSW

Study NSW is a NSW Government agency dedicated to supporting and enriching your international student experience.

Our team coordinates a wide range of free initiatives to help you with living, studying and working in NSW.



Access international student support and engagement programs.



Access free legal advice from International Student Legal Service NSW.



Explore work experience and work integrated learning opportunities.



Find out about our NSW International Student Awards.



Get involved with our annual partner projects.



Contact Service NSW on **13 77 88** for free information and referral advice.



Visit our website **[www.study.sydney](http://www.study.sydney)** to find out more and keep in touch.



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# Everything you need to know about studying in Australia

Head to our website  
for more information:  
[insiderguides.com.au](https://insiderguides.com.au)

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INSIDER GUIDES



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Need some help while you are in Sydney? Find the contact details of the various support services available.



# Welcome

New South Wales (NSW) is home to some of the top professional education providers in Australia. Here you'll find an inspiring education journey designed to help you reach for your dreams, while living in one of the most beautiful places on the planet. While Sydney boasts a world-famous opera house, an impressive harbour, and renowned museums, shopping and nightlife, the rest of NSW shines just as brightly. The state is home to several other fantastic study destinations like Newcastle, Bathurst and Orange, and you also have the opportunity to explore places such as creative Byron Bay, the breathtaking Blue Mountains, and the real Australian outback in country NSW. This is one state that delivers infinite possibilities.

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*All information presented is true and correct to the best of our knowledge. Current businesses and services mentioned were operating at the time of publication. We apologise if any have moved, closed or their services have altered in the interim.*



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# Welcome to Sydney and New South Wales

On behalf of the New South Wales (NSW) Government, I warmly welcome you to our home, the premier state of Australia.

I am proud of everything NSW has to offer. Our state is the leading destination for study in Australia, hosting more international students from more countries than any other state.

Our aim is to ensure that NSW feels like a home away from home, and that you can make the most of your experience here.

The NSW Government has set up Study NSW, part of government dedicated to supporting and enriching your student experience.

Study NSW coordinates a wide range of initiatives to help you with living, studying and working in NSW, including:

- free legal advice to international students across the state
- programs such as NSW Global Scope and International Student Welcome Desk at Sydney Airport which provide practical experiences through work integrated learning opportunities.

Study NSW's approach to enhancing student employability is founded on connecting today's students to tomorrow's businesses. NSW is Australia's leading startup jurisdiction, providing opportunities for our budding student entrepreneurs.

Wherever you study here, you learn from the best. From north to south, east to west, our universities, research organisations, and training institutions, are ready to welcome you. You will experience first-hand their global reputation for excellence. We are also home to many of Australia's leading private education and training providers, English language colleges and secondary schools.

You can visit [www.study.sydney](http://www.study.sydney) to find out more about Study NSW programs, including our response and support for those affected by COVID-19.

I also encourage you to explore all that Sydney and our wonderful state has to offer, with a view to becoming the next generation of ambassadors for NSW. Being a long way from home, we want you to feel welcome and we are committed to making your experience in NSW the best it can be.

I wish you every success with your studies.



**Deputy Premier John Barilaro,**  
**Minister for Regional New South Wales,**  
**Industry and Trade**





## Quick facts

### Iconic infrastructure

Sydney Harbour is one of the world's most recognisable harbours, and is itself home to the city's most renowned landmarks: Sydney Harbour Bridge and Sydney Opera House.

### Boundless plains

NSW covers just over 800,000 square kilometres of land – roughly 10 per cent of Australia. This includes the pristine Lord Howe Island in the Pacific Ocean.

### Claim to fame

Sydney Harbour Bridge, nicknamed 'The Coathanger', is the world's widest long-span bridge. It is also the tallest steel arch bridge, measuring 134 metres from top to water level.

### Regional gem

The Hunter Valley is the state's largest regional economy, while the Port of Newcastle, the second largest city in NSW, is the largest port on Australia's east coast.

### Growing strong

NSW is Australia's fastest growing state, growing by roughly 100,000 people each year. Combined, Greater Sydney and Newcastle have the highest density of people in the country.

### Culture capital

More than 275 different languages are spoken in NSW. Almost one-third of residents were born overseas, while 37 per cent of people had both parents born overseas.

“

**In Sydney, I love having the opportunity to interact with different cultures and the geniality of Sydneysiders!**

**Chintan, India**

Studying at Macquarie University



”

“

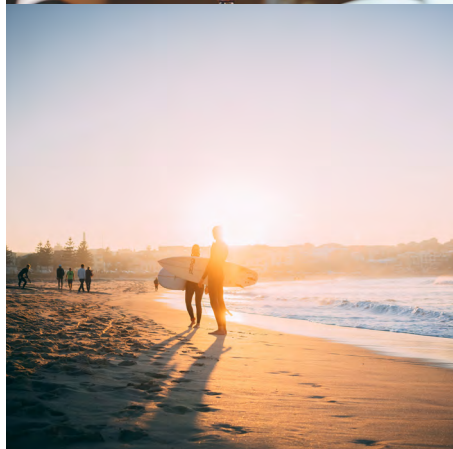
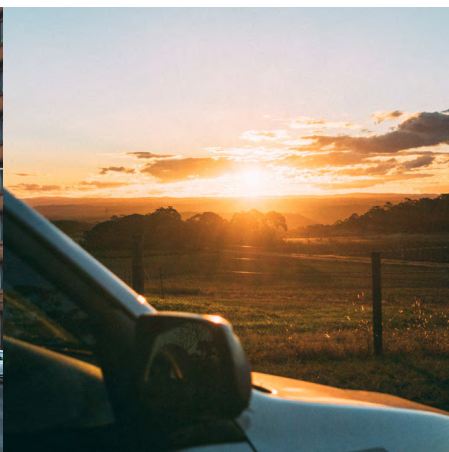
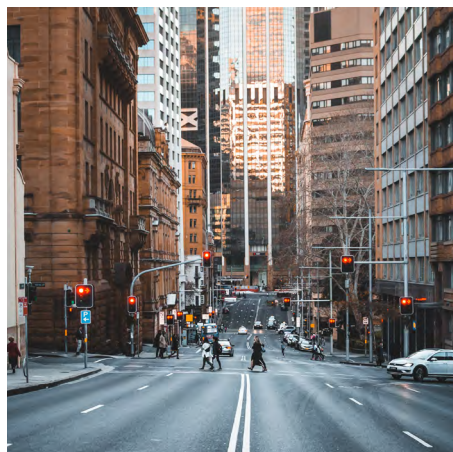
**“Sydney is so multifaceted and there is always something to explore, from the nature side to the city side, and the rich Aboriginal culture.”**

**Judy, Hong Kong**

Studying at  
The University of Sydney



”





# Must-do in NSW

---

There are so many fun things to do in Sydney, but here are a few you can't leave the city without doing.

1.

## Sightsee Sydney

There are so many ways to see this beautiful city – coastal hikes, river cruises, electric bikes and scooters, photography tours, and so many more.

2.

## Road trips

Sydney is surrounded by spectacular landscapes, best explored by car. Head south for idyllic coastline, west for red-dirt outback, and north for a taste of the tropical.

3.

## Wine regions

NSW is Australia's oldest wine-growing state, with 16 unique wine regions. This means endless opportunities for wine tasting, weekends away and guided wine region tours.

4.

## National parks

There are more than 870 national parks and reserves in NSW, covering more than seven million hectares, with unlimited options to hike, swim, and camp.

5.

## Learn to surf

Learning to surf is a rite of passage in NSW. Almost every coastal town is home to a surf school, where you can learn in groups or individually.

6.

## Aboriginal culture

NSW has a rich Indigenous culture. Take one of the tours led by local Aboriginal leaders to learn more about Australia's traditional owners and ancient culture.

# Your first week in Sydney

1.



P.58

## Buy an Opal card

You'll need an Opal card to get around on public transport. Buy one from convenience stores and other selected retailers.

2.



P.31

## Set up your bank account

This is crucial if you're planning to work in Australia, but is also useful for paying rent and other expenses.

3.



P.27

## Sort out your phone

You can use your existing phone or buy a new one in Australia, with the option of going prepaid or signing up for a plan.

4.



## Know the emergency number

If you need emergency assistance – police, fire or ambulance – you can call Triple Zero (000), even when your phone can't get reception. Make sure to store this number in your phone.

5.



## Stock up your fridge

Once you've found your nearest grocery store, stock up on basic ingredients and your favourite foods from home – they'll help if you get homesick during your first week!

6.



## Plan your studies

Find out when classes start, where your campus is located (some institutions are spread across several campuses) and when O-Week kicks off.

## Priya, Canada

Studying at the University of Sydney



**“I like exploring residential neighbourhoods and attending events at the local community centres. It’s not exactly touristy, but it gives you a feel of the city.”**

“

### PRIYA'S HIGHLIGHTS

#### COFFEE

For coffee, I like Forum on the University of Sydney campus. I love the ambience.

#### BREAKFAST

Tripod Cafe near Redfern Station does good breakfast. Their Cherry Tomato Omelette is delicious, comes in a large portion size, and most importantly, is healthy!

#### DINNER

For dinner, go to Thai Riffic in Newtown and order the pineapple fried rice. It's delicious and authentic.

#### THREE THINGS NOT TO MISS

1. Royal Botanic Garden
2. Ferry from Circular Quay to Manly
3. Bondi to Coogee walk

”





# Improving your English

If you'd like to continue improving your English during your time in Australia, there are a few tools and resources that can help.

## SPEAKING

Join a conversation group. There are plenty of conversation groups on Meetup.com, as well as at local libraries and community centres.

Find a friend who also wants to improve their English and only chat to them in English - including via text message, online, over the phone and in person.

Make friends with people from other nationalities so you only communicate in English.

Join a volunteer group or sports team so you can put your English skills to good use.

## READING & LISTENING

Read in English every day. This includes websites, online news, newspapers, magazines and books.

Listen to English-language music and podcasts, watch English-language films, television shows and YouTube videos, and try to do so without subtitles!

## WRITING

Write a daily journal in English. It doesn't matter what you write about, as long as it's in English.

Do little translation exercises. Take a passage from a book or article in your native language and translate it into English, or do the reverse.



## WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE TO HELP ME IMPROVE MY ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS?

TITLE	LINK	WHAT IS IT?
English Central	<a href="http://englishcentral.com">englishcentral.com</a>	A platform full of English language videos that progressively build your comprehension.
BBC Learning English	<a href="http://bbc.co.uk/learningenglish">bbc.co.uk/learningenglish</a>	Watch well-crafted videos and complete related activities to increase your knowledge of the English language.
italki	<a href="http://italki.com">italki.com</a>	Choose between native speakers and qualified tutors (more expensive) to have a 1-on-1 video chat with you.
Busuu	<a href="http://busuu.com">busuu.com</a>	A website and mobile app, Busuu is a social network of people learning new languages.

# Australian slang

## EXPRESSING YOURSELF

### Aggro (Adjective)

Angry, showing aggression

'He's so aggro at the moment, you should avoid him.'

### Fair enough (Idiom)

Alright/OK

'You'll be late? Fair enough, traffic is bad today.'

### Feral (Adjective)

Disgusting, something repulsive

'I just saw someone drop their hot chips and then continue to eat them off the ground - that's so feral.'

### Hey? (Exclamation)

Used at the end of a sentence to ask if someone agrees

'You're going out tonight, hey?'

### She'll be right (Idiom)

It will be fine

'You missed the bus? She'll be right, there'll be another one soon.'

### Keen (Adjective)

Excited for something  
'I'm so keen for the new Quentin Tarantino film.'

### No worries (Idiom)

Don't worry about it/it's OK

'You can't come to the party? No worries!'

### ----- as (Adverb)

Almost anything could go here: busy as, awesome as, tired as. To understand the speaker, just cut off the 'as' and add 'very' to the front and you'll get what they mean.

'She's been annoying as since she got back from exchange - she won't stop talking about it.'

### Heaps (Adjective)

A lot or very

'Wow, that show was heaps good.'

### Full on (Adjective)

Intense/wild

'Uni is so full on, I can't keep up with my assignments.'

### Yeah, nah (Determiner)

- No

### Nah, yeah (Determiner)

- Yes



### Snag (Noun)

Sausage

'For the best snags, I go to Bunnings Warehouse.'



### Esky (Noun)

Ice cooler

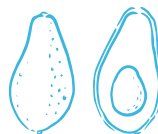
'The esky will keep the drinks cool while we swim.'



### Cuppa (Noun)

Hot beverage

'A hot cuppa tea goes well with biscuits.'



### Avo (Noun)

Avocado

'I love avo toast with feta cheese.'



## GOING OUT

### Arvo (Noun)

Afternoon

'Let's catch up this arvo for a coffee.'

### Barbie (Noun)

BBQ

'Let's fire up the barbie for dinner tonight.'

### Bathers (Noun)

Swimming costume

'Remember to bring your bathers, my friend has a pool.'

### Brekky (Noun)

Breakfast

'I always have a big brekky. I'm so hungry when I wake up in the morning.'

### Chemist (Noun)

Drug store/pharmacy -

'We should go pick up some Panadol from the chemist.'

### EFTPOS (Noun/Acronym)

Machine for electronic (card) payments. Stands for Electronic Funds Transfer at Point Of Sale

'Luckily, the café has EFTPOS, because I don't have any cash.'

### Bottle-o (Noun)

Liquor store

'I have to go and get some beer from the bottle-o.'

### Macca's (Noun)

McDonald's

'I'm too tired to make dinner, shall we go to Macca's instead?'

### Mate (Noun)

Friend (this can be used passive-aggressively though, so pay attention to the situation)

'I like her, she's a good mate, she always has my back.'

### Mozzie (Noun)

Mosquito

'The mozzies are so bad in the summer.'

### Rip-off (Adjective)

To cheat/something that's too expensive

'This brunch is such a rip-off - \$18 for toast?!'

### Servo (Noun)

Service station/gas station

'On long drives I have to stop at the servo to buy snacks.'

### Shout (Verb)

To pay for the next round of drinks i.e. 'it's your shout'

'I paid for the last round, so it's your shout this time.'

### Spud (Noun)

A potato

'I'd love a baked spud with sour cream right about now.'

## WHILE STUDYING

### Bludge (Intransitive Verb)

To not try your hardest

'He's bludging uni, there's no way he'll graduate.'

### SWOTVAC (Noun/Acronym)

Study break/revision week

'I have so much revision to do during SWOTVAC. I shouldn't have slacked off so much during the semester.'

### Chuck a sickie (Phrasal verb)

To fake a sick day from work or study.

'I can't miss The Bachelor tonight - I'll just call work and chuck a sickie.'

### Dodgy (Adjective)

Poor quality/not reliable/suspicious

'That website is dodgy, I'm pretty sure it gave me a virus.'

### Good on ya (Exclamation)

Well done/good on you

'Congratulations on that HD! Good on ya!'

### How ya going/How's it going? (Spoken phrase)

How are you?

### Reckon (Verb)

Think/figure/assume

'I reckon I'll go for a run; I've been feeling lazy as.'

### Uni (Noun)

University

'Do you want to walk to uni together?'



# Accommodation

- + Comparing your options
- + Housemates' code
- + Paying rent
- + Setting up your home

# Comparing your options

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## Private rental

\$200-\$700/wk

This is true independent living; renting an apartment or a house, either alone or with housemates. Living with others is ideal for meeting new people and reducing your costs. However, if you decide to live alone, you will have to pay for everything and may get lonely (depending on your personality, of course). Rentals come either furnished or unfurnished.

*Note: Listed price is per room.*

---

## Homestay

\$250-\$350/wk

Homestay involves staying with a family in their home with meals, internet and utilities covered by your host. It is a popular choice for a true Australian experience, and it also allows you to settle into your new life in Australia with the support of a family. Homestay can be both close to and some distance from your educational institution – make sure to check access and public transport options.

---

## Purpose-built student accommodation

\$200-\$500/wk

These large centres are full of apartments of varying sizes, generally one to five bedrooms. You will get a fully furnished bedroom with 24-hour support and internet included. Generally, student accommodation is conveniently located for students, is secure and safe, and boasts a real sense of community. The downside to this is the internet can slow down at peak times and the rooms can be on the smaller side.

---

## Residential college

\$450-\$550/wk

While they appear more expensive than other options, residential colleges do include a lot of extras. They're usually located close to campus, your fully furnished bedroom will be cleaned weekly, study facilities and gyms are supplied, and meals are included. The downside is that you often have to pay for the full academic year and may not need all the extras.

### FOR MORE ACCOMMODATION INFORMATION

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Head to the Study NSW website for more details on accommodation in Sydney, including links to the Student Accommodation Association (SAA), the national body representing education providers and student accommodation operators, and general accommodation tips.

[study.sydney/live/accommodation](https://study.sydney/live/accommodation)





## Before you take out a lease on a property

- ☐ ENSURE YOU HAVE ENOUGH MONEY TO COVER THE BOND
- ☐ ARRANGE A REFERENCE OR GUARANTOR
- ☐ INSPECT THE PROPERTY BEFORE YOU SIGN A CONTRACT OR PAY A DEPOSIT
- ☐ PHOTOGRAPH ANY EXISTING DAMAGE OR ISSUES
- ☐ MAKE SURE YOU RECEIVE, AND KEEP, A COPY OF YOUR RENTAL AGREEMENT AND RECEIVE A RECEIPT FOR ALL RENT AND BOND PAYMENTS
- ☐ PAY ATTENTION TO DETAILS REGARDING THE END OF YOUR RENTAL AGREEMENT



## Other factors to consider when selecting accommodation

- ☐ HOW CLOSE IS IT TO YOUR STUDY INSTITUTION?
- ☐ HOW CLOSE IS IT TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND WHAT WILL THE TRAVEL COST BE?
- ☐ WHAT IS NEARBY? (SHOPS, HOSPITALS, POLICE STATIONS, PARKS)
- ☐ IS THERE ADEQUATE HEATING AND COOLING?
- ☐ IS IT NOISY?
- ☐ IS THE AREA SAFE AND IS THE BUILDING SECURE?
- ☐ WHAT WILL THE INSURANCE COSTS BE?
- ☐ DOES EVERYTHING WORK? (SMOKE ALARMS, APPLIANCES, LIGHT SWITCHES)

## HEAD ONLINE

From types of accommodation and support for renters, to decorating your space and being a great housemate, check out our online Accommodation guide.

[insiderguides.com.au/student-accommodation-in-australia](https://insiderguides.com.au/student-accommodation-in-australia)



# Housemates' code

Sharing a house with others can be a really fun experience. Use these tips to ensure a happy and harmonious household.

1.



## Food

Establish early on how groceries will be purchased and make it clear what food is shared. Avoid eating any food that isn't yours or designated as shared.

2.



## Guests

Communication with your housemates is crucial when it comes to guests. Guidelines to consider include when/how long they should be there and which areas/rooms are shared spaces.

3.



## Cleaning

Consider creating a cleaning roster, noting that some housemates may prefer certain tasks. You will still be responsible for doing your own dishes and laundry, and keeping your room tidy.

4.



## Rent

Make sure rent is paid on-time to the right person. You might be paying rent to a head housemate or making individual payments to the real estate agent or landlord.

5.



## Bills

Have a plan for how bills are divided up and paid. One person is generally responsible for managing bills, but like rent, make sure they're paid on time to avoid housemate disputes.

6.



## Moving out

If someone decides to move out, establish the process involved. Determine how much notice they need to give and whether you need to alert your property manager or landlord.

## What support services are available for renters in NSW?

Tenants NSW can help you understand your rights when renting a room, apartment or house in Sydney. Visit the Tenants NSW website to learn about bonds, condition reports and where you can ask for assistance with accommodation issues before and after you arrive.

[tenants.org.au](http://tenants.org.au)

Community Legal Centres (CLCs) are independent community organisations that provide free legal services to the public. They help people who are ineligible for legal aid and cannot afford a private lawyer. Redfern Legal Centre is a great resource if you need free information and advice on tenancy issues.

[rlc.org.au](http://rlc.org.au)

## Can I get a pet as an international student?

If you are considering getting a pet, you need to make sure you have done your research. Things like the size of the pet, where it will live, how much time you can spend with it, what will happen to it when you return home and the amount of money you have to properly take care of it should all be part of your decision. You also need to know the rules and requirements of pet ownership. They may be different from what you are

used to and you may get into trouble if you don't follow them.

[cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/pet-animal-services](http://cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/pet-animal-services)

Fostering an animal is a good option if you can't keep a pet long-term. You will be provided with basic supplies, and can enjoy the company of a pet temporarily until they find their perfect forever home.

[rspca.org.au/support-us/foster-care](http://rspca.org.au/support-us/foster-care)



## Factors to consider before owning a pet

- ☐ WILL MY ACCOMMODATION ALLOW THEM?
- ☐ UPFRONT COSTS (DESEXING, REGISTRATION, ETC)
- ☐ ONGOING COSTS (FOOD, BOARDING, HEALTHCARE, VETERINARIAN COSTS, ETC)
- ☐ WILL YOUR PETS NEED DAILY WALKS AND EXERCISE?
- ☐ WILL YOU NEED A FULLY ENCLOSED BACKYARD?
- ☐ HOW OFTEN ARE YOU NOT AT HOME?
- ☐ HOW LONG WILL YOU BE STAYING IN AUSTRALIA, AND WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO YOUR PET IF YOU DECIDE TO LEAVE?



## HOW MUCH WILL MY BOND BE?

In private rentals and managed student accommodation, you will need to pay a bond in advance, which will be returned at the end of your agreement if no damage has occurred and your rental payments are up to date. For private rentals, this bond is not legally allowed to be more than four weeks rent.

Make sure you receive a receipt for all money given to your landlord or real estate agent, including the bond, and a bond authority lodgment notice from Fair Trading NSW.

## How to pay rent

There are a few different ways to pay rent in Australia. These include direct debit (bank), BPAY (a type of electronic payment), or paying in person with card or cash. Your real estate agent or landlord will sometimes offer a range of options or request only one.

## Rental scams

Unfortunately, rental scams can occur in Australia. But, there are a few things to look out for so you can protect yourself.

Be careful of offers that sound too good to be true. Ask advice from trusted friends, or your school or agent, if you see any of the following warning signs:

- The rent is a lot cheaper than other similar accommodation in the area
- You are asked to sign a lease or pay a bond or deposit before you have seen the property
- The photos or description of the property don't match the reality on inspection
- The landlord or agent makes excuses that you can't view the property, such as saying they are overseas
- The landlord or agent requests money via money transfer
- The scammers may try to appear genuine by providing photos, real addresses of properties, copies of land titles, and even scans of stolen passports. Scammers also ask for personal details – such as bank and credit card numbers – which they use for credit card and identity fraud
- Make sure you always inspect the property in person (or via Skype if you can't attend) and don't send any money via money transfer



# Setting up your house

There are plenty of stores and online marketplaces in Australia offering affordable furniture and other home items. Here's our guide to some of the best.

## FURNITURE STORES

There are three IKEA stores located in Sydney (Tempe, Rhodes and Marsden Park), where you can find reasonably priced furniture and homewares. Fantastic Furniture and Amart are also good options for larger items, with locations around the city.

## SECOND-HAND STORES

If you're looking for one-of-a-kind, affordable furnishings and home items, second-hand stores are fantastic places to look. Popular second-hand chain stores in NSW include Vinnies and Salvos, as well as independent shops and boutiques.

## ONLINE MARKETPLACES

In Australia, Gumtree and eBay are two of the biggest online marketplaces for new and used furniture and home goods. On Gumtree, you'll often find people giving things away for free.

## FACEBOOK

Facebook is a great resource for buying (and selling) furniture and homewares. Facebook Marketplace is full of second-hand furniture, appliances, decorative pieces, cookware, and even clothing, electronics, and hundreds of other items.

## DEPARTMENT STORES

Look for your nearest Kmart, Target, Big W or Spotlight – these stores sell everything from furniture and lighting to kitchenware and bedding at low prices.

## BUY, SWAP, SELL

You'll find plenty of buy, swap, sell groups on Facebook that are dedicated to particular suburbs around Sydney. There are also websites such as Zilch and Freecycle.





## IMPORTANT STEPS

Once you've moved into your new home, there are a few things you'll need to do.

1. Notify your bank, employer, education provider and OSHC provider of your new address. Your student visa requires you to update your education provider within seven days of arriving in Australia or moving to a new address.
2. Get to know your local area and council. Find out where your nearest medical centre, shops, public transport hubs, fitness facilities and more are located. Learn about waste disposal in your area, including recycling and composting options. Check out your local council's website for more information.
3. Tell your friends and family back home where you're living. They probably want to know that you're in a safe place and they may want to send mail from time to time.
4. Think about home and contents insurance. If you're living in your own apartment or house, or have joined an existing share house, you might want to purchase home and contents insurance to protect your belongings from theft or damage.
5. Check your home is in working order. Make sure things like hot water, taps and switches work. If there are any faults or issues, notify your agent or landlord.

The background of the page is a photograph of a hand holding a smartphone over a wooden desk. A semi-transparent blue and purple graphic overlay covers the left and center portions of the image. The word 'Communication' is written in white on this overlay.

# Communication

- + Mobile phones
- + Internet
- + Streaming

# Mobile phones

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## Plan vs prepaid

Prepaid involves buying credit for your phone and topping up each week or month. This way, you can control how much you spend. It's a great option if you're in Australia for a short time. If you'll be here for over 12 months, you may want to consider a 'plan' or a 'contract', which is a set payment per month to use the network. Usually, you will get more phone calls and data this way than through prepaid options.

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## What should I watch out for?

Read your contract, or the terms and conditions, closely to make sure you understand any additional charges that can be applied. Another thing to be aware of is extra subscriptions that may come with the service. If the overall deals between phone providers are similar, then consider if you would save money by having free access to another service. For example, the plan may come with free sport streaming, Spotify or Netflix.

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## How do I get started?

For both prepaid and plan options, head to one of the phone shops we've listed below. To get started, you'll need some documents to prove who you are:

- An Australian bank statement or rental agreement
- Your student visa details
- Proof of identity, such as your passport

### WHERE CAN I BUY A NEW MOBILE PHONE OR SIGN UP FOR A PLAN?

There are several mobile phone providers in Australia that sell phones and/or SIM cards, offering both plans and prepaid options. Some of the most popular providers include Vodafone, Telstra, Optus, Virgin Mobile, Amaysim, Boost Mobile and Vaya.

## Factors to consider before signing a phone contract

- ☐ HOW LONG IS THE CONTRACT?
- ☐ HOW MANY MINUTES OF PHONE CALLS DO I GET (AND ARE INTERNATIONAL CALLS INCLUDED)?
- ☐ WHAT IS THE MONTHLY DATA LIMIT AND HOW MUCH EXTRA WILL I BE CHARGED FOR GOING OVER THE LIMIT?
- ☐ HOW MUCH WILL I BE CHARGED IF I NEED TO END THE CONTRACT EARLY?
- ☐ WHAT EXTRAS/DISCOUNTS/SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE INCLUDED?
- ☐ HOW GOOD IS THE NETWORK COVERAGE?
- ☐ WILL I BE CHARGED EXTRA FOR PAYING BILLS IN A CERTAIN WAY (E.G. CREDIT CARD)?

# Internet

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## How do I arrange home internet?

There are several home internet providers in Australia including Optus, Telstra, iiNet, TPG, Belong and more.

Services like Compare Broadband are a good starting point if you are unsure of pricing and the options available in your area. Month-by-month and six-month contracts are becoming more common. They work for students in regards to contract length but cost more than 12 or 24-month contracts.

After you've chosen an internet provider, setting up your home internet is easy. You can buy your own modem or purchase one through your provider. They'll then provide you with all of the necessary steps required to finish your set-up.

Australia is gradually connecting to the National Broadband Network. But, note that speeds in many locations are still quite slow, especially if you come from a country with fast internet.

*[comparebroadband.com.au](http://comparebroadband.com.au)*

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## Free Wi-Fi in Sydney

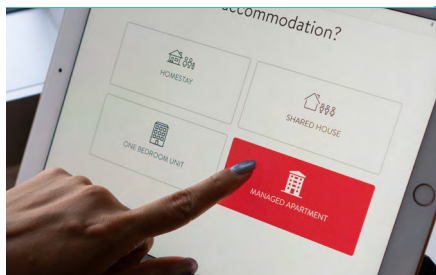
Sydney offers free Wi-Fi in certain parts of the city, predominantly around the CBD. You'll also find free Wi-Fi at Sydney Airport – ideal if you've just arrived in Australia and need internet to navigate your way into the city.

Public libraries and community centres usually offer free Wi-Fi too, and you'll find that many cafes around Sydney give decent internet access (either for free or with purchase).

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## How do I arrange mobile broadband?

If you can't get a hotspot using your phone and want a good connection for your device, an easy solution is mobile broadband. Visit a Vodafone, Optus or Telstra store and pick up a 4G modem - they start at around \$15-20 per month, but prepaid options are also available.



## COST OF LIVING CALCULATOR

Want to work out your budget? Use our Cost of Living Calculator to receive a customised breakdown of your expected costs in Sydney.

*[insiderguides.com.au/colc](http://insiderguides.com.au/colc)*





# Streaming options

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## **Netflix ([netflix.com](https://netflix.com))**

Netflix provides on-demand access to a range of local and international shows. You can watch on smart TVs, gaming consoles, Apple TV and Chromecast, mobile devices, and computers. From \$9.99/month.

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## **Foxtel Now ([foxtel.com.au/now](https://foxtel.com.au/now)) and Stan ([stan.com.au](https://stan.com.au))**

Both available on computers, smart TVs, Chromecast and gaming consoles. The Foxtel Now app allows you to sign up for the subscription service, Foxtel, without any installation costs or contracts. Foxtel is a good choice if you want to access live sport. Stan is an Australian subscription service that offers an extensive back catalogue of local and international content. From \$25/month (Foxtel) & \$10/month (Stan).

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## **Sport streaming services**

Kayo is the most popular streaming service for sport content, with over 50 sports available. It works by streaming from popular sport channels including ESPN and Fox Sports. Prices start at \$25/month. Optus Sport has the rights for the English Premier League and UEFA Champions and Europa Leagues. These games can be watched on mobile devices or on Chromecast, Fetch TV or Apple TV. It is free for most Optus customers or \$14.99/month for non-Optus customers. AFL (Australian Rules Football), A-League (Football/Soccer), NRL (Rugby League) and Super Netball can be streamed on mobile devices through Telstra. These have varying prices for non-customers but are free to Telstra customers.

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## **ABC iview, SBS On Demand, 7plus, 9Now, 10 Play**

The main free-to-air stations in Australia all have apps available that allow you to watch their shows on demand. These apps are free to download and use, but most of them do contain advertising.



# Money & Banking

- + Banks in Australia
- + Managing your money
- + Transferring funds

# Banks in Australia

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## Why do I need an Australian bank account?

Opening an Australian bank account will enable you to earn money in Australia. Any payment you receive

from employment or a scholarship will need to be paid directly into an Australian account.

Additionally, you will easily be able to access funds without attracting fees for international transfers.

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## How do I set up a bank account?

This step is easy. There are several banks to choose from in Australia. When you arrive in Australia, simply head to your chosen bank and let them know you're an international student and would like to open an account. You will need to bring some important documents. You will be provided with access to a day-to-day account and an online savings account.

Once you have been identified, you will be provided with a debit card, allowing you to shop across Australia and online without paying additional fees.

You can use a basic day-to-day account to pay for course fees, rent or daily living costs.

## What should I bring with me?

- ☐ PASSPORT OR BIRTH CERTIFICATE
- ☐ NATIONAL IDENTITY CARD (IF YOU HAVE ONE)
- ☐ PROOF OF AUSTRALIAN ADDRESS (CAN BE A HOUSEHOLD BILL)
- ☐ PROOF OF ENROLMENT

*Note - It is not necessary to have a Tax File Number to get a bank account, but without one you will get taxed up to 48% (approximately) on the interest your money earns in the bank account.*

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## Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs), contactless payment and PayID

Your debit card allows you to withdraw cash from most ATMs across Australia. Note that using an ATM that's not from your bank may incur a fee. You don't always need to use your debit card though; you can also set up contactless payments so you can pay for things using your mobile phone, meaning you don't need to carry a card around. PayID is another way to make payments that uses either your mobile number or email address. Ask your bank for more information.

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## Can I get an Australian credit card as an international student?

It's a little more complicated to get a credit card as an international student, as most Australian banks require you to be on a particular visa and earning a minimum amount of money per year.

If you're set on getting an Australian credit card, talk to your nearest bank branch. In most cases, you will need to undergo a credit check and meet certain requirements.

# Managing your money

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## How do I manage my budget?

The first thing you need to do is get an understanding of your current financial position. Predict and list all of your income and expenses for the next three to six months as best you can. Then, it's time to think about ways to improve it. Think about the things that add a

lot of value versus what you pay for but don't really need, such as buying a coffee every day vs. making one at home. Then, download an app such as Pocketbook on your phone, and sync up your bank accounts so you can start tracking and setting goals for spending and saving. Use ASIC's free budgeting tool to get started.

*[moneysmart.gov.au](http://moneysmart.gov.au)*

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## What should I do if I am facing financial difficulties?

If you are having any difficulties with your finances, your first contact should be your educational institution. They have qualified staff available to help and can point you in the right direction for support. If you are experiencing financial hardship then you may be able to apply to pay your tuition in instalments. Additional financial support was introduced for international students during the COVID-19 pandemic. Study NSW has advice on where to look for help.

*[study.sydney](http://study.sydney)*

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## Scams and security

Unfortunately, there are a number of scams specifically targeted towards international students, including agency, accommodation, blackmailing and online scams, and these increased during the COVID-19 pandemic. If you are vigilant and aware of these scams, you will be better able to avoid them. Scamwatch and the NSW Government outline different types of incidents and who to contact for help.

*[scamwatch.gov.au](http://scamwatch.gov.au) • [service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/report-scam-or-cybercrime](http://service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/report-scam-or-cybercrime)*

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## Where can I seek help for gambling?

Gambling can be addictive, which not only affects your health, but your finances too.

To get an accurate picture of how much gambling is costing you, use the calculator on the Gambler's Help website.

*[gamblershelp.com.au](http://gamblershelp.com.au)*

There are a number of resources available to help you beat your gambling addiction. These include NSW Gambling Help and various community services.

*[gamblinghelp.nsw.gov.au](http://gamblinghelp.nsw.gov.au)*

*[gamblinghelponline.org.au](http://gamblinghelponline.org.au)*



# Transferring funds

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Setting up your new life in Australia is an exciting process, but it does come with a lot of expenses. You will need to pay course fees to your institution, buy textbooks, pay your accommodation costs, pay your bills every month, and have access to your money for everyday spending. This can mean a lot of transactions. There are many different ways to send and receive funds; with a little research, you can find the best solution to suit your needs.

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## Send and receive money from home

If you have internet banking set up with your bank, you can easily receive funds from home or send money overseas. Just make sure you have all the required codes (SWIFT, Sort and, for Europeans, IBAN) and the correct account numbers. Bank accounts are best for transferring small amounts and paying your everyday expenses. If you are transferring large amounts of money and want a better exchange rate with lower fees, you may want to consider other services.

Money transfer companies provide a fast option to send and receive money overseas in minutes. If you shop around, specialist international money transfer companies will often give you a better

deal on currency exchange rates than your bank. PayPal is perhaps the most well-known money transfer system, but it does attract a currency conversion fee. Otherwise, you can check out dedicated international money transfer services like Western Union.

A prepaid credit card is a great way to receive money from home for daily expenses and not fall into the trap of spending more money than you have in your budget. Both Visa and Mastercard (widely accepted in Australia) have card issuers that offer their own prepaid credit cards, that even come with special discounts on things like food and entertainment for members. Have a chat to your bank or financial institution to see what options are available.

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## Pay your education expenses and other bills

Your education provider will outline a range of different ways you can pay for your tuition fees as an international student, whether these are through electronic bill payment systems, telegraphic transfer, credit card or another payment portal. Usually, your education provider will have a preferred payment provider, so make sure you check their website.

When it comes to paying bills in Australia, BPAY and POLi Payments are electronic bill payment systems that enable secure payment for many different expenses, like your monthly mobile phone or other utility bills. Look for the BPAY or POLi reference number on your bill and then select the relevant option on your internet, mobile or phone banking account to make your payment.

A background image showing a person's hand pouring coffee from a silver kettle into a glass carafe through a pour-over filter. The scene is set on a wooden surface with green foliage in the background. A large blue and purple abstract graphic overlay covers the middle section of the page.

# Employment

- + Employment basics
- + Looking for work
- + Writing a resume
- + Workplace rights

# Employment basics

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## Can I work while studying?

While on a student visa, you can work up to 40 hours per fortnight during the semester and unlimited hours during semester breaks. A fortnight means 14 days. Australia has laws guaranteeing basic workplace rights, including minimum pay and conditions. We'll go into these later in the guide.

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## What do I need to know about tax?

Before working in Australia, it is crucial to obtain a Tax File Number (TFN). Your TFN will ensure that you get taxed at the correct rate for the amount of work you are doing. Australia has a tax-free threshold of \$18,200, meaning you will pay no tax if you earn less than this amount in one year. If you have any tax taken from your earnings, you will need to complete a tax return at the end of the financial year.

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## Do I need an Australian Business Number (ABN)?

You don't need an ABN to work for an Australian employer. You only need one if you're an independent contractor, like a freelancer.

*[fairwork.gov.au/find-help-for/independent-contractors](https://fairwork.gov.au/find-help-for/independent-contractors)*

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## What is superannuation?

Often known as 'super', it is a financial contribution towards a fund that you use to live on when you retire. You can contribute to your own fund, but most commonly your employer does this. If you are an employee, the law in Australia says you are entitled to receive super from your employer. If you earn over \$450 (before tax) in the calendar month, your employer must contribute at least 9.5% of your earnings to your nominated super fund. This is in addition to your ordinary wage. You can also claim your super when you leave Australia.

*[ato.gov.au/Individuals/Super](https://ato.gov.au/Individuals/Super)*

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## Internships and work experience

An internship may be a compulsory part of your degree, or you might just want a bit of extra professional experience to improve your resume. Check with your institution's career centre for options for arranging an internship or work experience.



## Where should I look for a part-time/casual job?

There are a range of job-seeking sites you can access for free to check work vacancies in Sydney. Below we've listed some of the most popular. Your education provider will also have a careers website that will list jobs specifically targeted to students. However, if you'd prefer to work freelance on your own time, check out Airtasker or Upwork.

[seek.com.au](https://seek.com.au)

[careerone.com.au](https://careerone.com.au)

[au.indeed.com](https://au.indeed.com)

[au.oneshiftjobs.com](https://au.oneshiftjobs.com)

[spotjobs.com](https://spotjobs.com)

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## Employability programs

If you don't have experience in the workplace or are struggling to find a job, there are several opportunities in Sydney and NSW to boost your employability and work skills. Study NSW offers a range of workshops and resources to help student employability, including the Virtual Startup Internship Program, where

interns work on real problems faced by three innovative startups, and free employability training courses, while the City of Sydney hosts business seminars for budding entrepreneurs and employability workshops throughout the year.

[study.sydney/work](https://study.sydney/work)

[cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au](https://cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au)

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## REDFERN LEGAL CENTRE

Redfern Legal Centre's International Student Legal Service NSW is funded by Study NSW. The Centre offers free, confidential employment advice if you're in a difficult situation. Visit their website of useful employment resources, or call 9698 7277 for support if you think you're facing any kind of workplace exploitation.

[rlc.org.au/our-services/international-students](https://rlc.org.au/our-services/international-students)

Your educational institution may also have an employment or welfare support service – check their website for more information.

# How do I write a resume?

The basics of a resume include your contact details, previous work history and, for students and recent graduates, information on your education. Keep it as concise as possible and get somebody to proofread it for you.

Include at least one reference; this should be a previous employer or someone who knows your work or study ethic. Speak to a friendly tutor if you need them to be a reference. Your resume and cover letter should be targeted for a particular role; don't use the same generic versions for all jobs.

We have underlined the errors in the following resume blue.

## PERSONAL INFORMATION

Ms Jane Lee  
2019 Guides Street

x Email - iloveponies27@hotmail.com

Ph (01) 2345 6789

x DOB - 01/02/03

x Height - 250cm Weight - 170kg

Visa - Student

x Marital Status - Divorced

x Religion - Jedi

## EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

x Shop Asistant

Insider Shop Jan 2017 - Present

Responsibilities: Handling Money

Key Achievements: Staff Award

## EDUCATION HISTORY

Bachelor of Arts - Insider University

x Insider Primary School

Responsible Service of Alcohol Certificate  
2017

*Avoid including your date of birth or particularly personal information like your height/weight, marital status or religion. You also don't need to include your visa status, as you should have working rights anyway.*

*Make sure your email address is professional.*

*Carefully proofread your resume to eliminate all typos and other errors.*

*Highlight your responsibilities in the role and, where relevant, showcase any significant achievements (awards, beating targets etc.).*

*If you haven't graduated yet, list your expected completion date.*

*You certainly don't need to include your primary school education. High school is definitely optional, but won't look out of place if you want to highlight your history of high achievement.*

*Include short courses if you believe they are relevant or beneficial to the role you are applying for.*

# Workplace rights

## WORKPLACE EXPLOITATION

It's important that you understand your rights at work. There are a few things to be aware of to ensure you don't end up being exploited by your employer.

1. Avoid job ads that look suspicious. Make sure they mention the business name and look it up on the Australian Business Name register ([abr.business.gov.au](http://abr.business.gov.au))
2. As of 1 July 2020 the national minimum wage is \$19.84 per hour or \$753.80 per week, reviewed each year. Use the pay calculator to find your pay rate: [calculate.fairwork.gov.au/FindYourAward](http://calculate.fairwork.gov.au/FindYourAward)
3. You should be paid at least once a month, receiving a payslip within one working day of being paid.
4. You should always be paid for work that you do, including training and trial shifts. Record your hours to make sure you're being paid in full.
5. Employers are not allowed to give you goods or services (including food) instead of pay.

## Am I getting the right pay?

As an international student, you have the same workplace rights as all workers in Australia.

The Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO) can help if you have concerns about pay, leave or other workplace entitlements. [www.fairwork.gov.au](http://www.fairwork.gov.au) has information in over 30 different languages to help you understand your work rights. A good starting point to learn about Australian employment laws is the Fair Work Information Statement, a short document that explains basic workplace rights and entitlements, including the national minimum wage at [www.fairwork.gov.au/FWIS](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/FWIS).

Remember, you can't get in trouble for being underpaid or being paid in cash. You can contact the FWO for help without fear of your visa being cancelled. See [www.fairwork.gov.au/internationalstudents](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/internationalstudents) for more information.

It is important to keep a record of the hours you've worked. The FWO's record my hours app makes it easy for you. Download it now from the App Store or get it on Google Play!

The FWO's anonymous reporting tool at [www.fairwork.gov.au/tipoff](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/tipoff) lets you report a workplace issue without providing your personal information. It's available in 17 languages.

To speak your language, you can call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 13 14 50. Tell the operator the language you speak and ask them to call the FWO on 13 13 94.

Contacting and getting help from the FWO is FREE!

# Want to work while you study?

## Know your workplace rights and get help with workplace issues

Like all workers in Australia, international students have the right to:

Minimum wages



Leave



Pay slips



Ask about workplace entitlements



### The Fair Work Ombudsman is here to help!

You can't get into trouble or have your visa cancelled for contacting the Fair Work Ombudsman.



Find out about your workplace rights in over 30 different languages at [www.fairwork.gov.au](http://www.fairwork.gov.au)

To report a work issue, register at [www.fairwork.gov.au/register](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/register) or call **13 13 94**

You can also report workplace concerns anonymously at [www.fairwork.gov.au/tipoff](http://www.fairwork.gov.au/tipoff)

The Fair Work Ombudsman's services are free.



Australian Government

**Fair Work**  
OMBUDSMAN



[facebook.com/fairwork.gov.au](https://facebook.com/fairwork.gov.au)



[@fairwork\\_gov\\_au](https://twitter.com/fairwork_gov_au)



[FairworkGovAu](https://www.youtube.com/FairworkGovAu)





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## WHY SHOULD I VOLUNTEER?

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Volunteering will provide you with a vast range of soft skills, improve your ability to communicate, allow you to make new friends, and help you integrate with your new community. Your university may have a volunteering office, but if not, seek help at the careers office. Off-campus volunteering may take you further into the local community and allow you to learn about Australian customs. The experience you develop through volunteering can be of great advantage when you apply for a professional role.

[volunteering.nsw.gov.au](http://volunteering.nsw.gov.au)



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## GETTING A JOB AFTER YOU GRADUATE

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After you graduate, you can apply for a Temporary Graduate visa (subclass 485) which will let you live, study and work in Australia for a set number of years depending on the education level you complete.

In your final year you will be able to apply for graduate positions with a range of organisations. Employers have the opportunity to sponsor your visa, too. See the Department of Home Affairs website for more information.

[homeaffairs.gov.au](http://homeaffairs.gov.au)

To learn more about employability skills, we recommend reviewing the International Education Association of Australia (IEAA) International Employability Guide.

[ieaa.org.au/research/employability](http://ieaa.org.au/research/employability)

# Everything you need to know about studying in Australia

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Head to our website for more information:  
[insiderguides.com.au](https://insiderguides.com.au)

Or follow us on:

- > Facebook
- > Instagram
- > YouTube
- > LinkedIn

**INSIDER GUIDES**





# Studying

- + The Australian education system
- + Student resources
- + Study basics

# The education system

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There are several education options in Australia, meaning you have a wide choice of study types and providers. Just make sure they're registered on the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS), as this is required for your visa.

*[cricos.education.gov.au](http://cricos.education.gov.au)*

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## University

Australia's university network is high quality; many of the country's institutions are considered among the best in the world. Different universities specialise in particular fields so be sure to research and find out what each institution excels in. At university, you can complete an undergraduate or postgraduate degree.

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## Vocational education and training (VET)

You can study VET courses at TAFE (Technical and Further Education) and private colleges. TAFE providers generally offer VET programs, such as cookery and hospitality, agriculture, creative arts, and trades. Private colleges tend to focus on specific fields and are often much smaller than universities.

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## English Language Intensive Course for Overseas Students (ELICOS)

ELICOS is perfect for students wanting to improve their academic English to prepare for further studies or develop their English language skills to expand their networking opportunities in Australia. ELICOS providers range from government-owned institutes, high schools and universities, to privately owned and fully accredited providers.

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## Schools

If you haven't finished high school yet, you can apply to study at a secondary school in Australia. International students are eligible to enrol in many public (government-run) and independent (religious and other non-government) schools from ages 12 to 18. Australian secondary schools are respected internationally thanks to the broad curriculum, small class sizes, advanced facilities and high-quality teachers.

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## Pathway providers

If you don't meet the academic entrance requirements for university, come from a non-English speaking background or want to change courses or careers, a pathway program provides a way to ease into academic study. It's similar to a bridging program between high school and university.



# Student resources

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## What services are available on campus and online?

There are lots of services your institution offers for free as part of your fees – hopefully you now realise how much help is available!

### CAREER CENTRE

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This office will assist you in creating an effective resume and explain how to complete a job application, prepare for a job interview, help you plan out your graduate career, discover volunteer and internship opportunities, and help you find casual work. Not many students use this office because they simply don't know about it. Now you do!

### INTERNATIONAL STUDENT OFFICE

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This office is your best friend. Staff will assist with your orientation, organise social events and answer any questions

that relate specifically to international students.

### LIBRARY

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There is more to the library than just books. Libraries are full of meeting rooms, TVs, journal databases, computers and more. If you can't get work done at home, head to the library. Learning how to use the library effectively will improve your chances of succeeding in your studies, and also offer a range of workshops to enhance your academic skills.

### TECHNICAL SUPPORT

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Studying from home might mean encountering more technical difficulties. Your institution's dedicated technical support team will be able to help you with questions about your tech, including accessing specific software for your course, storage – even setting up Zoom!

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## Where can I get help with my coursework?

If you need assistance with your studies or are falling behind on your coursework, there are plenty of support services around Sydney.

### STUDENT LEARNING HUBS

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Most educational institutions offer a central learning hub that provides free individual support in particular subjects, as well as activities designed to improve things like English skills, digital literacy, writing and more. Check out your provider's website for details.

### PRIVATE TUTORING

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You can hire a private tutor if you need assistance in a particular subject. You'll usually find them listed on your education provider's noticeboard, or you can use the Student VIP website.

[studentvip.com.au/tutors](http://studentvip.com.au/tutors)

### APPROACH STAFF

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Your teaching staff are there to help. If you're struggling, reach out to them for assistance – it's their job to provide the advice you need. They can also refer you to other support services.

## WHAT IS PLAGIARISM?

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Plagiarism is essentially copying someone else's work and presenting it as your own. This may be literally copying part of an essay (or the entire thing) written by someone else, or using the words of an author without referencing them. If you use someone else's idea, even if you write it in your own words, you will need to provide the source. If you are found guilty of plagiarism there can be serious consequences, including expulsion from your course. This may lead to the cancellation of your student visa.

## HOW DO I SAVE MONEY ON TEXTBOOKS?

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### 1. Check with students from higher years

Look for adverts on your institution's message boards (both online and on campus) and if you can't see what you are looking for then post your own advert.

### 2. Use an online tool

Online resale sites like Student VIP allow you to buy second-hand textbooks from students across the country.

[studentvip.com.au](http://studentvip.com.au)

### 3. Consider eBooks

Do you need a hard copy of your textbook? If not, download a digital copy and save some money.

### 4. Rent your textbooks

Will you ever look at the textbook again? If you only need it for one semester then consider renting it online. Campus libraries often have textbooks for hire too.

## Building an online study routine

The key to studying from home successfully is building a regular routine that you stick to, making sure that you're balancing your studies with time to exercise and relax. Some tips to help keep you motivated while studying online include: having a dedicated study area, taking regular breaks, taking notes by hand during online lectures, breaking up tasks and giving yourself rewards (away from the screen!) for completing them. If you have any issues with your education provider while studying online, file a complaint with the Overseas Student Ombudsman.

[ombudsman.gov.au/How-we-can-help/overseas-students](http://ombudsman.gov.au/How-we-can-help/overseas-students)

## Prepare for your studies

### ☐ CREATE A LESSON TIMETABLE

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An easy-to-understand lesson timetable means you'll always know where you're supposed to be and when.

### ☐ CREATE A STUDY TIMETABLE

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Organise your routine around your classes and include time for study and other activities.

### ☐ CHARGE YOUR DEVICES

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Make sure your laptop and phone are charged. You don't want to run out of battery halfway through your second class!

### ☐ PRINT OUT OFFICIAL UNIVERSITY DOCUMENTS

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Make sure you've printed all the paperwork you need, so orientation is an easier process.



# Health, Safety & Wellbeing

- + Healthcare basics
- + Physical, mental & sexual health
- + Staying safe
- + Friends & dating

## MASKS

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Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, many Sydney residents opted to wear a face mask. Even if wearing a face mask isn't mandatory, you may choose to use one anyway. You can usually buy disposable face masks from pharmacies, but many stores around Sydney sell reusable masks. You can refer to the NSW Government and Australian Government websites for more information regarding masks.

[australia.gov.au](https://australia.gov.au) [nsw.gov.au/covid-19](https://nsw.gov.au/covid-19)

## SOCIAL DISTANCING GUIDELINES IN AUSTRALIA

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To keep everybody safe and healthy, there are a number of guidelines to follow when you're in public. These include keeping 1.5 metres away from others wherever possible, practising good hygiene (such as washing your hands regularly with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand sanitisers), wearing fitted face masks when outside, and staying home if you have any cold or flu symptoms.

## WHAT DO I DO IN AN EMERGENCY?

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If you have a medical emergency, if there is a fire, or if you need police attention, call 000 (it's entirely free to call). You will then be asked if you need police, fire or ambulance. You can also request a translator if you need one.

# Healthcare basics

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## How does Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) work?

All students in Australia must have OSHC to cover the entire period of their stay, which would have been arranged when you organised your visa. OSHC covers in-hospital and out-of-hospital medical assistance, prescription medications and emergency ambulance assistance. Make sure you understand your cover to avoid any unwanted charges, and refer to your OSHC policies for their rules on COVID-19 testing and treatment. Every time you go to an appointment, take your OSHC card with you, along with photo identification.

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## What should I do if I have a complaint about my OSHC provider?

If you face a situation where you feel like you're being taken advantage of or treated unfairly in regards to your OSHC, you can contact the Private Health Insurance Ombudsman (PHIO). It's a free service designed to help you get out of trouble!

*[ombudsman.gov.au/How-we-can-help/private-health-insurance](https://ombudsman.gov.au/How-we-can-help/private-health-insurance)*

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## What do I need to know about hospitals?

If you are feeling sick, visit a doctor at a local medical centre first. This is the cheapest upfront option and you may be able to claim all or some of the cost from your OSHC provider. Hospitals are for emergency situations – either life-threatening or an injury/illness that is quickly getting worse. If you need to visit hospital, call your health cover provider to see if you're covered, as the hospital may charge you a fee.

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## What should I do when medical clinics are closed?

Very few medical clinics are open seven days or have 24-hour services (and those that do can be expensive). If you need a medical certificate or you have a minor illness, it's best to wait until the medical clinics are open. For urgent non-life-threatening enquiries, there are after-hours home doctor services available including 13SICK (call 13 7425) and DoctorDoctor (call 13 26 60).

You can also ring Healthdirect Australia (1800 022 222) to get advice on treating non-life-threatening illnesses.

## HOW DO I FIND A DOCTOR?

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Your OSHC provider will likely maintain a list of recommended providers. Their website may even have a 'find a doctor' resource to assist you in finding your nearest doctor. The Health Engine website can also be used to locate a doctor to match your needs.

*[healthengine.com.au](https://healthengine.com.au)*



# Mental health

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## What should I do if I'm feeling homesick?

Remember to take time out for yourself. Living overseas, especially with the impact of COVID-19, can be an incredibly difficult and stressful time for many. It's important that you know support is available to you if you need help. It can be very beneficial to talk to friends and family about how you feel, or use one of the resources mentioned below or visit your general practitioner (a local doctor, also called a GP). Mental health is a big reason people go to the doctor, so don't ignore any of the signs.

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## Where can I seek help for mental health issues?

Your OSHC covers visits to a GP. The GP is the first person you should see, as you will need to get a referral from them if you want to see a psychiatrist or psychologist. You will only be partially covered for a limited amount of visits with a psychologist. Check with your OSHC provider for details. Most educational institutions offer free or

discounted counselling services to their students (both international and local). Some require appointments, so check your education provider's website to find out.

Many organisations, such as Beyond Blue and Lifeline, offer COVID-19 specific support, so there's accurate information, advice and strategies to help you manage your mental health during this time.

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## What if I need immediate support?

There are several organisations that offer 24/7 mental health support over the phone or through an online chat service.

Lifeline delivers crisis support, suicide prevention and mental health support services across Australia.

*Phone 13 11 14, text 0477 13 11 14 (12pm to midnight AEST) or [lifeline.org.au](http://lifeline.org.au)*

Beyond Blue is for people with depression, anxiety and other emotional issues.

*Phone 1300 224 636 or [beyondblue.org.au](http://beyondblue.org.au)*

Mental Health Line is available to everyone in NSW offering professional help and advice, and referrals to local mental health services

*Phone 1800 011 511*

*More more resources, visit the [Study NSW website](http://Study NSW website).*

*[study.sydney/student-welfare/](http://study.sydney/student-welfare/)*

*In an emergency, call Triple Zero (000)*

# Other support services

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## Support for your children and spouse

Many international students choose to bring their spouse and children with them when they study in Australia. Some education providers offer language or other kinds of support that cover both you and your spouse. Ask your educational institution for more information.

If your children are school-aged, they'll need to be enrolled at either a public (government-funded) or private school. Visit the NSW Government website for details.

*[education.nsw.gov.au](http://education.nsw.gov.au)*

If your children are younger, Sydney has a wide network of childcare facilities. Your educational institution may provide childcare, but you can also get in touch with your local council to find childcare in your area.

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## Support services for LGBTIQ people

LGBTIQ stands for Lesbian Gay Bisexual Trans Intersex Questioning. In Australia, the Sex Discrimination Act 1984 makes it against the law to discriminate against a person on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status.

QLife is a great resource that provides peer support and guidance over the phone and online for the LGBTIQ community in Australia.

*[qlife.org.au](http://qlife.org.au)*

If you're looking for support services that are sensitive to your cultural needs, or would just like to engage with other LGBTIQ students from similar backgrounds then AGMC is a good resource. Or join the Rainbow International Students Network on Facebook.

*[agmc.org.au](http://agmc.org.au)*

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## Finding a mental health expert that speaks your language

You can use an interpreting service if you need assistance in your language. TIS National should be your first stop when accessing mental health services or making an appointment. Not only can they help you book an appointment over the phone, but you can also request an on-site interpreter to attend your session with you.

*Phone 131 450 or [tisnational.gov.au](http://tisnational.gov.au)*

# How students beat loneliness

We asked students who have already settled into their new life in Australia for advice on beating loneliness. Here's what they had to say.



"Make friends with other international students and openly discuss your homesickness. Chances are they are going through the same thing, even if they don't show it."

Priya, Canada

"Cook or eat some authentic comfort food from your own country whenever you feel a little homesick."

Giorgia, Italy



"Just grab this opportunity to spend time with yourself. Sleep as much as you can, taste some food or cook, watch your favorite movies, read what you like and think about what you will do in your university journey, set up some goals and plan to achieve them."

Linh, Vietnam

"Don't be afraid to go out and do things and meet people. Sign up for classes and activities that you enjoy and provide yourself with good, healthy distractions."

Jenna, USA

"Talk to your family back home, but not so much that you don't have time for your friends! Other tips include working out, eating right, meditation and yoga. Most importantly, enjoy alone time!"

Yuvi, UAE

"Sleep on it. I was extremely homesick and lonely in my first few days. I took a nap, woke up refreshed, took a shower, went into the city and visited locations where there were large amounts of backpackers."

Abdul, UAE

# Staying safe

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## Police in NSW

NSW Police Force's main role is to protect the community and property. It does so by preventing, detecting and investigating crime, and monitoring and maintaining safety and order.

Its services are free and available 24/7 to everyone in the community, including visitors and international students. If you are the victim of a crime or you have seen or heard something unlawful, phone the police or go to a local police station. If you cannot speak or understand English, police can arrange for and communicate with you through an interpreter. Some police stations have Multicultural Community Liaison Officers to help communities. Visit the NSW Police Force website for information. Study NSW and NSW Police have developed a 'Stay safe in our State' video series which is available in 9 languages on the Study NSW YouTube channel.

[police.nsw.gov.au](http://police.nsw.gov.au)



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## How can I stay safe?

Be aware of the security and emergency arrangements of both your institution and the local area. If you are leaving your institution at night then try to walk with a friend or a group. Take well-lit paths that are used regularly by other people. If this is not going to be possible, check if your institution has an escort service.

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## Who can I contact if I have been sexually harassed or assaulted?

If you have experienced sexual harassment, your first call should be to your institution, as there will be mechanisms in place designed to support you. If you're being threatened and require immediate assistance, or have been the victim of sexual assault, you can visit your local police station or call 000.

The NSW Rape Crisis Centre provides 24/7 free and confidential support online

and over the phone for any person who has experienced sexual violence in NSW.

*Call 1800 424 017 or visit*

*[Nswrapecrisis.com.au](http://Nswrapecrisis.com.au)*

Should you need to contact someone at your institution to report sexual assault or for support services in relation to sexual assault, Universities Australia lists contact details for universities.

*[universitiesaustralia.edu.au](http://universitiesaustralia.edu.au)*



# Sexual health

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## Where can I get advice on sexual health?

You can ask your doctor about sexual health matters including sexually transmitted infections (STIs), contraception options, and more. If you are a woman, you can choose to visit a female doctor if that makes you feel more comfortable.

Your education provider may also offer sexual health support, so make sure to check their website or visit the student help desk to find out.

It is important to remember that the more sexually active you are the more often you should get tested for sexually transmitted infections (STIs). If left untreated some STIs can have serious impacts on your health outcomes.

The Sydney Sexual Health Centre and Western Sydney Sexual Health Centre provide free and confidential services to all international students.

[sshc.org.au](http://sshc.org.au)

[wslhd.health.nsw.gov.au/Western-Sydney-Sexual-Health-Centre](http://wslhd.health.nsw.gov.au/Western-Sydney-Sexual-Health-Centre)

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## Contraception options in Australia

You can get contraceptive medications and devices very easily and cheaply in Australia. You should talk to your GP about long-term contraception options like IUDs and the pill. Condoms are available from supermarkets and pharmacies. Emergency contraceptives are available from pharmacies if you need them. Pregnancy tests are also available at the pharmacy or supermarket.

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## What is sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment can take many forms, both physical and non-physical. Sexual harassment may include:

- Unnecessary familiarity, such as unwelcome touching
- Suggestive comments or jokes, insults or taunts of a sexual nature
- Physical assault, indecent exposure, sexual assault, stalking or obscene communications
- Sending sexually explicit emails or text messages
- Intrusive questions or statements about someone's private life
- Requests for sex or repeated unwanted requests to go out on dates

# Staying fit

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## Gyms

If you're keen to join a gym during your time in NSW, there are several options available including Anytime Fitness, Jetts and more. There are also womens-only gyms such as Fernwood Fitness. Most universities have gyms and offer students reasonable rates, while some managed accommodation providers have gyms on-site. Your local pool may also include a gym, which is often accessible for a low cost.

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## Social Sports

If you enjoy a particular sport, you'll most likely find a social sports league near you. Your institution might even have a society or association dedicated to it, so you can meet like-minded students, or you can check websites such as Meetup to find social sport groups. Sports leagues, including basketball, badminton, futsal, volleyball, cricket and more, are available all over Sydney.

*[justplay.com.au](http://justplay.com.au)*

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## Yoga and Pilates

There are many different types of yoga, with varying levels of intensity and movement. Use Find Yoga to find a class near you; there are plenty of beginner classes available. Pilates is an exercise that focuses on flexibility and strength. There are two different types of Pilates: mat-based and equipment-based, which is sometimes called 'reformer Pilates'. Check out studios using Australian Pilates.

*[findyoga.com.au](http://findyoga.com.au) [australianpilates.asn.au](http://australianpilates.asn.au)*

## ONLINE RESOURCES

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If you can't or don't want to leave the house to exercise, there are lots of free online resources available to help you get fit. The Body Coach TV and MadFit are two great options, with workouts of varying lengths that target different areas of the body. You can also try yoga, guided by Yoga With Adriene, or dance with POPSUGAR Fitness.

## BEACH SAFETY

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A day spent at one of Australia's 10,685 beaches is rarely a day wasted. If you're planning a day out by the water, here's your guide to staying safe and having a great day.

### Plan your visit

Check the weather forecast before you leave. If there's heavy rains or storms, consider postponing. Make sure you apply and pack sunscreen. Even if it's cloudy the UV can be high. Don't go swimming if you have consumed drugs or alcohol.

### Stay safe

Don't go swimming alone - grab a couple of friends and head to a patrolled beach. Once there, check for any signs and follow the instructions. Swim between the yellow and red flags, this is the monitored spot that's been deemed safest for swimming. Don't dive into water, you may overestimate the depth and this can have very serious consequences.

### How to get help

If you ever find yourself in trouble while swimming, try to stay calm and raise your hands to show that you need help. If you see someone else in distress in the water, emergency dial Triple Zero (000). For more information see Royal Lifesaving Australia. *[royallifesaving.com.au](http://royallifesaving.com.au)*



# Making friends

You'll probably meet lots of new people in your course or through where you live, whether it's a share house or managed student accommodation. But there are also a few other avenues you can take to make friends.

## HOBBIES AND INTERESTS

If your education provider has a student club network, make sure to join one that suits your interests – you're bound to meet one or several like-minded people. You'll find clubs and societies focused on all kinds of things, from individual sports and hobbies to specific cultural backgrounds or religions. Outside of your educational institution, think about joining a choir, community garden, sports team, movie or book club, or any other group that matches your interests. If you can't meet in person, most clubs have introduced online activities to keep members connected, such as quiz nights or virtual movie nights.

## LANGUAGE GROUPS

There's bound to be other international students in Sydney and NSW looking to improve their English. There are countless English

conversation groups that take place all over the city and online; check your local library or community centre, or visit your education provider's website, to find out more. You'll also find conversation groups on Meetup.

*meetup.com*

## APPS AND WEBSITES

The key to finding friends might be in the palm of your hand. There are plenty of great apps and websites designed to help you meet people online (you can decide to meet them in person if you feel comfortable doing so). Bumble BFF, We3 and Meetup are some of the best. Understand that you won't necessarily 'click' with everyone and that it can take time to make good friends. Don't overthink it and just have fun meeting lots of new people!



## Dating

### WHAT'S THE DATING CULTURE LIKE IN AUSTRALIA?

Australia has a pretty relaxed dating scene. In a lot of cultures, the first or second date can mark the beginning of a relationship. But in Australia, you'll probably find yourself doing a lot of 'couply' activities before the relationship starts. Australia doesn't have a huge pick-up culture. Generally, people will want to know someone a little bit before they agree to share contact details or hang out somewhere.

Remember, Australia does not tolerate verbal or physical abuse, nor stalking behaviour. Understand what is and isn't appropriate before dating – you can read our sexual harassment section for more information.

### WHERE CAN I MEET PEOPLE?

- Apps like Tinder, Bumble, OKCupid, Coffee Meets Bagel, Hinge, Happn and Plenty of Fish are popular in Australia and cater to various sexual preferences.
- Otherwise, pretty much any place we mentioned above under 'Making Friends' is bound to offer opportunities to meet potential dates!
- Remember to stay safe on a date. Laws around consent may be different in Australia compared to your country. Read our Safety section to find out more.





## Areas of Sydney

\*Disclaimer: We do our best to ensure all of the information in this guide is up-to-date and accurate at the time of publication, but we encourage you to ensure locations are still open and operating by checking their websites or social media in advance of your visit.

1

## CITY CENTRE

A buzzing epicentre of commuters, historical buildings, and student-heavy areas like Ultimo and Haymarket.

P.66

2

## INNER SOUTH

Home to youthful, arty and student-friendly suburbs like Redfern, Waterloo and Chippendale.

P.68

3

## INNER WEST

Alive with a culture of their own are the funky Inner West suburbs of Glebe, Newtown, Camperdown and Erskineville.

P.70

4

## INNER EAST

Take a step back in time on the leafy streets of Paddington, Darlinghurst and Surry Hills.

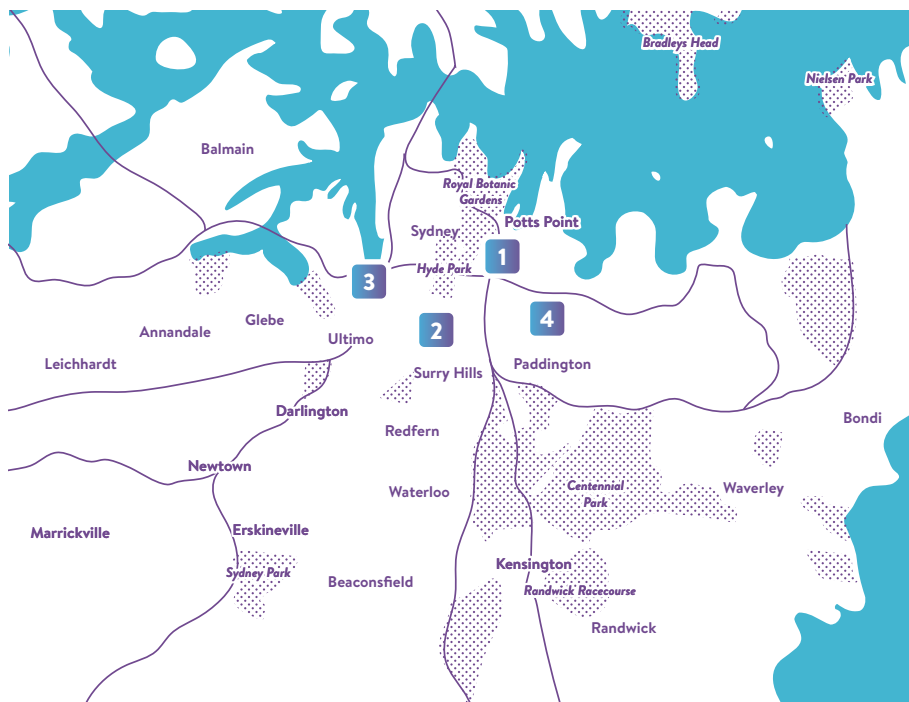
P.74

## WESTERN SUBURBS

The Western Suburbs of Parramatta, Penrith and Homebush make up Sydney's cultural melting pot.

(not on map)

P.78





# Getting around

Sydney's transport system is diverse, clean and reliable. With buses, trains, ferries and a new light rail lane, there are plenty of transport options for getting around the city easily and efficiently.

## TRAINS

Sydney has several train lines from Central that head east, north, west and south from the Central Business District (CBD). There are plenty of stations along each line, so check the timetable to see if any are close to where you live. The train system is an effective choice for getting to the outer suburbs and around the CBD quickly.

## LIGHT RAIL

A new CBD & South East Light Rail lane has just opened, running from Randwick and Kingsford to the CBD. Light rail services are also available between Central Station and Dulwich Hill, stopping at a number of popular city centre and Inner West locations. At peak times on weekdays they run every ten minutes.

## BUSES

To get to many of Sydney's metropolitan areas, buses are the best option. Buses service almost all parts of Sydney and its outer suburbs, so it's pretty likely there'll be a bus stop near you. Buses around Sydney vary in arrival times, usually averaging between 5-15 minutes at popular bus stops and ranging up to an hour in the outer suburbs. If the bus has an L or X somewhere in the number, be careful! Some of these buses are express buses, meaning they won't stop at certain bus stops. Check with the driver if you're unsure.

## FERRIES

Ferries cover almost every suburb that's fronted by Sydney Harbour, including Manly, Balmain and Circular Quay, and even extend as far as Parramatta. The ferry system is one of the prettiest ways to get around the city, taking advantage of the city's harbour, port and river system. Tickets are a little more expensive but worth it for the scenery.



## Planning

To get real-time travel information for buses, trains, light rail and ferries in Sydney, download the TripView app. Available from the App Store, Google Play and Windows Phone Store, it makes planning your travel around the city a lot easier. With information on delays, vehicle locations and service interruptions, it will help you select the best available option for your journey.

## Ticketing

You can either use your debit/credit card to use the public transport network or purchase an Opal transport card. Regardless of which option you choose, you need to tap on and tap off your card, as the fares are calculated based on the distance you travel. If you don't do this, you may be charged at a higher rate.

If you want to use Opal, you'll need to load money onto your Opal card at a station or an authorised store such as 7-Eleven. Visit [opal.com.au](http://opal.com.au) for information on where to buy and top up an Opal card.

## CONCESSIONS

International students are generally not entitled to transport concessions in NSW unless study is fully funded by specified Australian Government scholarships. For more information see:

[transportnsw.info/tickets-opal/ticket-eligibility-concessions](http://transportnsw.info/tickets-opal/ticket-eligibility-concessions)



## Other transport options

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### Ridesharing

The first to launch, and still by far the most popular, is Uber. A recent addition has been UberPool, allowing you to reduce your fare by sharing with others heading in a similar direction. Other companies in the Sydney market include GoCatch, Bolt and Ola, offering discounted rates during quiet hours of the day. The most unique ride sharing option available in Sydney is the female-only service Shebah. All drivers and all passengers of the service are female, with the exception being males under 18 travelling with a female, and many cars come with car seats available.

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### Taxis

There are a few taxi ranks located around the city - these are specific areas where you can line up and get a taxi, otherwise you can try hailing one from the side of the road.

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### Renting a car

If you want to explore some of Sydney's outer parts or regional areas surrounding the city, you can rent a car for one or multiple days. There are several car rental providers around Sydney – use a comparison website like VroomVroomVroom to find the best deal.

[vroomvroomvroom.com.au](http://vroomvroomvroom.com.au)

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### Renting a bike

There are two bike share schemes running in central Sydney: Lime electric-assist bikes and Mobike.

You simply need to download the app to find your nearest bike.

[li.me](http://li.me)

[mobike.com](http://mobike.com)



# Riding a bike

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Most international students will spend between \$700 - \$1500 a year on transport. This makes getting a bike a very cheap alternative.

Add to that, riding a bike is:

- Good for your physical health
- Good for your mental health
- Good for the environment
- Reliable (no more waiting for late buses or traffic jams)

## BUYING A BIKE

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The cheapest overall option is to buy your own bike to use throughout your time in Sydney. There are plenty of dedicated bicycle shops around the city, but you can also purchase affordable ones from Kmart.

Second-hand bikes are also a great option if you want to save money. Try Facebook Marketplace or Gumtree. You can also use these websites if you want to sell your bike when you leave Australia.

[gumtree.com.au](http://gumtree.com.au)

## BIKE LAWS

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It is illegal to ride in Australia without a helmet and you must have a light on your bike if you plan to ride at night. As a bike rider, you're allowed to ride on the road, on bike paths and on shared paths. You usually can't ride on pedestrian footpaths. When you're riding on the road, you're expected to follow the same road rules as drivers. Check out the Transport for NSW website for more information.

[roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au](http://roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au)

## BIKE LANES

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There are several bike lanes and tracks around Sydney, designed to keep you safe. These are clearly marked so you know where you can safely ride. You can contact your local council for an up-to-date bike map or visit the Roads & Maritime Services website to use the interactive Cycleway Finder.

[rms.nsw.gov.au/maps/cycleway\\_finder](http://rms.nsw.gov.au/maps/cycleway_finder)

## STORING AND LOOKING AFTER YOUR BIKE

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You'll find plenty of bike storage racks and lockers located all over Sydney, where you can securely leave your bike for an extended period of time (just make sure you have a good-quality lock). The Transport NSW website has a map showing all bike rack locations.

[applan.transport.nsw.gov.au/bikelockers](http://applan.transport.nsw.gov.au/bikelockers)

City of Sydney runs regular bike care and maintenance courses for only \$25. Check the City of Sydney's What's On website for dates and times.

[whatson.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au](http://whatson.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au)

# History of Sydney

## Pre-settlement

While there's no official figure, experts estimate that Aboriginal people lived in Australia for 50,000-120,000 years prior to English settlement.

## 1790-1791

The second and third fleet of ships arrive in Sydney.

## 1817

Bank of New South Wales opens in Macquarie Place.

## 1842

Sydney officially becomes a city.

## 1851

The discovery of gold brings many people from China, North America and Europe to the region.

## 1883

A railway is built between Sydney and Melbourne.

## 1906

Central railway station opens.

## 1932

The Sydney Harbour Bridge opens.

## 1973

The Sydney Opera House opens to the public.

## 2000

Sydney hosts the Olympics.

## Early 1788

The first fleet of British ships arrives in Botany Bay in January, and the first European settlement and penal colony is set up at Sydney Cove.

## 1816

The Royal Botanic Garden opens.

## 1831

The first edition of well-known newspaper the Sydney Morning Herald is published.

## 1850

The University of Sydney is founded.

## 1854

The Sydney Cricket Ground (SCG) opens.

## 1901

Australia's first Prime Minister, Sydney-born Edmond Barton, is elected.

## 1924

Sydney Airport starts operating.

## 1935

Luna Park opens.

## 1979

The Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras holds its first festival.

## Built on immigration

### EARLY IMMIGRATION

There were between 300,000 to 950,000 Aboriginal people living on Australian land when the British first colonised in 1788, bringing nearly 1,500 men, women and children with them on the First Fleet.

### THE GOLD RUSH

The discovery of gold in 1851 led to a wave of Chinese and European settlers arriving in Australia over the next decade. In the years following World War I and the Great Depression era in the 1930s, many more British settlers were encouraged to come to Australia, as were German Jews fleeing persecution. The Indian population in Australia increased in 1947, following India's independence from Britain.

### ASIA

Thousands of refugees from Thailand, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Vietnam arrived in Australia by boat in the late 1970s and early 1980s, and those who stayed have since set up thriving communities in Sydney. Cabramatta in south-west Sydney now has the largest Vietnamese population in Australia (and some of the best Vietnamese food in the city).

### MIDDLE EAST

In the 1970s to 1990s, many people seeking asylum in Australia came from the Middle East. During the Lebanese Civil War in 1975-1990, thousands of people fled to Australia with the majority of Lebanese immigrants opting for Sydney as their city of choice.

### TODAY

Since the creation of the first immigration portfolio in 1945, around 7.4 million people from overseas have settled in Australia. Now, around 39% of Sydney's population was born overseas. The top countries of origin are China, the UK, India, New Zealand and Vietnam.

### LEARN MORE

To learn more about Sydney's migration history and to discover how various cultures have helped shape Australia, make sure to visit the Museum of Sydney. Located in the CBD, the museum is open daily from 10am to 5pm and entry is \$12 for students.

# Aboriginal culture

There were once more than 500 different Aboriginal nations in Australia, with their own distinct beliefs, languages and customs. There are 29 groups of Aboriginal communities in the Sydney metropolitan area, collectively referred to as the Eora Nation. 'Eora' means 'here' or 'from this place'. The estimated population of Aboriginal people in NSW is more than 250,000, representing nearly 3.5 per cent of the total NSW Indigenous population and just over 33 per cent of the total Aboriginal population of Australia.

## HISTORY AND CULTURE

You can learn more about Aboriginal history and culture at Muru Mittigar Aboriginal Cultural & Education Centre in Rouse Hill. The centre houses a range of artefacts, and hosts regular cultural talks and workshops. Other cultural centres in NSW include the Blue Mountains Aboriginal Culture and Resource Centre; Minjungbal Aboriginal Cultural Centre in Tweed Heads; and the Aboriginal Cultural Centre & Keeping Place in Armidale.

## ART

The Art Gallery of NSW and the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) both contain fantastic collections of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art, spanning everything from traditional to contemporary pieces across all kinds of mediums. There are also plenty of smaller galleries around the city, such as Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Co-operative in Leichhardt. If you're in the Tweed Valley region of Northern NSW, definitely visit Tweed Regional

Gallery, which usually has at least one Aboriginal artist on display, as well as a fantastic view of Mount Wollumbin (Mount Warning), a sacred Aboriginal site.

## FOOD

Join a Bush Tucker Walk at Muru Mittigar Aboriginal Cultural & Education Centre, during which you'll learn about the traditional uses of plants, and have the opportunity to try native foods. The Royal Botanic Garden Sydney also runs an Aboriginal Bush Food Experience, where you'll identify, gather and prepare various bush foods.

## MUSIC

Music is a big part of Aboriginal storytelling, and traditional instruments such as the didjeridu (not the traditional name), bullroarer and clapsticks are still used today. Make sure to check out artists such as Yothu Yindi, A.B. Original, Baker Boy, Thelma Plum and Dan Sultan for a modern take on traditional music.



## EVENTS

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### NAIDOC WEEK

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NAIDOC Week (National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee) is a celebration of Aboriginal talent and culture, celebrated across Australia in July. A different Australian city is chosen each year to host the awards ceremony. Awards are given to celebrate the achievements of Aboriginal people, such as the Person of the Year Award and the Caring for Country Award.

### NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK

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National Reconciliation Week is a time for Australians to learn about Aboriginal culture and history as a part of reconciliation. It lasts from 27 May, the anniversary of the 1967 referendum which included Aboriginal people in the census, to 3 June, the anniversary of the High Court Mabo decision that recognised the native title of Australia.

### NATIONAL SORRY DAY

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National Sorry Day, held on 26 May, is a day for Australians to acknowledge and raise awareness of the struggles of Aboriginal people, particularly the impact of the Stolen Generation. The day was initiated in response to the absence of an apology by the Australian Government. Since the official apology in 2008, it has become a day of recognition and remembrance.



# City Centre

There's a bit of everything in Sydney's CBD, from skyscrapers and streets teeming with people, to the iconic blue waters of Darling Harbour and the quiet green of the Royal Botanic Garden.



## Highlights

Sydney is well-known for its love of fashion, and the shopping in the city centre does not disappoint. Whether you're looking for luxury brands, top local fashion designers, or something cheap and cheerful, you can find it all in central Sydney.

Originally built in the 1890s, the magnificent Queen Victoria Building now houses more than 180 of Australia's best-loved fashion, jewellery and homeware designers, as well as an assortment of cafés and restaurants. Even if you're not buying, it's worth exploring this building simply for its incredible historical grandeur – particularly during the Christmas period, when it comes alive with magical Christmas decorations, the centerpiece of which is a huge Christmas tree that is erected beneath the massive dome ceiling.

Westfield Sydney shopping centre houses more than 250 fashion, food and lifestyle stores. Spread over four levels, you'll find Australian designers side by side with international high-street brands, with a further three levels for dining. Westfield offers a Privilege Card to Sydney visitors, which entitles them to exclusive discounts, special offers, and access to the on-site concierge team. All you need to do is present your passport at the Concierge Desk, located at street level

on Pitt Street Mall. Westfield's friendly concierge staff will give you a list of special offers and a directory to help you navigate the centre.

For student nights out in the city, try Bar Broadway, Hermann's Bar, or The Lansdowne Hotel. These student favourites might not be flashy, but they do offer cheap food, drink specials, themed nights, student specials, and regular events. The bar scene in this area is dominated by students who attend the nearby universities, so you'll be in good company.

If you're looking for affordable, delicious, home-cooked food, try Malay Chinese Takeaway on Hunter Street. More than a thousand people have reviewed this restaurant online; many claim this is the best laksa in the city. Mamak is another buzzing restaurant, offering reasonably priced traditional Malaysian dishes that you can eat in or take away. There is often a queue to get in, so it's best to get there before you're starving (it's well worth the wait!). If you're vegan or curious about diversifying your diet, try out Soul Burger, where the menu is entirely vegan. The burger chain is also 98 per cent plastic-free, and is powered by 100 per cent carbon-neutral energy. You'll feel good about your contribution to a cleaner, happier, healthier society while enjoying a tasty burger.





## Community facilities

Ultimo Community Centre is a popular space for sports and recreation activities. You can hire a basketball court, take a yoga or fitness class, or even learn Chinese painting. The centre offers English conversation classes, and has a bilingual Chinese community worker on duty at the facility from Monday to Friday.

Darling Square Library, located inside The Exchange building in Darling Harbour, is a modern facility that contains lots of great study spaces and reference materials. The library holds more than 30,000 books, including a

large collection of Asian literature. You can come here to enjoy a good book, or to study in peace and quiet.

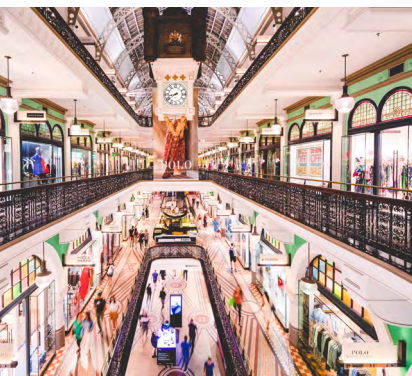
There are several churches around Sydney CBD, including Scots Church Sydney, a Presbyterian church that welcomes cultural diversity; Church Hill Anglican; St Patrick's Catholic Church; and the Hillsong Sydney City Campus. Sydney CBD Masjid in Argyle Place offers two different prayer times on Fridays, at 12.15pm and 1.15pm. There are also smaller musallas located near Town Hall Station (167B Castlereagh Street) and Wynyard Station (56-60 Erskine Street).

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## Unique experiences

It's hard to narrow down unique experiences in Sydney because there are so many to choose from. One iconic thing to do is to take the ferry from Circular Quay to Manly. Although the ferry is usually used by locals for their daily commute to work, it's a beautiful and affordable way to see some of the city's most well-known monuments from the water, including the Sydney Harbour Bridge, Sydney Opera House, Taronga Zoo, the many harbour beaches, and of course Manly, famed for its beautiful white-sand beaches, cafés, restaurants and bars.

Another great way to enjoy the scenic views along the coastline, try out the Manly to Spit Bridge Coastal Walk. The trail takes in some of the city's most breathtaking harbour views. You'll also encounter traditional Aboriginal rock engravings, beach vistas, and multi-million dollar mansions along the way. The walk stretches along 10 kilometres of coastline, and contains a mix of paved walkways, boardwalks and well-maintained bush tracks. The full walk takes about 3.5 hours – you can either choose a section you'd like to sample, or take your time and walk the whole thing for a picturesque day out.





## Inner South

The historic suburbs of the Inner South are an arty hub. These suburbs are filled with creative collectives and galleries, as well as busy international restaurants serving food late into the night.

### Highlights

The Inner South of Sydney is made up of a number of lively, industrial, arty suburbs. The relatively new suburb of Waterloo may lack some of the heritage and prestige of its older neighbours, but it is a treasure trove of awesome events, new developments, and accessible creative spaces.

The tastefully converted Eveleigh Railway Yards, renamed Carriageworks, is the creative centre of the Inner South. The huge precinct is home to many wonderful venues, including the renovated performance space, which hosts theatre, music, dance and festival events. You'll also find delicious seasonal produce each Saturday at the Carriageworks Farmers Market.

Redfern is the original hub for small bars in Sydney. On the east side of Redfern Station, you'll have a hard time choosing between Arcadia Liquors, The Dock, Moya's Juniper Lounge, Hustle & Flow, BART Jr, Redfern Surf Club, and Misfits. Each bar has its own individual character, so be sure to try them all to find out which is your favourite.

The restaurants and cafés in the area are top quality. Kepos Street Kitchen is famed for Middle Eastern food; RaRa

Ramen attracts regular queues for its delicious ramen; and Cafe Kentaro has a classic Japanese menu with an Australian fusion twist. If you're looking for Vietnamese-inspired delicacies, try Nem Kitchen on Danks Street for excellent authentic meals; or head to Orange Supermarket in Waterloo for a great selection of Chinese, Korean, and Japanese groceries to cook at home.

This area is also home to Sydney's most awarded cooking school, VictorsFood. This company organises a Farmer's Market Tour and Cooking Class, both full of complimentary goodies. It's a great way to explore Sydney's food scene and learn about different cuisines with a group of your friends. Tours can be run the third Saturday of each month for 8 to 12 people.

For those looking to experience the district from a local's point of view, several walking and cycling tours now operate in the area. One of the more unique options is Sydney Architecture Walks. Led by practicing architects, these tours will give you an appreciation for the city's most iconic buildings. You'll have fun exploring while you get a feel for your new neighbourhood.

## Community facilities

Youthblock Youth Health Service in Redfern offers free and confidential counselling and health services for people aged 12 to 25 years old. If you need someone to talk to about money, family or relationship problems, or if you have questions about your health, this is the place to go.

Myhealth Medical Centre Central Park in Chippendale offers a range of services, including psychology, and has Mandarin-speaking doctors available. Redfern Station Medical Centre and Waterloo Medical Centre also provide a range of health services.

The National Centre of Indigenous Excellence (NCIE) in Redfern is a community sports centre that contains a small gym, heated indoor swimming pool, and a basketball court for hire. If you're not a confident swimmer, you can join one of the swimming classes. The centre runs a range of group fitness classes, such as yoga, Pilates, spin class (cycling), and strength-focused classes. Student memberships are available.

Churches in the area include One1seven Church Redfern, St Benedict's Catholic Church in Chippendale, and Hillsong City Waterloo Campus. Redfern is also home to Redfern Mosque.

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## Unique experiences

It's no surprise that the experiences found in this area tend towards the artistic. Bursting with art-lovers, creatives, and alternative culture, this precinct is home to several off-beat activities that you won't find anywhere else.

For a taste of the local arts scene, start with White Rabbit Gallery in Chippendale. This state-of-the-art space occupies four levels dedicated to original 21st-century Chinese art. The gallery stages two major exhibitions per year, which are known to be focused on adventurous, confronting, and conversation-starting pieces.

The gallery's founder, Judith Neilson, established and self-funded this not-for-profit art gallery to showcase her breathtaking and extensive collection of Chinese art. Entry to the gallery is always free, and the ground-floor tea shop is also not to be missed.

For something both exciting and intellectually stimulating, try Expedition Sydney Escape Rooms. Just across the road from Redfern Station, this is a great activity for groups of friends. Grab your mates and enjoy 60 minutes of mind-bending activities, as you solve riddles and puzzles to escape the room together.





# Inner West

The cool, alternative and multicultural Inner West is a student hub made up of diverse neighbourhoods, community markets, vibrant nightlife and incredible eateries.



## Highlights

Between Newtown's famous creative scene, Glebe's bohemian village vibe, and the educational hub of Camperdown, it's hard not to fall in love with the Inner West. You'll find the University of Sydney and the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital here, both of which are famous leaders in education. But this area is definitely not all about work and no play.

Head to Newtown for a seemingly endless selection of cool bars, restaurants and cafés. This suburb is also the epicenter of the local theatre, music, art and design scenes. King Street is the main strip, along which you'll find vintage stores, specialty shops, and local designer boutiques. Head to nearby Enmore Road for more shopping, as well as the iconic Enmore Theatre, which hosts a dazzling program of events and performances.

The Courthouse Hotel is a classic local pub with a fantastic beer garden. If craft beer is your passion, don't miss the area's most successful brewery, Young Henrys, where you'll find a range of locally brewed beers, a regular rotation of food trucks, and a thoroughly rock 'n' roll vibe.

Glebe is one of the oldest areas in Sydney, and is filled with heritage-listed buildings – a great place to visit

for some sophisticated charm.

The village atmosphere of this suburb lends itself to casual strolls and leisurely visits to its many cafés, independent stores, and the weekly markets, where an eclectic array of stalls will delight bargain hunters and window shoppers alike.

You'll also find several wonderful open green spaces in this suburb, perfect for relaxing with a picnic. For something more active, the Glebe Foreshore Walk stretches from Bicentennial Park to the Sydney Fish Markets – both must-see destinations in their own right. The waterfront walk encompasses more than 27 hectares of open space and allows you to take in views of both Rozelle Bay and Blackwattle Bay.

For food and drink, you can't go wrong if you walk down Glebe Point Road. Lined with cafés, bars and restaurants, there is so much to choose from. The cosy atmosphere of this area is perfectly represented by English-style pubs such as The Nags Head Hotel. If you're looking for something really special, it's worth checking out Tramsheds. Originally the storage facility for Sydney's old trams, this beautifully refurbished building is now home to a number of well-respected restaurants, as well as regular workshops, specialty stores, and weekend markets.







## Community facilities

Royal Prince Alfred Hospital (RPA) in Camperdown offers a 24-hour free translation service if you need to speak to someone in your own language. The Church Street Medical Practice in Newtown and Glebe Family Medical Practice both cover a range of health services, including mental health.

There are a few different options for worship in the Inner West. Sydney Buddhist Centre on Enmore Road hosts various meditation classes, as well as a Young Sydney Buddhists class. All sessions are funded by donations, so

you can just pay as much as you're able to. In Erskineville, the Turkish Mosque holds khutbah at 12.15pm daily in both English and Turkish. The mosque also has Wudu areas for women and men, as well as a women's prayer room upstairs.

Glebe is home to beautiful parks that line the foreshore, including Bicentennial Park, Jubilee Park, and Federal Park. These areas are perfect for picnics or sports, and are equipped with public toilets and free barbeque areas. Victoria Park Pool in Camperdown has a 50-metre lap pool and gym, and offers fitness classes throughout the week.

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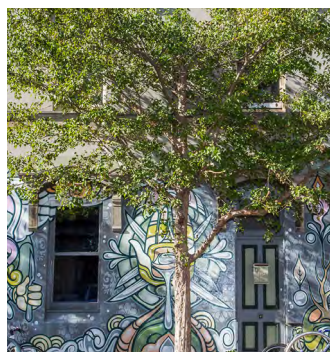
## Unique experiences

A Newtown staple is the Newtown Market, held every Saturday. With a more eccentric mix of stalls than you'll find almost anywhere else, you're sure to find some treasures. The markets have vintage fashion stalls, collectable items, jewellery, pre-loved books, and much more. Food stalls at the markets serve everything from freshly baked bread to vegan delicacies.

A truly unique experience in Eveleigh is Yerrabingin, a world-first Indigenous rooftop farm that grows more than 2,000 edible, medicinal and culturally significant plants. The initiative uses the principles of Indigenous knowledge, collaborative design, and permaculture. If you want to learn more, you can

join workshops on Aboriginal culture, native permaculture, environmental sustainability, and physical and mental wellbeing, as well as providing food to restaurants around the city.

With a focus on collaborative design and ethno-botanical ecology, Yerrabingin also runs the South Eveleigh Aboriginal Cultural Landscape Garden. The aim of this garden is to aid the health of their rooftop farm, educate the local community, and to promote authentic Aboriginal cultural heritage. The initiative maintains threatened, endangered and culturally significant species of native medicinal plants and bush foods that you can enjoy when you visit.





## NEARBY NEIGHBOURHOODS

# Marrickville and Leichhardt

Marrickville is seven kilometres south of the city centre. It's popular among students because rental prices are considerably cheaper here than in the city. It's home to a large Vietnamese community, so you'll find a lot of great food and speciality grocery stores. Illawarra Road is where the best Vietnamese food can be found, including Hello Auntie #payyourauntyavisit and Marrickville Pork Roll, which serves up the best banh mi in Sydney.

Every Sunday between 9am and 3pm Marrickville hosts an organic food market at the Addison Road Centre. There's great food and fresh fruit on offer, as well as stalls selling secondhand furniture and antiques. There are loads of great cafes in Marrickville too, including Two Chaps where you should try the amazing beetroot and halloumi sandwich – it's heavenly!

If you're after some live music, Marrickville's Lazybones is a small and cosy bar that hosts local musicians. If you're after a larger venue, The Factory Theatre hosts an array of events, comedy nights, music gigs and plays. It's close to The Vic on the Park, so you can grab a beer with your friends before catching a show.

Back towards the Inner West is Sydney's Little Italy in Leichhardt. Sydneysiders flock here for beautiful authentic Italian feasts and, of course, gelato! Head to Bar Italia for a drop of espresso or go to Mezzapica Cakes for perfectly crisp cannoli. Make sure to visit in October for the Norton Street Italian Festa. The whole precinct is closed off to cars so pedestrians can roam the streets and soak up the food and entertainment that Italian culture is well-known for.

# Ordering coffee

Some people can go a bit wild with their coffee orders, but here are the basics of ordering a cup of coffee in Australia.



**LATTE**



**FLAT WHITE**



**CAPPUCCINO**



**LONG BLACK**



**ESPRESSO**



**MOCHA**



*Coffee Shot*



*Warm Milk*



*Water*



*Chocolate  
Powder or Syrup*



*Milk Foam*

# Inner East

Packed with great shops, beautiful Victorian terrace houses, independent cafés and bustling pubs, the Inner East is perfect for a Saturday night out bar-hopping or a lazy Sunday brunch.



## Highlights

For shopping in the inner east suburbs, Oxford Street is a great place to start. This renowned fashion district, which extends from Darlinghurst to Paddington, is home to an array of interesting shops, including many of Australia's top designers. You're likely to rub shoulders with the rich and famous while you shop. If exclusive designers aren't your style, head to the Central Park Mall, where you can find supermarkets, specialty food stores, entertainment, and a variety of shops that cater to all your essentials.

If you're looking for something a bit different, head to the Paddington Markets, which run every Saturday from 10am to 4pm. Here you'll find unique clothing, accessories and homewares made by local craftspeople and artisans. The markets also have a colourful array of food and drinks vendors offering fresh treats all day, including gluten-free and vegetarian options.

Surry Hills is a tree-lined suburb that has benefited from considerable investment, and is now the café hub of Sydney's Inner East. If good coffee

is your priority, visit Haven Specialty Coffee. Not only is their coffee amongst the finest in the city, they also make some of the best Asian eats in the east.

In Darlinghurst, you're spoiled for choice when it comes to authentic Indian food. Govindas Cinema and Restaurant is a vegetarian Indian restaurant that's been hosting movie nights for more than 40 years. This superb staple regularly has great offers and all-you-can-eat deals on the buffet, so you can make a night of it without breaking the bank.

If you're looking for a more energetic night out, Darlo Bar in Darlinghurst is a popular pub and bar with budget accommodation attached. The venue is dog-friendly and has a rooftop bar, a bottle shop, weekend DJs, and eclectic clientele. For a novelty night on the town, try The Standard Bowl. This four-lane bowling alley describes itself as 'not a normal nightclub', and offers free entry, free bowling, live DJs, arcade games, and pinball machines.





## Community facilities

Surry Hills Library offers free Wi-Fi and peaceful study areas. If you don't have your own laptop, the library has computers and printers that you can use once you're signed up. There's a great selection of Russian books, DVDs and newspapers on offer, as well as Chinese and Spanish newspapers. What's more, it's won awards for being an environmentally friendly and sustainable community building.

In Darlinghurst you'll find St Vincent's Hospital, which was first built in 1857 and is one of Australia's top hospitals. As well as offering general

hospital services and emergency care, St Vincent's operates the Anxiety Disorders Clinic. This service offers face-to-face appointments as well as low-cost online treatments supervised by experts.

Darlinghurst is home to both St John's Anglican Church and Sacred Heart Catholic Church; and in Surry Hills you'll find King Faisal Mosque on Commonwealth Street. Paddington has several churches, including Paddington Uniting Church, Paddington Church of Christ, and St Francis of Assisi's Catholic Church.

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## Unique experiences

For a night out with a difference, why not get a group together for Music Bingo at Button Bar in Surry Hills? Hosted every Wednesday night, each round has a different theme, with fun prizes to be won. It's free to play but booking is advised, as it's a popular local mid-week event.

If you're looking for a fun way to improve your coffee-making skills, try latte art classes in Surry Hills, available through ClassBento. This workshop covers the basic skills you need to produce an Instagram-worthy cup of

coffee. Not only will you enjoy the fun of creating patterns, you'll also gain an understanding of how latte art can enhance your coffee drinking experience. The skills you learn might even help you land a job in a local café!

Head to the Oceanic Arts Australia, a gallery in Paddington with the finest exhibition of Aboriginal tribal art from Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji, Polynesia and Micronesia in the Asia-Pacific. It also boasts an entirely unique collection of antique Asian Buddhist art.







## NEARBY NEIGHBOURHOODS

# East (Randwick, Kensington, eastern beaches)

Arguably, Sydney's most beautiful suburbs are located by the beach. The most well-known of these is the famous Bondi Beach. While it's certainly stunning, it can get quite crowded. Instead, try Bronte and Coogee Beaches, which are just as beautiful. Clovelly Beach is a smaller bay with calm waters, ideal if you're not a confident swimmer. There's a picturesque coastal walk that takes you three kilometres from Bondi to Bronte; or, go further and try the six-kilometre walk from Bondi to Coogee. Stop in for a coffee at The Little Kitchen in Coogee and enjoy the seaside atmosphere.

Kensington is home to the main University of New South Wales campus. Visit the Museum of Human Disease, which houses more than 2,500 human tissue specimens, to learn about the causes and outcomes of human disease. The suburb is also home to Peter's of Kensington, a large department store that sells a

variety of well-priced homewares, kitchenware and luggage.

There are many great dining options in the neighbouring suburb of Randwick. Just up from the beach is Maybe Frank, where you'll find delicious pizzas. If you're after something quick, head to Tucker, where the menu is designed to grab and go. After you choose your salad or sandwich, you can take it down to the beach.

Randwick is home to one of Sydney's most iconic vintage theatres, Ritz Cinemas. Enjoy new-release films, vintage favourites, and special events, such as their regular movie marathons. On Mondays, student tickets are only \$6.

# Cinema

Sydney is home to several cinema chains playing the latest blockbusters, as well as classic theatres showing art-house and independent films.

There are plenty of great vintage cinemas in Sydney. Some of the best include heritage art deco icon, Ritz Cinemas in Randwick; Palace Cinemas in Paddington, Chippendale and Leichhardt; and Golden Age Cinema & Bar in Surry Hills. These cinemas play new releases, classic favourites, and host many of Sydney's best film events, including both the Italian and Scandinavian Film Festivals.

Sydney also has several modern cinema chains, including HOYTS and Event Cinemas. Most of these offer discounted tickets for students, but there are some extra special deals worth noting. At the Dumaresq Street Cinema in Campbelltown, all tickets are \$7.50 all the time – a bargain considering ticket prices elsewhere are usually around \$22 for an adult and \$16 for a student. If you're

looking for something closer to the city, Dendy Cinemas in Newtown has \$8 student tickets on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. For an extra \$4, you can get a beer and an ice cream. The best deal can be found at The Soda Factory in Surry Hills, which hosts free movie screenings with unlimited popcorn every Monday night.

One of Sydney's most notable film events is the annual Tropfest film festival. Held at Parramatta Park each February, Tropfest attracts thousands of people each year. Local filmmakers enter the competition based on a chosen theme. Around 16 finalists have their short films screened, with winners announced at the end of the evening. Head to the Tropfest website to see previous films.

*[tropfest.org.au](http://tropfest.org.au)*

# Western Suburbs

Hugely popular among students, Western Sydney is very laid-back, with easy access to the CBD, a multicultural food and drink scene, and lots of green space to relax in.



## Highlights

Parramatta has been dubbed Sydney's second centre. Known for its multicultural community, the creative scene here is vibrant and welcoming.

Riverside Theatres is the perfect place to start when looking for entertainment, with an annual program of more than 1,000 events. Parramasala is the largest celebration of cultural diversity in NSW, and takes place in Prince Alfred Square over three days each year.

Parramatta overflows with authentic dining options. Walk along the popular dining hubs of Church and Wigram Streets to find a great selection of restaurants, bistros and cafés that mirror the area's diverse local community.

Even though Penrith is a short drive from the city centre, here you begin to feel as though you're leaving the city for the countryside. Bordered by mountains and the Nepean River, there are many fun outdoor activities available to try. Cables Wake Park & Aqua Park offers wakeboarding lessons; at the Sydney International Regatta Centre you can try jetpacking, and elsewhere you'll find go-karting, and indoor skydiving.

Penrith's lively cultural scene is a melting pot of street art, museums, galleries, and heritage trails. Visit the famous Joan Sutherland Performing

Arts Centre (affectionately known as 'The Joan') for theatre, opera, comedy, and music. Penrith is also one of the oldest European settlements in the state; Penrith Heritage Drive is one of the best places to learn about colonial history.

Right in the middle of Western Sydney is Olympic Park. This incredible stadium, used as a sporting and entertainment precinct, is a must-visit. All the biggest international music performances take place here, as do the city's major sporting events. This amazing complex has facilities that are open to the public; you can book into swim lanes at the pool, or take a behind-the-scenes tour. The Sydney Royal Easter Show also takes place here. This massive two-week festival offers non-stop entertainment for all ages, and is well-worth spending some time exploring.

One of the largest urban parklands in Australia can be found within Bicentennial Park, which borders Sydney Olympic Park. Hire a bike and spend the day exploring, or have a laugh while trying something new on a segway tour. Once you've built up an appetite, there are plenty of options for food and drink in and around the stadium complex. You can find maps embedded around the precinct, or you can head to the information centre for assistance.



## Community facilities

The City of Parramatta Library has six branches around the Western Sydney area. You'll find a great selection of books, English conversation classes, and various workshops and events in English and other languages.

More than 60 per cent of the state's Islamic places of worship are located in Western Sydney. Lakemba Mosque is Australia's largest mosque, and the first purpose-built mosque in Sydney. It offers worship services and an Islamic counselling service. If you're not part

of the Muslim community but want to learn more about it, the mosque provides tours and education sessions.

If you're looking for a Hindu temple, the Shree Swaminarayan Temple in Blacktown hosts daily Darshan sessions, as well as Satsang Sabha every Sunday evening, followed by Maha Prasad.

To get in touch with nature, take a walk around the beautiful Parramatta River and visit one of the many cafés along the way. Or, get your fitness fix by taking your bike along the 20-kilometre cycle path between Parramatta and Sydney Olympic Park.

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## Unique experiences

In Penrith, you can go whitewater rafting when you've barely left the city! Penrith Whitewater is located only an hour from Sydney CBD at the foot of the majestic Blue Mountains. Purpose built for the canoe and kayak events during the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, this is the only man-made whitewater river in the Southern Hemisphere. Guided rafting tours with experienced, friendly instructors are 90 minutes long and full of excitement and adventure.

For something more relaxed, visit Penrith Regional Gallery, one of Australia's most beautiful regional

galleries. This unique space is set among heritage gardens on the Nepean River. The gallery building is the former home of sculptor Gerald Lewers and his artist wife, Margo Lewers. Check out the dynamic mix of events, exhibitions, and workshops on their website before you head visit.

TreeTops Western Sydney is set in the Western Sydney Parklands. Here you can swing through the trees as you attempt assault courses in the canopy. Slide down zip wires, balance on suspension bridges, or swing from branch to branch. This award-winning park has more than 100 challenges, graded for all levels of experience.

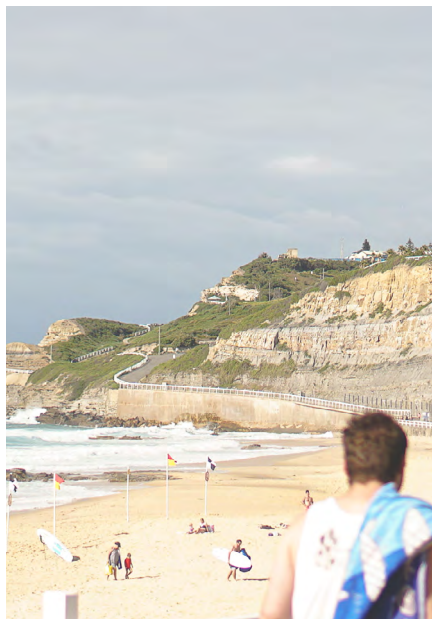






# Regional NSW





## HUNTER REGION

Two hours north of Sydney you'll find Newcastle and the surrounding Hunter region. This coastal area combines the relaxed atmosphere of a small beach town with the convenience of the city, and has many great cafés, parks, and stunning beaches.

In Newcastle, there's no shortage of good coffee. Head to Suspension Espresso on Beaumont Street for a meal in the leafy courtyard. Darby Street, next to Bar Beach, is a great strip to stroll along, with boutique fashion labels, cafés and bars to check out. Wander through Hunter Street Mall, with its great food and shopping options, and you'll end up in Newcastle East, where many of the city's beautiful historic terraced houses still stand. Grab some fish and chips from Scotties Seafood Restaurant and have a picnic

on Nobbys Beach. Another great picnic spot is King Edward Park, which has a beautiful rotunda at its centre, and is home to Newcastle's famous Bogey Hole. This small swimming spot was hand-carved by convicts in 1819.

If you drive 90 minutes north, you'll find yourself in the Hunter Valley wine region. This is where some of Australia's best wines are produced. Gather a group of friends and hire a bus for a tasting tour of the best vineyards. Some of the most popular include Brokenwood Wines, Tamburlaine Organic Wines, and Tyrrell's Wines. There are many great accommodation options in the region, so stay the night and make a weekend of it.



## ILLAWARRA REGION (WOLLONGONG, KIAMA AND SHOALHAVEN)

Take the winding 90-minute drive south of Sydney and you'll find yourself in the Illawarra region. The gem here is Wollongong, the 10th most populated urban area in Australia. There are plenty of things to do in this beautiful coastal city. Start by having a dip in the ocean. North Wollongong Beach and Wollongong City Beach are the most popular, so if you're after a quieter spot, try Stanwell Park Beach. Make sure to go to the headland to spot the humpback whales during their migration between May and November.

If you're into water sports the saltwater lakes in Shellharbour and Lake Illawarra are a must. If you're feeling hungry, the best fish and chip shop can be found on the outskirts of Wollongong at Aish's Seafood & Takeaway in Berkeley.

Just 30 minutes out of Wollongong is

the smaller town of Kiama. One of the biggest attractions in this area is the Kiama Blowhole, which sprays around 50 litres of water up to 25 metres high. Around 90,000 visitors check out the Blowhole each year. After you've viewed this impressive attraction, head to nearby cafe Milk and Honey and enjoy a cup of coffee while overlooking the ocean.

The wilderness surrounding the Illawarra region is not to be missed. Macquarie Pass National Park, located 30 minutes from Wollongong, is the perfect spot to cool off in one of the many swimming holes. And in Darkes Forest, you'll find Dharawal National Park. Your reward for completing the hiking trail is the view of Madden Falls from the lookout. This park is perfect for birdwatching and picnicking – just make sure you take your rubbish with you.



### STUDENT TIP

**“Wollongong is always a peaceful place without much traffic. It's located in between mountains and ocean, so it is a real blessing to see sunrises on the beaches and sunsets over the mountains.”**

Harsavardhan, India

Studying at the University of Wollongong



## CENTRAL WEST (BATHURST, ORANGE AND DUBBO)

If you drive through the Blue Mountains, eventually you'll arrive in the Central West of NSW, a truly unique area that's very different from the coast. Bathurst is well-known for two things: The annual Bathurst 1000 car racing event that runs around Mount Panorama, and Charles Sturt University (CSU). During the semester, the whole city becomes a lively student hub.

There's plenty to see and do on a day trip to Bathurst. The best food in town can be found at a little café called The Hub. Further down Keppel Street is Al Dente, where you'll find the best coffee in town. Come nighttime, enjoy a delicious pizza at Church Bar, a restaurant inside a converted church where each pizza is named after a street in Bathurst.

When there are no races on, Mount Panorama is a public road, so you can take a drive around the 6.2-kilometre circuit. If you drive 40 minutes outside of Bathurst, you'll hit Orange, a famous wine-producing region. If you would like to do some wine tasting, book into Philip Shaw Wines, where you can enjoy a glass of local wine while overlooking the gorgeous countryside.

In April, Orange F.O.O.D Week takes over the town; while October is when the Orange Wine Festival is held. From here, it's a two-hour drive west to reach Dubbo. A highlight here is Taronga Western Plains Zoo, where you can visit lions, giraffes, rhinos and more in an open, safari-like setting.

## CHEAP CHOICE

The Lord Anson is one of Orange's best pubs, with a great selection of craft beers, good food, and a trivia night every Thursday. There are lots of prizes to win and entry is entirely free.



## RIVERINA

The Riverina area is the agricultural epicentre of regional NSW. It's a five-hour drive from Sydney, so it's best to set aside a full weekend. The two biggest towns in this region are Wagga Wagga and Griffith.

The perfect day in Wagga Wagga includes a morning visit to The Blessed Bean. The coffee is roasted in-house, and the menu contains simple yet delicious meals. For lunch, try Artisan Baker for an impressive selection of French pastries, then head to Thirsty Crow Brewing Co. for a locally brewed craft beer. Wagga Wagga Art Gallery has Australia's biggest glass art collection; while the River & Wren Market, which takes place every second month, celebrates handmade and

homegrown products and produce. Market stalls sell all kinds of locally made treasures, including jams, soaps, cakes, and flowers.

Two hours northwest of Wagga Wagga is Griffith, which is known for great fresh produce and beautiful wines. There's a strong Italian history in this town, which is on display during the annual Festa delle Salsicce. The festival celebrates the end of the salami-making season with a long lunch. To enjoy some of the stunning views of the surrounding farmland, take a walk to the lookout at Hermit's Cave on the ridge of Scenic Hill. Here you can learn about Valerio Ricetti, who lived like a hermit in the caves for 23 years.

## CHEAP CHOICE

Head to G. Thai in Wagga Wagga for their daily lunch specials, with plenty of classic Thai dishes available for only \$10.





## NEW ENGLAND

New England is a stunning area of rolling green where you'll find the towns of Armidale and Tamworth.

Tamworth is the country music capital of Australia; the Tamworth Country Music Festival is held here each year in January. Armidale is an education hub, home to the University of New England.

As music runs in Tamworth's veins, it's not surprising there are plenty of live music venues in town. Major bands play at Capitol Theatre, while local musicians grace the stage at The Imperial Brew House. The town's most iconic landmark is the roadside Big Golden Guitar. For a unique eating experience, try Glasshouse Restaurant on Goonoo Goonoo Station, a former sheep station. You can also stay overnight in one of the historic shearing sheds or cottages.

Armidale has the perfect blend of city and rural living, with great cafés,

shopping centres, and cheap rental properties. It's also home to spectacular waterfalls and World Heritage-listed national parks.

Goldfish Bowl Bakery is one of the most popular lunch spots, with well-priced sweet and savoury options. For a student night out, head to The Stro at the University of New England. Non-students may have to pay for entry to certain events, but it's a great place to meet other students.

The Wollomombi Falls picnic area is a popular nature spot in the area. From here, you can walk along either the Chandler or Wollomombi walking tracks. Both boast phenomenal views of the gorge. You can camp here if you feel like staying overnight.





## NORTHERN RIVERS

This relaxed region of New South Wales is a popular tourist destination, with incredible beaches that sprawl along the eastern coastline. Byron Bay, Australia's most easterly point, has a relaxed backpacker atmosphere; locals can often be found walking around town in their swimming costumes. The food here is famous for being fresh, healthy, and sustainable. Make sure to check out the many cafés and restaurants along the beachfront, such as Orgasmic Food.

After you've spent the day lying on the beach or surfing at The Pass, you'll be ready for a night on the town. The biggest pub in Byron, Beach Hotel, overlooks the main beach and is ideal for a drink while the sun goes down. For dancing, head to Cheeky Monkey's, where you'll find people dancing on tabletops to pop music.

Ten minutes outside of Byron is Brunswick Heads. For a fun night out, try Cheeky Cabaret at the Brunswick Picture House, where you can see world-class cabaret in a renovated, 1950s-style cinema.

Around 30 minutes southwest of Byron is Lismore, an area known for its creative arts scene. The Back Alley Gallery on Eggins Street is home to large-scale murals and graffiti art from more than 60 Northern Rivers artists, and is free to visit. A trip to Protesters Falls walking track in Nightcap National Park is an absolute must. It's about an hour north of Lismore, and is well-worth the trip. Take a stunning hike through pristine rainforest to the beautiful waterfall.

## CHEAP CHOICE

Balcony Bar and Oyster Co. in Byron Bay has some of the best food and drink deals in the Northern Rivers region. Think daily happy hour, \$1.50 oysters on Wednesdays, and bottomless brunches on weekends.

# Everything you need to know about studying in Australia

Head to our website for more information:  
[insiderguides.com.au](https://insiderguides.com.au)

Or follow us on Facebook / Instagram / YouTube / LinkedIn

Subscribe to our weekly e-newsletter for events, news and opportunities to enhance your study experience in Australia.

- + International student news
- + Online events and networking
- + Accommodation
- + Employment
- + Student life
- + Explore your city

INSIDER GUIDES





# Activities

## AXE THROWING

At Maniax, located just five kilometres from Sydney CBD, the crew promises to teach you how to throw axes like a legend. The venue offers group bookings, individual sessions and special date nights.

[maniax.com.au](http://maniax.com.au)

## INDOOR ROCK CLIMBING

The first climbing gym in NSW – still the biggest in Australia – is in the suburb of St Peters. Sydney Indoor Climbing Gym is a favourite amongst pros, but caters to all levels of experience. The Climbing Centre in Penrith offers classes, courses, and equipment for hire, as well as a bouldering wall.

[indoorclimbing.com.au](http://indoorclimbing.com.au)      [climbingcentre.com.au](http://climbingcentre.com.au)

## POTTERY

If you're new to wheel-throwing, try The Pottery Shed in Surry Hills. Basic sessions and courses cater to absolute beginners. More advanced sessions are available for experienced pottery-makers.

[thepotteryshed.com.au](http://thepotteryshed.com.au)

## PAINT AND DRINK

Try Cork & Chroma in Surry Hills or St Leonards; Brush and Sip in Newtown; and Cork and Canvas in Darlinghurst, Crows Nest, or Bondi Junction. Head to their websites to choose which painting you'd like to recreate.

[corkandchroma.com.au](http://corkandchroma.com.au)   [brushandsip.com.au](http://brushandsip.com.au)   [corkandcanvas.com.au](http://corkandcanvas.com.au)

## VIRTUAL REALITY

Zero Latency VR offers a free-roam video game experience like no other. Once you've chosen your themed games, put on your headset, strap on your backpack, and pick up the controller to start playing.

*zerolatencyvr.com*

## SURFING

Manly Surf School runs daily surfing classes. To really get your skills up to scratch, Surf Camp Australia has multi-day surfing lessons for beginners.

*manlysurfschool.com surfcamp.com.au*

## ARCHIE BROTHERS

Archie Brothers Cirque Electriq is an "arcade for adults"; a kaleidoscopic circus of cocktails and arcade games. Along with classic arcade games, you can ride the bumper cars, play laser tag, try virtual reality, or go bowling.

*archiebrothers.com.au*

## INDOOR TRAMPOLINING

Sky Zone Alexandria is a massive warehouse full of trampolines, dodgeball zones, basketball games, and dive pits. Or, try indoor and outdoor trampolines at Flip Out, which has extended late-night jump sessions just for adults.

*skyzone.com.au flipout.net.au*

## DANCING

For 1980s music and aerobics, try Retrosweat. Or, if you're new to dancing, give Groove Therapy a go. This beginners' class in Redfern prides itself on being judgement-free. No Lights No Lycra is designed to help you dance in an inclusive space. Don't worry about what you look like because you're dancing in the dark.

*retrosweat.com.au groovetherapy101.com nolightsnolycra.com*

## QUIDDITCH

This Harry Potter-inspired game is a great way to meet other students. The University of Sydney has a Quidditch Club that plays competitively in state and national tournaments, but you can also play casually.

*usydquidditch.com*



# Live music

No matter what genre of music you like, you're bound to find a venue that suits your tastes.

## THE LANSDOWNE HOTEL

One of Sydney's most iconic live music venues is the Lansdowne Hotel in Chippendale. Back in the day, it saw big names like Nirvana and the Pretzels take the stage, but in 2015, the venue was sadly closed down. Two years later, the people behind Newtown's famous burger joint, Mary's, saved the day by purchasing it, and now this mid-sized music venue is the perfect hangout spot for students and rock 'n' roll/punk music lovers.

## THE MARLBOROUGH HOTEL

For indie music fans, the top level of the Marlborough Hotel in Newtown hosts local up-and-coming talent every Thursday from 9pm. Downstairs, you'll also find a live band doing cover songs on Friday and Saturday nights, as well as DJs playing the latest hits and classic dance

songs. Further down in the basement 'rave cave', also known as Tokyo Sing Song, DJs play house music on Friday and Saturday nights until the early hours of the morning.

## ENMORE THEATRE

The longest-running live music venue in New South Wales, the Enmore Theatre is just up the road from the Marlborough Hotel. This is where more well-known artists like Carly Rae Jepsen, The Dandy Warhols and The Darkness grace the stage. It's close to a lot of great bars and pubs for a pre-gig beverage.

## POTTS POINT HOTEL

If jazz is more your style, head to the Potts Point Hotel for Jazz Sundays. From 3pm, you can listen to the soothing melodies of a quartet band while you enjoy a cold beer and a Sunday roast dinner. What more could you want?

## GIG GUIDES

To stay in the loop with the big name artists who will be touring in Sydney, you can sign up to the The Brag's newsletter. If you want to discover up-and-coming talent, City of Sydney's 'What's On' website allows you to search exclusively for gigs near you.

[thebrag.com/gigs](http://thebrag.com/gigs)

[whatson.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au](http://whatson.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au)



# A week in Sydney

## MONDAY

Side Bar is the most fun you can have on a Monday night. Entry to their Musical Bingo is free, with \$5 drinks during happy hour (4–8pm), \$10 pizzas, and \$200 worth of prizes to be won.

## TUESDAY

Tuesday is trivia at The Unicorn. Big Daddy Howie leads you on a journey through dusty facts, archaic academia, oddball pop culture, and geek chic, with a \$100 bar tab up for grabs.

## WEDNESDAY

Drop in to Royal Hotel Darlington for a \$10 chicken schnitzel lunch special on Wednesdays. There are also \$5 schooners of beer from 7–9.30pm.

## THURSDAY

Try your hand at life drawing at Parliament on King every Thursday at 7pm. This tiny cafe and bookshop in Erskineville is a great place to visit any day of the week. Friday and Saturday there are also \$5 soup nights from 5pm.

## FRIDAY

You can grab \$6 house wine, beer and spirits at The Morrison Bar & Oyster Room from 5–7pm on Fridays, then indulge in \$1.50 oysters from 6–7pm. The bar runs promos throughout the week, including bottomless fries with any steak or moules marinière for \$25 per person each Monday and Tuesday.

## SATURDAY

A major highlight at Govindas Cinema and Restaurant is the incredible all-you-can-eat buffet for \$25 per person. You can also grab a concession price movie ticket for \$17.

## SUNDAY

The Nag's Head Hotel in Glebe showcases its English heritage with a Sunday roast dinner for just \$22. There are other specials throughout the week, as well as regular themed events.

# A year in Sydney

## JANUARY

### SYDNEY FESTIVAL

Sydney Festival is a show-stopping program of theatre, dance, music, circus, and visual arts.

[sydneyfestival.org.au](http://sydneyfestival.org.au)

## FEBRUARY

### SYDNEY GAY AND LESBIAN MARDI GRAS

During Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras, Sydney puts on an entire program of festival events as well as a spectacular parade.

[mardigras.org.au](http://mardigras.org.au)

## MARCH

### PARRAMASALA FESTIVAL

Parramasala Festival in Parramatta hosts music, live performance, dance, theatre, and film, as well as an amazing parade and food from all over the world.

[discoverparramatta.com](http://discoverparramatta.com)

## APRIL

### SYDNEY ROYAL EASTER SHOW

Sydney Royal Easter Show is a chance to immerse yourself in exciting rides, family entertainment, arts, crafts, and agricultural displays.

[eastershow.com.au](http://eastershow.com.au)

## MAY

### SYDNEY WRITERS' FESTIVAL (SWF)

Venues across the city are abuzz with insightful events and talks with the best writers, thinkers and creatives from Australia and across the globe.

[swf.org.au](http://swf.org.au)

### SYDNEY COMEDY FESTIVAL

Sydney Comedy Festival attracts some of the world's most famous comedians, as well as up-and-coming talent, for a festival of non-stop laughter.

[sydneycomedyfest.com.au](http://sydneycomedyfest.com.au)

## JUNE

### SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL

Sydney Film Festival is one of the most popular events in Sydney; an annual two-week celebration of local and international film.

[sff.org.au](http://sff.org.au)

## JULY

### AUSTRALIAN INTERNATIONAL MUSIC FESTIVAL

During the Australian International Music Festival, more than a thousand talented musicians perform choral, orchestral, and jazz ensembles.

[aimf.com.au](http://aimf.com.au)

### SMASH!

SMASH! Anime Convention is an annual celebration of Japanese pop culture, anime and manga. Meet like-minded fans and creators, and experience the world of Japanese animation.

[smash.org.au](http://smash.org.au)

## AUGUST

### VIVID SYDNEY

Vivid Sydney is one of the largest festivals of its kind in the world. Broken down into three segments – Vivid Light, Vivid Music and Vivid Ideas – this 23-day festival is packed with exhibitions, installations, and live music.

[vividsydney.com](http://vividsydney.com)

## SEPTEMBER

### SYDNEY FRINGE FESTIVAL

Sydney Fringe Festival welcomes more than 3,400 independent artists to display their finest work, from visual art to live music, cabaret and all varieties of performance.

[sydneyfringe.com](http://sydneyfringe.com)

## OCTOBER

### OKTOBERFEST IN THE GARDENS

Oktoberfest in the Gardens is inspired by the food, drink and culture of Bavaria. You'll find traditional dishes, activities, colourful dress, and plenty of beer drinking.

[oktoberfestinthegardens.com.au](http://oktoberfestinthegardens.com.au)

## NOVEMBER

### COLOUR RUN SYDNEY

Colour Run Sydney is a five-kilometre run even where you can run, skip, walk or dance your way around the course while getting covered in colourful powder.

[colorrun.com.au](http://colorrun.com.au)

## DECEMBER

### BONDI TO BRONTE OCEAN SWIM

The popular Bondi to Bronte Ocean Swim is a chance to swim in some of the city's most iconic waters, from Bondi Beach around Mackenzies Point to Bronte Beach.

[bonditobronte.com.au](http://bonditobronte.com.au)



# Travel

Get out of the city to explore some of the best natural beauty and quaint towns Australia has to offer. Here's our guide to the best travel spots around NSW.

## Short trips

### BLUE MOUNTAINS

The world-famous Blue Mountains are known for their stunning natural attractions, cute country towns, incredible views, and awesome hiking trails. From Sydney, head 90 minutes west on the M4 Motorway and you'll find yourself in Katoomba, where Scenic World's railway, cable car, skyway and walkway offer views of the beautiful Three Sisters rock formation. Many hiking trails begin in Katoomba, including the Grand Canyon track, which boasts dramatic views of sandstone cliffs, waterfalls and rainforest. This track is a 6.3-kilometre loop; NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service suggests allowing yourself three to four hours to complete it.

### CENTRAL COAST

The Central Coast is known for its beautiful coves, headlands, and lookouts. Under two hours drive north of Sydney is Terrigal, a picturesque town with two beaches to choose from. The main beach is patrolled by lifeguards and is a great place to learn to surf in forgiving conditions. You might also like to try snorkelling, stand-up paddleboarding, or kayaking. If you enjoy walking, try the hike around the headland and up The Skillion, an easily accessible lookout with sweeping views of the coastline.

### ROYAL NATIONAL PARK

An hour south of Sydney is the Royal National Park, one of the oldest national parks in the world; it's the perfect spot for a great day trip. Pack a picnic to enjoy after you've taken a stroll along the beautiful coastline. From the Governor Game lookout, during May and November, you might be lucky to spot whales breaching from the water. Learn more about Indigenous Australians by checking out the rock engravings near Jibbons Head, which is near the Bundeena entry of the park accessed by ferry from Cronulla. While you're here, don't forget to visit the Instagram-famous Wedding Cake Rock and figure 8 pools.



## Longer trips

### KOSCIUSZKO ALPINE WAY

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The scenic Kosciuszko Alpine Way links the towns of Jindabyne and Khancoban. This self-drive tour takes you through incredible forests and winding mountain ranges before arriving in the historic town of Khancoban. In winter, you can ski at Thredbo; in the warmer months, you can hike to Australia's highest point, Mount Kosciuszko. The quickest way is to take the Kosciuszko Express Chairlift from Thredbo to the hiking trail, a 13-kilometre loop that takes roughly five hours. There's so much to see and do in this area, including mountain biking, horse-riding, fishing, kayaking, and a range of seasonal festivals and events.

### SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS

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The Southern Highlands have a rich colonial history. You can find beautifully restored architecture, boutique stores, and fine-dining restaurants in Bowral, the area's largest town. Cricket fans should make time to visit the Bradman Museum and International Cricket Hall of Fame. This area offers almost unlimited activities; you can pick from local winery tours, bushwalking through national park, cycling the trails, or sitting back and enjoying fine food. The region is a 1.5-hour drive from Sydney, or you can take the direct train from Sydney to Bowral.

### HUNTER VALLEY

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This beautiful region is the winery epicentre of NSW, with more cellar doors than any other wine region in Australia. This plethora of vineyards means you have a vast choice of tour options; you can go by bike, on horseback, in a classic car, or even in a hot air balloon. To experience a bit of the area's history, wander through some of the wonderful landscaped gardens, such as the Storybook Garden within the Hunter Valley Gardens in Pokolbin. If you're after a more rugged adventure, go mountain biking or hiking through World Heritage-listed Yengo National Park.

## HEAD ONLINE

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*For more things to do in Sydney and NSW, along with sample itineraries, accommodation guides and events, check out the Visit NSW and Sydney websites.*

[sydney.com](http://sydney.com) [visitnsw.com](http://visitnsw.com)



# Camping

In the bushland surrounding Sydney, there's a range of great camping spots if you feel like escaping the city. Head to the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service website to find out where you can set up camp. The site will also tell you which parks are free to enter and those that require a fee.

[nationalparks.nsw.gov.au](http://nationalparks.nsw.gov.au)

The waterside Basin campground in Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park is an hour out of Sydney. It's got all the basic amenities covered, including bathrooms, drinking water, and a barbeque area. Plus, it's one of the best snorkelling spots in Sydney.

Just an hour from the CBD, Cattai campground is situated along the beautiful Hawkesbury River. It's the perfect place to go with friends for a weekend of riverside walks and roasting marshmallows on the fire.

Take a trip along the Ruined Castle walking track in the Blue Mountains National Park. The walk is graded difficult, so it's recommended to take a personal locator beacon (PLB) with you. Once you've completed the six-kilometre track, you can set up your tent at one of the two nearby campsites: Kedumba River Crossing, or Dunphys campground.

When venturing off the beaten track, it's a good idea to let someone know where you're going. Fill out a trip intention form on the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service website with information on the route you're taking. This can help locate you in case of an emergency. In some areas, such as the Blue Mountains, you can also borrow a free PLB from the police station. This sends a signal via satellite to emergency services should you need them.

When packing for a camping trip, make sure you've got the basics, including a tent, pillow, blanket, sleeping bag, food, plenty of water, sunscreen, hat, torch, comfortable walking shoes, sensible clothing, swimming costume, towel, toiletries, toilet roll, and a bag for rubbish.

## HEAD ONLINE

Experiencing a new and exciting culture is one of the best things about being an international student. Find out how to make the most of your time in Australia with our Activities and Culture guide.

[insiderguides.com.au/activities-and-culture](http://insiderguides.com.au/activities-and-culture)


# Key contacts

CONTACT NAME	WHEN WOULD I USE THIS SERVICE?	CONTACT DETAILS
AUSTRALIAN CONSUMER LAW	Understand your legal rights in regards to shopping or purchasing goods and services.	<a href="http://consumerlaw.gov.au">consumerlaw.gov.au</a>
AUSTRALIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION	If you feel you are being treated unfairly because of your race, descent, colour or ethnic/national origin then make a complaint to the Australian Human Rights Commission.	<a href="http://humanrights.gov.au">humanrights.gov.au</a>
AUSTRALIAN TAXATION OFFICE	Contact them to arrange a Tax File Number or learn more about payments made to you while you're here.	<a href="http://ato.gov.au">ato.gov.au</a>
BEYOND BLUE	A free counselling service that you can contact if you are feeling depressed or anxious.	1300 224 636 <a href="http://beyondblue.org.au">beyondblue.org.au</a>
CITY OF SYDNEY	See the website for information on all the services, facilities and events happening in the city centre and surrounding suburbs.	<a href="http://cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au">cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au</a>
CITY OF SYDNEY COMMUNITY CENTRES	Community facilities that assist with the learning and recreation needs of the local communities in which they're based	<a href="http://cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/community">cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/community</a>
CITY OF SYDNEY YOUTH SERVICES	The City delivers six youth programs within the City of Sydney local government area which offer recreational, education and vocational programs.	<a href="https://facebook.com/cityofsydneyyouth">facebook.com/cityofsydneyyouth</a>
OVERSEAS STUDENT OMBUDSMAN	This resource investigates complaints about problems that overseas students have with private education in Australia.	1300 362 072 <a href="http://oso.gov.au">oso.gov.au</a>
CONSUMER AND BUSINESS SERVICES (AND TENANCY ADVICE)	If you require detailed information about obligations and entitlements when buying products and services.	13 32 20 <a href="http://fairtrading.nsw.gov.au">fairtrading.nsw.gov.au</a>
COUNCIL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AUSTRALIA	The peak body for the interests and needs of international students, they always require volunteers.	<a href="http://cisa.edu.au">cisa.edu.au</a>
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE (FOR EMBASSIES)	If you require help from your country's embassy within Australia.	<a href="http://dfat.gov.au">dfat.gov.au</a>

CONTACT NAME	WHEN WOULD I USE THIS SERVICE?	CONTACT DETAILS
DEPARTMENT OF HOME AFFAIRS	This government department handles visa enquiries and issues.	<a href="http://homeaffairs.gov.au">homeaffairs.gov.au</a>
FAIR WORK OMBUDSMAN	If you require assistance understanding your workplace rights and responsibilities.	13 13 94 <a href="http://fairwork.gov.au">fairwork.gov.au</a>
GAMBLING HELP	If you are having problems managing your gambling, you can call for free, confidential support.	1800 858 858 <a href="http://gamblinghelp.nsw.gov.au">gamblinghelp.nsw.gov.au</a>
HEALTHDIRECT AUSTRALIA	Outside of GP consultation hours their trained staff can help you treat non-urgent illnesses.	1800 022 222
IDP SYDNEY	Assistance with assessing study options, including courses, applications and student visas.	8260 3300 <a href="http://idp.com/australia">idp.com/australia</a>
LEGAL AID	If you need to know what your legal rights are then contact this free legal service.	1300 888 529 <a href="http://legalaids.nsw.gov.au">legalaids.nsw.gov.au</a>
LIFELINE	If you need someone to talk to about your state of mind, this resource is a crisis support hotline.	<a href="http://lifeline.org.au">lifeline.org.au</a>
NSW OMBUDSMAN	An independant agency to watch over the NSW Government and improve their delivery of services to the public.	9286 1000 <a href="http://ombo.nsw.gov.au">ombo.nsw.gov.au</a>
REDFERN LEGAL CENTRE	This independent, non-profit community centre offers free legal advice, referral and casework to international students anywhere in NSW.	9698 7277 <a href="http://rlc.org.au">rlc.org.au</a>
SERVICE NSW	NSW Government services including driving and transport.	13 77 88 <a href="http://service.nsw.gov.au">service.nsw.gov.au</a>
STUDY NSW	NSW Government agency, Study NSW, delivers programs, events and engagement programs to enhance the experience of international students in NSW.	<a href="http://study.sydney">study.sydney</a>
TRANSPORT INFOLINE (PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES)	To find out about trains, buses and ferries, including ticketing information, timetables and more.	131 500

## EMERGENCY

For emergency services requiring ambulance, fire brigade and/or police dial **Triple Zero (000)**. If you require a translator then tell the operator your language and they will connect you with one.



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\* We're the top young university in Australia, according to QS Top 50 Under 50 2016–2021.

Photography: Kwa Nguyen