

Getting around in Australia

Australia, which is both a country and a continent, covers an area of about 7.69 million square kilometres (2.97 million square miles) and is often compared to the size of Europe. If you are coming to Australia for the first time, it is important to familiarise yourself with the variety of transport available and ensure that you can access websites and applications that can help you get around.

Interstate Travel

Interstate travel within Australia is in some cases only available through a plane connection. The longest nonstop domestic flight in Australia is between Perth in Western Australia and Brisbane in Queensland, with the flight duration of 4 hours and 45 minutes. There are a small number of domestic airlines in Australia and if you have flexibility around the dates for your planned travel, it might be worth using travel websites and applications to look for the best offer.

An alternative to flying is using rail services. The large railway network offers connections between the main Australian cities. Travelling by interstate rail may not always be the cheapest or fastest travel solution, however, it can offer a memorable experience and the opportunity to discover a variety of landscapes within the country.



Another affordable option to travel throughout Australia is using bus or coach services. Bus or coach service providers can offer cost-effective and accessible connections between major cities and popular tourist destinations. There are several competitive providers and online tools available to compare different bus fares, like [Checkmybus](#).

Metropolitan Areas

Most of Australia's major cities have pre-paid card systems available for public transport that replaces single printed tickets. Each city has its own system, and each operates under a different name. There are multiple benefits for using cards over single tickets. For example, by using pre-paid card, you have daily and weekend and weekly caps that provide reduced fees. See each city's **card provider** below for more information about where you can use the card and the cost of fares.

Sydney [Opal Card](#)

Melbourne [Myki](#)

Brisbane [Go Card](#)

Perth [SmartRider](#)

Adelaide [Metro Card](#)

Canberra [MyWay](#)

Hobart [Metro Greencard](#)

Darwin [Tap & Ride Card](#)



Rural and remote Australia

Some rural and remote areas in Australia are only accessible by vehicles. You might need to rent a vehicle to get to your destination or, if you are moving to those areas more permanently, you might consider purchasing your own vehicle.

Renting a car

Renting a car is a good option for short-term use for e.g. when you require a vehicle to reach a specific destination, rather than on an every-day basis. There are specific conditions for the vehicle that need to be met in order to advertise it for hire and therefore hire cars must be reliable and safe to use. Car rental companies are located at major airports making their services accessible for newcomers. You might consider booking the car in advance so that it is available on your arrival.

Campervans are popular among travellers allowing them to undertake long trips with the convenience and the flexibility that a campervan offers. There are many companies providing campervans for hire in Australia.

Car sharing is another popular and eco-friendly solution, which is accessible in most metropolitan areas in Australia. Car sharing can offer more flexibility around rental periods and are usually more affordable than standard car rental companies.

Another cost-effective option that has gained more popularity in the recent years is called relocation rentals. This unique service offers free or low-cost car rental in exchange for delivering that vehicle to a specific location which can be a great way to explore the country on a low cost.

Tip: Before entering Australian roads, it is advisable to familiarise yourself with road rules and practice before a long drive. Australians drive on the left side on the road which is the first road rule to remember. On the website of the [National Transport Commission](#) you can find useful links to each state and territory's road rules with free resources on penalties, parking permits and driving handbooks.

Purchasing a vehicle

Buying a vehicle can be a necessary move if you are located in rural and remote areas and you are required to commute on a daily basis. It can also be your personal preference to travel more freely. Regardless of your circumstances, as well as your budget, you can find an affordable option for yourself and your family. See the most common options below:

Bringing your vehicle from overseas - if you are planning to bring your vehicle from overseas, you must apply for the import approval on the [Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development](#). There is also a tax (i.e. a fee) applied on imported vehicles which contributes to an overall price of the import.

Buying a new or used vehicle – there are a variety of vehicles available in Australia to meet every driver's preference and budget. There are car dealerships which sell new and used cars. Private sellers also offer their vehicles for sale on popular websites such as [Carsales.com](#), [Facebook Marketplace](#) or [Gumtree](#). When buying a vehicle from a dealership you will receive all necessary assistance to register the vehicle you purchase. However, when purchasing a vehicle from a private seller, you will need to complete vehicle registration requirements yourself. In addition to registering your vehicle you may need to apply for a certificate of roadworthiness. A certificate of roadworthiness is document that is issued as evidence that the vehicle is safe to be used on public roads and can be known by a variety of names depending on the state or territory. Check the government vehicle and transport office in your state or territory website for further information about their requirements to register a vehicle.

Tip: You can use your drivers licence from your home country for up to three months upon your arrival, as long as the licence is in English. After that time, you are required to transfer to the Australian driver's licence in the state or territory of your residency.

