



*Australia is generally a safe destination with travellers enjoying unhindered travel experiences in terms of their personal safety and security. However, as with all travel at home or away, you should observe the same precautions with your personal safety and possessions.*

## TRAVEL INSURANCE & MEDICAL SERVICES

A travel insurance policy that covers you for theft, loss, accidents and medical problems before you leave home is highly recommended. If you plan on doing any adventure activities like scuba diving, bushwalking or travelling in remote areas, check that your policy fully covers these activities. Remember to bring your insurance policy details and emergency contact numbers and with you.

Australia's public health care system is called Medicare and Australian hospitals provide world-class medical facilities and standards of care. The Australian Government has reciprocal healthcare agreements with some countries for medically necessary treatment while visiting Australia, however it is best to check your eligibility before you leave home and have appropriate travel insurance to cover your stay in Australia.

## VACCINATIONS & MEDICATIONS

No special immunizations or vaccinations are required to visit Australia unless you have come from, or have visited a yellow fever infected country within six days of your arrival. However, regulations and medical advice can change at short

notice, so check with your doctor and the relevant Australian Government websites before you leave home.

Medicine brought into Australia for personal use is subject to controls and must be declared on your arrival. It is recommended you bring a prescription or letter from your doctor outlining your medical condition and the medicine you are carrying. If you need to obtain prescription medicine while you are here, the prescription must be written by a doctor in Australia.

## ACCESSIBLE TRAVEL

Much time and effort has been spent in recent years to ensure that travelling with a disability won't stop you enjoying all that Australia has to offer. If you have a medical condition or special needs, you will find plenty of services available. Speak to your travel agent about your specific requirements or visit the websites below to help you prepare before you leave home.

## SUN PROTECTION

The Australian sun is very strong and can burn your skin in as little as 15 minutes in summer, so it is important to protect yourself all year round, even if it is a cloudy day.

While travelling in Australia, be 'sun smart' and protect yourself against sun damage by wearing clothes that cover as much of your skin as possible, even when swimming; applying a high-level water resistant sunscreen regularly; wearing a hat and sunglasses that provide good protection for the face, nose, neck, ears and eyes; and sitting in the shade rather than directly in the sun.

Extra care should be taken in the middle of the day when UV radiation is most intense, and make sure you drink plenty of fluids to avoid dehydration.

The Australian Government's SunSmart UV Alert will tell you the time period when you need to be most careful and appears on the weather page of most daily newspapers and on the Bureau of Meteorology website.

## SURF & WATER SAFETY

Most of Australia's population lives close to the coastline and the beach has long occupied a special place in the Australian identity. Australians love the water, and every day thousands of people flock to Australia's coastline to swim, surf, relax and have fun. But our beautiful beaches can hold hidden dangers in the form of strong currents and beach conditions can change dramatically for those who are not used to them.

Popular beaches are usually patrolled by volunteer lifesavers from October to April and red and yellow flags mark the safest area for swimming. Be safe and always swim between these flags and always swim with other people.



If you intend to go diving, check with a dive operator in the locality or contact the Diving Industry Association in the state that you are visiting for information on site conditions, safety regulations, licences, permits and diver rating requirements.

### WILDLIFE

Australia's unique and extraordinary wildlife is one of our key attractions for visitors, but use common sense, and you don't need to worry too much about dangerous Australian wildlife.

Shark attacks in Australia are very rare. Shark netting on Australian beaches deter sharks, but you can further reduce your risk by always swimming between the flags on patrolled beaches and never swimming alone.

Crocodiles live in rivers and coastal estuaries across northern Australia. When travelling near crocodile habitats, observe safety signs and don't swim in rivers, estuaries, tidal rivers, deep pools or mangrove shores. Also seek expert advice about crocodiles before camping, fishing or boating.

Marine stingers are often present in tropical waters from November to April. During this time you can only swim within stinger-resistant enclosures, which are set up on the most popular beaches.

You will also need to wear protective clothing when swimming in these areas and always observe any warning signs.

Australia does have poisonous snakes and spiders, but bites are extremely rare and rarely fatal. When bushwalking or hiking, avoid bites by wearing protective footwear and using common sense. If bitten, you should seek immediate medical attention.

### TRAVELLING IN REMOTE LOCATIONS

Australia's outback tracks are among the best four-wheel-drive journeys in the world, but driving in Australia's remote and rugged areas requires thorough preparation. Before embarking on an unescorted outback journey, check road conditions, ensure your vehicle is properly equipped and that you have a good map, extra provisions and an emergency plan. Make sure you inform someone of your expected arrival. Distances between towns in Australia are often hundreds of kilometres apart, so plan your trip accordingly. Be aware that mobile phones may have limited coverage in remote areas. If your vehicle breaks down in a remote area, always stay with your vehicle. This is the single most important rule of survival. Some roads should not be travelled unless part of a well-organised convoy.

If bushwalking or hiking check the length and difficulty of the walk and consider using a local guide for long or challenging walks. Check the Parks Australia website for the latest information on track conditions and hazards.

### NATURAL DISASTERS

From time to time Australia experiences a range of 'natural disasters' including bushfires, floods, drought, heat waves, severe storms, and occasionally earthquakes and landslides. These events are often seen as part of the Australian national character and are part of the natural cycle of weather patterns in Australia.

Many Australian Government agencies have a role to play during significant emergencies. In the event of a health emergency, the Australian Government's Health Emergency website provides up-to-date information, important health messages, and health related response arrangements.

### EMERGENCY SERVICES

000 is the number for all emergency services in Australia. An operator will connect you to police, ambulance or the fire brigade. You should only call 000 in an emergency.