

Australia

Business Travel Guide

Compiled by:

Consulate General of Switzerland in Sydney

Sydney, September 2023

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Passport:

All passengers need a valid passport for overseas travel, regardless of the destination. As some countries require at least six months validity remaining on the passport, you should check with the consulates of all the countries you are planning to visit prior to your departure. Make sure that there are enough free pages in your passport for the entry/exit stamps of the countries you are visiting.

Australia requires that your passport must be valid only for the period of your intended travel in and out of Australia. There is no requirement for your passport to be valid for six months after your travel.

Swiss citizens living in Switzerland or abroad can find information about application for a new passport under www.schweizerpass.ch.

Visa:

All travellers, except New Zealand citizens, must obtain a visa or electronic travel authority before travelling to Australia. You can explore all Australian visa options [here](#).

Business travellers and tourists can apply for an [eVisitor](#) (subclass 651) visa prior to departure. This is a free visa for multiple visits to Australia for tourism or business purposes for up to three months at a time within a 12-month period. This visa is available to passport holders from a number of European countries, including Switzerland, and it cannot be extended.

Swiss nationals can apply online for most Australian visas through [ImmiAccount](#). This is the preferred and most efficient way to apply. Any paper applications (where applicable) should be sent to the Australian Embassy, Berlin (<https://germany.embassy.gov.au/>), which manages visa services for clients living in Switzerland. The Australian Consulate-General in Geneva has no visa and immigration function, nor does the Embassy of Switzerland in Bern.

Australia does not insert a visa label in the passport anymore. Visa holders can access their visa record through the free [Visa Entitlement Verification Online](#) (VEVO) service or the myVEVO mobile app.

Please note that the Consulate General of Switzerland in Sydney and the Embassy of Switzerland in Canberra do not deal with visa matters for Australia. The responsibility lies with the Australian Department of Home Affairs and only information provided by that office is binding. For more details about entry requirements and visas, please check the website of the [Department of Home Affairs](#) or the Australian Embassy's website: [Connecting with Australia](#). If after accessing these websites you have further visa questions or require additional information, you may get in touch with the [Global Service Centre](#).

Entering Australia:

The [Australian Border Force](#) is the front-line operational agency within the Department of Home Affairs, responsible for offshore and onshore border control enforcement.

Immigration in Australia is generally a fast and efficient process. However, as there is a government mandated curfew operating at most major airports between 11pm and 6am, there can sometimes be longer wait times when the first morning flights arrive. Give yourself enough time if planning any meetings immediately after arrival.

Business travellers generally enter Australia via [Sydney](#) (NSW), [Melbourne](#) (VIC), [Brisbane](#) (QLD), [Adelaide](#) (SA) and [Perth](#) (WA) and to a lesser extent [Cairns](#) (QLD), [Darwin](#) (NT) or [Hobart](#) (TAS). The capital city of Australia and its political hub is [Canberra](#), but the biggest business hubs remain Sydney and Melbourne respectively.

Health certificate requirements:

No special immunisations or vaccinations are required to visit Australia **unless you have come from a yellow fever risk country**. Upon arrival in Australia from a yellow fever risk country, travellers may be required to present a valid International Yellow Fever Vaccination Certificate to Australian Border Force Officers. For more information about this disease, vaccination and risk countries please check the website of the Australian Department of Health: [yellow fever](#) or [Yellow Fever – General Factsheet for travellers](#).

Australian Customs:

When arriving from overseas you will need to clear first immigration and then [customs](#). All travellers arriving into Australia are required to complete and sign an [Incoming Passenger card](#) (translation into different languages is provided on this link). This card is a legally binding document declaring what you are bringing into the country. Due to the unique biodiversity of the country, among other things, Australia's customs laws prevent you from bringing protected wildlife into Australia. Some common items such as fresh or packaged food, fruit, eggs, meat, plants, seeds, skins and feathers are not allowed. The laws prevent also the import of some drugs and steroids, or weapons and firearms.

For a more complete list of items which are prohibited or restricted or to check the strict limits for duty free items or alcohol and tobacco/cigarettes, please consult the [website](#) of the Australian Border Force or check the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment's website [here](#). Please also consult the [biosecurity](#) website. Non-compliance will attract criminal or administrative sanctions.

If you want to purchase duty free items when travelling internationally, you need to be aware that these articles (if packed in your carry-on baggage) are subject to the same restrictions as other powders, liquids, aerosols and gels. Australia applies restrictions for flights both to and from Australia. On the website of the Australian Border Force you can find more information on [what you can bring on a plane](#) and on [duty free limits](#).

For further information on travel to Australia, you may also want to refer to the website of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs: [Reisehinweise für Australien](#) (only in German, French or Italian).

Leaving Australia:

People leaving Australia do no longer need to complete an outgoing passenger card, making their departure quicker and easier.

International travellers (including Australians) might be able to claim a GST (Goods and Services Tax) and/or WET (Wine Equalization Tax) refund for some goods bought in Australia. For more information about the Tourist Refund Scheme (TRS) and how to make the claim, check the following website of the Australian Border Force: [Tourist Refund Scheme](#).

Transfer from the airport to the city center:

The easiest way to travel from the airport to the city centre is generally by taxi, ride-share or on the train. For the train you will need to tap on with a credit card on the readers before entering the station and then tap off again at the exit. The train goes into the heart of the CBD in Sydney, stopping at various stations, depending on where your hotel is located. By taxi or ride-share the CBD is generally around a 25-minute ride away, but like all multi-million cities, there can be traffic congestion during peak hours when workers are going to work or returning home.

The links of Australian airports listed below each contain detailed information regarding airport transfers, taxis, buses, trains, airport parking, terminal information and tips for airport arrivals & departures.

- [Adelaide Airport](#)
- [Brisbane Airport](#)
- [Cairns Airport](#)
- [Darwin Airport](#)
- [Gold Coast Airport](#)
- [Melbourne Airport](#)
- [Perth Airport](#)
- [Sydney Airport](#)

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

Mandatory and recommended vaccinations:

No special immunisations or vaccinations are required to visit Australia unless you have come from a yellow fever risk country. Upon arrival in Australia from a yellow fever risk country, travellers may be required to present a valid International Yellow Fever Vaccination Certificate to Australian Border Force Officers. For more information about yellow fever, vaccination and risk countries please check the website of the Australian Department of Health: [yellow fever](#) or [Yellow Fever – General Factsheet for travellers](#).

Mandatory medical insurance:

Generally, you do not need to hold health insurance to be granted a visitor or business visitor visa for Australia. However, all visitors to Australia are strongly recommended to make their own arrangements for private health insurance (regardless of whether or not it is a visa condition) to ensure they are fully covered for any unplanned medical and or hospital care they may need while in Australia.

Other mandatory health requirements:

There are no other mandatory health requirements for your arrival into Australia. Nevertheless, travellers should seek medical advice regarding vaccinations for their individual medical circumstances prior to travelling to Australia and for the duration of their business trip. Should you need to bring any medicine into Australia, please consult the website of the [Department of Health Therapeutic Goods Administration](#) or the [Office for Drug Control](#) for more information.

Prior to departure from Switzerland, you can also consult the websites of the Federal Office of Public Health [BAG](#) or the Swiss medical travel advisory [Safe Travel](#).

PUBLIC SECURITY / RECOMMENDED PRECAUTIONS

Australia is generally considered to be a safe country. According to the [Global Peace Index 2023](#) produced by the Institute for Economics & Peace (IEP), Australia is indeed ranked 22nd (Switzerland = 10th) on the list of the safest nations in the world, out of 163 countries and territories.

The most common dangers in Australia are natural hazards (bushfires, flooding, storms, cyclones, etc.), dangerous flora & fauna (on land and in water) and riptides. Underwater currents (rips) occur on many beaches and bear considerable risks as well. On beaches patrolled by surf life savers, please always swim between the yellow and red flags.

The emergency phone number in Australia is 000 (Triple Zero), which gets the right emergency service to help you (Police, Fire or Ambulance).

Please consult the website of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs [Travel advice for Australia](#) (only in German, French or Italian) before you travel.

TIME ZONE

Time difference between Switzerland and

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Canberra (ACT) | Central European Time UTC +10 |
| Sydney (NSW) / Melbourne (VIC) | CET UTC +10 |
| Perth (WA) | CET UTC +8 |

Australia's mainland states and territories are divided into 5 standard time zones.

In 2023, Daylight Saving Time is used in New South Wales, Victoria, Australian Capital Territory and Tasmania: clocks are turned back by one hour on the second Sunday in April and turned forward on the first Sunday in October. Other states in Australia (Queensland, Northern Territory and Western Australia) remain on standard time all of 2023.

BUSINESS HOURS

Shop trading hours in Australia are regulated by individual states and territories. Here is a general view of business hours, but they can change from one region to another. Depending on the region, non-essential shops are required to remain closed on Christmas Day (25.12.), Good Friday (date varies from one year to the next), ANZAC Day (25.04.) or Boxing Day (26.12). *Some close early

| | Weekdays | Saturdays | Sundays and Nationals Holidays |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| Government Offices | 9 am - 5 pm | Closed | Closed |
| Banks | 9 am - 5 pm* | Closed | Closed |
| Shops | Open Various opening times | Open Various opening times | Generally open Various opening times |

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| New Year's Day | 1 st January |
| National Day (Australia Day) | 26 January |
| Anzac Day | 25 April |
| Bank Holiday | The first Monday of August |
| King's Birthday | The second Monday of June (except WA) |
| Labour Day | The first Monday of October, the first or second Monday of March according to the State |
| Christmas Day | 25 December |
| Boxing Day | 26 December |

Travelling in Australia during the local school holiday periods can be busy as local families often use this time to have their own vacations. Peak travel seasons (dates differ from state to state): two weeks in April, two weeks in June/July, two weeks in September/October and six weeks in December/January (summer holidays).

NATIONAL TRADE FAIR CALENDAR

The dates of the main trade fairs can be found on the following website:

<https://www.tradefairdates.com/Fairs-Australia-Z14-S1.html>

COMMUNICATION: TELEPHONE AND INTERNET

Australia's country code is: +61

Local SIM card can be purchased easily at virtually every supermarket, kiosk or phone shop. There are about 50 operators in Australia - so much choice.

Communication via phone, internet or e-mail is easy and well organised in Australia.

Landline phone numbers within Australia usually have 10 digits - two digits for the area code and eight digits for the number.

The area codes for the main Australian cities are:

- Sydney and Canberra - 02
- Melbourne and Hobart - 03
- Brisbane - 07
- Adelaide, Darwin and Perth - 08

Mobile phone numbers in Australia have 10 digits. Do not dial an area code within Australia if you are calling a mobile phone number; just dial the 10-digit number.

The outgoing IDD (international direct dialling) code from within Australia is 0011.

- If you are calling from a landline dial 0011 first, then the number, but leave out the zero in front of the area code before the number. Here is an example: If you were calling a phone number in Switzerland with county code +41 and in Bern, which is area code 031, you would dial: 0011 41 31
- From a mobile phone just dial +41 31 xxxx

Cell Phones

Australia uses the 900MHz and 1800MHz GSM bands for mobile phones. Before you arrive in Australia, check that your phone will work on these bands and that your phone is "unlocked" (by your mobile phone provider). If your phone is marketed as "GSM", "tri-band" or "quad-band", it is a good bet your phone will work, but check before you leave to avoid any problems once in Australia.

If your phone works on these bands, you have three options for making/receiving calls in Australia:

- Using your existing SIM card
- Buying an international prepaid SIM card from your service provider before you leave
- Buying a new SIM card, once you get to Australia (pre-paid or plan)

If you are using your existing SIM card, the only thing you need to check is if your service operator has enabled "roaming." This will allow you to use the networks in Australia with your existing SIM card. There are usually very high call charges for this though, so be careful. Check with your service operator before you leave.

Internet is easily accessible and there are no restrictions in Australia. Many places offer Free WiFi.

ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

Electricity plug and socket:

The plugs in Australia have two flat metal pins shaped like a "V" and some may contain a third flat pin in the centre, according to the photo below:



The voltage in Australia is 230 V with a frequency of 50 Hz.

Travellers from most nations in Asia, Africa and Europe should have appliances that work on the same main voltage as Australia - therefore you will not need a voltage converter. Notable exceptions to this are Japan, USA and Canada, which uses 100/120V 50/60Hz. Please note, however, that you will require a power adaptor.

METHODS OF PAYMENT

The national currency in Australia is the Australia Dollar (AUD or A\$).

Australian dollar notes are available in \$ 5, \$ 10, \$ 20, \$ 50 and \$ 100 denominations. Coins are available in 5c, 10c, 50c (silver coloured), 1 dollar and 2 dollar coins (gold coloured) denominations.

Exchange rate as of September 14, 2023: CHF 1 = AUD 1.74 (source: OANDA).

Travellers can carry an unlimited amount of money into and out of Australia. However, when entering or leaving the country you must declare cash in Australian and foreign currency if the combined value is AUD\$ 10,000 or more, and you must declare non-cash forms of money when asked by an Australian Border Force or police officer.

Currency exchange is available at banks, hotels, international airports, as well as at foreign exchange counters (service fees may be charged). Australian banks offer the same range of services typical in other western nations.

EFTPOS (electronic payment system) is widely available in most Australian shops, restaurants and hotels, allowing you to pay for purchases with your credit or debit card. Merchants may impose credit card surcharges in some places. Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) are widespread, although facilities may be limited in remote towns and the outback. A good tip when travelling to these isolated areas is to carry multiple credit cards and some cash.

Credit cards such as American Express, Bankcard, Diners Club, MasterCard, Visa, UnionPay and JCB are accepted in Australia. Visa or MasterCard can be used everywhere credit cards are accepted. American Express and Diners Club are accepted at major supermarkets, department store chains and tourist destinations.

Traveller's cheques are not widely accepted in Australia. If you do purchase traveller's cheques, it is best to buy them in Australian dollars, as smaller shops, restaurants and other businesses are unlikely to know what the exchange rate is if you present a cheque in a different currency.

For further information and large business finance transaction, please consult the Australian Government Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre [AUSTRAC](#).

The Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) is Australia's central bank and manages Australia's foreign exchange reserves. Currency fluctuations are best followed via the stock market, but the official and historical exchange rate information with the Swiss Franc can be found [here](#).

Tipping is not compulsory in restaurants or places of service in Australia, but always appreciated. Most people leave tips for service that was great. A good rule of thumb is to round your restaurant bill up to the nearest \$10 when service is great or up to 10% of the bill. Servers sometimes do not receive tips included on a credit card, so always try to tip in cash whenever possible. In upmarket restaurants, it is common to tip waiters about 10 % of the bill for good service.

| Accepted methods of payment: | everywhere | almost everywhere | limited | not accepted |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Cash (national currency) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| MasterCard | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Visa | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| American Express | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Diner | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Apple Pay | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Google/Samsung Pay | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

DOMESTIC TRAVEL, LOCAL TRANSPORT

Transport in all of Australia's state capital cities is provided by an extensive network of public transport operating modes, including commuter rail, trams and light rail, rapid transit system, buses and ferries. The quality of the services is good.

For public transport in most large cities and regional areas, contactless payment by pre-paid card (smartcard ticketing system) is the quick and easy way to pay for your trip. In Sydney the card is called **Opal**, in Melbourne **myki**, in Brisbane **go card**, in Perth **SmartRider** and in Adelaide **metroCARD**.

When travelling interstate, flying is the best way to cover Australia's large distances in a short time. Australia's domestic airlines, including [Qantas](#), [Virgin Australia](#), [Jetstar](#) and [Rex](#), serve all state capital cities and many regional cities, making it an easy way to travel. Competition between domestic airlines means that some great value fares are available, especially if you book in advance.

Taxi fares are regulated by each state government, based on flag fall, distance, peak time charge and waiting time. In Sydney for instance, the basic fee is A\$ 3.60 (CHF 2.40 @ exchange rate 1.50) and the kilometer price is A\$ 2.19 (CHF 1.46). For standing and waiting time, A\$ 56.68 (CHF 37.78) is charged per hour. These fees are higher on Friday and Saturday between 10:00pm and 6:00am.

Main taxi ride hailing apps can be found among others, on following websites: [Silver Service](#), [13Cabs](#), [Premiercabs](#), or [Rydo](#).

Alternatively, ride-sharing services such as [Uber](#), [Didi](#) or [Ola](#) could be a much reliable and cheaper option.

Main method of payment for taxi or ride-share is by credit and debit card or cash.

There are numerous car rental companies, which have an office at major airports, central city locations, suburbs and resorts, among others:

- [Avis](#)
- [Hertz](#)
- [Thrifty](#)
- [Enterprise](#)
- [Budget](#)
- [Europcar](#)

Generally, car rental companies in Australia require drivers to be over 21 years of age. They also need to have a full driving license. Drivers under the age of 24 may need to pay a daily underage surcharge. Young drivers may not be able to hire certain kinds of vehicle and if more than one person is driving the rental car, you will often have to pay an additional driver fee. The rules can differ between suppliers and states.

It is important to check the terms and conditions of your insurance policy. Rental cars in Australia will have an excess amount, which is the sum you will be liable to pay for any damage caused to the vehicle. To reduce your financial liability, you can buy an excess reduction insurance at the car rental counter.

You will need a valid credit card with sufficient funds to hire a car in Australia, as the rental car companies temporarily block a refundable security / guarantee amount on your card when you rent a vehicle and until you return it in the same condition.

Car rental companies usually do not allow to drive their cars on dirt and gravel roads or to take them on any island off the coast of Australia unless authorized in writing. Check the terms and condition carefully.

For many visitors, driving on the left-hand side of the road will be a major difference and a challenge. Please note that it is illegal not to wear a seat belt, or to use your mobile phone while driving. There are severe penalties for drunk driving and speeding.

ACCOMMODATION, TEMPORARY OFFICE SPACE

Australia has accommodation for every budget. Ranging from 5-star hotels, luxury resorts to boutique or small hotels and backpackers.

Should your business trip require a longer period of stay and you would like to feel more at home, there are various serviced apartments as well. These apartments generally contain a fully equipped kitchen or kitchenette and laundry facilities.

There are many companies offering short-term office spaces, such as for instance: [Spacely](#), [realcommercial](#) or [instantoffices](#).

LANGUAGES USED FOR BUSINESS

The language used for business in Australia is English. While generally intelligible, there are many unique Australian expressions, which can be confusing to non-native speakers. Just ask if there is something you do not understand.

Even at an important business level, Australians are generally helpful and will take pleasure in explaining the colloquial jargon. For a brief history about Australian English click [here](#) and for a few slang words and phrases click [Australian slang](#). With this you will feel at home on your first day Down Under.

BUSINESS PRACTICES

Tips for initiating business contacts:

Here are a few suggestions on how to obtain business contacts, how to initiate contacts before you go and how to make your first appointments:

- **Switzerland Global Enterprise (S-GE)** is the official Swiss organization for export and investment promotion with offices throughout Switzerland and in 31 countries. S-GE support Swiss SMEs in their international business and help innovative foreign companies to establish in Switzerland. For more information about S-GE, please click [here](#).
- S-GE's worldwide global network includes the **Trade Point Australia**, which is integrated into the Consulate General of Switzerland in Sydney. This office assist Swiss SMEs with trade and import advices and business contacts in Australia. For more information about Trade Point Australia and contact details, please click [here](#).
- The Science, Technology and Higher Education Office of the **Embassy of Switzerland in Canberra** can help with advice and contacts regarding Universities and Research Institutes. For inquiries, please send an email to the Embassy: canberra@eda.admin.ch.

General Business Practice:

Australian business culture is collaborative, reflecting an egalitarian approach to life. Australians value and appreciate strong work ethic and the principles of courtesy, formal relations, mutual confidence and respect.

Business travellers will quickly realize not to be too self-promoting when presenting to Australians. A hard-sell approach can often be misconstrued as bragging and can provoke a negative response. A

factual description of issues will be far better received than a more hyperbolic approach. They are rarely intimidated by others' status of importance and speak plainly when conveying their ideas.

Australia's focus on egalitarianism and individuality strongly influences corporate structure and hierarchy. Organizations tend to be fairly non-hierarchical and by all appearances, managers may seem to simply be another member of the team as they only keep a marginal power distance and the business culture prefers a more collaborative approach to work. Therefore, managers and subordinates alike will give their input and consider the options before reaching a final decision. Despite an overall results-orientated outlook towards business, the decision-making process can sometimes be a slow and extended one, which should not be rushed or hurried.

Australians usually get down to business quickly with a minimum amount of small talk. Indeed, time and efficiency are of the utmost importance when conducting business meetings. Australians generally appreciate brevity and are not impressed by too much detail. A presentation should be straight-forward and open, and backed with facts and figures.

Australians are direct communicators who are likely to be open if they disagree with you. This is not to say they will be rude (they will usually be diplomatic in their approach), but expect them arrive straight to their point without euphemism. You should not hesitate to debate and defend your point of view, but any exaggerated claims should be avoided. Australians favour a win-win negotiating style so proposals should be presented with acceptable terms. During this process, it is imperative to avoid confrontations or pressure tactics or to come with preconceived ideas or ready-to-use solutions.

Because of their matter-of-fact approach, Australians do not feel it necessary to build personal relationships before doing business, particularly at the first meeting. They will be more interested in your experience, credentials and the longevity of your company. Nevertheless, Australians are open to cultivating business friendships, especially in the long term. They enjoy building rapport so long as it does not seek to compromise either person's position in negotiations.

When faced with a problem, Australians tend to seek a quick resolve and move on rather than reflect on what has happened. They generally do not like to dwell on past errors. Reliability is strongly valued in business culture, therefore when promises are not kept or business falls through, it is often remembered.

Scheduling Meetings:

Meetings in Australia are relatively easy to schedule on almost all organisational levels. You will find that many executives will be pleasant, approachable, and willing to meet in order to discuss business. Please do not expect to meet anyone without an appointment, as it usually does not matter how important or well known someone is in this country.

Make a meeting appointment at least two weeks ahead of time, and indicate what its objectives are beforehand as well. If you already have a written agenda, people will appreciate you sharing it with them prior to the meeting. Appointments must be confirmed by calling a couple of days beforehand.

Australians are well known for their laid-back culture and lifestyle, but are usually very punctual with business appointments. Tardiness reflects badly in a professional setting, so make sure to arrive on time or slightly early. If you are chairing the meeting, it is more crucial to start punctually. Being casually late is not customary for business meetings.

Proceedings should follow the set agenda, but it is likely that first meetings will serve the primary purpose of determining familiarity and trustworthiness. Therefore, people will be less concerned with getting to know you personally and more interested in learning about your credentials and ideas.

It is recommended to avoid December/January (6 weeks; summer holidays), April (2 weeks), June/July (two weeks), September/October (two weeks), which are periods when people often take their vacations. School holidays are regulated by individual states and territories and vary from a region to the other.

Business attire:

The Australian business dress code depends on the industry, with banking and finance being the most conservative. In some companies it is acceptable to dress more casually, but if you are not sure about the way to dress when you go somewhere new, it is better to be over-dressed than under-dressed. For

initial meetings, it is advised to adopt discreet and stylish, rather conservative dress and to adapt it according to the appointment and the type of industry. Men should wear classic dark suits while women should wear plain suits.

In Brisbane, Cairns, Darwin or other tropical areas, depending on the job function and company culture, men may wear shirts, ties and Bermuda shorts.

People are rarely criticized if someone fails to observe formal etiquette (e.g. forgetting to dress smartly). Being overdressed for a gathering is sometimes considered more embarrassing than being underdressed. Unlike in some other cultures, it is not customary for men to comment on a woman's attire or looks.

Introducing yourself:

When meeting your Australian contacts for the first time, it is customary to give a firm, friendly handshake with a warm smile and eye contact at the beginning and end of a meeting. This is the preferred gesture for both male and female colleague.

When meeting an Australian business partner for the first time, it is advised to use the courtesy titles "Mrs" or "Mr" followed by the name. You may introduce yourself by your full name, but expect your interlocutors to address you by your first name. Indeed Australians usually quickly use first names in all business situations in Australia, but you should wait to be invited to do so. Academic or job-related titles are downplayed and they take generally little part in business situations, except in the medical or academic world.

Business cards are exchanged over introductions without formality. If this is not the case, then they will be given out only if there is a need for another's contact details following discussions. When someone gives you his or her card, do not just shove it in your pocket, but also take time to look at the card, give a positive comment or ask a question. A translation in English on the back of the card is an advantage.

Building trust and personal relationships:

Foreigners are often surprised by how openly and quickly Australians begin to establish the basis for a personal relationship after a first meeting. Indeed relationships in Australia tend to be built on camaraderie rather than hierarchy. In this way, people tend to show respect to friends and peers through gestures of equality instead of deference.

Australia is one of the very few cultures in the world in which humour is all-pervasive in business situations. Australians typically appreciate a good sense of humour and may use it throughout dealings to lighten the setting. Reciprocate this to build a good atmosphere for discussion and take the time to exchange pleasantries. Asking about your partner's previous evening or weekend will help you building trust and establish a good relation. If an Australian teases you, reply with good humour and show that you are not disconcerted by it. Indulging in their jokes like this will show, in a non-arrogant way, that you are self-confident but do not take yourself too seriously. Lightly teasing them back will also be received cheerfully. In addition, do not be surprised if they use informal language that would be considered unprofessional in your own country (e.g. swearing can be common).

However, while meetings may seem casual, they are still taken very seriously and you should never underestimate an Australian senior manager because he or she uses humour.

There is no set tradition for business entertaining in Australia, but business lunches or dinners generally occur when the relation is already established. Professional life is often not very strictly separated from private life.

In meetings and negotiations, Australians can come across as relaxed. However, beware they are tough and direct business people. Sometimes this directness comes before diplomacy and therefore can be considered quite blunt on occasions, especially by people from those cultures in which the majority are wary of speaking plainly for fear of creating a negative emotional impact.

Business meetings are sometimes held around, during, before or after an important sporting event. In business, Australians tend to be receptive to sporting analogies because they love sports, especially the ones played or watched most frequently, and are passionate about them. Knowing what sports

Australians are particularly interested in can also be an advantage in professional or private discussions. For more information about Australian Sports click [here](#).

Australian Do's and Don'ts:

Do's

- Do arrive on time to a meeting or slightly early. Tardiness reflects badly in a professional setting. If you are chairing the meeting, it is more crucial to start punctually.
- Do engage in some initial "small talk" before a business meeting begins, break the ice with a few minutes of social chat. Australians use this as a way of establishing rapport with their colleagues and is an important part of business etiquette. This should usually only be about impersonal topics (such as the weather) to avoid intruding on others' private lives.
- Do keep a certain amount of distance when in conversation with your Australian counterparts. Personal space is greatly valued in Australian culture.
- Do maintain good, direct eye contact with your Australian colleagues during all business meetings and conversations as this helps to establish trust and reflects confidence.
- Do speak plainly in meetings and negotiations, and expect that what you say will be taken literally. Do not "beat around the bush" and be straight forward.
- Do appeal to your counterparts' common sense during negotiations and be clear about your intentions. Support them with facts and figures, avoiding claims that you cannot demonstrate.
- Do give the impression that everything is well managed and under control. Australians like to feel relaxed about business, no matter what the situation may be.
- Do aim for a win-win outcome, as an even deal will create better chances of future business with Australians. Keep a measure on how much you criticise them directly.
- Do try to be yourself. Australians warm most to those who seem genuine and comfortable with themselves.
- Do drink with Australians (if you can), relax and enjoy yourself in casual settings. They tend to bond quickly with people they 'click' with in informal social situations.
- Do respect the natural environment, wildlife and land of Australia. Protection of the country's ecology is very important to many Australians.

Do not's

- Do not be overly combative or argumentative. Australians tend to avoid the company of people who are too opinionated and may consider them a controversial character and be less enticed to keep your company.
- Do not over-exaggerate or boast about your company's abilities or build up business information. Self-importance is not a favoured quality in Australian culture; therefore, you should remain modest and unassuming at all times.
- Do not use aggressive sales techniques during negotiations as your Australian business colleagues will dislike being pressured and may be put off by this approach.
- Do not boast or make ostentatious comments that give the impression that you see yourself as superior to others. Australians will find this contrived and obnoxious.
- Do not be too conscious or constrained by rules as this could potentially make you seem untrustworthy or likely to 'dob' on them.
- Do not discuss aspects of your personal life during business negotiations. Privacy is an important element of everyday life in Australia.

Offering and accepting gifts and invitations:

While giving gifts in business is not expected, it is greatly appreciated and admired when one does so. However do not bring gifts on your first visit to an Australian partner. Once the business partnership is established, this can be discussed with your business counterparts.

If you decide to give a gift, make sure it does not seem to be an attempt at bribery. For example, gifts given to a partner while waiting for them to come to a decision would seem improper. On the other hand, gifts given at the sealing of a deal or closure of negotiations are seen as congratulations.

Gifts to employees of government-funded organisations may only be accepted if they have a low dollar value, and may have to be declared to the Human Resources or finance department in advance.

Sensitive topics:

Be aware that the Indigenous minority of Australia are the original custodians of the land and recognize the impact colonization has had on their people. Do not mention the divisive topics of Australian society (e.g. Indigenous affairs, refugees) unless you are approaching it with sensitivity and are prepared to hear adverse opinions.

On a general cultural level, Australians tend to avoid overt displays of religiosity. There is not a common public religious rhetoric (such as 'God bless America' or 'God save the Queen') that correlates Australian national identity with Christianity. Indeed, it is more common for people to avoid explicitly stating their religious beliefs in the workplace to maintain a distinction between their private and public life. Conversations about religion are usually welcome in private settings and among familiar people. However, public promotion or defensiveness of one's religious views (including atheism) is typically unappreciated.

Women are seen as capable individuals who can help themselves. Therefore, it is not considered wholly necessary for men to open car doors (etc.) for women. Doing so is recognized as very polite and courteous, but can also sometimes be seen as patronizing depending on the circumstance.

As in most developed countries, the following actions or situations can also be considered sensitive or highly inappropriate:

- Ask a direct question about a person's salary or wealth.
- Inquiring about someone's weight or age.
- Commenting on someone's poor manners (can be seen as overly formal).
- In professional settings, punctuality is important in Australia, and people stick to the appointments, engagements and meetings they schedule. If someone expects they will be more than 10 minutes late, they usually text or call the person to let them know in advance.
- Considerable effort is put into being fair to everyone in social interactions. Therefore, it is considered bad taste to ask someone to do anything you would not do yourself.
- People who hold themselves in higher esteem than their friends are quickly reminded of their place.
- Australians tend to strongly dislike it when friends or business partners knowingly put them in awkward situations that oblige them to do something without having necessarily wanted or offered to.
- If there is a line, never cut it and always queue and wait for your turn.

BUSINESS RISKS

With one of the most transparent and well-regulated business environments in the world, Australia's political stability and regulatory framework provides generally investors with confidence and security.

Doing Business:

Doing business in Australia is easier than in many other countries. Australia is ranked 12th in the [2022 Index of Economic Freedom](#) (Switzerland = 2nd), 6th (Switzerland = 2nd) in the [Global Entrepreneurship Index \(GEI\) 2019](#). With almost half of all Australian firms active in innovation, the country is ranked 25rd (Switzerland = 1st) in the [Global Innovation Index 2021](#) of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

Corruption:

On the [Global Corruption Index 2021](#) from Transparency International, Australia ranks 18th out of 180 countries, receiving a score of 73 (Switzerland = 7th with a score of 84). The results are given on a scale of 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean). This perception suggests that Australia's public sector is relatively free from corruption.

Bribery:

Australia, like many countries around the world, is becoming increasingly active in investigating suspected bribery both within and outside their borders and bringing enforcement action. Organizations need to be conscious of anti-bribery legislation, have policies and procedures in place to comply with that legislation and take steps to ensure that compliance is embedded within the organization's culture.

Anti-corruption and anti-bribery laws are divided between commonwealth laws that apply territorially (within Australia), and to some extent extraterritorially (outside Australia), and state and territory laws which apply within each state and territory. The primary instruments that influence anti-corruption laws in Australia are as follows:

- the Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions, published by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD);
- the United Nations Convention against Corruption; and
- the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

Intellectual Property:

IP protection in Australia is an important consideration for companies looking to do business in this country. Under common law the principal forms of intellectual property protection available in Australia are trade-marks, designs, patents, plant breeder's rights and copyright. All of these forms of protection are governed by legislation. The common law also provides remedies against a person passing off goods or services as those of another, as well as protection for confidential information or trade secrets. Australia is a party to the World Trade Organization's Agreement of Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, and a signatory to multilateral treaties administered by the World Intellectual Property Organization. Find out more about Intellectual Property and other ways of protecting your business in Australia on the [Austrade website](#) and the [IP Australia website](#).

Cyber Incidents:

The ever-growing reliance on technology in business has only intensified over the past year, with the transition to remote working, a massive jump in online sales and an increase in the transfer of sensitive digital files. Add to this the always evolving sophistication of cyber threats, and it is little wonder that the risk of cyber incidents is high. There are many ways to businesses from cyber threats, including security software, backups, encryption and continual training of staff. Nevertheless, there is a need to be proactive and vigilant in Australia and many countries worldwide as the cyber landscape changes rapidly.

Natural catastrophe:

After devastating bushfires in 2020 and floods in 2021 and 2022, natural catastrophes have to be taken into consideration in Australia, as they can not only cause significant losses on the ground, it can also result in businesses being unable to resume operations and service customers for some time. Although almost impossible to predict, the impact of natural catastrophes can be minimized by preparing and maintaining a solid business continuity plan, if it was impacted by a storm, flood, cyclone or wildfire.

Swiss Export Risk Insurance SERV

Country Risk Category (CRC): <https://www.serv-ch.com/en/cover-practice/>

| Country | CRC | CC | Public | | Bank | | Private | | Restrictions | Sustainable Lending |
|-----------|-----|----|------------|------|------------|------|------------|------|--------------|---------------------|
| | | | ST | MLT | ST | MLT | ST | MLT | | |
| Australia | HI | 1 | restricted | open | restricted | open | restricted | open | Subsidiarity | No |

CRC HI = High-Income OECD and Eurozone countries with premiums partly as per market prices.

CC: Consensus Category (according to GNP per capita). Max. credit period for CC1: 5 years (or 8.5 with prior notification).

Swiss Export Risk Insurance SERV insures political and *del credere* risks involved in exporting goods and services.

[Products for exporters](#)

[Product for service providers](#)

[Products for financial institutions](#)

The full range of services and products offered by SERV can be obtained at www.serv-ch.com.

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IMPORT OF SAMPLES AND CATALOGUES

Section 162A of the Australian Customs Act 1901 regulates goods that qualify as temporary importation, in line with intergovernmental agreements and conventions to which Australia is a signatory. Among others, commercial samples and goods imported for display or use at events, fairs and exhibitions qualify for temporary importation

Goods that qualify as temporary imports may be imported either **under ATA carnet** or under security - where a security is lodged with us at the time of import. These goods may be temporarily imported into Australia for a period of up to 12 months without the payment of duty or taxes provided certain conditions are met. The nature of the goods, what they will be used for while they are in Australia and who is importing the goods will determine whether the goods will qualify.

Importers bringing goods to Australia as a temporary importation must export the goods within the time limit approved and must not sell, loan, mortgage, hire, give away, dispose of or alter in anyway without permission from Australian Border Force.

Details can be found on the website of the Australian Border Force: [temporary importations](#).

USEFUL LOCAL WEBSITES, ADDRESSES, EMAIL AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS

| | | | |
|--|---|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| | Business News Australia www.businessnewsaustralia.com | | |
| | The Australian https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business | | |
| | ABS News Australia https://www.abc.net.au/news/business/ | | |
| Business news | News.com.au https://www.news.com.au/finance | | |
| | Financial Review https://www.afr.com/ | | |
| | Business News https://www.businessnews.com.au/ | | |
| Customs hotline | Australian Border Force | +61 2 6196 0196 | Use online services & guides) |
| Police, Fire department and medical emergency | 000 (tripe 0) | | |

STATE GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS (Trade & Investment)

New South Wales (NSW)
Department of Planning and Environment
Phone: +61 2 9338 6600
www.industry.nsw.gov.au

Queensland (QLD)
Department of State Development, Tourism and Innovation
Phone: +61 7 3452 7100 or 13 74 68
www.statedevelopment.qld.gov.au
info@dsdmip.qld.gov.au

Victoria (VIC)
Invest Victoria
Phone: +61 3 9651 8100
www.investvictoria.com

Western Australia (WA)
Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation
Phone: +61 8 6277 3000
jtsi.wa.gov.au/
jtsi@jtsi.wa.gov.au

South Australia (SA)
Department for Innovation and Skills
Phone: +61 8 8226 3821
[https://innovationandskills.sa.gov.au/](https://innovationandskills.sa.gov.au/disreception@sa.gov.au)
disreception@sa.gov.au

Northern Territory (NT)
Department of Trade, Business and Innovation
Phone: +61 1800 193 111
<https://business.nt.gov.au/>

Tasmania (TAS)
Department of State Growth
Phone: 1800 030 688
www.stategrowth.tas.gov.au
info@stategrowth.tas.gov.au

ADDRESSES OF EMBASSY AND CONSULATES OF SWITZERLAND

Embassy of Switzerland in Canberra

7 Melbourne Avenue
Forrest ACT 2603, Australia
Phone: +61 (0) 2 6162 8400
Fax: +61 (0) 2 6273 3428
canberra@eda.admin.ch
www.eda.admin.ch/canberra

Consulate General of Switzerland in Sydney

101 Grafton Street, Cnr Grosvenor Street
Tower 2, Level 23
Bondi Junction NSW 2022, Australia
Postal Address: PO Box 282, Bondi Junction NSW
1355, Australia
Phone: +61 (0) 2 8383 4000
Fax: +61 (0) 2 9369 1334
sydney@eda.admin.ch
www.eda.admin.ch/sydney

The Science, Technology and Higher Education Office of the Embassy of Switzerland in Canberra can help with advice and contacts regarding Universities and Research Institutes.

Trade Point Australia is integrated into the Consulate General of Switzerland in Sydney. It represents the Swiss trade and investment promotion agency Switzerland Global Enterprise (S-GE). For more information about Trade Point Australia and contact details, please click [here](#).

Opening times:

Monday-Thursday: 09:00 - 12:00 & 14:00 - 16:00
Friday 09:00- - 11:30
Saturday and Sunday closed

Opening times:

Monday-Tuesday: 09:00 - 12:00
Wednesday: 09:00 - 12:00 & 14:00 - 16:00
Thursday: 09:00 - 12:00
Friday: 09:00 - 12:00
Saturday and Sunday closed

The honorary Consulates in Melbourne (VIC), Adelaide (SA), Perth (WA), Darwin (NT), Brisbane (QLD) and Hobart (TAS) support the Embassy and the Consulate General Swiss in safeguarding Switzerland's interests, foster trade partnerships and act in emergencies involving Swiss citizens abroad. For a detailed list of the honorary Consulates click [here](#).

All requests and inquires must be sent to the Consulate General in Sydney (sydney@eda.admin.ch).

More information about travelling to Australia or living in Australia can be found on the following link of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs: [Travel Advice Australia](#).

ADDRESSES BILATERAL, NATIONAL AND LOCAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

- **SwissCham Australia** is the Swiss-Australian Chamber of Commerce located in Sydney. For contact details, please click [here](#).
- **Australian Swiss Chamber of Commerce ASCC** in Zurich is an independent, not-for-profit bilateral Chamber of Commerce, recognised by the Australian & Swiss business communities located in Switzerland. For more information, please click [here](#).
- **Business Australia**
<https://www.businessaustralia.com/>
- **Business NSW**
<https://www.businessnsw.com/regions/NSW-regions>
Australia wide location: [Australia Locations](#)
- **Canberra Business Chamber**
www.canberrabusiness.com/
- **Business SA (Chamber of Commerce and Industry of South Australia)**
www.business-sa.com
- **Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia (CCIWA)**
www.cciwa.com
- **Chamber of Commerce Northern Territory (CCNT)**
www.chambernt.com.au
- **Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland CCIQ**
www.cciq.com.au
- **Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (TCCI)**
www.tcci.com.au
- **Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry**
www.victorianchamber.com.au/

ADDRESSES OF THE EMBASSY AND CONSULATES OF AUSTRALIA IN OR FOR SWITZERLAND

Please note that the Australian Consulate-General in Geneva has no visa and immigration function. The Australian Embassy in Berlin, Germany, is competent for immigration and visa matters with regards to clients living in Switzerland.

Embassy of Australia in Berlin (Germany)

Wallstr. 76-79
10179 Berlin

Phone: +49(0)30 880088 0 (not for visa inquiries)

Fax: +49(0)30 880088 210 (not for visa inquiries)

Email: info.berlin@dfat.gov.au (not for visa inquiries)

<https://germany.embassy.gov.au/>

Australian Permanent Mission and Consulate-General of in Geneva

Chemin des Fins 2

CP 102

1211 Geneva 19, Switzerland

Switchboard: +41 (0)22 799 91 00

Consular / Passports / General Enquiries:
australian.consulate-geneva@dfat.gov.au

Opening times:

Embassy:

Monday - Friday 8.30am - 5.00pm
(except for public holidays)
Telephone switchboard: Monday - Friday
8.30am - 1.00pm & 2.00pm - 5.00pm

Consulate-General:

Monday - Friday 8.30am - 5.00pm
(except for public holidays)

Opening times:

Monday - Friday, 9.00 to 17.00 - passport and
notarial services are by appointment only

The **Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)** works to make Australia more prosperous and to ensure a secure Australian Government presence overseas. DFAT provides foreign, trade and development policy advice to the government and works with other government agencies to ensure that Australia's pursuit of its global, regional and bilateral interests is coordinated effectively.

Laws, regulations, policies and government directives on most matters, be they of political or legal nature or in regards to trade agreements/relations, are generally to be found uploaded on the internet.

The **Australian Trade Commission (Austrade)** is Australia's leading trade and investment agency. Austrade assists Australian businesses in different sectors, such as education and tourism, and deals with and regulates the export of goods and services.

DFAT and Austrade work closely across a number of areas, at home and overseas. This cooperation results in stronger economic ties, and includes the maximisation of trade and investment opportunities for Australia through the promotion of free trade agreements. It also contributes to the projection of a positive image of Australia as a destination for business, investment, tourism and study.

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Date March 21, 2022

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