

Australian Citizenship

Our Common Bond



All of the information you need to sit the Australian citizenship test is in this book. You are not required to purchase or obtain other citizenship packages from any individuals or organisations in order to pass the citizenship test. The Department does not endorse or recommend any package that claims it will assist you to pass the citizenship test.

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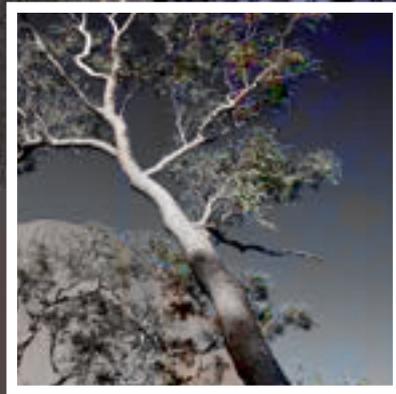
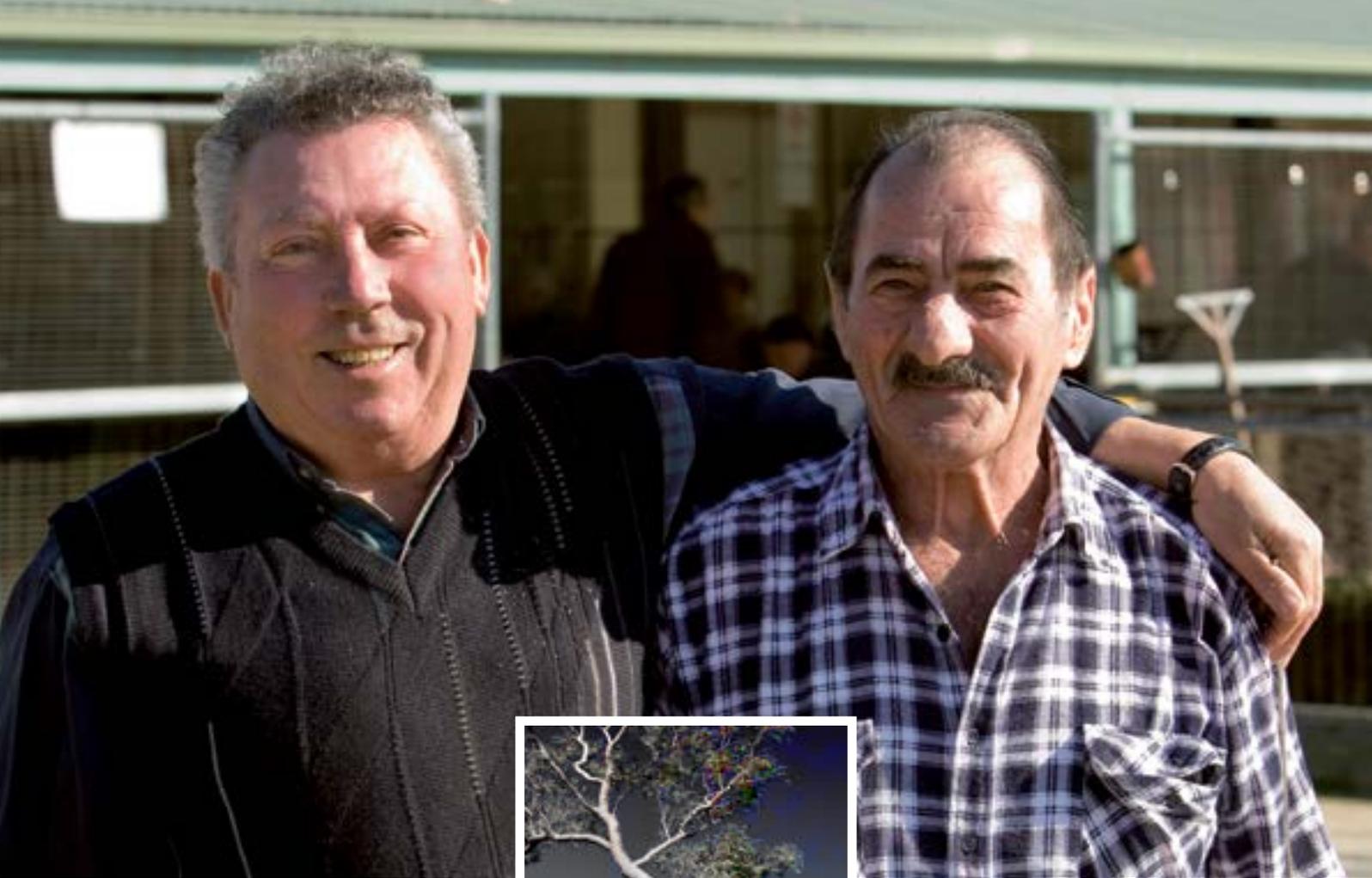
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Disclaimer:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are warned that this publication contains images and/or content relating to deceased persons.

Contents

A message to you	3
Testable section	
Part 1 – Australia and its people	8
Part 2 – Australia’s democratic beliefs, rights and liberties	16
Part 3 – Government and the law in Australia	22
Glossary of testable section	30
Practice test questions	34
Non-testable section	
Part 4 – Australia today	38
Part 5 – Our Australian story	54
Glossary of non-testable section	72
For more information	74
Acknowledgments	76



*Australian citizenship is a privilege that offers enormous rewards.
By becoming an Australian citizen, you are joining a unique national community.*

A message to you

Congratulations on choosing to become an Australian citizen. It takes courage, endeavour and commitment to live in a new country and participate fully as a citizen. We value your contribution to our peaceful and democratic society.

Australian citizenship is an important step in your migration story. Becoming an Australian citizen means that you are making an ongoing commitment to Australia and all that this country stands for. It is also the beginning of your formal membership of the Australian community. It is the step that will enable you to say 'I am Australian'.

Australian citizenship is a privilege that offers enormous rewards. By becoming an Australian citizen, you are joining a unique national community. Our country has been built on the combined contributions of our Indigenous people and those who came later from all over the world. We celebrate this diversity and at the same time, strive for a unified and harmonious nation.

The strength of the Australian community means that we work together to solve problems and to make Australia the great country that it is. We have a stable system of government and Australians respect the authority and laws of the government. Our stability, our culture and our laws have been shaped by our history. By joining the Australian community, you will inherit this history and you will be in a position to contribute to it.

Australia is an ancient land. It is vast and unique. It is a country of rainforests and woodlands; of golden beaches and dry deserts. Our Indigenous cultures are the oldest continuing cultures in the world. We are also a young nation; a nation of migrants. European settlement in Australia began in 1788 and we continue to welcome new migrants today. People from more than 200 countries have made Australia their home. As a result, our society is one of the most diverse in the world. Australia successfully combines ethnic and cultural diversity with national unity. Citizenship is the bond that unites us all.

Australia is a democracy. Citizenship gives you the opportunity to fully participate in building our democratic nation. It means that you are ready to fulfil your responsibilities as a formal member of the Australian community. Australians believe in the dignity and freedom of each person, the equality of men and women and the rule of law. Australian citizenship is about living out these values in your everyday life.

The Australian Citizenship Pledge

It is important for all Australian citizens to understand our rights and responsibilities and what it means to be a citizen, whether we are Australian by birth or by choice. It is a critical part of building our nation.

When you attend your Australian citizenship ceremony, you will make the Australian Citizenship Pledge. In doing so, you are making a public commitment to Australia and accepting the responsibilities and privileges of citizenship. Learning the meaning behind the Pledge will give you a greater understanding of what it means to be an Australian and the responsibilities and privileges of citizenship.

This is the pledge you will make:

*From this time forward, under God,**

I pledge my loyalty to Australia and its people,

whose democratic beliefs I share,

whose rights and liberties I respect, and

whose laws I will uphold and obey.

* A person may choose whether or not to use the words 'under God'.

As you read this book, you will gain a full understanding of the meaning behind the Pledge and how you can enhance your role in Australian society.

Becoming an Australian citizen

Australia's migrant history is over 200 years old. In this regard, we are still a young nation and you are a part of our story. The decisions you make as a citizen of Australia will help to shape our future.

The Australian citizenship test

The Australian citizenship test is designed to assess whether you have an adequate knowledge of Australia and the responsibilities and privileges of citizenship.

The citizenship test is also designed to assess whether you have a basic knowledge of the English language. English is our national language. Communicating in English helps you to play a more active role in Australian society. It helps you to take full advantage of education, employment and the other opportunities Australia has to offer.

The citizenship test is a computer based multiple-choice test in English. The citizenship test consists of 20 questions drawn at random from a pool of questions. To pass the test, you must answer 75 per cent, or 15 out of 20 questions, correctly.

Citizenship tests are conducted in Department of Home Affairs offices around Australia. Tests are also scheduled in a number of locations throughout regional Australia and in some overseas missions.

By passing the citizenship test, you will have shown that you understand the commitment you are making by taking the Australian Citizenship Pledge.

Preparing for the Australian citizenship test

To prepare for the citizenship test you will need to read this resource book.

Resource book

This resource book has a testable and a non-testable section.

Testable section

All the information you need to know to pass the citizenship test is in the first three parts of this book:

- Part 1 - Australia and its people
- Part 2 - Australia's democratic beliefs, rights and liberties
- Part 3 - Government and the law in Australia

You will need to know and understand the information in the testable section to answer the questions in the citizenship test.

Non-testable section

The non-testable section has important information that will help you to understand the history and culture of Australia. You will not be tested on this information.

- Part 4 - Australia today
- Part 5 - Our Australian story

Practice questions

At the end of the testable section, there are 20 practice questions to help you prepare for the citizenship test.

Glossary

There is a glossary (list of key words and their meanings) at the end of both the testable and the non-testable sections.

Translated versions of this resource book

This resource book has been translated into 37 community languages for those prospective citizens who are more competent at reading in a language other than English. These translations are available for download only from the Australian citizenship website www.citizenship.gov.au.

DVD

An audio-visual DVD in English is also available to help prospective citizens prepare for the citizenship test. On the DVD you will find a presentation of the key points from the testable section, as well as the 20 practice test questions. This DVD has been produced as a study aid for those clients with low English language proficiency. The DVD is available for order or for download from the Australian citizenship website www.citizenship.gov.au.

Assistance during the Australian citizenship test

It is expected that most prospective Australian citizens will have the literacy skills necessary to complete the citizenship test without assistance. For those people who require assistance because of low English literacy skills, an officer can help by reading the questions and possible answers aloud. Assistance will also be available to people with low levels of computer skills, or who have a disability. If you think you will need assistance during the citizenship test, please advise the citizenship officer.

Our Common Bond: A Course in Australian Citizenship

You may be eligible to attend an Australian citizenship course instead of the computer based test.

The citizenship course will cover all the information in the testable section of this book. You will still need to show that you have a basic knowledge of English and understand the concepts in the Australian Citizenship Pledge.

More information about the course is available from the Australian citizenship website www.citizenship.gov.au.

For more information

You can call the Citizenship Information Line on 131 880 (Monday to Friday 8.30 am to 4.30 pm).

If you require the services of an interpreter, please call 131 450.

You can also visit the Australian citizenship website www.citizenship.gov.au.

The Australian citizenship ceremony

Australian citizenship ceremonies can be small, involving just a few people, or they can be very large, involving hundreds or even thousands of people. The depth of feeling and pride among new citizens and officials makes it a very joyful celebration.

At the beginning of a citizenship ceremony, you may be welcomed by a representative of the Indigenous people who are the traditional owners of the land in your area. You will hear words of welcome and encouragement from other leaders of your local community or government representatives.

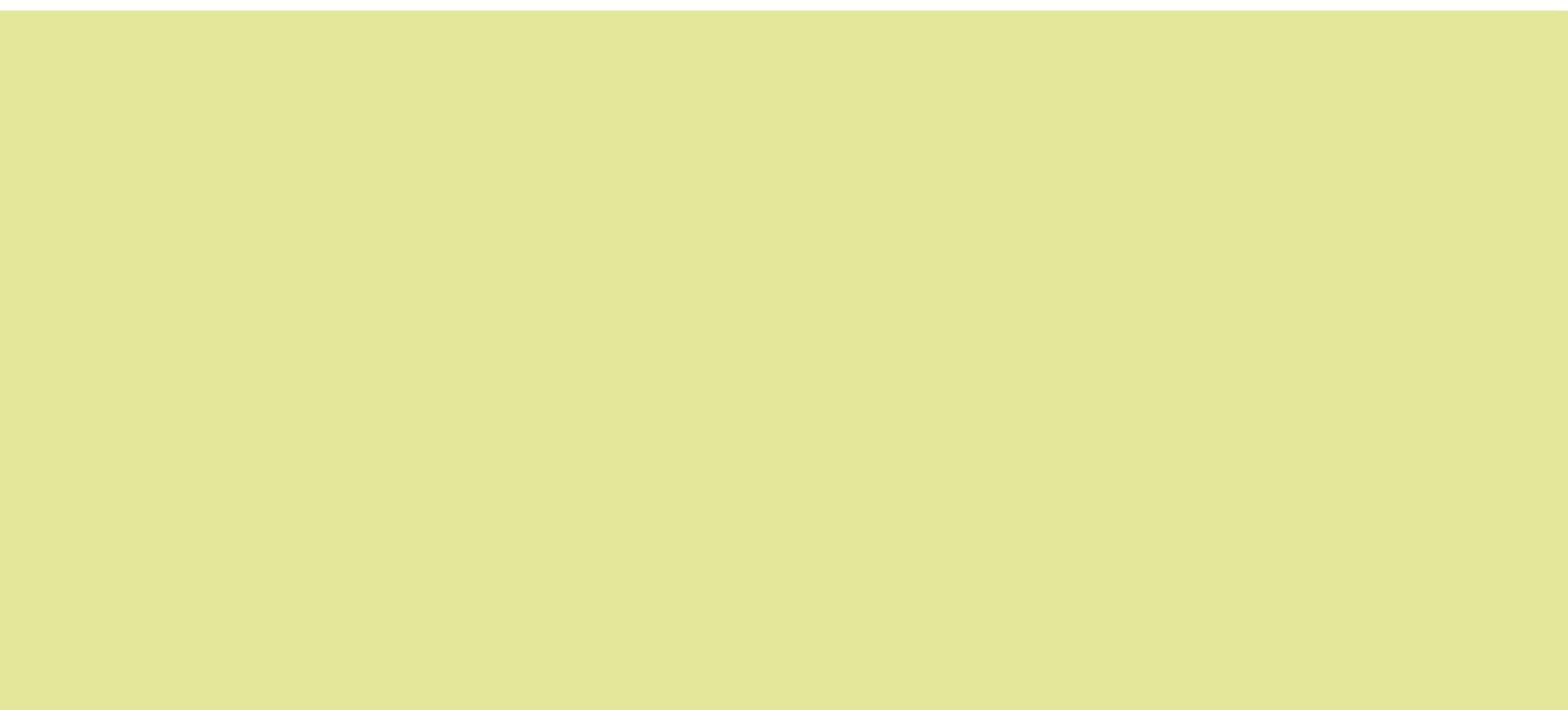
You will read or repeat the Australian Citizenship Pledge aloud with other people who have chosen to become Australian citizens. This is the most important part of the ceremony. You do not become an Australian citizen until you have made your pledge of commitment to Australia. You are welcome to bring a holy book or scripture to hold while you make the Pledge, but you do not have to do so.

Leaders from your community or government representatives will make short speeches on the meaning of citizenship. You will receive your Certificate of Australian Citizenship and you may also receive a small gift from the community. Everyone will sing 'Advance Australia Fair', the Australian national anthem. After the citizenship ceremony, you will have the chance to meet and celebrate with your fellow Australians.

We wish you every success in becoming an Australian citizen and in pursuing a peaceful and productive life in Australia.

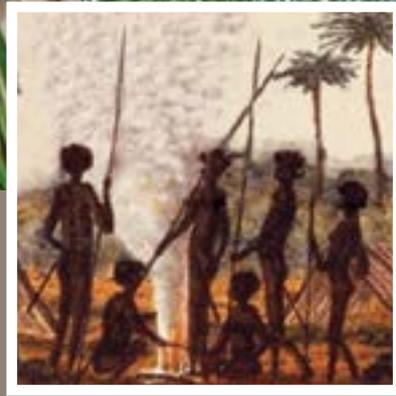


New Australian citizens at their citizenship ceremony





The start of the testable section



Part 1

Australia and its people

From this time forward, under God,
I pledge my loyalty to Australia and its people,
whose democratic beliefs I share,
whose rights and liberties I respect, and
whose laws I will uphold and obey.*

* A person may choose whether or not to use the words 'under God'.

Australia and its people

At the citizenship ceremony, you pledge your loyalty to Australia and its people. It is therefore important for you to have an understanding of Australia's community and population, including our Indigenous heritage. It is also important for you to understand how Australia developed from its uncertain beginnings as a British colony to the stable and successful multicultural nation it is today.

In this section, you will read about some of the events that have contributed to our story. There is information about our states and territories, and there is information on the traditions and symbols that we proudly identify as being distinctly Australian.

Our people

Indigenous Australians

Australia's first inhabitants were the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. They are the Indigenous people of Australia. Australia's Indigenous cultures are the oldest continuing cultures in the world.

Historically, Aboriginal people are from mainland Australia and Tasmania. They have lived here for between 40 000 and 60 000 years.

Torres Strait Islanders are from islands to the north of Queensland. They have a distinct cultural identity.

Indigenous people share common beliefs and traditions that still guide them today. They have a deep connection with the land that is expressed in their stories, art and dance.

Early days of European settlement

European settlement started when the first 11 convict ships, which became known as the 'First Fleet', arrived from Great Britain on 26 January 1788.

At this time British laws were harsh and the jails could not hold the large number of people imprisoned for their crimes. To manage this problem, the British Government decided to transport these convicts to the other side of the world; to the new colony of New South Wales.

The first governor of the colony of New South Wales was Captain Arthur Phillip. He overcame many problems in the first few years of European settlement. The colony survived and as more convicts and free settlers arrived, it grew and developed. More colonies were established in other parts of the country.

Early free settlers were from Great Britain and Ireland. This British and Irish heritage has had a major influence on Australia's history, culture and political institutions.

In 1851, gold was discovered in the colonies of New South Wales and Victoria. People from all around the world came to these colonies to try their luck at making a fortune. Chinese people arriving at this time were the first large group of migrants not from Europe. In 10 years, the population more than doubled.

The nation of Australia

Over the following decades, the separate colonies discussed the idea of becoming one nation.

In 1901, the colonies were united into a federation of states called the Commonwealth of Australia. At that time, Australia's population was counted at about four million people. This number did not include the Indigenous people.

Throughout the first half of the 20th century, migration levels rose and fell. There were programs to actively encourage British migrants to settle here, and many did.

A wave of non-British migration came after World War II, when millions of people in Europe had to leave their homelands. Large numbers came to Australia to build a new life.

In recent years, our migration and refugee programs have brought people to Australia from all over the world. People have come here to join family, to make a new life in a young country, or to escape poverty, war or persecution.

Today, Australia has a population of about 24 million people. Over one quarter of these people were born overseas. Australia is greatly enriched by the contribution these people make to our nation. While we celebrate the diversity of Australia's people, we also aim to build a cohesive and unified nation.

Australia's national language is English. It is part of our national identity. Everyone in Australia is encouraged to learn and use English to help them participate in Australian society. Communicating in English is also important for making the most of living and working in Australia. Other languages are also valued. In Australia's diverse society, over 200 languages are spoken.

Australia's states and territories

The Commonwealth of Australia is a federation of states and territories. There are six states and two mainland territories. Canberra is Australia's capital city, and each state and mainland territory has its own capital.



State	Capital city
New South Wales (NSW)	Sydney
Victoria (Vic.)	Melbourne
Queensland (Qld)	Brisbane
Western Australia (WA)	Perth
South Australia (SA)	Adelaide
Tasmania (Tas.)	Hobart
Territory	Capital city
Australian Capital Territory (ACT)	Canberra
Northern Territory (NT)	Darwin

Canberra is also Australia's capital city

The states

New South Wales was the first colony established by the British. Sydney is the capital city of New South Wales and is the nation's largest city. Sydney's Harbour Bridge and Opera House are national icons.



New South Wales

Victoria is the smallest of the mainland states. Many fine buildings in Victoria were built from the wealth created by the gold rush of the 1850s. Victoria's capital city is Melbourne.



Victoria

Queensland is the second largest state. It has the Torres Strait Islands in the north, tropical rainforests, temperate coastal areas and an often dry inland. The world famous Great Barrier Reef runs along its eastern coast. Queensland's capital city is Brisbane.



Queensland

Western Australia is the largest state. The east of the state is mostly desert, while the south-west is a rich agricultural and wine-growing area. The state is home to many large mining projects. About three-quarters of the state's population lives in Perth, the capital city.



Western Australia

South Australia has a rugged coastline and many famous wine regions. Adelaide, the capital city, has many examples of fine colonial architecture.



South Australia

Tasmania is the smallest state, separated from the mainland by Bass Strait. Much of the island has unspoiled wilderness landscapes. Tasmania's capital city is Hobart.



Tasmania

The territories

The **Australian Capital Territory** is situated between Sydney and Melbourne. It is the site of the nation's capital city, Canberra. Canberra is home to important national institutions, such as Parliament House and the High Court of Australia.



Australian Capital Territory

The **Northern Territory** has the tropics in the north and red desert soil in the south. Most of its small population live in the capital city, Darwin, and along the main highway between Darwin and Alice Springs, which is the main town near the centre of Australia.



Northern Territory

Traditions and symbols

Important days for Australians

Australia Day

On 26 January each year, we celebrate Australia Day. Australia Day is a public holiday in every state and territory in Australia.

On Australia Day, large and small communities across Australia celebrate all that is great about Australia and being Australian. It is the biggest annual public event in Australia.

Australia Day is the day that we honour our history and all the people who have made this nation great. It is a day to rejoice in the present and commit to a happy and prosperous future together. For this reason, it is a day when many citizenship ceremonies are held across the country.

It is the anniversary of the arrival of the First Fleet from Great Britain in 1788 to set up a convict settlement for the British Government. The commander of the First Fleet was Captain Arthur Phillip.

On the eve of Australia Day, the Prime Minister announces the Australian of the Year Awards in Canberra.



Many citizenship ceremonies are held on Australia Day each year



Anzac Day parade

Anzac Day

Anzac Day is observed on 25 April each year. Anzac Day is named after the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps, which landed at Gallipoli in Turkey during World War I on 25 April 1915.

Anzac Day is a solemn day when we remember the sacrifice of all Australians who served and died in wars, conflicts and peacekeeping operations. We also honour the courage and commitment of all servicemen and women.

More information about Australia Day, Anzac Day and other important national days and celebrations can be found in *Part 4, Australia today*.

Australia's flags

The Australian National Flag is the official flag of our nation. Other flags that are officially recognised and may be flown in the community include the Australian Aboriginal Flag and the Torres Strait Islander Flag.

Each state and territory also has its own flag. These can be found on page 11.

The Australian National Flag

The Australian National Flag is blue, white and red. It has three important parts:

- The flag of the United Kingdom, known as the Union Jack, is in the top left corner. The flag represents our history of British settlement.
- The Commonwealth Star is under the Union Jack. This star has seven points, one point for each of the six states and one for the territories.
- The Southern Cross, on the right, is a group of stars we see in the southern sky.



The Australian National Flag is blue, white and red

The Australian Aboriginal Flag

The Australian Aboriginal Flag is black, red and yellow. It has three important parts, and the most common interpretation of the colours is:

- The top half is black and represents the Aboriginal people of Australia.
- The bottom half is red and represents the earth and a spiritual relation to the land.
- The yellow circle represents the sun.



The Australian Aboriginal Flag is black, red and yellow

The Torres Strait Islander Flag

The Torres Strait Islander Flag is green, blue, black and white.

- The green stripes represent the land.
- The blue panel in the centre represents the sea.
- The black lines represent the Torres Strait Islander people.
- The white dancer's headdress in the centre is a symbol for all Torres Strait Islanders.
- The points of the white star represent the island groups in the Torres Strait.
- The colour white is a symbol of peace.



The Torres Strait Islander Flag is green, blue, black and white

Commonwealth Coat of Arms

The Commonwealth Coat of Arms is the official symbol of the Commonwealth of Australia. It represents our national unity. It identifies the authority and property of the Commonwealth of Australia.

- The shield in the centre represents the six states and federation.
- A kangaroo and an emu support the shield on each side. Kangaroos are native Australian animals and emus are native Australian birds.
- A gold Commonwealth Star sits above the shield.
- The background is the golden wattle, Australia's national flower.



Commonwealth Coat of Arms

Australia's national flower

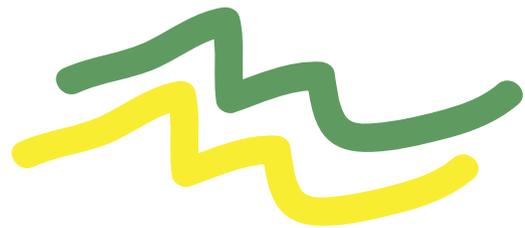
Australia's national flower is the golden wattle. This small tree grows mainly in south-eastern Australia. It has bright green leaves and many golden yellow flowers in spring. Each of the states and territories of Australia also has its own floral emblem.



Golden wattle

Australia's national colours

Australia's national colours are green and gold, the colours of the golden wattle. The uniforms of our national sports teams are usually green and gold.



Australia's national colours of green and gold

Australia's national gemstone

The opal is Australia's national gemstone. In Aboriginal legend, a rainbow touched the earth and created the colours of the opal.



Opal

Australia's national anthem

'Advance Australia Fair' is Australia's national anthem. It is sung on occasions of national importance. It is also sung at Australian citizenship ceremonies, major sporting events and at school. It unites the nation and is a public expression of the joy and pride in being Australian.

Advance Australia Fair

*Australians all let us rejoice,
For we are young and free;
We've golden soil and wealth for toil;
Our home is girt by sea;
Our land abounds in nature's gifts
Of beauty rich and rare;
In history's page, let every stage
Advance Australia Fair.
In joyful strains then let us sing,
Advance Australia Fair.*

*Beneath our radiant Southern Cross
We'll toil with hearts and hands;
To make this Commonwealth of ours
Renowned of all the lands;
For those who've come across the seas
We've boundless plains to share;
With courage let us all combine
To Advance Australia Fair.
In joyful strains then let us sing,
Advance Australia Fair.*

*While you may be tested on Australia's national anthem, you will not be tested on the words of the anthem.



Part 2

Australia's democratic beliefs, rights and liberties

From this time forward, under God,
I pledge my loyalty to Australia and its people,
whose democratic beliefs I share,
whose rights and liberties I respect, and
whose laws I will uphold and obey.*

** A person may choose whether or not to use the words 'under God'.*

Australia's democratic beliefs, rights and liberties

At the citizenship ceremony, you pledge that you share Australia's democratic beliefs and that you respect the rights and liberties of the people of Australia.

Australia is a democracy. A democracy is a system of government in which citizens freely choose representatives to govern the country and make laws on their behalf.

Australians believe in peace, respect, freedom and equality. An important part of being Australian is respecting other people's differences and choices, even if you don't agree with those choices. It is about treating people fairly and giving all Australians equal opportunities and freedoms, no matter where they come from, what their traditions are, or whether they are male or female.

These democratic beliefs have shaped our country and culture and are a reason why so many people want to become Australian. It is therefore very important that you understand these democratic beliefs, and the rights and liberties that all Australian people respect.

Our democratic beliefs

Parliamentary democracy

Australia's system of government is a parliamentary democracy. This means that all Australians are involved in how the country is governed. The power of the government comes from the Australian people because Australian citizens regularly vote for people to represent them in parliament. Only parliament has the power to make and change the laws that govern the country.

In a parliamentary democracy, the representatives in parliament must answer to the people, through elections, for the decisions they make.

The rule of law

Australia's laws are important for all people living in Australia. Australians recognise the value of laws in maintaining a peaceful and orderly society. All Australians have the right to be protected by Australia's laws.

Everyone must obey Australia's laws. If they don't obey the law, they may be arrested by the police and have to go to court.

All Australians are equal under the law and no person or group is above the law. This is called the 'rule of law'. People who hold positions of power in the Australian community must obey Australia's laws. This includes government, community and religious leaders, as well as businesspeople and the police.

Living peacefully

We are proud to live in a peaceful country with a stable system of government. We believe that change should occur through discussion, peaceful persuasion and the democratic process. We reject violence as a way to change a person's mind or the law.

Respect for all individuals regardless of background

People come to settle in Australia from countries all around the world. Many people have a different cultural heritage with different beliefs and traditions. In our democratic society, we are all free to follow and share these beliefs and traditions as long as they do not break Australian laws.

We value this freedom and expect all Australians to treat each other with dignity and respect, regardless of their race, country of origin, gender, sexual preference, marital status, age, disability, heritage, culture, politics, wealth or religion.

We value this mutual respect for the dignity of all people.

Compassion for those in need

In Australia, there is a spirit of 'mateship'. This means we help and receive help from each other in times of need. A mate is often a friend, but can also be a total stranger. A mate might take a meal to an elderly neighbour, drive a friend to a medical appointment or visit someone who is lonely.

Because of this spirit of mateship, many individual people and groups help others through voluntary community work. You can also be a volunteer. Volunteering can be very satisfying. It is also a great opportunity to share knowledge, learn new skills, and increase your sense of belonging to the Australian community. Our government also supports Australians in need through social security and other services.

Our freedoms

Freedom of speech and freedom of expression

Freedom of speech allows people to say and write what they think and to discuss their ideas with others. Freedom of expression allows people to express their views through art, film, music and literature.

In Australia, we are free to say and write what we think, privately or publicly, about any topic. However, we cannot harm others.



Australians are free to peacefully protest against government decisions and laws

We cannot make false allegations, encourage others to break the law or damage another person's reputation. There are laws to protect a person's good name against false information.

It is against the law to try to make other people hate or act violently towards others because of their culture, ethnicity or background.

We are free to meet with people in public or private places for social or political discussion. We can criticise the government, peacefully protest against government decisions and campaign to change laws.

We must also respect other people's freedom of speech and freedom of expression.

Newspapers, television and radio have the same freedom.

Freedom of association

Australians are free to join any legal organisation, such as a political party, trade union, religious, cultural or social group. People can also decide not to join.

Australians can gather with others to protest against a government action or an organisation. However, all protests must be within the law. This means they must be peaceful, and must not injure any person or damage property.

Freedom of religion and secular government

Australia has a Judaeo-Christian heritage, and many Australians describe themselves as Christians. Australia has public holidays on Christian days such as Good Friday, Easter Sunday and Christmas Day.

However, the government in Australia is secular. This means that there is no official national religion.

People in Australia are free to follow any religion they choose, as long as its practices do not break Australian laws. In addition to Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, Judaism and many other religions are practised freely in Australia.

Australians are also free to not follow a religion. The government treats all citizens equally, whatever their religion or beliefs.

This mix of religions contributes to making Australia a vibrant multicultural society.

Most religions have rules, but these are not laws in Australia. For example, the process of divorce, including custody of children and property settlement, must follow laws passed by the Australian Parliament. All Australians have the right to be protected by these laws. Some religious or cultural practices, such as being married to more than one person at the same time, are against Australian law.

Our equalities

Equality in Australia

There are a number of laws in Australia that make sure a person is not treated differently to others because of their gender, race, disability or age.

Equality of men and women

Men and women have equal rights in Australia. It is against the law to discriminate against a person because of their gender.

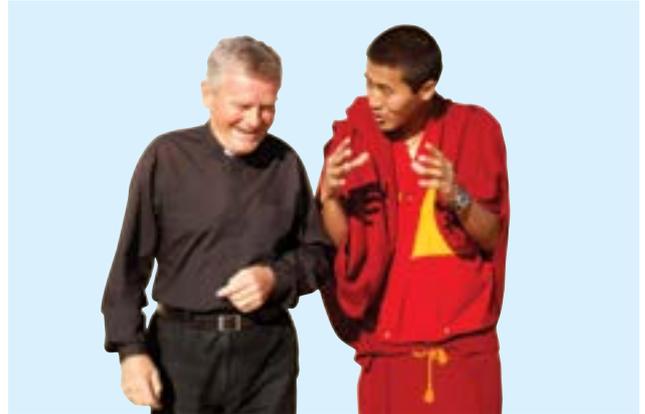
Both men and women have the right to make their own independent choices about personal matters such as marriage, and are protected by the law from intimidation or violence.

Both men and women have equal access to education and employment. Both men and women can vote and stand for parliament. Both men and women can join the Australian Defence Force and the police. Men and women are treated equally in courts of law.

Equality of opportunity

Australians do not believe in class distinctions in our society. Instead, we believe in a fair society, where everyone deserves a 'fair go'. This means that what someone achieves in life should be a result of their hard work and talents, rather than their wealth or background. For example, a person should get a job or a promotion on the basis of their skills, ability and experience, not because of their background.

Australia has many stories of new migrants who have become leaders in business, the professions, the arts, public service and sport through their hard work and talents.



People in Australia are free to follow any religion



Men and women can join the Army, Navy and Air Force



All Australians have the opportunity to go to university

Responsibilities and privileges of Australian citizenship

As a permanent resident of Australia, you have already enjoyed living in a free and democratic society. When you become an Australian citizen, you will have new responsibilities. You will also have a range of new benefits.

Responsibilities

As an Australian citizen you must:

- obey the law
- vote in federal and state or territory elections, and in a referendum
- defend Australia should the need arise
- serve on a jury if called to do so.

Privileges

As an Australian citizen you have the right to:

- vote in federal and state or territory elections, and in a referendum
- apply for work in the Australian Public Service or in the Australian Defence Force
- seek election to parliament
- apply for an Australian passport and re-enter Australia freely
- ask for consular assistance from an Australian official while overseas
- register children born overseas as Australian citizens by descent.

Responsibilities

Obey the law

Our representatives in government make laws to maintain an orderly, free and safe society and to protect our rights. All Australians must obey the laws made by the Australian Parliament, state and territory parliaments, and local government.

More information about some important laws in Australia can be found in *Part 3, Government and the law in Australia*.

Vote in federal and state or territory elections, and in a referendum

Voting is both an important right and responsibility for all Australian citizens. We vote for the people we want to represent us in parliament. By doing this, we all have our say in how the country is governed and contribute to the future of Australia.

As a citizen, you will vote regularly in federal and state or territory elections. Occasionally, you will vote in a referendum, which is a vote to change the Australian Constitution. More information about the Australian Constitution can be found in *Part 3, Government and the law in Australia*.

Australian citizens aged 18 years or over must register their name and address on the electoral roll. Once you are on the electoral roll, voting is compulsory for Australian citizens aged 18 years or over in federal and state or territory elections.

Voting in local government elections is not compulsory in some states.



We have our say by voting in federal, state or territory and local government elections.

Defend Australia should the need arise

While service in the Australian Defence Force is voluntary, should the need arise it is vital that all Australian citizens be committed to joining together to defend the nation and its way of life.

Serve on a jury if called to do so

Jury service is a responsibility for Australian citizens aged 18 years or over. A jury is a group of ordinary Australian men and women who listen to the evidence in a court case and decide if a person is guilty or not guilty.

Any Australian who is on the electoral roll may be called to serve on a jury.

Jury service helps to make sure that the court system is open and fair.

Privileges

Apply for work in the Australian Public Service and the Australian Defence Force

If you are an Australian citizen, you can apply to join the Australian Public Service and work for the Australian Government, for example, in Centrelink, Medicare or the Australian Taxation Office.

Australian citizens also have the right to apply for a career in the Australian Defence Force (the Army, Navy and Air Force).

Seek election to parliament

Australian citizens aged 18 years or over can seek election to parliament at the federal, state or territory level. It is both an honour and a serious responsibility to serve in an Australian parliament.

Apply for an Australian passport and re-enter Australia freely

When you become an Australian citizen, you have the right to live freely in Australia.

You have the right to apply for an Australian passport. As an Australian citizen, you are free to travel overseas and return to Australia. You do not need a visa to come back to Australia.

Ask for consular assistance from an Australian official while overseas

In many countries, Australia has an embassy, high commission or consulate. While you are overseas, you can ask for help from an official in times of need.

This includes emergencies such as civil unrest and natural disasters. Officials can also issue emergency passports and provide advice and support in the case of an accident, serious illness or death.

When in another country, you must obey the laws of that country.

Register children born overseas as Australian citizens by descent

Australian citizens may have children born overseas. They can register their children as Australian citizens. The children then have the same rights and responsibilities of citizenship as children born in Australia.

Participating in Australian society

Australia encourages all citizens to participate in society. Citizens who participate in society contribute to Australia in many ways. You can join neighbourhood and local communities. You can volunteer to do social and community work. You can join an arts or cultural organisation. You can also actively participate in political life.

Paying tax is another important way you directly contribute to the Australian community. Tax is paid out of the money you earn, whether it's from a job, a business or investments.

Many of the benefits that Australians enjoy are made possible through taxes. Taxes are spent on services which include health, education, defence, roads and railways, and social security. By working and paying taxes, you can support the government to provide these important services to the Australian community. These services help make Australia the peaceful and prosperous country it is today. State and territory governments and local councils also collect taxes to pay for services.

Paying tax is required by law. Tax is collected by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) from both businesses and individuals. The ATO works to ensure all citizens are aware of their tax rights and obligations to pay the correct amount of tax.



Part 3

Government and the law in Australia

From this time forward, under God,
I pledge my loyalty to Australia and its people,
whose democratic beliefs I share,
whose rights and liberties I respect, and
whose laws I will uphold and obey.*

* A person may choose whether or not to use the words 'under God'.

Government and the law in Australia

At the citizenship ceremony, you pledge to uphold and obey the laws of Australia. It is important for you to understand Australia's system of government, how the laws are made in our parliamentary democracy and how these laws are administered. It is also important to understand how you, as a citizen, will have a say in the running of the country.

How do I have my say?

Voting

In Australia, citizens aged 18 years or over must enrol to vote at federal elections. By voting, you get to have your say in who represents you in parliament. If you are not correctly enrolled, you are not able to vote in an election.

Once you are on the electoral roll, voting is compulsory in Australian federal and state or territory elections. If you do not vote in an election and do not have a good reason for not voting, you will have to pay a fine. Compulsory voting is a way to make sure that the people we elect are really the ones that the majority of the people want.

The Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) is a Commonwealth agency. It conducts federal elections and referendums and maintains the Commonwealth electoral roll. The AEC helps to provide voters with fair and honest elections. The AEC is independent of the government. Political parties or people in government cannot influence the decisions of the AEC. Votes are by secret ballot, so you are free and safe to vote for any candidate. No one else sees who you vote for. You can tell other people who you vote for, but no one can force you to tell them.

Raising matters with your representatives

In Australia, you have the right to raise matters that concern you with your elected representative. Your views may then be taken into consideration by parliament when it is considering new laws or changes to existing laws. For example, if you have a suggestion about how to improve the immigration system, you can make an appointment to discuss it with your local member of parliament. You can also write a letter outlining your views.

In this way, ordinary Australians can have a say in forming the laws and policies of a government.

How did we establish our system of government?

Federation

Before 1901, Australia was made up of six separate, self-governing British colonies.

Within its borders, each colony had its own constitution and its own laws relating to defence, immigration, postage, trade and transport.

People wanted to unite the colonies to form a single Australian nation for a number of reasons. Trade and transport between the colonies was expensive and slow. Enforcing the law across borders was difficult. The separate colonies also had weak systems of defence. More importantly, Australia's national identity was beginning to form. Sporting teams were representing Australia internationally and a unique Australian culture was developing in popular songs, poems, stories and art.

Uniting the nation was a difficult task, but over a period of time, the idea of one Australian nation became a reality. Australians are proud of the fact that their nation did not emerge through revolution or bloodshed, but by negotiation and referendum.

On 1 January 1901, the colonies were united into a federation of states called the Commonwealth of Australia.

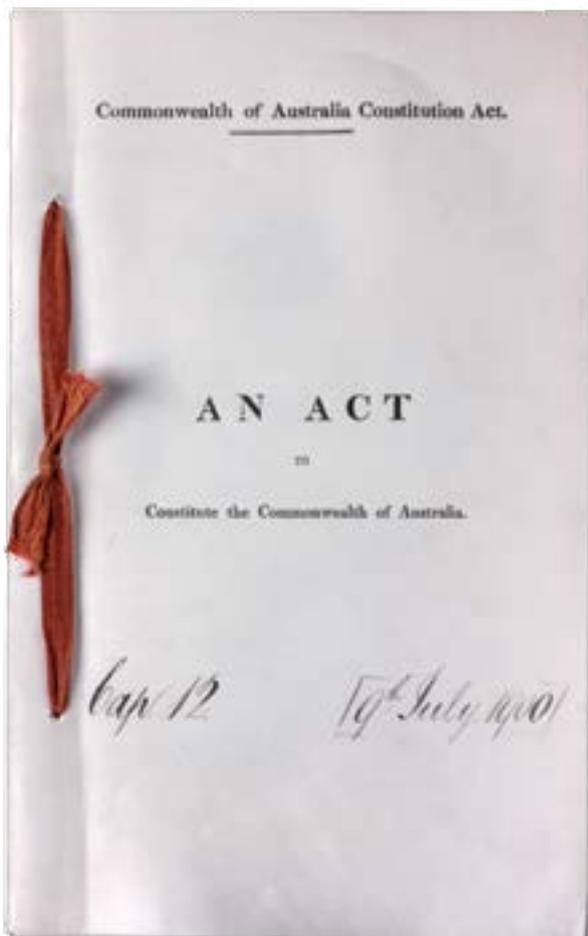
The Australian Constitution

The *Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act 1900* is the legal document that sets out the basic rules for the government of Australia. The Australian Constitution was originally passed as part of a British Act of Parliament in 1900. On 1 January 1901, when the Constitution took effect, the Australian colonies became one independent nation, the Commonwealth of Australia.

The Australian Constitution established the Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, created with a House of Representatives and a Senate. The Constitution also established the High Court of Australia, which has the power to apply and interpret the laws of Australia.

The Australian Constitution can only be changed through a special vote called a referendum.

In a referendum, there needs to be a double majority for the Australian Constitution to be changed. This means that the majority of voters in a majority of states and a majority of voters across the nation must vote for the change.



The Australian Constitution

How is the power of government controlled?

The Australian Constitution divides power between three arms of government. This is to stop one person or one group of people taking over all the power to govern Australia.

Legislative power

Parliament has the power to make and change the laws. Parliament is made up of representatives who are elected by the people of Australia.

Executive power

Executive power is the power to put the laws into practice. The Executive includes Australian Government ministers and the Governor-General. Each minister is responsible for one or more government departments.

Judicial power

Judges have the power to interpret and apply the law. Courts and judges are independent of parliament and government.

These powers are written into the Australian Constitution.

Who is Australia's Head of State?

Australia's Head of State is the Queen of Australia, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

In Australia, the Queen does not have a day-to-day role in government. The Queen appoints the Governor-General as her representative in Australia, on advice from the Australian Prime Minister. The Governor-General acts independently of all political parties.

In each of the states there is a Governor who represents the Queen in a role that is similar to the Governor-General.

Constitutional monarchy

Australia is a constitutional monarchy. A constitutional monarchy is a country in which a king or queen is the head of state but has to act in accordance with the constitution.

The Australian system of parliamentary democracy was based on the British system, developed over many centuries. In the Australian system, the leader of the Australian Government is the Prime Minister.

The role of the Governor-General

The Governor-General:

- signs all Bills passed by the Australian Parliament into law (this is called Royal Assent)
- signs regulations
- performs ceremonial duties
- approves the appointment of the Australian Government and its ministers, federal judges and other officials.

The Governor-General also has special powers known as 'reserve powers' that can only be used in specific circumstances.

Who are some of Australia's leaders?

Head of State

The Queen of Australia

Governor-General

The representative of the Head of State in Australia

Governor

The representative of the Head of State in each Australian state

Prime Minister

The leader of the Australian Government

Premier

The leader of a state government

Chief Minister

The leader of a territory government

Government Minister

A member of parliament chosen by a government leader to be responsible for an area of government

Member of Parliament (MP)

An elected representative of the Australian people in the Australian Parliament

Senator

An elected representative of a state or territory in the Australian Parliament

Mayor or Shire President

The leader of a local council

Councillor

An elected member of a local council



Old Parliament House in Canberra opened in 1927

How is Australia governed?

Australian Government

The Australian Government is also called the Federal Government or the Commonwealth Government.

The Australian Parliament has two Houses:

- the House of Representatives
- the Senate.

The members of both Houses are directly elected by the Australian people at federal elections. When you vote in a federal election, you usually elect representatives to each House.



New Parliament House in Canberra opened in 1988

The House of Representatives

The House of Representatives is sometimes called the Lower House or the People's House.

Australia is divided into federal electorates. Australians in each electorate vote for one person to represent them in the House of Representatives. This representative is called a Member of Parliament (MP).

The number of MPs for each state and territory is based on the size of its population. The people of Australia elect a total of 150 members to the House of Representatives.

The important work of the House of Representatives is to consider, debate and vote on proposals for new laws or changes to the laws. Members of the House of Representatives also discuss matters of national importance.



The House of Representatives

The Senate

The Senate is sometimes called the Upper House, the House of Review or the States' House.

The states are equally represented in the Senate, regardless of their population size. There are 12 representatives elected from each state. Both mainland territories elect two representatives each. There are 76 representatives elected in total and they are called Senators.

Senators also consider, debate and vote on new laws or changes to the laws. Senators also discuss matters of national importance.



The Senate

State and territory government

There are six states and two mainland territories in Australia. Each state has its own constitution and its own parliament. State and territory governments are based in their capital cities.

The leader of a state government is the Premier and the leader of a territory government is the Chief Minister.

State governments operate in a similar way to the Australian Government. In each state, a Governor represents the Queen of Australia. In the Northern Territory, an Administrator is appointed by the Governor-General. The role and responsibilities of the Administrator are similar to those of a state Governor.

As with the Australian Government, people vote to elect a representative for their area. These representatives become a member of the state or territory parliament.

Local government

The states and the Northern Territory are divided into local government areas. These may be called cities, shires, towns or municipalities. Each area has its own local council. Councils are responsible for planning and delivering services to their local community. Citizens in each local government area vote to elect their local councillors.

What do the three levels of government do?

The Australian Government is responsible for:

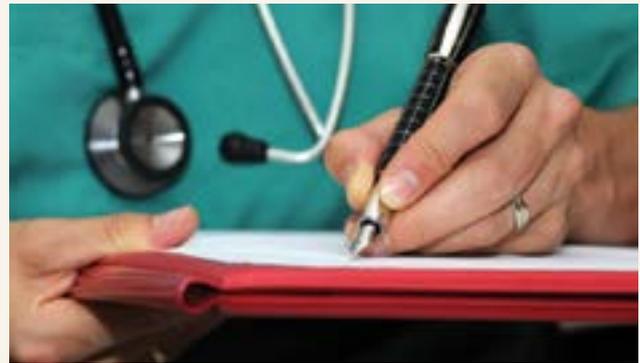
- taxation
- national economic management
- immigration and citizenship
- employment
- postal services and the communications network
- social security (pensions and family support)
- defence
- trade
- airports and air safety
- foreign affairs (relations with other countries).



The Australian Government is responsible for national economic management

State and territory governments are responsible for:

- hospitals and health services
- schools
- railways
- roads and road traffic control
- forestry
- police
- public transport.



State and territory governments are responsible for hospitals

Local governments (and the Australian Capital Territory Government) are responsible for:

- street signs, traffic controls
- local roads, footpaths, bridges
- drains
- parks, playgrounds, swimming pools, sports grounds
- camping grounds and caravan parks
- food and meat inspection
- noise and animal control
- rubbish collection
- local libraries, halls and community centres
- certain child-care and aged-care issues
- building permits
- social planning
- local environmental issues.



Local governments are responsible for playgrounds

Some responsibilities are shared between the various levels of government. The Council of Australian Government (COAG) has been set up to encourage cooperation between the levels of government.

What role do political parties play in the way Australia is governed?

A political party is a group of people who share similar ideas about how a country should be governed. They work together to have the party's ideas turned into laws. The main political parties in Australia are the Australian Labor Party, the Liberal Party of Australia, the Nationals and the Australian Greens.

Most members of parliament belong to political parties. Some members of parliament do not belong to any political party. They are called Independents.

In Australia, you are free to join a political party if you choose.

How is the Australian Government formed?

After an election, the political party or coalition of parties with the majority of members in the House of Representatives forms the Australian Government. The leader of this party becomes the leader of the Australian Government, the Prime Minister.

The party or coalition of parties with the second largest number of members in the House of Representatives is known as the Opposition. Its leader is called the Leader of the Opposition.

The Prime Minister chooses MPs or Senators to become ministers. Ministers are responsible for important areas of government (called portfolios), such as employment, Indigenous affairs or the Treasury. Ministers with the most senior portfolios make up the Cabinet, which is the key decision making body of the Australian Government.



High Court of Australia

How are laws made?

Citizens of Australia elect people to represent them in the Australian Parliament.

The Australian Parliament makes and changes laws to benefit the nation.

A member of the Australian Parliament proposes a new law or a change to the law. This proposal is called a Bill.

The House of Representatives and the Senate consider, debate and vote on whether they agree with the Bill.

If the majority of members in each House of Parliament agrees to the Bill, it goes to the Governor-General.

When the Governor-General signs the Bill, it becomes a law. This is called Royal Assent.

State and territory parliaments make their own laws in a similar way.

How are laws administered?

The courts

The courts in Australia are responsible for interpreting and applying the law. They are independent of the government. The courts decide if a person has broken the law or not and decide the penalty. Every person has the right to be represented by a lawyer in court. Courts can only base their decision on the evidence before them.

Judges and magistrates

The judge or magistrate is the highest authority in the court. Judges and magistrates are independent and no one can tell them what to decide.

Judges and magistrates are appointed by the government, but the government cannot take their jobs away if it disagrees with their decisions.

Juries

A court will use a jury in some cases to decide if a person has broken the law.

A jury is a group of ordinary people randomly chosen from the general population. The judge explains the law to the jury. In a criminal trial, if the jury finds a person guilty, the judge decides the penalty.

Under the law, people in Australia are considered innocent until they are found guilty by a court.

The police

The police maintain peace and order in the community. It is their job to protect life and property. They are independent of the government. If the police believe that someone has broken the law, they can arrest them and bring them before a court of law. The police may give evidence in court, but the court decides if a person is guilty or not.

The states and the Northern Territory have their own police forces. They deal with crimes under state and territory laws.

Australia also has a national police force called the Australian Federal Police. The Australian Federal Police investigates crimes against federal laws, for example, drug trafficking, crimes against national security and crimes against the environment. The Australian Federal Police is also responsible for general police work in the Australian Capital Territory.

The police and the community have a good relationship in Australia. You can report crimes and seek assistance from your local police.

It is important for you to be familiar with the laws in Australia, because not knowing a law is no excuse for breaking it.

It is a serious crime to bribe a police officer. It is a crime to even offer a bribe to a police officer.

Criminal offences in Australia

Some of the most serious crimes include murder, assault, sexual assault, violence against people or property, armed robbery or theft, having sexual relations with children or young people who are aged below the legal age of consent, dangerous driving of a motor car, possession and use of illegal drugs and fraud.

As in other countries, violence towards another person is illegal in Australia and is a very serious crime. This includes violence within the home and within marriage, known as domestic or family violence. Domestic violence includes physical, sexual or psychological abuse or harm, forced sexual relations, forced isolation or economic deprivation.

Carrying weapons such as knives or guns is against the law in Australia. A person who wishes to own a gun, for example, for use on a farm, must first obtain a firearm licence from the police.

Traffic offences

Road and traffic rules are controlled by state and territory governments. People can be fined large amounts of money or even sent to prison for breaking traffic laws. To drive a car in Australia, you must have a local driver's licence and the car must be registered.

Everybody travelling in a car must wear a seatbelt. Babies and young children must be in an approved car seat. Traffic laws relating to speeding and driving after drinking alcohol or taking drugs are very strict. It is also against the law to talk on a hand-held mobile phone while driving.

In conclusion

Our democratic institutions have created a peaceful and stable society. We have a rich and unique culture to share. As an Australian citizen, you will become part of our nation's story and will contribute to our future. Australia welcomes you. Citizenship is our common bond.

In preparation for the citizenship test, try the practice test questions on pages 34 and 35.

Glossary of testable section

Australian Public Service

government departments and people employed by them

Paul got a job in the Australian Public Service as a Centrelink officer.

civil unrest

demonstrations and riots by large numbers of people, usually protesting against a government decision or policy

There was civil unrest when the government passed the unpopular laws.

coalition

the joining of two or more political parties, usually to form a government or opposition

After the election, there was no party with a majority in the House of Representatives, so two parties with similar ideas joined to form a coalition.

commission

a group of people with an official responsibility

An independent commission organises the elections.

constitutional monarchy

a country in which a king or queen is the head of state, whose powers are limited by the constitution

Our Constitution established the Commonwealth of Australia as a constitutional monarchy, with the King or Queen of the United Kingdom as our Head of State.

court

a place where legal cases are heard by a judge or magistrate

When people break the law, they may go to court.

criminal trial

a hearing of facts by a court to decide if a person is guilty or not guilty of an alleged crime.

After the criminal trial, the bank robber was sent to jail.

democracy

government by the people through elected representatives

Grace was happy to live in a democracy where she could vote for her representative in parliament.

drug trafficking

carrying or buying drugs to sell illegally

Jess was sent to jail for drug trafficking.

economic deprivation

a form of domestic violence, where one partner in a relationship prevents the other partner from receiving or handling money

Lin experienced economic deprivation because her husband gave her no money.

election

an event in which citizens choose a person to represent them in parliament

Australian citizens aged 18 years or over must vote in an election.

electoral roll

the list of people entitled to vote in an election or referendum

When Jan arrived at the voting centre, the official looked for her name on the electoral roll.

enforce the law

to make sure that people follow the law

Police enforce the law and keep the peace.

executive power

the power and authority to administer the laws, one of the three powers under the Australian Constitution

Australian Government ministers and the Governor-General have executive power to administer the laws made by the Australian Parliament.

federation

the union of colonies into one nation with the colonies retaining certain powers

In 1901, the colonies were united into a federation called the Commonwealth of Australia.

First Fleet

the group of 11 ships which set out from Britain under Captain Arthur Phillip to establish a convict settlement in New South Wales

On Australia Day we remember the landing of the First Fleet at Sydney Cove on 26 January 1788.

floral emblem

national flower

Australia's floral emblem is the golden wattle.

forced isolation

a form of domestic violence where one partner in a relationship controls who the other partner sees and talks to, what they read and where they go

Sandi was in forced isolation because her husband did not allow her to visit friends or family.

from this time forward

from now and in the future

At the citizenship ceremony, you promise to be loyal to Australia from this time forward.

icon

a well known image

The Opera House is a famous Sydney icon.

Indigenous people

the original inhabitants of the land – in Australia, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

The Indigenous people of Australia make up 2.5 per cent of the Australian population.

Judaeo-Christian

of both the Jewish and the Christian religions

Judaeo-Christian values are those based on lessons from the Bible.

judicial power

the power and authority to interpret and apply the laws, one of the three powers under the Australian Constitution

The courts in Australia have the judicial power to interpret and apply the law.

legislative power

the power and authority to make and change the laws, one of the three powers under the Australian Constitution

Under the constitution, parliament has legislative power, that is, the power to make laws.

liberties (liberty)

personal freedom and independence

In our democratic society, people have freedom of speech, freedom of expression, freedom of religion and freedom of association. We value these liberties.

magistrate

a judge of a lower court

The magistrate found the thief guilty and sent him to jail.

mateship

helping and receiving help from others, especially in difficult times

When my car broke down, the other drivers helped to push it in the spirit of mateship.

national anthem

national song

Australia's national anthem is 'Advance Australia Fair'.

parliamentary democracy

a system of government based on the regular election of representatives to parliament by the citizens

In a parliamentary democracy, the people vote for their representatives.

permanent resident

a person who has a visa to work and live in Australia with no time limit

Abdul's Japanese neighbour is a permanent resident of Australia and works at a bank.

political party

a group of people who share similar ideas about how a country should be governed

Members of a political party meet regularly, for example, to discuss improvements to public transport.

public service

the use of time, energy or skill for the good of the nation

Jose provided a valuable public service by helping refugees to settle in Australia.

referendum

a vote by all voters on a proposed change to the Australian Constitution

In a 1967 referendum, the people voted to count Indigenous Australians in the census.

representative

a person who acts or speaks for others

My local council representative liked my idea and presented it at the council meeting.

review

to consider a proposal for a new law and decide whether to accept or reject it

The Senate, as the House of Review, debated a taxation Bill from the Lower House.

secret ballot

a system of voting where people vote privately, so no one can influence or pressure them to vote in a certain way

In a secret ballot, no one else watches while you write your vote.

secular

separate from religion

In a secular society there is no official religion.

set up

to build, establish, start

Governor Phillip set up the first colony in New South Wales.

shire

a local government area

The roads in my shire are very safe.

social security

government pensions or benefits to help unemployed people, disabled people, elderly people and others in need

When Trang lost her job, she had to apply for social security.

try your luck

to take a chance

Every year, I try my luck and bet \$10 on a horse in the Melbourne Cup.

volunteer

a person who gives their time to a person or organisation without expecting payment

Raza is a volunteer who teaches people English in their homes.

Practice test questions



1. What do we remember on Anzac Day?

- a. The landing of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps at Gallipoli, Turkey
- b. The arrival of the first free settlers from Great Britain
- c. The landing of the First Fleet at Sydney Cove

2. What are the colours of the Australian Aboriginal Flag?

- a. Black, red and yellow
- b. Green, white and black
- c. Blue, white and green

3. Which official symbol of Australia identifies Commonwealth property?

- a. The national anthem
- b. Australia's national flower
- c. Commonwealth Coat of Arms



Australia's democratic beliefs, rights and liberties

4. Which of these statements about Australia's system of government is correct?

- a. The Queen of Australia chooses people to form the Australian Parliament
- b. The government is elected by the people
- c. The Prime Minister chooses our Members of Parliament

5. Which of these is an example of freedom of speech?

- a. People can peacefully protest against government decisions
- b. Men and women are treated equally in a court of law
- c. Australians are free to not follow a religion

6. Which of these statements about government in Australia is correct?

- a. The government does not allow some religions
- b. Government in Australia is secular
- c. Religious laws are passed by parliament

7. Which of these is an example of equality in Australia?

- a. Everyone follows the same religion
- b. Men and women have the same rights
- c. Everyone belongs to the same political party

8. Which of these is a responsibility of Australian citizens aged 18 years or over?

- a. To attend local council meetings
- b. To vote in elections
- c. To have a current Australian passport

9. Which of these is a responsibility of Australian citizens aged 18 years or over?

- a. To do local community service
- b. To carry a passport at all times
- c. To serve on a jury if called to do so

10. Which of these statements about passports is correct?

- a. Australian citizens can apply for an Australian passport
- b. Permanent residents can hold an Australian passport
- c. Australian citizens need a passport and visa to return to Australia

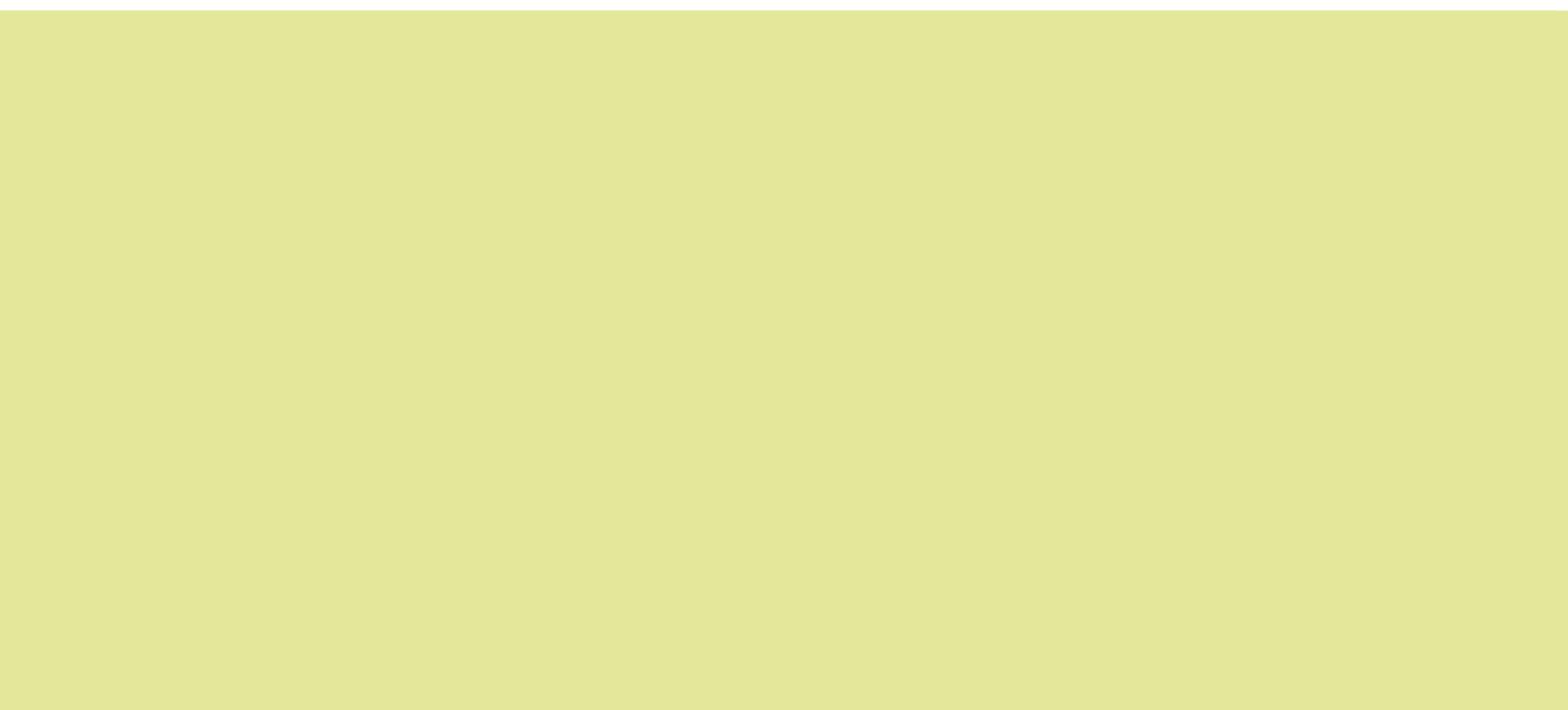


Government and the law in Australia

11. Which of these statements about voting in Australian elections is correct?
 - a. People are free and safe to vote for any candidate
 - b. Voting is by a show of hands
 - c. People must write their name on their vote
12. What happened in Australia on 1 January 1901?
 - a. The Australian Constitution was changed by a referendum
 - b. The Australian Constitution came into effect
 - c. The Australian and New Zealand Army Corps was formed
13. What is the name of the legal document that sets out the rules for the government of Australia?
 - a. The Australian Federation
 - b. The Australian Commonwealth
 - c. The Australian Constitution
14. What is a referendum?
 - a. A vote to change the government
 - b. A vote to change the Australian Constitution
 - c. A vote to change the Prime Minister
15. Which arm of government has the power to interpret and apply laws?
 - a. Legislative
 - b. Executive
 - c. Judicial
16. Which of these is a role of the Governor-General?
 - a. The appointment of state premiers
 - b. The signing of Bills passed by the Australian Parliament
 - c. The appointment of the Head of State
17. Which of these statements about state governments is correct?
 - a. All states have the same constitution
 - b. Each state has its own constitution
 - c. The states have no constitution
18. What is the name given to the party or coalition of parties with the second largest number of members in the House of Representatives?
 - a. The Government
 - b. The Opposition
 - c. The Senate
19. What is the name of a proposal to make a law in parliament?
 - a. Royal Assent
 - b. Bill
 - c. Debate
20. Who maintains peace and order in Australia?
 - a. Public servants
 - b. Police
 - c. Lawyers

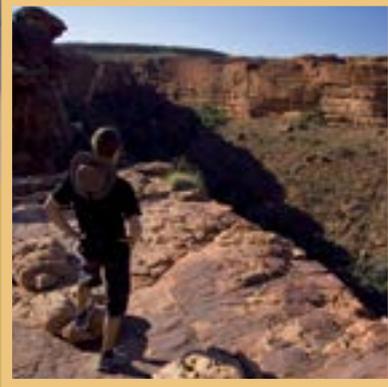
Answers:

1a, 2a, 3c, 4b, 5a, 6b, 7b, 8b, 9c, 10a, 11a, 12b, 13c, 14b, 15c, 16b, 17b, 18b, 19b, 20b





The end of the testable section



Part 4 Australia today

Australia is one of the world's oldest land masses.

It is the sixth largest country in the world.



Australia today

In these pages you will learn about what makes this country so special. You will find out more about our culture, our innovators and our national identity. In the world today, Australia is a dynamic business and trade partner and a respected global citizen. We value the contribution of new migrants to our country's constant growth and renewal.

The land

Australia is unique in many ways. Of the world's seven continents, Australia is the only one to be occupied by a single nation. We have the lowest population density in the world, with only two people per square kilometre.

Australia is one of the world's oldest land masses. It is the sixth largest country in the world. It is also the driest inhabited continent, so in most parts of Australia water is a very precious resource.

Much of the land has poor soil, with only 6 per cent suitable for agriculture. The dry inland areas are called 'the outback'. There is great respect for people who live and work in these remote and harsh environments. Many of them have become part of Australian folklore.

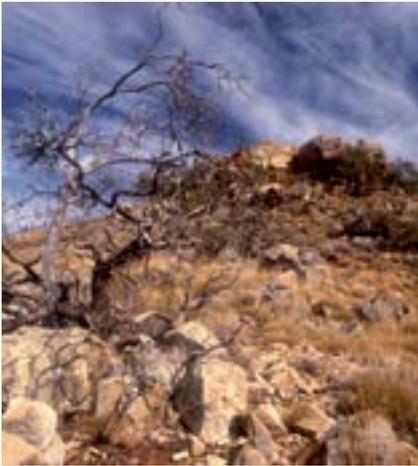
Because Australia is such a large country, the climate varies in different parts of the continent. There are tropical regions in the north of Australia and deserts in the centre.

Further south, the temperatures can change from cool winters with mountain snow, to heatwaves in summer.

In addition to the six states and two mainland territories, the Australian Government also administers, as territories, Ashmore and Cartier Islands, Christmas Island, the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, Jervis Bay Territory, the Coral Sea Islands, Heard Island and McDonald Islands in the Australian Antarctic Territory, and Norfolk Island.

World Heritage sites

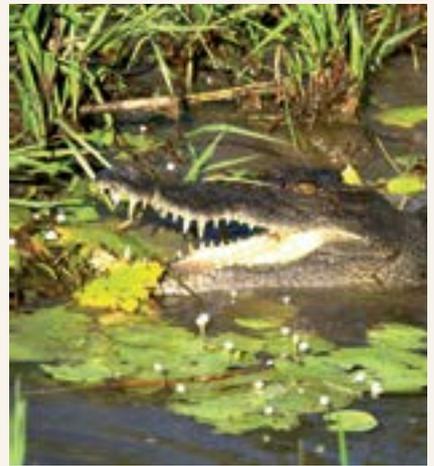
More than 11 per cent of our continent is protected Indigenous land, a reserve or a national park that is managed for conservation according to international standards. Seventeen Australian sites are listed on the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage List.



Australian Fossil Mammal Sites in South Australia and Queensland



Gondwana Rainforests of New South Wales and Queensland



Kakadu National Park in the Northern Territory



Fraser Island off the coast of southern Queensland



Great Barrier Reef in Queensland



Lord Howe Island off the coast of New South Wales



Greater Blue Mountains west of Sydney



Heard Island and McDonald Islands in the Australian Antarctic Territory



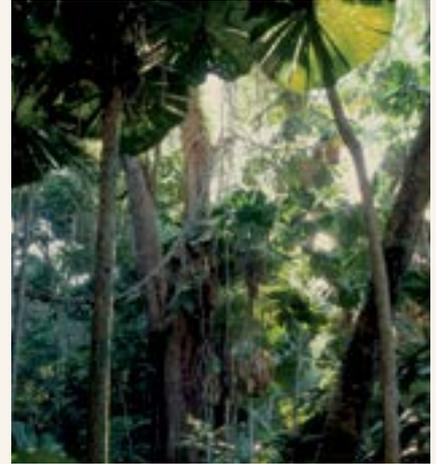
Macquarie Island to the south of Tasmania



Purnululu National Park in Western Australia



Sydney Opera House



Wet Tropics of Queensland



Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens in Melbourne



Tasmanian Wilderness



Willandra Lakes in New South Wales



Shark Bay in Western Australia



Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park in the Northern Territory

We encourage you to broaden your experience of Australia by visiting these and other amazing landmarks. You can walk the desert or the shore, the mountains or the rainforests. Every step you take is a step closer to belonging to this vast and vibrant land.

A vast country

The vastness of Australia has given rise to innovation and invention.

In the early days, people in the outback sometimes had to travel for several days to visit the nearest doctor. Many children in the bush lived too far away to attend day schools.

Outback families found the isolation hard to bear. Large cattle stations could be thousands of square kilometres in size. Women and children who lived there might not see another person for months. There were no telephones and people felt extremely isolated and vulnerable.

These were problems that great Australians solved through ingenuity and innovation.

The pedal radio

In 1929, Alfred Traegar, from Adelaide, designed the first pedal-powered radio. Users could keep a two-way radio going by pushing the pedals with their feet. Lonely homesteads, remote mission stations and Aboriginal communities all benefited from this invention. Isolated women could now make friends with each other across the airwaves.

The pedal radio helped to establish two great Australian institutions, the Royal Flying Doctor Service and the School of the Air.

The Royal Flying Doctor Service

Reverend John Flynn lived and worked with people in remote communities. His idea was to bring the doctor to the patient in the outback as quickly as possible, by air. He received help from the government, the airline Qantas and charitable donations. The Royal Flying Doctor Service began in 1928 but there were still people in remote places who could not call the service. The introduction of the pedal radio ensured that people in more isolated stations could call for a doctor as soon as possible.

The School of the Air

Until the 1950s, children living in isolated places had to attend boarding school or complete their lessons by mail.

Adelaide Miethke, Vice-President of the Royal Flying Doctor Service in South Australia, realised that the Flying Doctor radio service could also help children at home talk with their teachers. The Alice Springs service began to air these two-way lessons in 1948. The School of the Air was formally established a few years later. Australia's School of the Air has also helped many other countries to set up their own similar programs.

The old pedal radio has now been replaced with high frequency receivers, but the Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia and the School of the Air continue to serve and benefit the people in Australia's remote communities.



Children studying through the School of the Air in New South Wales

Australia's identity

Australia's identity has been shaped by our unique heritage, our culture and the enterprising character of our people.

Sport and recreation

Many Australians love sport and many have achieved impressive results at an international level.

We are proud of our reputation as a nation of 'good sports'. Australian sportsmen and women are admired as ambassadors for the values of hard work, fair play and teamwork.

Throughout our history, sport has both characterised the Australian people and united us. From early settlement, sport provided an escape from the realities of a harsh existence. Even during wartime, members of the Australian Defence Force organised sporting competitions to help relieve the stress of the battleground.

Sport also provides a common ground that allows both players and spectators to feel included and a part of something that is important to Australian society.

Many Australians participate in team sports. Cricket, basketball, netball, hockey and the football codes are among the most popular.

Swimming, tennis, athletics, golf and cycling are popular recreational activities. They are also sports that Australians excel at in international competitions. Other popular physical activities include bushwalking, surfing and skiing.

Australians also play and love to watch football (also known as soccer), rugby league, rugby union and Australian Rules football. 'Aussie Rules' is a uniquely Australian game.

Australia is especially proud of its international successes in the game of cricket. Australian and English cricket teams have had an intense rivalry since the late 19th century.

The Melbourne Cup, 'the race that stops the nation', is one of the richest and most challenging horse races in the world. The first Melbourne Cup was held in 1861. The first Tuesday in November, Melbourne Cup Day, has been a public holiday in Victoria since 1877.



Ian Thorpe, five-time Olympic gold medallist



Member of the Australian Women's National Football team

Sir Donald Bradman (1908 – 2001)

Sir Donald Bradman is the greatest cricket batsman of all-time and is an Australian sporting legend.

Raised in Bowral, New South Wales, Donald Bradman played his first game of cricket for the Australian team in 1928.

He was slight but amazingly quick on his feet. On his first tour of England in 1930, he broke nearly all the batting records. By age 21, he was already an Australian legend.

On Bradman's final tour in 1948, his team became known as 'The Invincibles', as they did not lose a single match they played against England.

Sir Donald Bradman, known as 'The Don', is recognised as the world's best ever batsman. His test batting average was 99.94.



The Arts

Australia has a vibrant arts scene that includes the nation's Indigenous cultural traditions and rich assortment of migrant cultures. All forms of the Australian visual and performing arts, including film, art, theatre, music and dance, draw admiration both here and overseas.

Literature

Australia has a strong literary tradition which started with the storytelling of Indigenous Australians and continued with the oral stories of the convicts arriving in the late 18th century.

Much of Australia's early writing is about the bush and the difficulties of life in such a harsh environment. Writers such as Henry Lawson and Miles Franklin wrote poems and stories about the bush and the Australian way of life.

An Australian novelist, Patrick White, received the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1973. Other popular modern day Australian novelists include Peter Carey, Colleen McCullough and Tim Winton.

Judith Wright (1915 – 2000)

Judith Wright was an outstanding poet, conservationist and campaigner for Aboriginal rights.

She is one of Australia's best loved poets. She expressed her love for Australia and its people in her poetry. She was awarded many prizes including the Encyclopaedia Britannica Prize for literature and the Queen's Gold Medal for Poetry. She was a member of the Australian Conservation Committee and the Aboriginal Treaty Committee.

Judith Wright is remembered for her skill as a poet and for advancing Australian literature and social and environmental reform.



Theatre and film

Australian plays, films and filmmakers are recognised and loved here and overseas. Australian actors such as Cate Blanchett and Geoffrey Rush, and filmmakers such as Peter Weir have won many international awards for their excellence in film.

Art

The most recognised Australian works of art are the iconic Indigenous paintings and the 19th century bush scenes of painters such as Tom Roberts, Frederick McCubbin and Arthur Streeton. In the mid 20th century, artists Russell Drysdale and Sidney Nolan depicted the harshness of the outback in bold colour. More recently, Brett Whiteley gained international acclaim for his unique and vivid style.

Music and dance

Australians have embraced and excelled in all areas of music and are internationally recognised for their contributions to classical, country and rock music. The most immediately recognised, purely Australian sound is that of the didgeridoo, the ancient instrument of the Aboriginal people.

Australian dance has flourished due to the efforts of great dancers and choreographers such as Sir Robert Helpmann, Meryl Tankard and Stephen Page.

Scientific achievement and invention

Australians have a strong record of scientific achievements and advances in the fields of medicine, technology, agriculture, mining and manufacturing.

Nine Australians have been awarded the Nobel Prize for scientific and medical discoveries.

Scientific achievers have also received Australian of the Year Awards. In 2005, the award went to Professor Fiona Wood, who developed a spray-on skin for burns victims. In 2006, the award went to Professor Ian Frazer, who developed the cervical cancer vaccine. In 2007, Professor Tim Flannery, a leading environmental scientist, received the award.

Professor Wood and Professor Frazer both migrated to Australia from Britain. Professor Frazer's co-inventor was the late Dr Jian Zhou, who migrated from China and also became an Australian citizen.



Conductor and recent citizenship conferee Vladimir Verbitsky with the Western Australian Symphony Orchestra

Professor Fred Hollows (1929 – 1993)

Professor Fred Hollows was a passionate ophthalmologist (eye doctor) who helped restore eyesight to over one million people in Australia and developing countries.



Fred Hollows was born in New Zealand. In 1965, he moved to Australia and later became the head of an Eye Department at a Sydney hospital.

He believed strongly in equality for all people and helped set up the first Aboriginal Medical Service. There are now 60 across Australia.

By 1980, Fred Hollows was travelling all over the world to help set up eye health programs in developing countries. He became an Australian citizen in April 1989.

Professor Hollows's good work continues through his wife, Gabi, and The Fred Hollows Foundation.

Australians of the Year

Since 1960, the Australian of the Year Awards have celebrated the achievement and contribution of leading Australians. Anyone can nominate an Australian from any walk of life for an award. Australians of the Year are people who have excelled in their work and served the nation.

- | | | | |
|------|---|------|--|
| 2016 | David Morrison AO
<i>Equality advocate</i> | 2000 | Sir Gustav Nossal AC CBE FAA FRS
<i>Research Biologist</i> |
| 2015 | Rosie Batty
<i>Family violence campaigner</i> | 1999 | Mark Taylor
<i>Test Cricket Captain</i> |
| 2014 | Adam Goodes
<i>AFL player and community leader</i> | 1998 | Cathy Freeman
<i>World and Olympic Athletics Champion and Indigenous Ambassador</i> |
| 2013 | Ita Buttrose AO OBE
<i>Media icon</i> | 1997 | Professor Peter Doherty
<i>Nobel Laureate in Medicine</i> |
| 2012 | Geoffrey Rush
<i>Oscar-winning actor</i> | 1996 | Doctor John Yu AM
<i>Paediatrician</i> |
| 2011 | Simon McKeon
<i>Social entrepreneur</i> | 1995 | Arthur Boyd AC OBE
<i>Artist</i> |
| 2010 | Professor Patrick McGorry
<i>Mental health expert</i> | 1994 | Ian Kiernan OAM
<i>'Clean Up Australia' Campaigner</i> |
| 2009 | Professor Michael Dodson AM
<i>Indigenous Leader</i> | 1992 | Mandawuy Yunupingu
<i>Indigenous Leader</i> |
| 2008 | Lee Kernaghan OAM
<i>Singer, Musician and Founder of 'Pass the Hat Around' Tours</i> | 1991 | Archbishop Peter Hollingworth AO OBE
<i>Social Justice Advocate</i> |
| 2007 | Professor Tim Flannery
<i>Scientist, Author and Conservationist</i> | 1990 | Professor Fred Hollows AC
<i>Ophthalmologist</i> |
| 2006 | Professor Ian Frazer
<i>Clinical Immunologist</i> | 1989 | Allan Border AO
<i>Test Cricket Captain</i> |
| 2005 | Professor Fiona Wood AM
<i>Plastic Surgeon and Burns Specialist</i> | 1988 | Kay Cottee AO
<i>Record-breaking Solo Yachtswoman</i> |
| 2004 | Steve Waugh
<i>Test Cricket Captain and Humanitarian</i> | 1987 | John Farnham
<i>Singer and Musician</i> |
| 2003 | Professor Fiona Stanley AC
<i>Paediatrician and Epidemiologist</i> | 1986 | Dick Smith
<i>Adventurer and Philanthropist</i> |
| 2002 | Patrick Rafter
<i>US Open Tennis Champion and Founder of 'Cherish the Children Foundation'</i> | 1985 | Paul Hogan AM
<i>Actor</i> |
| 2001 | Lt General Peter Cosgrove AC MC
<i>Chief of the Australian Army 2000-2002</i> | 1984 | Lowitja O'Donoghue CBE AM
<i>Indigenous Leader</i> |

Their achievements make us think about what more we can do to contribute to our great country. The awards now include Young Australian of the Year, Senior Australian of the Year and Australia's Local Hero.

- | | | | |
|-------|--|------|--|
| 1983 | Robert de Castella MBE
<i>World Marathon Running Champion</i> | 1971 | Evonne Goolagong Cawley AO MBE
<i>Wimbledon and French Open Tennis Champion</i> |
| 1982 | Sir Edward Williams KCMG KBE
<i>Commissioner, Australian Royal Commission of Inquiry into Drugs</i> | 1970 | His Eminence Cardinal Sir Norman Gilroy KBE
<i>First Australian-born Cardinal</i> |
| 1981 | Sir John Crawford AC CBE
<i>Architect of Australia's Post-War Growth</i> | 1969 | The Rt Hon Richard Gardiner Casey Baron of Berwick, Victoria and of the City of Westminster KG GCMG CH
<i>Governor-General of Australia 1965-69</i> |
| 1980 | Manning Clark AC
<i>Historian</i> | 1968 | Lionel Rose MBE
<i>World Boxing Champion</i> |
| 1979* | Senator Neville Bonner AO
<i>First Aboriginal Senator</i> | 1967 | The Seekers
<i>Musical Group</i> |
| 1979* | Harry Butler CBE
<i>Conservationist and Naturalist</i> | 1966 | Sir Jack Brabham OBE
<i>World Motor Racing Champion</i> |
| 1978* | Alan Bond
<i>Entrepreneur</i> | 1965 | Sir Robert Helpmann CBE
<i>Actor, Dancer, Producer and Choreographer</i> |
| 1978* | Galarrwuy Yunupingu AM
<i>Indigenous Leader</i> | 1964 | Dawn Fraser MBE
<i>Olympic Swimming Champion</i> |
| 1977* | Sir Murray Tyrrell KCVO CBE
<i>Office Secretary to the Governor-General</i> | 1963 | Sir John Eccles AC
<i>Nobel Laureate in Medicine</i> |
| 1977* | Dame Raigh Roe DBE
<i>Country Women's Association Leader</i> | 1962 | Alexander 'Jock' Sturrock MBE
<i>Skipper of America's Cup Challengers</i> |
| 1976 | Sir Edward 'Weary' Dunlop AC CMG OBE
<i>Military Surgeon</i> | 1961 | Dame Joan Sutherland OM AC DBE
<i>Soprano</i> |
| 1975* | Sir John Cornforth AC CBE
<i>Nobel Laureate in Chemistry</i> | 1960 | Sir Frank MacFarlane Burnet OM AK KBE
<i>Nobel Laureate in Medicine</i> |
| 1975* | Major General Alan Stretton AO CBE
<i>Commander of Darwin Relief Operation after Cyclone Tracy</i> | | |
| 1974 | Sir Bernard Heinze AC
<i>Conductor and Musician</i> | | |
| 1973 | Patrick White
<i>Nobel Laureate in Literature</i> | | |
| 1972 | Shane Gould MBE
<i>Olympic Swimming Champion</i> | | |

*Between 1975 and 1979 the Canberra Australia Day Council also recognised an Australian of the Year.

The post nominals noted after the award recipient's name were current at the time the award was received.

Australian currency

Our currency depicts people and icons that are important to Australia. The famous Australians chosen to appear on our currency are people who have shown initiative and great talent in the areas of social reform, science, politics, military accomplishment and the arts.

Old and New Parliament House



The \$5 note shows both Old Parliament House and New Parliament House in Canberra.

Queen Elizabeth II (born 1926)



Queen Elizabeth II is Australia's Head of State. She is the Queen of Australia and of the United Kingdom and lives in England. She has been a strong, stable presence throughout her long and popular reign.

Dame Mary Gilmore (1865 – 1962)



Dame Mary Gilmore was an author, journalist, poet and campaigner for social reform. She is remembered for her writing and for speaking on behalf of women, Indigenous Australians and poor people.

AB 'Banjo' Paterson (1864 – 1941)



Andrew Barton Paterson was a poet, songwriter and journalist. He wrote under the name 'Banjo' Paterson and is remembered for 'Waltzing Matilda', the most famous folk song in Australia.

Reverend John Flynn (1880 – 1951)



Reverend John Flynn began the world's first airborne medical service, the Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia. He is remembered for saving many lives by bringing health services to remote areas of Australia.

Mary Reibey (1777 – 1855)



Mary Reibey was a pioneer businesswoman in the colony of New South Wales. After arriving in Australia as a teenaged convict settler, she became a respected leader in the community.

Edith Cowan (1861 – 1932)



Edith Cowan was a social worker, politician and feminist. She was the first female elected to any Australian parliament.

David Unaipon (1872 – 1967)



David Unaipon was a writer, public speaker and inventor. He is remembered for his contributions to science and literature, and for improving the conditions of Aboriginal people.

Sir John Monash (1865 – 1931)



Sir John Monash was an engineer, administrator and one of Australia's greatest military commanders. He is remembered for his leadership, intelligence and eloquence.

Dame Nellie Melba (1861 – 1931)



Dame Nellie Melba was a world famous soprano. Known around the world as the 'Queen of Song', she was the first Australian singer to become internationally renowned.

National days and celebrations

Australia's national holidays reflect our Judaeo-Christian heritage and celebrate the milestones that have shaped the Australian identity since European settlement.

Fixed dates

New Year's Day 1 January

We celebrate the start of the new year.

Australia Day 26 January

We celebrate what it means to be Australian and remember the arrival of the First Fleet at Sydney Cove in 1788.

Anzac Day 25 April

We remember the landing of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) at Gallipoli during World War I. We also honour all Australians who have served and died in conflicts.

Christmas Day 25 December

A gift-giving day based on the Christian celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ.

Boxing Day 26 December

Part of the Christmas celebration.

Variable dates

Labour Day or Eight Hour Day

Celebrates the Australian workers' win of the eight-hour work day – a world first.

Easter

Commemorates the Christian story of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Queen's Birthday

Celebrates the birth of Australia's Head of State, Queen Elizabeth II. This celebration is held on the second Monday in June in every state and territory except Western Australia.

Other public holidays

Other public holidays are held in different states, territories and cities. For example, the Australian Capital Territory has Canberra Day, South Australia has Volunteers Day and Western Australia has Foundation Day.

Important non-public holiday dates

Harmony Day 21 March

A day where all Australians celebrate our cultural diversity.

Australian Citizenship Day 17 September

A day where we celebrate the common bond represented by Australian citizenship and reflect on the role we play in shaping our country's future.



Walangari Karntawarra Aboriginal artist, teacher and performer.

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Australian people

Australia has a population of about 24 million people and one of the most diverse societies in the world. Indigenous Australians make up 2.5 per cent of the total population. Over one quarter of Australia's residents were born overseas, and have migrated from over 200 countries. The diversity of the population provides Australia with a rich variety of languages, beliefs, traditions and cultures.

Australia's formal ties with Great Britain have diminished over time but the influence of Great Britain survives in Australia's institutions. It also survives in many of our values and, of course, in our national language. While over 200 different languages are spoken at home and in the community (including many different Indigenous languages), English is an important part of our national identity.

Australian people take pride in Australian citizenship, which is the single unifying bond in our diverse society. Australian Citizenship Day is celebrated on 17 September each year. On this day, Australians publicly affirm their loyalty and commitment to Australia. It is a day for all Australian citizens to reflect on the role we play in building our nation and shaping our country's future.

Australia's economy

Australia has a stable and competitive economy. We value our vibrant and skilled workforce. The quality of life enjoyed by people in Australia is one of the highest in the world.

Dick Smith (born 1944)

Dick Smith is a leading Australian businessman, adventurer and philanthropist.



Dick Smith made his first fortune in his electronics business. He has used his wealth to advance Australia. He started up an Australian-only food company and he has invested millions of dollars to help keep companies Australian-owned.

He was named Australian of the Year in 1986 and has won an award for technical advancement and environmental preservation. He was the first person to cross Australia, and the Tasman Sea, in a hot air balloon. He is known for his adventurous spirit, his success in business and his deep love of Australia.

The market

Australia's stable and modern financial institutions and strict tax and trading regulations give certainty to business activity. The service industry, which includes tourism, education and financial services, form nearly 70 per cent of Australia's gross domestic product (GDP).

Australia's economic stability makes it an appealing destination for investment. Australia's stock market is the second biggest in the Asia-Pacific region after Japan's.

Trade

Australia's largest trading partners are Japan, China, the United States, South Korea, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. We are a major exporter of wheat, wool, iron ore, minerals and gold. We also export energy in the forms of liquefied natural gas and coal. Our economy is open and trade has always been a vital part of our economic prosperity. Australian exports recently totalled well over \$200 billion.

Mining

Australia is rich in natural resources such as coal, copper, liquefied natural gas and mineral sands. These are in high demand, especially in the developing economies in Asia.



Australia's largest export sector is minerals and fuels

Australia as a global citizen

Australia is proud of its role as a good international citizen. We show this by helping those less fortunate than ourselves around the world.

Australia's international aid and humanitarian efforts

The Australian Government's international aid program supports developing countries to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development. We provide this support in our region and around the world by assisting people and governments.

Australians show enormous generosity when disasters occur in our country or overseas. We also donate regularly to countries that experience ongoing suffering. Australia's commitment to our aid program reflects this feature of the Australian character.



Australian relief operation in Indonesia after the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami

Australia's active participation in international forums

Australia has been an active member of the United Nations (UN) from its beginning in 1945. Under the 1951 UN Refugee Convention, Australia provides protection for people who have been identified as refugees under the 1951 UN Refugee Convention. We also contribute to UN peacekeeping efforts and humanitarian and emergency responses for developing countries, and have a strong involvement in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

In 1971, Australia became a full member of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The OECD aims to improve economic, social and employment conditions in its 30 member countries and in other developing countries. At the same time, the OECD aims to expand world trade.

Australia strongly supports closer cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region. Australia is an active member of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the East Asia Summit (EAS), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF).

Dr Catherine Hamlin AC (born 1924)

Dr Catherine Hamlin is a gynaecologist, renowned for saving young Ethiopian women from a life of suffering.



Since 1959, Catherine Hamlin has worked in Addis Ababa in Ethiopia helping women with the childbirth injury known as 'obstetric fistula'. Women with this problem cannot control their bodily functions and so they are made outcasts from society.

Catherine and her husband established the Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital. Their efforts have meant thousands of women are able to return home to lead full, healthy lives in their villages.

In 1995, Dr Catherine Hamlin was made a Companion of the Order of Australia, the highest Australian award. She continues to work for the women of Ethiopia.

Australia today is a vast and growing country, proud of its achievements in sport, the arts and science. We value the quality of life of our people, but we are always aiming higher.

Through international aid and development assistance, Australia has carried its sense of fair play beyond the sports field and into the global community.

Australian Nobel Laureates

Australia is renowned for scientific and medical research. Eleven Australians have been made Nobel Laureates in these fields.

Professor William Bragg (1862 – 1942) and Lawrence Bragg (1890 – 1971) Physicists.

William Bragg (father) and Lawrence Bragg (son) were joint winners of the Nobel Prize in Physics 1915, 'for their services in the analysis of crystal structure by means of X-rays'.

Sir Howard Walter Florey (1898 – 1968) Pathologist.

Born in Adelaide, South Australia, Howard Florey received the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 1945 (jointly) 'for the discovery of penicillin and its curative effect in various infectious diseases'.

Sir Frank Macfarlane Burnet (1899 – 1985) Medical Scientist and Biologist.

Born in Victoria, Frank Burnet was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 1960 (jointly) 'for discovery of acquired immunological tolerance'.

Sir John Carew Eccles (1903 – 1997) Physiologist.

John Eccles was born in Melbourne and received the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 1963 (jointly) 'for discoveries concerning the ionic mechanisms involved in excitation and inhibition in the peripheral and central portions of the nerve cell membrane'.

Professor John Warcup Cornforth (1917 – 2007) Chemist.

John Cornforth was born in Sydney and received the Nobel Prize in Chemistry 1975 (jointly) 'for his work on the stereochemistry of enzyme-catalyzed reactions'.

Professor Peter Doherty (born 1940) Immunologist.

Peter Doherty was born in Queensland and received the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 1996 (jointly) 'for discoveries concerning the specificity of the cell mediated immune defence'.

Professor Barry Marshall (born 1951) Gastroenterologist and

Doctor Robin Warren (born 1937) Pathologist.

Barry Marshall and Robin Warren were joint winners of the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2005 for their discovery of 'the bacterium *Helicobacter pylori* and its role in gastritis and peptic ulcer disease'.

Professor Elizabeth Helen Blackburn (born 1948) Biologist.

Elizabeth Blackburn was born in Hobart and received the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2009 (jointly) 'for the discovery of how chromosomes are protected by telomeres and the enzyme telomerase'.

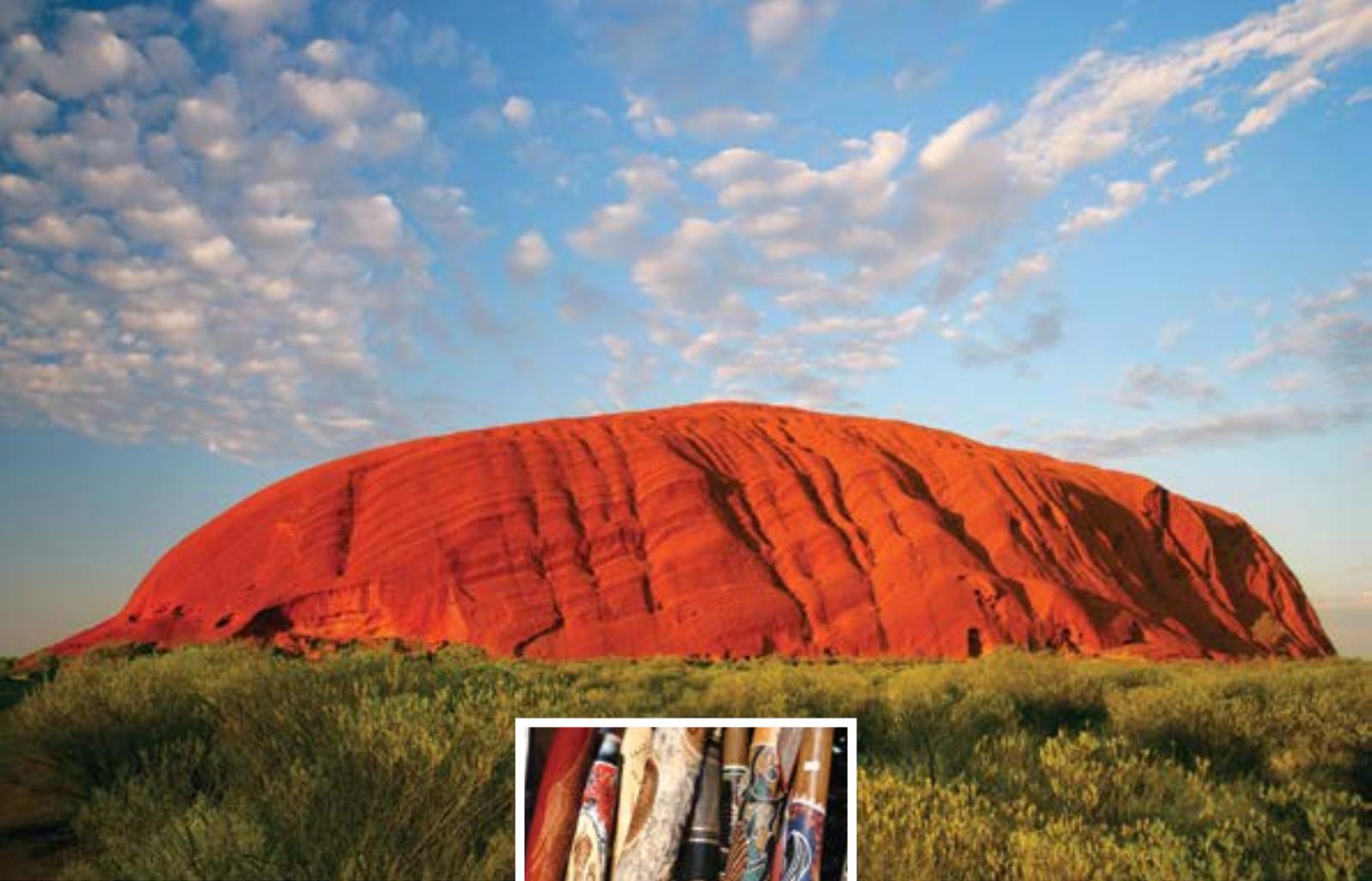
Professor Brian Schmidt (born 1967) Astronomer.

Brian P. Schmidt received the Nobel Prize in Physics 2011 (jointly) 'for the discovery of the accelerating expansion of the Universe through observations of distant supernovae'.

Australia also has one Nobel Laureate in Literature.

Patrick White (1912 – 1990) Novelist and Playwright.

Born in London to Australian parents, Patrick White was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1973 'for an epic and psychological narrative art which has introduced a new continent into literature'.



Part 5

Our Australian story

*The Indigenous cultures of Australia
are the oldest continuing cultures in the world.*

Our Australian story

This brief history of Australia is by no means the full story, but it will give you an idea of the events that have shaped our country and our culture. For thousands of years the land was inhabited and cared for by the Indigenous people. The arrival of the First Fleet in 1788 meant their world would change forever. Over the past 200 years, Australia has learnt many lessons about equality and human rights on its path towards multiculturalism and reconciliation. The reforms we have made mean that the Australian community that you are now joining is one where every person feels included and valued.

Indigenous Australians

The Indigenous cultures of Australia are the oldest continuing cultures in the world. Australia's Indigenous people have lived here for between 40 000 and 60 000 years.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures differ from each other. They have their own languages and traditions.

Historically, Aboriginal people are from mainland Australia and Tasmania. Torres Strait Islanders are from the islands between the tip of Queensland and Papua New Guinea. Torres Strait Islanders share many cultural similarities with the people of Papua New Guinea and other Pacific islands.

Languages

Before British settlement, over 700 languages and dialects were used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. About 145 languages are still used today. There was no written language. The oral histories of the Indigenous cultures are extremely important because they tell the story of the people and the land. For example, stories such as those explaining the flooding of Port Phillip Bay in Victoria refer to an actual event that happened 10 000 years ago.

The Dreaming and Indigenous arts

Different Indigenous clans have their own name for what we, in English, call the 'Dreaming'. The Dreaming, or Dreamtime, is the system of knowledge, faith and practice that guides Indigenous life. It shows people how they should live and how they should behave. People who do not obey its rules are punished.



Kakadu Aboriginal art

The stories of the Dreaming were told to children by their parents and elders. These stories taught the children how their land came to be shaped and inhabited, and how to behave and why. The stories also gave the children valuable practical lessons, for example, where to find food.

Indigenous music, song and dance tell stories of the Dreaming and everyday life. When Indigenous people sing and dance, they feel a very deep connection to their ancestors.

The original forms of Aboriginal art were rock carvings or paintings and ground designs. Some of these are 30 000 years old. People from Central Australia painted with dots and circles representing the land or stories from the Dreaming. Those in the northern parts of Australia painted figures of humans, animals and spirits.

The Dreaming continues to be important to Indigenous people today.

The first Europeans to Australia

Early European exploration

In the 17th century, European explorers discovered parts of what they called 'Terra Australis Incognita', the unknown land of the south. In 1606 a Dutchman, Willem Janszoon, charted the western side of Cape York Peninsula at the northern tip of Australia. At about this time, a Spanish ship lead by Luis Vaez de Torres sailed through the strait at the north of the continent.

Later in the 1600s, Dutch sailors explored the coast of Western Australia. The Dutch called this land 'New Holland'.

In 1642, Abel Tasman discovered the coast of a new land that he named 'Van Diemen's Land' (now Tasmania). He also charted thousands of miles of Australian coast. His incomplete map of New Holland shows that he believed the land was joined to Papua New Guinea in the north.

William Dampier was the first Englishman to set foot on Australian soil. In 1684, he landed on the north-west coast. The land was dry and dusty so he did not consider it useful for trade or settlement.

Captain James Cook

The east coast of Australia was not explored by Europeans until Englishman James Cook reached it in 1770 in his ship, the 'Endeavour'. Cook had been sent by the British Government on a voyage of discovery to the South Pacific. He charted the east coast and landed at Botany Bay, just south of modern Sydney. James Cook called this land 'New South Wales', and claimed it for King George III.



Abel Tasman's map of New Holland, 1644

Convict transportation

Australia is unique in that most of its first European settlers were convicts. After the United States of America achieved independence, Great Britain could no longer send its convicts there. British prisons became very crowded. When the convict numbers grew too large, the British Government had to find a new place for them. In 1786, Great Britain decided to send the convicts to the new colony of New South Wales. This was called 'transportation'.

The first colony

The first governor of the colony of New South Wales was Captain Arthur Phillip. He brought the first fleet of 11 ships safely from Britain to the other side of the world. He took great care over the feeding and welfare of the convicts and very few died on the voyage.

Captain Phillip led the First Fleet into Sydney Cove on 26 January 1788. It is on the anniversary of this day that we celebrate Australia Day each year.



The First Fleet sailed from Britain, arriving in Sydney Cove in 1788

The early years

The early years of settlement were very hard. Governor Phillip made sure that people didn't starve by putting everyone on the same rations, including himself and his officers. His common sense and determination helped the colony survive those first difficult years.

The hard work of the early settlement was done by the forced labour of the convicts. They were flogged if they did not work hard or if they ran away or got drunk. If they committed a serious crime, they were sent to a remote settlement or hanged. Convicts who completed their sentences became free men and women and moved into the community to work and raise families.

New opportunities

The first European population of Australia was made up of English, Scottish, Welsh and Irish people. The Scottish, Welsh and Irish had often been at war with the English in the past, but in Australia, the four groups lived and worked closely together.

Convicts and ex-convicts began to find new opportunities in the colony. The military officers used their time to make money by trading and employed convicts and ex-convicts to help them. Soon, some of the ex-convicts were setting up businesses on their own as merchants. Other ex-convicts did well as farmers, tradesmen, shopkeepers and publicans. Ex-convict women also did well in business and in many ways enjoyed more freedom than women in England.

Caroline Chisholm (1808 – 1877)

Caroline Chisholm was a leading social reformer who improved the situation of single women in the early colonies.



Caroline came to Australia with her army officer husband and five children in 1838. She helped the migrant women who were living on the streets of Sydney. Within a few years, she set up 16 migrant women's hostels around the colony.

Caroline worked hard to improve life on the ships for the people travelling to the colonies. She also arranged a loan plan for destitute people to help break the cycle of dependence and poverty.

Today, many of Australia's schools are named after Caroline Chisholm. She was known as 'the migrant's friend' and is remembered for her tireless efforts to help people start a new life.

An enlightened governor

Along with Governor Phillip, Governor Lachlan Macquarie holds an important place in our early history. He governed the colony of New South Wales between 1810 and 1821. He developed the colony as a free settlement, not a convict colony. He improved farming practices and built new roads and public facilities. He encouraged the exploration of Australia.

Macquarie also put money into education and respected the rights of former convicts. He gave some former convicts jobs as judges and public servants.

Governor Macquarie is honoured in history for the positive changes he made to the colony. The Macquarie University in New South Wales is named after him.

Our convict heritage

After Macquarie's term, it was thought that the Governor's position was too powerful for one man, so in 1823 the New South Wales Legislative Council was formed to advise the next Governor. The Legislative Council then tried to reform the colony so that convicts were properly punished and did not live too well. However, it could not shut off all the opportunities for convicts living in New South Wales and the other colonies established around Australia in the early 19th century.

All together, more than 160 000 convicts were transported to Australia. Great Britain stopped sending convicts to New South Wales in 1840, to Tasmania in 1852 and to Western Australia in 1868.

The children of the convicts had always been free, so the divisions between ex-convicts and the settlers gradually disappeared. From the 1850s, the colonists were governing themselves and wanted to build respectable societies. The colonists became ashamed of their convict past and did not talk about it. About a century later, this feeling of shame changed. Australians came to be proud of their convict beginnings and many people are now pleased to find a convict ancestor.

In this spirit of acceptance, Australians have become a people who don't care much about a person's family background or past behaviour. We take people as we meet them and give people a 'fair go'.

Indigenous people after European settlement

It is estimated that there were between 750 000 and 1.4 million Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia at the start of European settlement. Their numbers included about 250 individual nations and over 700 language groups.

When they first settled in Australia, the British Government did not make a treaty with the Aboriginal people. The Indigenous people had their own economies and an ancient connection to the land. The Government could not recognise this because there were no such systems or beliefs in Europe. Aboriginal people did not grow crops or set up homes to stay in one place as the British did, so the Government thought they had no sense of ownership. The Government felt free to take over the land.

Fatal impact

The early governors were told not to harm the Aboriginal people, but the British settlers moved onto Aboriginal land and many Aboriginal people were killed. Settlers were usually not punished for committing these crimes.

Some Aboriginal people and European settlers were able to live peacefully together. Some settlers employed Aboriginal people on sheep and cattle farms. Governor Macquarie offered Aboriginal people their own land for farming and set up a school for Aboriginal children. However, very few Aboriginal people wanted to live the way the settlers lived. They did not want to lose their cultural traditions.

We don't know how many Indigenous people were killed in the battles over land but we do know that hundreds of thousands of Aboriginal people died. The biggest killers of Aboriginal people were the diseases that the Europeans brought to the country. The loss of Aboriginal life was catastrophic. In Victoria in the 1830s, the Aboriginal population was about 10 000 people. In 1853, only 1907 Aboriginal people were counted.

Historical milestones

Inland exploration

In New South Wales, the early colonists faced extreme hardship. Very little of Australia is fertile country. The Aboriginal people had learnt to manage and live in this environment, though they too suffered in times of drought.

The first great barrier the Sydney settlers faced in exploring inland was the mountain range 50 kilometres to the west of Sydney, the Blue Mountains. In 1813, three men, Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson, finally crossed the mountains. The road and railway across the Blue Mountains still follow the route they took.

On the other side of these mountains the explorers discovered open country which was good for raising sheep and cattle. Further inland, however, they came across dry, desert country. They had trouble finding water and carrying enough food to survive. The German-born explorer, Ludwig Leichhardt, disappeared while trying to cross the continent from east to west in 1848.

In 1860 Burke and Wills set out from Melbourne to cross Australia from south to north. They led a large expedition but their crossing was very difficult. Burke and Wills were not experienced bushmen. They received expert help from the Aboriginal Yandruwandha people but both explorers died on their way back. Although Burke and Wills failed to complete their expedition, their story is remembered in art and literature. It is a tragic example of the harshness of our land.



Burke and Wills expedition across Australia, 1860

Settlers and pioneers

Even when the settlers had good land, life was very hard. After periods of flood or drought, farmers would often need to start again. By 1838, wool was Australia's primary export and if there were droughts or if the overseas wool prices fell, settlers would lose their livelihood. However, people picked themselves up and battled on. The 'Aussie battler' is the name we give to a person who survives such hard times. The Aussie battler represents the Australian fighting spirit and resilience. Male and female pioneers are honoured for their courage during these hard times. Women often had to keep the business or farm going when the men were away or had died.

It was during these harsh early years that Australia's spirit of mateship began. It was strong among the men who travelled through the outback, shearing and droving. Settlers also helped each other out of difficulty. This tradition is still very much a part of Australian life, for example, thousands of people volunteer to fight bushfires each year.

The gold rush

The discovery of gold in New South Wales in early 1851 has been described as the 'discovery that changed a nation'. Shortly after, gold was also found in Victoria, a newly independent colony.

By the end of 1852, 90 000 people had travelled to Victoria from all parts of Australia and all over the world to search for gold.

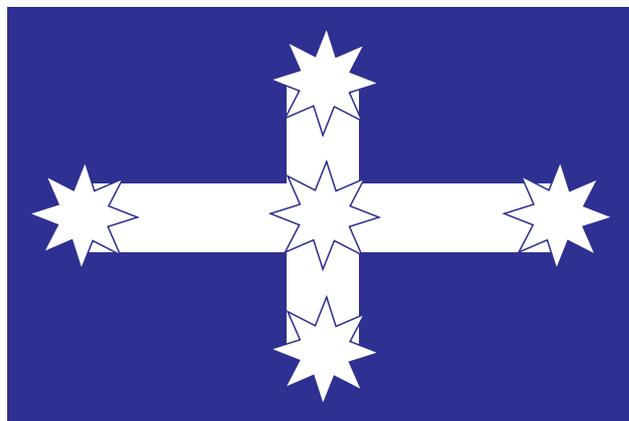


Gold was discovered in the colonies of New South Wales and Victoria in 1851

The Eureka rebellion is remembered as a great democratic moment in Australia's history. At the Ballarat goldfield in 1854, the gold diggers held a large protest against the harsh way the government officials ran the goldfield.

Government troops would be very rough with the diggers when they collected the licence fee to dig for gold. On 11 November 1854, 10 000 people gathered at Bakery Hill, Ballarat, to adopt a charter of basic democratic rights. They wanted to be able to dig for gold without needing to pay for an expensive licence. They also wanted to be able to vote for people to represent them in the Victorian Parliament.

A small group built a stockade at the Eureka diggings and flew their rebel flag with the Southern Cross on it. The government officials sent soldiers to attack the stockade on the morning of 3 December 1854. The gold diggers were soon overpowered and about 30 were killed.



Eureka flag

When the rebel leaders were put on trial for high treason, no jury would convict them. A Royal Commission found the government was at fault and many of the miners' demands were met. Their wish for political representation was also granted. Within a year, Peter Lalor, the leader of the rebels, became a member of the Victorian Parliament.

Over the years, the Eureka rebellion has become a symbol of protest and our belief in a fair go.

The gold rush changed Australia in many ways. During the gold rush years, the total population of Australia increased from 43 000 in 1851 to 1.7 million in 1870. The first railways and telegraphs were built in the 1850s to link the growing populations.

Large gold deposits were found in all colonies except for South Australia. The economy was flourishing and gold overtook wool as our most valuable export. By around 1890, it is possible that Australia had the highest standard of living in the world.

The squatters and the farmers

From the early days of the colonies, people known as 'squatters' had taken over vast areas of land to farm. Although they did not usually have to pay for this land, the squatters considered it their own. After the first gold rushes were over, there was a great struggle to take this land back from the squatters.

In the 1860s, the Government wanted to sell the squatters' land to working men and their families to farm. The squatters tried to keep as much land as possible for themselves by claiming many leases, especially those in the best positions.

The new farmers faced a difficult environment and until the railways were built, were far from markets. The opportunity to earn high wages in the cities always made life on the land and working for little reward, unattractive.

Farmers did well in South Australia however, and the Australian tradition of inventing machinery to make farming easier began there. The stump-jump plough (1870s), for example, allowed rough land to be easily cleared for crop farming.

Migration in the 1800s

In the early 1800s, English, Scottish, Welsh and Irish settlers were the main groups in the colonies. Their heritage was the basis of the new nation. Australia's pastimes, cultural activities and religious practices were the same as those of the United Kingdom. However, there were also small groups of migrants from Europe and Asia. European arrivals in the 1800s included Italians, Greeks, Poles, Maltese and Russians as well as French settlers working in the wine industry. These were mostly young men seeking work and fortune, or seamen who had deserted their ships.

Chinese migrants began arriving in Australia after 1842. Their numbers grew after the discovery of gold and there were racial tensions on the goldfields. This sometimes led to riots against the Chinese, such as those in Bendigo in 1854. The racial tensions resulted in the first restrictions on immigration in Victoria in 1855 and New South Wales in 1861.

After the gold rushes of the 1850s, most Chinese returned home. Among those who stayed were the Chinese market gardeners who supplied much needed fresh fruit and vegetables in areas where water was scarce.

From the 1860s, people from Iran, Egypt and Turkey came to operate camel 'trains' through outback Australia. Along with the Indian cameleers, they were loosely referred to as 'Afghans' largely because of their similar dress and common religious beliefs in Islam. These cameleers were regarded as 'pioneers of the inland'. About 4000 Indians and 6000 Pacific Islanders also worked in the sugar and banana industries in Queensland.

From the 1880s, workers from Lebanon arrived in Australia. Many Lebanese were involved in the fabric and clothing industries. Lebanese families came to own most of the draperies in country Australia, a tradition that continues today.



'Afghan' cameleers in outback Australia

Aboriginal reserves

After the early battles between the Aboriginal people and settlers for land were over, the Aboriginal people lived on the edges of society. Some worked on outback sheep and cattle stations for very low wages. The colonial governments set up reserves where the Aboriginal people could live, but these areas did not allow the Aboriginal people to live their traditional life. They could not hunt and gather as they wanted to.

In the late 1800s, the colonial governments took away Aboriginal rights. They told the Aboriginal people where to live. They told them who they could marry and they took many Aboriginal children away from their parents. These children were sent to 'white' families or government orphanages. These practices no longer exist but they remain a cause of deep sadness for the Aboriginal people and for many Australians.

Suffrage

'Suffragettes' was the term used around the world for women who campaigned for the right to vote in elections. During the 1880s and 1890s, every colony had at least one suffrage society. Suffragettes collected thousands of signatures on petitions to present to their colonial parliaments.

Women in South Australia won the right to vote and seek election to parliament in 1895. Women in Western Australia won the right to vote in 1899.

In 1902, Australia was the first country to give women both the right to vote and the right to be elected to the Australian Parliament. Indigenous women (and men) were not granted the right to vote until 1962.

Edith Cowan became the first female parliamentarian when she was elected to the Western Australian Parliament in 1923. It was not until 1943 that a woman, Enid Lyons, was elected to the Australian Parliament.

Catherine Spence (1825 – 1910)

Catherine Spence was a writer, preacher, feminist and suffragette.



Catherine Spence migrated to Australia from Scotland. She wrote prizewinning novels about Australian life as well as schoolbooks.

She helped set up an organisation to help homeless children and supported new kindergartens and government secondary schools for girls.

She was the first woman to stand for parliament and received many votes, but she did not win her seat. In 1891 she became the Vice-President of the Women's Suffrage League of South Australia.

Catherine Spence is a symbol of what a woman can achieve, even in restrictive times.

Federation

The colonies had developed separately, but by the late 19th century a common sense of national belonging had developed. This feeling was expressed in the words of 'Advance Australia Fair'. This song was written by Peter Dodds McCormick and first sung in Sydney in 1878. It is now our national anthem.

Towards the end of the 19th century, two attempts were made to bring the colonies together. In 1889, Sir Henry Parkes called for a strong new nation to be formed. The Australasian Federation Conference was held in 1890 to discuss the idea of an Australian federation.

After some delays, the move towards federation gathered speed in 1893. Electors chose the members of the next constitutional convention. Electors voted in two rounds of referendums to accept the Constitution. The fact that the federation process was based on the wishes of the people shows how progressive Australia was.



Federation Day in Brisbane, 1901

The British Government agreed that Australia could govern itself and the first Australian Government was sworn in before a huge crowd in Sydney's Centennial Park on 1 January 1901. The Prime Minister of the new nation was Edmund Barton, who had led the movement for federation in New South Wales.

Australia was now a nation but still within the British Empire. It did not acquire full powers over defence and foreign affairs until 1931. Though national feeling had grown, the sense of being British was still strong.



Sir Edmund Barton

The birth of political parties

By the 1880s, the workers in Australia had built up strong trade unions. In the hard times of economic depression and drought, these unions held strikes to protect their wages and conditions. The workers then turned to politics. In 1891, they created the Labor Party.

The Labor Party's first job was to win back and improve workers' wages and conditions. Middle-class people lived more comfortably than the workers but they understood the workers' situation. Official boards were created to set wages and to prevent strikes. In 1907, the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration determined a minimum wage at a level so that a working man, his wife and three children could live in 'frugal' comfort.

As the Labor Party grew, all the other parties combined into a Liberal Party in 1910. This party has had many names. Between the wars, it became the Nationalist Party and then the United Australia Party. In 1944 the Liberal Party we know today was founded. This followed a conference held by Robert Menzies which involved many of the non-Labor parties. Sir Robert Menzies went on to become Australia's longest serving Prime Minister.

After World War I, the Country Party was formed to advance the cause of farmers. Now known as the Nationals, it usually acts in coalition with the Liberal Party.

The *Immigration Restrictions Act 1901*

The 'White Australia' policy became law when the *Immigration Restrictions Act 1901* was passed in December 1901. This restricted immigrants from working in Australia and restricted the migration of 'non-white' people.

Anyone with a non-European background had to sit a dictation test of 50 words in a European language. Members of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, the barrister William Ah Ket and leading Chinese businessmen made public protests, but these did not succeed in changing the law.

Chinese, Indians, Pacific Islanders and peoples from the Middle East were largely replaced by migrants from southern Europe in the newly federated Australia, but their cultural contributions were already part of Australia's social identity.

World War I, 1914–1918

Apart from conflict between settlers and the Aboriginal people, Australia has had a remarkably peaceful history. There have been no civil wars or revolutions. Generations of Australians remained very loyal to the British Empire.

However, as a European outpost close to Asia, Australia also felt vulnerable, especially after Japan became a great power. We relied on the British Empire and its naval strength to defend us. Australia fought in both world wars to keep the British Empire strong and to protect ourselves.

Australia entered World War I in August 1914, and in 1915 took part in an attack on Germany's ally, Turkey. The men of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (Anzacs) were given their own part of the Gallipoli Peninsula to attack.

They had to climb steep cliffs while being shot at by Turkish troops. Somehow, they got up the cliffs and dug in, although many young men died. Australians at home took tremendous pride in the spirit of the Anzacs.

The anniversary of the landing on Gallipoli (25 April) is now a national holiday. It is called Anzac Day.

After Gallipoli, the Australian forces fought on the Western Front in France and Belgium. It was here that they got the name 'diggers' because they spent so much time digging and fixing trenches. Led by their commander, Lieutenant General Sir John Monash, the Australian diggers won great victories in the last battles against Germany.

Australian servicemen and women also served in the Middle East, participating in the defence of the Suez Canal and the Allied conquest of the Sinai peninsula and Palestine.



Gallipoli Peninsula during World War I

Simpson and his donkey – John Simpson Kirkpatrick (1892–1915)

John Simpson Kirkpatrick was a serviceman and is an Australian legend.

As Private John Simpson, he served at Gallipoli in the ambulance medical corps as a stretcher bearer. It was difficult to carry stretchers through the hills and the valleys. Against army orders, he used a donkey, named Duffy, to help transport the wounded soldiers back to safety.

Day and night, hour after hour, they would risk their lives travelling between the fighting and the beach camp.

Private John Simpson had arrived at Gallipoli on 25 April 1915. He was killed just four weeks later by enemy machine guns. Servicemen at the beach camp watched in silent sadness as Duffy, still carrying an injured soldier, trotted towards the beach without his young master by his side.



The Anzac legend

The Anzac tradition was forged on 25 April 1915 when the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) landed on the Gallipoli Peninsula in Turkey.

It marked the start of a campaign which lasted eight months and resulted in some 25 000 Australian casualties, including 8700 who were killed or died of wounds or disease. The bravery and spirit of those who served on the Gallipoli Peninsula shaped a legend, and 'Anzac' became part of the Australian and New Zealand language.

In 1916, the first anniversary of the landing was observed in Australia, New Zealand and England, as well as by troops in Egypt. In that year, 25 April was named 'Anzac Day'.

By the 1920s, Anzac Day ceremonies were held throughout Australia and the states had designated Anzac Day as a public holiday. Major war memorials were built in the capital cities, and monuments in cities and towns across the nation remember the young men and women killed in that and later conflicts.

Anzac Day is now a day to honour all those who have served in wars, conflicts and peacekeeping operations. It is not really a military celebration. It does not honour victories - the Gallipoli campaign was a failure. It honours the qualities of ordinary servicemen and women: mateship, endurance and humour in the face of adversity. Today, Anzac Day is commemorated in Australia and around the world. Returned Australian servicemen and women from World War II and other conflicts, as well as peacekeepers and veterans from Allied countries, all march proudly in Anzac Day parades.



Anzac Day Dawn Service at Gallipoli

The Great Depression, 1929 – 1932

The Great Depression was a time of extreme hardship for the people of Australia. It started at the same time as the collapse of the New York Stock Exchange, but there were other factors that also led to the Depression. These included a fall in export prices and sales, a fall in overseas loans and government spending and a fall in construction. By the middle of 1932, almost 32 per cent of Australians were out of work.

The Depression's impact on Australian society was devastating. Without work and a steady income, many people lost their homes. They were forced to live in makeshift shelters with no heating or sanitation. Some fathers deserted their families or turned to alcohol. Working-class children started leaving school at 13 or 14 years of age. Many women worked in basic jobs as well as looking after their children and homes on their own.

At the time leading up to the Depression, the Australian Government did not have a central unemployment program. Apart from charities and some private organisations, poor people had to rely on employment projects and public works projects.

The economy started to improve in 1932 but, in many cases, the damage to families could not be repaired. During the Great Depression, the vital role of Australian charities and volunteers was emphasised.



A soup kitchen during the Great Depression

Sir Charles Kingsford Smith (1897 – 1935)

Sir Charles Kingsford Smith was a daring pilot, aviation pioneer and an Australian hero.

In World War I, Charles Kingsford Smith fought at Gallipoli and flew with Britain's Royal Flying Corps.

His greatest achievement was making the first crossing of the Pacific Ocean from California to Queensland in 1928. When his plane, the Southern Cross, finally arrived in Australia, 25 000 adoring people were there to cheer for their hero 'Smithy'. He was knighted for his services to aviation in 1932.

Tragically, in 1935, he went down with his plane on a flight from England to Australia and was never found.

Sir Charles Kingsford Smith has been called the world's greatest aviator and he is remembered for giving the people, in the midst of the Depression, a true Australian hero to look up to.



World War II, 1939 - 1945

In World War II, Australians fought for the Allies in the deserts of North Africa and many other places. In North Africa, they fought in a long siege by the Germans and Italians in the town of Tobruk. The enemy called them the 'Rats of Tobruk' because they were cornered and had to eat whatever food they could find. The Australians fought and survived these tough conditions and so they adopted this name for themselves. The siege showed that these men had the fighting spirit of the World War I diggers. The soldiers themselves knew that they had a great tradition to live up to.

After Japan launched its war in the Pacific, the Australian servicemen and women came home. Before they could return though, Papua and New Guinea needed to be defended. This enormous task was handed to regular soldiers and to young conscript soldiers who were poorly trained. They fought the enemy in the jungle, along a steep, muddy trail known as the Kokoda Track. The Australian troops stopped the Japanese advance and the Kokoda Track has joined Anzac Cove at Gallipoli as a place of pilgrimage for many Australians.



A wounded soldier on the Kokoda Track helped by a Papuan carrier

When the Japanese took the great British base at Singapore in 1942, 15 000 Australian troops were among those who were captured and taken to work on the Thai-Burma Railway. It was during the construction of the Thai-Burma Railway under the Japanese during World War II that thousands of Australian and British prisoners of war died.

One of the sharpest Australian memories of the war is the cruel treatment of these men by the Japanese. Although Australian prisoners of war did their best to look after each other, with officers and men treating each other as equals, many Australians died.

Remembrance Day

As well as Anzac Day ceremonies, Remembrance Day is also a day on which Australians remember those who have served and died in war. At 11am on 11 November (the 11th month) each year, Australians pause to remember the sacrifice of the men and women who died or suffered in wars and conflicts, as well as all those who have served. We wear a red poppy on this day.



Red poppies have been used as a symbol of remembrance since World War I

The Australian Defence Force has recently been engaged in conflicts in East Timor, Iraq, Sudan and Afghanistan and has taken part in UN peacekeeping operations in many parts of the world, including Africa, the Middle East and the Asia-Pacific region.

Sir Edward 'Weary' Dunlop (1907 – 1993)

Sir Edward 'Weary' Dunlop was a brave and caring surgeon and an Australian war hero.

During World War II, Weary was an Army surgeon. He and his fellow men were captured by the Japanese and taken to Burma to work on the Thai-Burma Railway. This was very long and hard work.

As their commander, Weary spoke up for his men and as their surgeon, he spent long hours healing them. He was tortured in the camp but defiantly continued to serve.

He was knighted in 1969 for his contribution to medicine. When he died, 10 000 people lined the streets of Melbourne for the state funeral of the hero they called 'The Surgeon of the Railway'.



They only stayed a short time in the camps but they learnt something about the land and the people. After the war, many returned to Australia as immigrants.



A European migrant arriving in Australia

Post-war refugees

After the war, Australia brought in migrants from other European countries to build up the population. Millions of people had fled Nazi Germany or were unable to return to their homelands now occupied by Soviet Russia. Approximately 170 000 of these displaced persons were accepted into Australia to begin a new life.

There was also an acute shortage of labour in Australia. The Australian Government believed that population growth was essential for the country's future. Healthy adult migrants under the age of 45 years could travel to Australia for £10 and their children could travel for free. Nationalities were, however, still restricted to those from the United Kingdom and Europe.

To revitalise Australia, the Australian Government started work on a bold scheme in 1949 to catch the waters of the Snowy River before they flowed to the sea in eastern Victoria. These waters were diverted to flow inland for irrigation and to be used to generate electric power. It was a massive project that took 25 years to complete. Seventy per cent of the workers on this project were migrants.

Migration in the early 1900s

In the period between the First and Second World Wars, restrictive conditions for entry into Australia remained. However, there was a growth in the migration of people, especially men, from southern Europe. They brought with them skills, education and their own cultural values. They helped develop Australia's rural industries and built roads and railways. Skilled Italian stonemasons made a significant contribution to the construction of our public buildings and residences.

At the end of the 1930s, Jewish refugees began to arrive from Europe. They were escaping the threat of Nazi Germany. They came from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland. Many were highly educated and talented refugees who contributed greatly to Australian cultural life.

Seventeen thousand Italian soldiers captured in the Second World War were held in prisoner of war camps in Australia. They were treated fairly.

The Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Scheme

The Snowy Mountains Scheme is an important symbol of Australia's identity as an independent, multicultural and resourceful country.

It is the largest engineering project in Australia. It is also one of the largest hydro-electric schemes in the world.

The scheme supplies water that is vital to the farming industries of inland New South Wales and Victoria. Its power stations also produce up to 10 per cent of all electricity for New South Wales.

Only 2 per cent of the Snowy Mountains Scheme is visible above the ground. It consists of 16 major dams, seven power stations, a pumping station and 225 kilometres of tunnels, pipelines and aqueducts.

Work on the scheme began in 1949 and was finished in 1974. More than 100 000 people from over 30 countries worked on the project. Seventy per cent of these workers were migrants. After the project was completed, most of the European workers stayed on to live in Australia, making a valuable contribution to Australia's multicultural society.

The Snowy Mountains Scheme is situated in Kosciuszko National Park, New South Wales. The effects of the project on the environment have been closely watched. The scheme has meant that, in some places, the Snowy River now only carries 1 per cent of the water that it carried before.

For the good of the environment, the Victorian and New South Wales governments have agreed to restore the river's flow to 28 per cent.



Workers on the Snowy Mountains Scheme

Treatment of Indigenous people

In the 1940s and 1950s the Australian Government policy on Aboriginal people changed to one of assimilation. This meant that the Indigenous people were told to live as the non-Indigenous population lived. This did not work because Aboriginal people did not want to lose their traditional culture.

In the 1960s the policy changed to integration. Most men in Australia gained the right to vote in the 1850s, but Commonwealth voting rights were not extended to all Indigenous Australians until 1962. With integration, Aboriginal people were given civil liberties but they were still expected to adapt to non-Indigenous Australian culture.

Further change came in 1967, when more than 90 per cent of Australians voted 'YES' to allow Aboriginal people to be counted in the census. This referendum was a historic milestone. It showed that the vast majority of Australians wanted Indigenous people to be included and given the same rights as everyone else.

This opening up of Australian attitudes, and strong Aboriginal protest at the time, led the way for a policy of Indigenous self-determination in the 1970s. The Australian Government came to recognise and agree that Indigenous Australians should have a say in their own political, economic, social and cultural development.

Migration - a gradual change

In the 1950s and 1960s, the Asian community, churches and social groups all protested to end the 'White Australia' policy.

In 1958, the Australian Government dropped the dictation test and in 1966 Australia opened the door for selective non-European and skilled Asian migration. Eventually Australians everywhere recognised the value of including all nations in our migration program. The 'White Australia' policy ended in 1973, and the country was on the path to multiculturalism.

In 1973, the Australian Government removed all racial qualifications to immigration. In 1975, after the Vietnam War, Australia accepted record numbers of Asian refugees and migrants.

These people were mostly from Vietnam but Chinese and Indian migrants also started arriving in large numbers.

Since 1975, Australia has accepted refugees from many war-torn countries including Bosnia and Herzegovina, and from countries in the Middle East and Africa. Today, our migrants come from all over the world.

Australia has become a nation of all the lands; one of the great successes of the modern world. Since 1945, 6.5 million people have come to Australia. Over one quarter of Australians were born overseas.

Migrants have chosen to come to Australia and to share our common set of values. They add to the rich tapestry of Australian life.

Inclusion

Australia is now a multicultural society where every individual's right to practise his or her beliefs and follow cultural traditions within the framework of the law, is respected and protected.

Australia today has an active policy of inclusion, where every person of every race feels a part of our society. This policy runs through all aspects of the Australian culture. It is part of our educational curriculum from early childhood through to university and is practised in our workplaces and the service industry.

The right of every individual to be treated equally and without discrimination is defended by the Australian Human Rights Commission and government anti-discrimination agencies in every state and territory. Racial discrimination is publicly condemned and a crime under the law.

Australia has become a multicultural society of harmony and acceptance. It is a country where migrants, Indigenous people and others born in Australia can feel free to pursue their goals in peace. It is a place where past conflicts and resentments can be left far behind.

Dr Victor Chang (1936 – 1991)

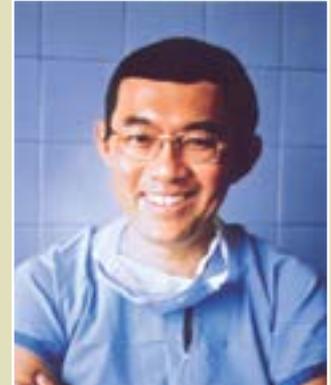
Dr Victor Chang was one of Australia's best heart surgeons.

Victor Peter Chang Yam Him was born in China in 1936 and came to Australia when he was 15 years old.

He worked at St. Vincent's Hospital in Sydney where in 1984 he set up the first centre in Australia specialising in heart transplants. In 1986 Victor Chang was made a Companion of the Order of Australia, the highest Australian award.

Victor became concerned about a shortage of donors so he started designing an artificial heart, which was almost finished when he was tragically killed in 1991.

A new research centre has been set up in his memory. He is remembered for his expertise, his optimism and his innovation.



Albert Namatjira (1902 – 1959)

Albert Namatjira is one of Australia's great artists who founded a school of painting that continues today.

As a young Arrernte man, Albert showed a natural gift for painting.



He had very limited formal training but his watercolour paintings of the Australian country were very popular and all sold very quickly.

He and his wife were the first Aboriginal people in Australia allowed to become citizens. This meant they could vote, enter a hotel and build a house wherever they liked. Albert's Australian citizenship highlighted the fact that other Aboriginal people did not have these rights.

His life showed non-Indigenous Australians the injustice of racist laws and contributed to changes for Aboriginal people.

Eddie Mabo (1936 – 1992)

Eddie Mabo was an activist and spokesperson on Indigenous land rights.

Eddie Koiki Mabo was born on Murray Island, on the traditional land of the Mabo clan. From an early age, he was taught exactly which trees and which rocks marked the boundaries of his family's land.



It was not until many years later that Eddie learnt that his homeland was considered Crown land under Australian law and did not belong to his family. He turned his anger into action and took his test case to court on behalf of the people of Murray Island.

In 1992, after many years, Eddie's case was won in the High Court. The Mabo decision ruled that if Indigenous people could prove that they had a historic and ongoing traditional connection to their land, they could claim ownership of that land if it was otherwise unclaimed. This decision has seen the return of large areas of land to their original owners.

Eddie Mabo is remembered for his courage and for gaining land rights for Indigenous Australians.

Indigenous people – two decades of change

Aboriginal protest over land rights had been brought to public attention in the 1960s with the Gurindji Strike at Wave Hill cattle station in the Northern Territory. Aboriginal stockmen, led by Vincent Lingiari, walked off the job at the cattle station. Their protest was about pay and working conditions, but it turned into a demand for land rights. Their actions led the way for Eddie Mabo and others to fight for Indigenous land rights.

Under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* Aboriginal people were granted vast areas of outback Australia. In the early 1990s, the High Court's Mabo decision and the *Native Title Act 1993* recognised that Indigenous people had a claim to land based on their own traditional laws and customs. Over 10 per cent of the Australian land mass is now covered by native title determinations. Here, aspects of traditional society still survive. Indigenous culture continues to flourish and is widely admired by the broader community.

In May 1997, the 'Bringing them home' report was tabled in the Australian Parliament. The report was the result of an inquiry into the removal of large numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families. These children came to be known as the 'Stolen Generations'. As a result of the report, thousands of Australians showed support for their Indigenous fellow Australians by marching together on the first national 'Sorry Day' in 1998.

The Apology to the Stolen Generations, 2008

On 13 February 2008, the Australian Prime Minister made a national apology to the Stolen Generations in the Australian Parliament. He spoke on behalf of all Australians. He said sorry for the way Indigenous Australians had been treated in the past. He said sorry especially for the way that Indigenous children had been taken from their parents.

The speech was aired on television and radio stations. Thousands of Australians gathered together in public places and in their workplaces to listen to the 'Sorry' speech. The speech officially listed past injustices and apologised for them. This was an important step towards the healing of the Indigenous people and to making sure that these injustices would never happen again. The Sorry speech was an important step forward for all Australians.

Today, the invaluable contribution of Indigenous people to the Australian identity is recognised and celebrated. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people hold leading positions across the Australian workforce, including the justice system, politics, the arts and sports. The MARVIN program, an Aboriginal innovation in digital animation, has won multiple awards and is being used in educational and business institutions in over twenty countries around the world.



Skywriter writes 'Sorry' over Sydney

In conclusion

These pages have given you just a glimpse into our Australian story. You might find that this new knowledge has opened up your awareness of your environment. You might start looking at the dates on old buildings and placing them in a historical context. When you are offered a poppy to wear on 11 November, you will know that it is to remember our fallen servicemen and women. When you meet Indigenous Australians, you will have a sense of the ancient cultures that guide them. We urge you to expand your knowledge by using local resources and through travel. The more you know, the more you will notice.

We welcome you to Australian citizenship and invite your full participation in our peaceful democratic country.

Glossary of non-testable section

ambassador

a person who represents or promotes a country or an activity

board

a group of people chosen to make decisions, for example about how a company should be run

boarding school

a school where students live at the school and do not return home for the whole school term

bush

the Australian countryside still in its natural state

cattle station

a large farm where cattle are kept for beef production

charter

a formal written statement of rights and responsibilities

clan

a group of people, related by blood or marriage, who share the same territory

common ground

a shared area of interest

conscript soldier

a soldier who did not choose to join the defence force but who had to join in a time of war

Crown land

land belonging to the government

curriculum

a course of study

destitute

not having money or a way of getting money

didgeridoo

a musical instrument of the Aboriginal Australian people made from a long hollow log

fair go

a reasonable or equal chance for everyone to do well

fair play

participating well in a group effort, following the rules for everyone's benefit, good team work

fallen servicemen and women

servicemen and women killed in war or battle

forge

to build or create

gross domestic product (GDP)

the value of all goods and services made within a country in a year

heatwave

very hot weather that lasts for more than two days in a row

high treason

a serious criminal offence which involves an attempt to overthrow the government

iconic Indigenous paintings

art that is unique to and representative of the Indigenous people

land mass

an area of land

milestone

an important event in history

native title

the traditional rights that Indigenous people have to land and waters, decided within the Australian legal system

oral history

people's spoken memories of what happened in the past

pioneer

one of the first settlers, an achiever in the early days of colonial settlement

political representation

being represented by a politician in the parliament

reserve

an area of land set aside by the government for Aboriginal people to live on

sentence

the length of time a criminal serves as punishment

set wages

to decide on how much employees must be paid for their work

social reform

making improvements to society gradually, rather than by revolution

state funeral

a funeral paid for by the government to honour a citizen who has made an important contribution to the nation

stockade

a defensive enclosure made with wooden posts and stakes

stockmen

men employed to look after cattle

strike

when employees stop working, for example, to protest against an employer's decision

suffrage

the right to vote in public elections

sworn in

to be accepted into public office in a formal ceremony

tabled

to be officially presented for discussion or approval in parliament e.g. a report is tabled

walk of life

social class or background, job, position

For more information

Australian citizenship

To obtain more information about how to become an Australian citizen, visit the Australian citizenship website at www.citizenship.gov.au.

Australia

You can obtain more information about Australia at your local library. The following websites may also provide further information:

- About Australia www.australia.gov.au/about-australia
- Australia in Brief www.dfat.gov.au/aib

Australian Government programs and services

You can obtain information about Australian Government programs and services from www.australia.gov.au.

Federal MP or Senator

Your local federal MP or a Senator for your state or territory has a range of information about Australian Government programs and services.

A listing of MPs and senators can be found at www.aph.gov.au.

Australian Government organisations

You can obtain more information about Australian Government organisations referred to in the resource book from the following websites:

- Australian Defence Force www.defence.gov.au
- Australian Electoral Commission www.aec.gov.au
- Australian Federal Police www.afp.gov.au
- Australian Human Rights Commission www.humanrights.gov.au
- Australian Sports Commission www.ausport.gov.au
- Australian Taxation Office www.ato.gov.au
- Australian War Memorial www.awm.gov.au
- Reserve Bank of Australia www.rba.gov.au

Non-government organisations

You can obtain more information about non-government organisations referred to in the resource book from the following websites:

- Bradman Foundation Australia www.bradman.com.au
- Hamlin Fistula www.hamlinfistula.org
- Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia www.flyingdoctor.org.au
- School of the Air www.schoolair-p.schools.nsw.edu.au
- Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Authority www.snowyhydro.com.au
- The Fred Hollows Foundation www.hollows.org.au
- UNESCO World Heritage Centre whc.unesco.org
- United Nations www.un.org
- Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute www.victorchang.edu.au
- Volunteering Australia www.volunteeringaustralia.org

Other

Search the following websites for more information on the following topics:

- Australian Constitution www.aph.gov.au
- Australian of the Year Awards www.australianoftheyear.org.au
- 'Bringing them home' report www.humanrights.gov.au
- Commonwealth parks and reserves www.environment.gov.au/topics/national-parks
- Famous Australians: The Australian Dictionary of Biography Online Edition <http://adb.anu.edu.au>
- List of Bills currently before Parliament www.aph.gov.au/bills
- Parliament of Australia www.aph.gov.au
- Parliamentary education services www.peo.gov.au
- Public Holidays www.australia.gov.au
- The Apology to the Stolen Generations www.australia.gov.au

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- p60 - 'Afghans' and their camels working in inland Australia (ref: A6180:25/5/78/62)
- p67 - Personalities - Sir Edward 'Weary' Dunlop in his office, 1986 (ref: A6180:1/9/86/12)
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