



A BACKPACKER'S GUIDE TO
A WORKING HOLIDAY IN

AUSTRALIA

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A Backpacker's Guide to a Working Holiday in Australia

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Why go to Australia?



Whitehaven Beach, Queensland

Australia is a country on many people's bucket lists, and for good reason – the saying *“there’s nothing quite like Australia”* is true.

The land Down Under is a huge and diverse continent, unlike any other. Australia is home to the world’s oldest rainforest, the largest reef, miles of endless gorgeous beaches, gigantic sacred rocks and seemingly never ending, dusty, red outback roads just ripe for exploration.

Add in hip, cosmopolitan cities, iconic sights, friendly locals, a sunny climate, an easy going lifestyle and unique animals not found anywhere else and it's clear to see why Australia is a dream destination.

It would take a lifetime to see all of Australia and traveling in this amazing country unfortunately doesn't come cheap. Luckily young people can apply for a year's working holiday visa, the perfect way to soak up the laid back Aussie lifestyle, explore the country and make some money to fund your travels.

10 Reasons to Love Australia



Kangaroos in Australia

There's a lot to love about this enormous, diverse and unique place, from golden beaches to stylish cities to the stark beauty of the outback, warm weather and a warm welcome. Here are 10 reasons to love Australia:

The Unique Wildlife

The kangaroo is one of the icons of Australia, and this unique, cute and slightly weird animal is so intriguing to watch. There's also wallabies, furry koalas snoozing in trees, emus stalking the dry plains, cackling kookaburras, dingoes, shy platypuses and echidnas and many other strange animals that are only found in Australia.

Natural Beauty

Australia's greatest asset is perhaps the many diverse and stunning landscapes and rich natural beauty. From tropical beaches, to luscious waterfalls, prehistoric gorges, fields of waving sugar cane, ancient rain forests, unique rock formations, coral reefs and mighty mountain ranges and more than 500 national parks and 15 UNESCO listed natural wonders, this is one big beautiful country.

Road Trips

Australia could have been made for road trips. Get some wheels and feel the thrill of the freedom and adventure of hitting the open road. Make sure to explore all the little surprises along the way as well as the famous sights.

Friendly Locals

The Australians are generally really positive, friendly and laid back people. It's not hard to make friends here and local Aussies are often happy to help out a traveller. Australia has a general air of sunny, infectious optimism that's just bound to suck you in.

Beautiful Beaches

Australians just love to be at the beach, there's a beach to suit your mood whether it's surfing, snorkelling the incredible Great Barrier Reef or just relaxing. Some of the best beaches in the world are here, you never need an excuse to hit the beach and surfing is almost a national obsession.

The Weather

Contrary to popular belief it does actually get cold in the south of Australia in the winter, but for most of the year the sun shines gloriously and the weather is warm which makes it possible to enjoy the great outdoors and be happy.

Cool Cities

Sydney has to be one of the world's most beautiful cities with its stunning harbour and iconic Opera House, Melbourne's lane ways are achingly cool and there's also plenty to keep you entertained in Brisbane and Perth too.

Travel is so Easy

Australia may be far from the cheapest place to travel but it is very easy. There's a whole industry around backpacking and budget tourism that, combined with the friendly Australian's, means it's easy to make friends and to get around.

The Outback

The outback is where Australia is really unique and special. It's hard to explain the allure and stark beauty of the vast and unforgiving outback but it will draw you in. If you haven't seen the outback, you haven't really seen Australia.

High Wages

Even though exploring Australia doesn't come cheap with the high cost of living come high wages, a strong economy and the chance to earn and save some good money on your working holiday.

How to Travel Australia on a Budget



Australian Dollars

There's no doubt that Australia is a dream destination for many but you've probably already heard how shockingly expensive Australia is.

While it is one of the most expensive places in the world, and even being thrifty it's really not hard to spend \$100 a day in Australia, don't worry, there are still many ways that you can travel and enjoy Australia on a budget. Plus once you start earning Australian wages things become a lot more affordable.

To allow you to budget and save for your dream trip Down Under here's a rundown of some typical costs to expect in Australia and how to make budget choices to make the most of your money on a budget trip to Australia.

All prices are shown in Australian Dollars (AUD). As always the cost of a trip depends on the activities you plan to be doing and the level of comfort you expect and prices and exchange rates are always subject to change.

Accommodation on a Budget

Hotels

Accommodation is not cheap in Australia, expect to pay at least \$100 a night at least for a private room in a budget hotel, depending on the location and season. A nice 4 star hotel in a good location in Sydney could easily run up to \$300 a night.

Check websites like [Booking.com](https://www.booking.com) and [Agoda](https://www.agoda.com) for the best rates.

Hostels

Hostels in Oz are a cheap, popular, sociable and often stylish backpacker option. Many even have swimming pools, kitchens, bars and a whole host of facilities and can even help you find a job. A bed in a shared dormitory in a hostel will cost between \$20 and \$45, expect prices to be higher in popular spots in Sydney and lower in smaller towns.

As well as saving money hostels can also be great places to meet fellow travellers. There are hostels all over Australia for every type of traveller and budget including party hostels, family friendly ones or uber stylish hostels for flashpackers.

Find the best hostels, book and check out reviews at [Hostelworld](#). Or try the new website [Yonderbound](#) where you can even earn credit towards your next stay from your travel knowledge and reviews. Here's [\\$10 off if you want to check out Yonderbound](#).

Renting or Sharing a Flat

If you have found a job and are planning to stay in one place for a while then renting a room in a shared house or finding a flat mate is the cheapest way to live.

You could start your search for finding a flat, apartment or house to rent on [Gumtree](#) and try [Flatmate Finder](#) to find a spare room or to advertise that you are looking to share a flat. Rental prices for a room in a shared house in Sydney start at \$120 a week but most are around the \$200 - \$250 a week mark. Rent would be usually be cheaper in smaller towns.

You could also try [Air BnB](#) but as the site is based towards vacation rentals it would be cheaper to flat share if you plan to stay for a while. But if you want to give it a go here's [\\$25 off your first Air BnB!](#)

House Sitting

If you can find a housesit that fits in with your work and travel plans you could even stay in someone else's house for free usually in return for looking after their houses and pets. Try [Trusted House Sitters](#) or [Mind My House](#). It costs to sign up to these websites (Mind my House is only \$20 though) and assignments can be competitive so invest time in building a good profile and be flexible about location to get the best results.

Camping

Camping is very popular and the cheapest way to tour Oz. However, you can't just camp up anywhere in Australia, if you can find a place that allows overnight camping you can pitch a tent or an aussie swag, or sleep in the back of a car or campervan, throw some snags on the barbie and enjoy a night for free under a million stars.

An un-powered pitch at a camp site goes from about \$20 a night up (which is still cheaper than a hostel) to \$40 for an all singing, all dancing holiday park with swimming pools and heaps of amenities and more for powered sites. Camping or Campervanning is an awesome way to immerse yourself in Australia's beautiful nature and a great way to save money on accommodation.

Use the [Wiki Camps App](#) or [Camps Australia Wide](#) books (and now an app too) which include maps and a directory of free and low cost camp sites.

Eating and Drinking on a Budget



Aussie Meat Pie

Restaurants

If you're eating out then expect an average meal in a pub or cafe to cost at least \$15–\$20. While in Australia you must try a meat pie and a parma. Just having a coffee will set you back \$5 and just one dish at a nice, stylish, city restaurant could cost at least \$25 each. Look out for vouchers or special offers to save money.

Fast Food

There are many fast food joints in Australia, including many you would recognise from home which are great for a cheap, quick meal on the go but even a McDonald's meal won't give you much change from \$10.

Grocery Shopping

The big supermarkets like Coles and Woolworths offer the best choice and value and it's possible to pick up some basic supplies for a couple of dollars and it's possible to eat

simply for a week for \$60. Stock up in the big towns as food in small, outback shops can be ridiculously expensive.

BBQ

Luckily most towns have free outdoor BBQ facilities, what could be a better way to save money than buying your own food from the supermarket and enjoying the great outdoors and having an aussie BBQ.

Drinking

Pubs and Bars

Considering that drinking is a popular pastime in Australia and it's a country well known for its excellent wines, drinking is a very expensive past time in Australia here and a couple of nights will quickly drain your budget.

A beer or a glass of wine in a bar can cost about \$8 – \$10 and most nightclubs charge an entry fee. You can find happy hours and backpacker bars that have cheap offers for about \$4– \$5. Cutting down on drinking will save a lot of money or stock up on drinks from the bottleshops but be careful getting too tanked up before hitting the bars and clubs, especially in Sydney, as they likely won't let you in if you are already intoxicated.

Bottleshops

Australia has huge bottle shops with a huge variety of alcohol, this is the cheapest place to buy your booze, Dan Murphy's is often the cheapest. Expect to pay \$5 + for a bottle of wine, \$40 for a bottle of Bundaberg rum, \$15 for a 6 pack or beer or \$45 for a 24 pack.

Goon

A legendary backpacker pastime in Australia is drinking Goon, a boxed wine that costs about \$15 for 4 litres. The catch is that it's not actually wine, but a fish, dairy, and milk products that tastes pretty gross and gives you a horrible hangover but every backpacker has a goon night sooner or later.

Getting Around Australia on a Budget



Australia is huge! How will you get around?

Australia is huge! Many people just don't realise how huge Australia is until they get there. Time and money can really add up when travelling around this huge country so it's worth planning in advance how you are going to get around.

Flights

Down Under is a long way! So get your trip off to a good start by spending time searching for the best deal and being flexible enough to take advantage of good offers.

Round the World Flights are a good option if you are planning to visit Australia as part of a longer trip or gap year around the world. Round the World tickets can end up being cheaper than point to point tickets but most are only valid for one year and changing your flight dates can end up being a frustrating and expensive exercise. If you plan to spend a whole year in Australia then a one way multi stop ticket to Australia via Southeast Asia would be a better option or, for the ultimate flexibility, buy one way flights but be aware that some countries do require you to have an onward or return ticket before entering so check the requirements for the countries you plan to visit on the way. Australia should be fine as long as you have the proof of funds to support yourself while in Australia and to buy a ticket home at the end of your working holiday.

Check out [Round the World Flights](#) or [STA Travel](#) to search for and build your own perfect round the world or multi stop flight ticket.

Internal Flights

If you plan on covering a lot of distance in a short time getting an internal flight may be your best option, it will get you from A to B the quickest but allow you to see very little. It can be expensive but before you are put off by the price remember how big this country is and think about the cost of fuel or bus tickets before ruling out a flight if you need to get somewhere in a hurry. For example, a budget flight from Melbourne to Cairns could cost \$100 but it would probably cost you \$500 in fuel at \$1.50 a litre and 4 or 5 days driving to get there by road so it's probably worth getting the flight!

Flight prices vary a lot depending on the route and demand, so use a comparison website like [Skyscanner](#) or [Momondo](#) to compare routes and dates to find the best prices.

Trains

The train network in Australia is expensive and has limited reach. Travelling by train is not really a cost or time efficient way of getting around Australia and only really an option if you really love travelling by rail but there are some pretty epic journeys to be had. Tickets for the famous Ghan railway journey, which travels the almost 3,000 kms through Australia's red center from Adelaide via Alice Springs to Darwin and takes 2 nights, start at \$499 for a seat ticket only! See more and book tickets at [Rail Australia](#).

Buses

The backpacker favourite, the Greyhound bus, is probably your best bet for affordable transport and if you plan on doing a lot of travel it is better value to get a pass than point to point tickets. For example, [Greyhound](#) have a mini traveller pass for \$509 travelling between Melbourne and Cairns and hopping on and off as many times as you want between these two destinations.

Share a Ride

You can often find someone heading the same way to share a ride with on hostel noticeboards or [Gumtree](#) or check out new ride sharing websites and apps. Some travellers choose to hitchhike, and safely do so all around Australia, but you should carefully assess the risks and safety implications of doing this.

Driving

Road Tripping Australia is an awesome way to see the land Down Under. With so much to discover and the thrill of the open road calling, Australia could have been made for road trips and a popular option is exploring by campervan.

Depending on how long you will be in Oz you can rent, relocate or buy a campervan. Renting would cost at least \$50 a day with gas being around \$1.50 a litre, more in the Outback.

Find and compare the best deals from all the major providers at [Vroom Vroom Vroom](#). You can find relocation deals where you can rent a campervan for only \$1 a day at [imoova.com](#).

Buying a Campervan



Exploring Australia by campervan

If you plan to be in Australia for a while then you could be better off buying your own car or campervan. Thinking about buying and owning a car or campervan in Australia can seem confusing and costly at first but should save you money in the long run, after the initial upfront cost, and really is a great option and not too difficult.

As well as having the ultimate freedom and flexibility to explore Oz, a bonus is that a campervan is your accommodation and transport in one, allowing you to save considerable money on hostels, bus tickets and eating out.

You can buy a second hand campervan from about \$4000 and if you can sell your camper at the end of your trip for the price you bought it for then you've just got yourself free transport and accommodation for the duration of your trip only paying out for fuel (and maybe factor in some repairs too if it's an older vehicle!)

A good place to look to buy a second hand campervan is [Gumtree](#)

For everything you need to know check out [The Ultimate Backpacker Guide to Buying a Campervan in Australia](#).

Attractions, Sightseeing and Tours



Snorkelling at The Great Barrier Reef

Australia has some epic and unique experiences, some can really damage your budget but many are free to enjoy.

Travel Independently

Traveling independently is the best way to save money. Tours in Australia are expensive, you would be lucky to get a day tour sightseeing for under \$100, but for many of these day trips, especially to outdoor activities and nature spots where the admission is free or very small, then if you have your own transport then you don't really need to take the expensive tour. (Another way that having your own transport can save you money.)

Some of the popular experiences do cost a lot, like the iconic Sydney Bridge Climb costs between \$250 - \$350, Dreamworld theme park and Steve Irwin's famous Australia Zoo are \$60 to enter. Expect to pay about \$60 to join a group surfing lesson, over \$350 to join a 2 day/1 night backpacker's tour around Fraser Island. A day trip snorkelling and scuba diving on the Great Barrier Reef would set you back at least \$200, visit spectacular Whitehaven beach in the Whitsundays on a day tour for \$135 or skydive for \$300.

Book a Package to Save Money

In Australia, buying a package will actually save you money than booking on your own. Look for special offers on packages at a hostel tour desk or a backpacker travel agent and save money by booking your activities all together.

For example, [Backpacker's World Travel](#) offer packages like 29 days Melbourne to Cairns adventure for only \$1719 including accommodation and tours and experiences up the

East coast – you would probably be able to get cheaper last minute deals in person but this saves you money compared to buying each separately. Also try [Peterpans Travel](#) and [Wicked Travel](#).

Many hostels also do this, for example Nomads offer a bed hopper pass and activity packages at their [Mad Travel Shop](#). Base also offer accommodation and activity packages, for example, their [Airlie Beach package](#) includes 2 nights accommodation, 2 meal and a drink deal and a trip to the Great Barrier Reef, this package saves you \$60. [Greyhound](#) also do packages combining a hop on hop off bus ticket and a pass for hostel accommodation.

Enjoy the Great Outdoors and find the free things to do

Luckily the saying that some of the best things in life are free is certainly true with Australia's stunning, unique and diverse natural beauty. From the world's oldest rainforest to the fascinating rock formations on the Great Ocean Road, the Blue Mountains and tropical Kakadu National Parks, to the majestic Ayers Rock or Uluru in Australia's red center to the many gorgeous beaches up and down the coast, the seemingly never ending outback and luscious waterfalls.

This natural beauty is probably Australia's best asset and most of it is usually free to go out, explore and enjoy in Oz's enviable climate. (Sometimes the national parks charge a small fee of about \$7 – \$15 or car parking fees).

Often your hostel will be able to tell you about awesome cheap and free things to do like [free walking tours in Sydney and Melbourne](#), free museums, free buses and ferries and the best parks, walks, beaches and gigs.

Ways to Travel for Free

There are also many ways to travel for free that can also be applied in Australia. To save even more money many hostels can do a '**work for accommodation**' deal. You could also try [CouchSurfing](#) to get a free place to stay and make new friends and don't forget about housesitting or wild camping to stay for free.

Even if you don't have a working visa you could find voluntary placements where you volunteer in return for free food and accommodation. You also get to learn new skills, make new friends and get a deeper insight into the local culture through these kinds of projects. You can find these opportunities on websites like [Workaway](#) or [Helpx](#).

Where to go: Backpacker City Guides



Beach huts near Melbourne 1

There's a lot to explore in Australia but here are some quick budget guides to the most popular cities to start your adventure Down Under.

There are many comprehensive guide books for Australia. The [Lonely Planet Australia](#) is the most popular and is geared towards backpackers so you will find information about budget activities and hostels and where to find work. You can save money by buying your [guide book on Amazon](#) instead of in a store.

Many backpackers arrive in one of the major cities that are well connected by international airlines and then set off up the East Coast doing the ever popular Melbourne or Sydney to Cairns route. There's a reason why this is so popular with miles of endless beaches, cosmopolitan cities, stunning natural beauty, laid back lifestyle and easy travels and a lot of other backpackers and fun to be had on the way.

However, bear in mind that 2 million other people also have this book, so the places they recommend for finding work and the best hostels they recommend are likely to be full by the time you get there. While the Lonely Planet is essential reading and very useful, make an effort to stray off the beaten track and discover something new every once in a while and make sure to venture into the Outback while in Australia – this is where Australia is really unique and there's a lot more to it than just one big rock!

30 Epic Aussie Experiences



Uluru or Ayers Rock in the Australian Outback

There is so much to include in the ultimate adventure Down Under but here are 30 epic Aussie adventures to get you started:

- ❖ Celebrate being in one of the most beautiful cities in the world with drinks in the Opera House Bar overlooking the iconic Sydney Harbour Bridge. The drinks are actually not as expensive as you would think!
- ❖ Sailing the Whitsundays and relaxing on impossibly beautiful Whitehaven Beach
- ❖ Feel the spirit of the Outback, get the red soil under your skin and witness the magnificent and sacred Uluru (Ayers Rock) at sunrise
- ❖ Take your time on a road trip driving the spectacular Great Ocean Road
- ❖ Take a 4WD and drive along the world's largest sand bar island and UNESCO heritage site Fraser Island. Camp out in the rainforest, laze in turquoise lakes, spot dingoes and explore shipwrecks on this unique island.
- ❖ Take a 3 day epic Outback train journey from Adelaide to Darwin and through the red center of Australia on The Ghan.
- ❖ Explore the underwater world by diving or snorkelling the Great Barrier Reef and earn bonus points if you swim with a turtle.

- ❖ Feel the freedom of the open road and take a camper van or road trip up the East Coast, across the Outback or just anywhere!
- ❖ Explore the tropics, cool off by lazing in swimming holes and gasp at thundering waterfalls in Kakadu National Park in the Northern Territory.
- ❖ Escape the city and lose yourself in the forests of The Blue Mountains, see the Three Sisters and feel the burn on your thighs climbing the giant staircase, only 2 hours from Sydney.
- ❖ Explore the laneways, graffiti art and cool coffee culture of uber chic Melbourne
- ❖ Cuddle up to a koala or hand fed a kangaroo at Australia Zoo and don't forget to keep your eye out for these unique creatures in the wild.
- ❖ Learn to surf and fall in love with the alternative vibe and spectacular sunsets in Byron Bay



Surfer at sunset at Bryon Bay

- ❖ Learn about the aboriginal culture and get an insight into a group of people that lived so long ago by viewing thousands of years old rock art.
- ❖ Spend a day or two on an Outback cattle station, drive a ute, ride a horse, muster some cattle and enjoy the wide open spaces.
- ❖ Quaff wine and take in the gorgeous views in Australia's award winning vineyards
- ❖ Soak up the views of the spectacular Sydney harbour by taking the ferry to Manly beach and walking to Spit, or take the cliff top walk from Bondi Beach to Coogee.

- ❖ Explore the convict history of Australia at spooky Port Arthur in Tasmania.
- ❖ Ride a camel along Cable Beach in Broome.
- ❖ Shop, eat and party at the Mindil beach sunset markets in Darwin.
- ❖ Explore the Daintree rainforest, the oldest rainforest in the world and see where 2 UNESCO sites met at Cape Tribulation.
- ❖ Camp out in a swag under a million stars in the clear outback skies, stare in amazement at The Milky Way and learn to identify the southern cross.
- ❖ Swim with whale sharks and snorkelling the diverse sea life on Ningaloo Reef, Western Australia.
- ❖ Feel the frontier spirit and discover old outback mining towns like Broken Hill, Silverton and Lightning Ridge in New South Wales, or gold rush towns like Ballarat, Victoria or Charters Towers, Queensland.
- ❖ Be awed watching sperm whales, the gentle giants of sea frolic in the waters near Hervey Bay.
- ❖ Explore the wilderness of Tasmania and hike to stunning wineglass bay.
- ❖ Experience the thrills and spills of a rodeo – wear a cowboy hat and drink the local iconic Bundaberg Rums made from Queensland sugar cane.
- ❖ Explore the remote, rugged and unique region of The Kimberly in the top corner of Western Australia with stunning rock formations, gorges and the unique Boab Tree, one of the oldest trees in the world.
- ❖ Hike through the Flinders Ranges National Park among spectacular scenery at the elevated basin of Wilpena Pound in South Australia, it's especially beautiful in spring with all the wildflowers in bloom.
- ❖ Celebrate the New Year before most other people in the world with the spectacular fireworks over the iconic harbour in Sydney.

Backpacker's Guide to Sydney



The Iconic Sydney Harbour Bridge and Opera House

Why Go:

Many backpackers start their Australian adventures in Sydney and it is one of the most beautiful cities in the world, home to one of the most iconic views in the world. But there's much more to Sydney than just the Opera house and Harbour Bridge and luckily there are plenty of ways to enjoy this fabulous city on a budget.

Top 5 Things to do in Sydney:

- When in Sydney you can't miss out on soaking up one of the most iconic and beautiful views in the world – the Sydney Opera House and Sydney Harbour Bridge. For the best views and photo opportunities stroll through the Botanical Gardens to **Mrs Macquarie's Point** to get that picture postcard perfect iconic view of the Opera House and Harbour Bridge.
- Take the excellent [free walking tour](#) that leaves at 10.30am and 2.30pm everyday from Sydney's Town Hall for an insight into Sydney's history and convict beginnings and taking in some of the best of the modern city.
- Explore Sydney's oldest area - 'The Rocks'. This is where Europeans first settled and now you can learn more about the history and people of Sydney at **the free Rocks Discovery Museum** and explore the steep lane ways and historic houses, shops and pubs.

- **Take a ferry trip to Manly**, enjoy stunning views of the harbour and relax on Manly's beach, enjoy the shops and seaside feel of one of the nicest areas of Sydney or stroll along the shore line, boat clubs and glamorous houses on the **9km scenic walk from Manly to Spit**.
- Australia is famous for its beaches and Sydney does not disappoint, hit up **famous Bondi Beach**. Relax on the beach or on the grassy hill that rises above the stunning bay, watch the bronzed surfers or **take a surf lesson** and try it yourself. If you feel more active take a **spectacular cliff top walk from Bondi to Coogee**. Feel the exhilarating force of the waves crashing below and keep your eyes peeled out to sea, maybe you can spot a humpback whale.



Bondi Beach, Sydney 1

Worth Splashing out on?

The **Sydney Bridge Climb at \$150 - \$350 is a bit steep** for most but gets great reviews if you can afford it. Unfortunately, the only way **inside the Opera House** is by taking an expensive tour or buying a ticket for a performance but drinks at the Opera House Bar outside are quite reasonably priced.

Where to Stay on a Budget in Sydney:

You are spoilt for choice with cool, modern hostels in Sydney. For a place with a view then try the [Sydney Harbour YHA](#) this modern hostel is right in the historic rocks district has a great rooftop with stunning views over Sydney harbour.

[Wake Up](#) is one of the most popular hostels in Sydney and has a good central location, loads of thoughtful extra and super nice staff that arrange events and activities most days.

[Bounce](#) nearby is also awesome and has a popular bar and restaurant.

[Maze Backpackers](#), has a great central location, sociable atmosphere and plenty of freebies, like BBQ night and pancake Sundays and is a great budget hostel option although not as modern and funky as the others.

Or if you fancy being closer to the beach the [Sydney Beach house YHA](#) is a popular choice with heaps of facilities, activities and even lend you all the stuff you need for a great day on the beach.

Where to Eat on a Budget in Sydney:

Check out buzzing Chinatown for cheap and delicious Asian food or try fresh mussels from the market. Darling Harbour is a really nice, if a bit pricey, spot for restaurants and nightlife in Sydney is great too, try the bars in Surry Hills or the clubs around Kings Cross for a lively night out. To really save money pick a hostel with a kitchen so you can cook up your own food.

How to get to Sydney:

Sydney is home to one of the busiest airports in Australia and is the entry point for many backpackers. Sydney is well connected by domestic flights, buses and trains to the rest of Australia.

Where Next:

Only an hour away on the train is the beautiful, UNESCO listed **Blue Mountains**. The wineries and rolling countryside of the **Hunter Valley** make a nice trip too.



The Blue Mountains

Backpacker's Guide to Melbourne



Melbourne

Why Go:

Melbourne is Australia's most European city, a lively, trendy, cultural and cosmopolitan city with something for everyone. The jury's out about which city is cooler – Melbourne or Sydney so you will just have to visit both to make your mind up which you prefer.

Top 5 Things to do in Melbourne:

- Melbourne's trams are iconic so hop on the **free city circle tram** to get your bearings and hop on and off between Melbourne's most popular downtown areas and attractions, make sure to get off and check out the iconic **Flinders Street Station**
- Take a [free walking tour](#), meets everyday at 10:30am and 2:30pm in front of the State Library of Victoria, for an insight into Melbourne's history and to be shown the lane ways, hidden shops, art, cafe culture and hidden bars. Don't miss exploring these quirky, **legendary lane ways**, that make Melbourne the cultural capital of Australia.
- Check out **Federation Square**, sometimes there are events on, if not just chill out, people watch or visit the free **National Gallery of Victoria**
- Hang out at **St Kilda Beach**, go on the old fashioned fun fair, walk along the pier and admire the skyline of the CBD. Or venture further along the coast to Brighton to see Melbourne's famous beach huts.

- Melbourne is an eminently walkable city, stroll through the botanical gardens or along the Southbank of the Yarra River.

Worth Splashing out on?

The **Eureka Skydeck** boasts to be the Southern Hemisphere's highest viewing platform and while it gives an incredible view of the city below (especially magical at sunset and with the lights twinkling below at night time).

Where to Stay on a Budget in Melbourne:

Stay in near the CBD at [Urban Central Backpackers](#) on the Southbank, they have kits of freebies too like free BBQ, breakfast, rice and pasta or [Melbourne Central YHA](#) on Flinders Street. Or get closer to the ocean and enjoy the vibe at funky [Base St Kilda](#).

Where to Eat and Drink on a Budget in Melbourne:

As arguably the most cosmopolitan city in Australia, Melbourne has the best Asian food, check out Chinatown and especially try Victoria street in Richmond **for amazing Vietnamese pho**. Melbourne also has great coffee and you can't visit without checking out the **legendary laneway bar** scene of Melbourne. If your hostel has a kitchen visit the Queen Victoria Market and save money by cooking your own food.

How to get to Melbourne:

Melbourne is well served by a large international airport and well connected by bus and train to the rest of Australia.

Where Next:

Just a few hours South of Melbourne starts one of the best drives in the world! Hire or buy a campervan and take your time to savour the epic **Great Ocean Road**. The wineries of the **Yarra Valley** make a nice day trip from Melbourne or discover more about Victoria's gold rush past at **Ballarat or Bendigo**.

Backpacker's Guide to Brisbane



Brisbane and Story Bridge

Why Go:

No longer just a big country town, Brisbane, Queensland's Capital and Australia's third largest city, is now cultured and cool, laid back yet happening, functional yet beautiful and modern but with some interesting historical buildings and just a short hop away from fabulous beaches and islands.

Top 5 Things to do in Brisbane:

- Brisbane life centers around the Brisbane River and the best way to see this city is on a river cruise. Take the **free city hopper ferry** which slowly traverses the main city stretch of the river giving plenty of time to sit up top, enjoying the sights, soak up the sun and take lots of photos.
- Explore the wonderful **South Bank**, stroll through the gardens, splash around in **Street's Beach** for free or visit Queensland's Cultural Precinct, which includes many **free museums and art galleries** – make time for the Queensland Museums and Queensland Art Gallery.
- Check out **Story Bridge**, one of Brisbane's most iconic landmarks. You can climb over Story Bridge and it's a lot cheaper than the Sydney Bridge Climb.

- Join Brisbanites and make use of the enviable climate and **get active**. Along the river are playgrounds, work out equipment, you can walk, jog, skate, hire a cycle, Segway or just BBQ for the less active. It's not uncommon to see people rock climbing and abseiling or kayaking or jet skiing down the river.
- Climb the walking trails up to **Mount Coot-Tha lookout** for an escape to nature with great views over the city and beyond.

Worth Splashing out on?

Brisbane's **Story Bridge Climb** starts from \$99 (so a lot cheaper than Sydney's). Or visit the **Castlemaine XXXX brewery**. You can also take a trip to **Lone Pine Koala Sanctuary** to cuddle a koala or hand feed a kangaroo, great if you want to get up close to these unique aussie animals.

Where to Stay on a Budget in Brisbane:

There is a good cluster of hostels just near the main Roma Street Station, the [Brisbane City YHA](#) is modern and clean with great views over Brisbane's river from the rooftop and even a small swimming pool. [Bunk Backpackers](#) is near Chinatown and has its own nightclub and a hot tub. Or try [Base Brisbane Central](#) is right in the centre of the CBD in a restored old Queenslander building and has a lively bar and different activities every day.

Where to Eat and Drink on a Budget in Brisbane:

Brisbane has quite a relaxed dining scene, head to Fortitude Valley for the best restaurants and nightlife or check out the casino in the historic treasury building. Make sure to try a famous **Aussie meat pie**, grab something on the go from Queens Street Mall or search out some tucker in a pub and try a classic XXXX Gold Queensland beer. If you really want to save money pick a hostel with a kitchen so you can cook your own food.

How to get to Brisbane:

Brisbane is well served by a large international airport and is on the main routes for buses and trains plying the East Coast and the rest of Australia.

Where Next:

Moreton Bay and **North Stradbroke Island** are just a short ferry hop away from Brisbane and the buzzing **Gold Coast** and more relaxed **Sunshine Coast** are also only about an hour away.

Backpacker's Guide to Perth



Perth

Why Go:

Perth is a vibrant and modern city, right on the ocean with a sunny climate. Perth is Australia's new boom town, a hub of activity and promise due to the growth in mining and other industries.

Top 5 Things to do in Perth:

- Hop on the free bus and visit **Kings Park**, explore the huge and varied parklands and soak up great views over Perth's slick skyline and the Swan River. Climb the DNA tower at the top for the best views.
- Learn about Perth's **gold rush history at the Royal Mint** and see how the discovering of gold transformed this state.
- Visit **Perth's cultural center** including free and engaging art galleries and museums
- Escape to the **beach**, some of the best beaches in the world are just a hop away from Perth's city center. City and Cottesloe beach are popular, Scarborough and Trigg are great for surfing and Swanbourne is a nudist beach.
- Take the ferry to **Fremantle** and enjoy a scenic journey, a sophisticated waterfront café scene and interesting Maritime museum.

Where to Stay on a Budget in Perth:

Perth doesn't have the huge number of backpacker hostels as other Australian cities but this is improving. Try [Billabong Backpacker's Resort](#) has a great swimming pool and outdoor area and all rooms, even dorms, are ensuite. [The Witches Hat](#) is an award winning hostel in a cute character building with friendly staff or try [Spinners Backpackers](#) in a good central location, free parking and a friendly sociable, family run atmosphere.

Where to Eat and Drink on a Budget in Perth:

Northbridge has many places to eat and drink even on a backpacker budget. Leederville and Subiaco are the places to go for eating out, or Fremantle for something classy. Much of Perth's lively nightlife is around Northbridge and don't miss a famous Sunday session in Perth's pubs. If you really want to save money pick a hostel with a kitchen so you can cook your own food.

How to get to Perth:

Perth is well served by a large international airport and as the most Westerly capital city in Australia it is actually closer to Singapore than Sydney and backpackers can often find the cheapest flights from Asia or Europe to Perth. Western Australia has one of the strongest economies too making Perth a good place to start your Australian adventure and look for a job. Perth is a long way from Perth to the East Coast of Australia so it's worth considering a domestic flight if you are short on time.

Where Next:

Perth is surrounded by world class beaches and wineries. Those who take the (long) trip up North towards Broome will be rewarded by having some spectacular scenery almost all to themselves, it's a long way from the busy East Coast. Closer to Perth and a must visit is beautiful **Rottneest Island** with sparkling white beaches and dazzling marine life.

Backpacker's Guide to Cairns



Cairns Lagoon

Why Go:

Cairns in tropical North Queensland is more than the jumping off point for the **Great Barrier Reef**. North Queensland is surrounded by lush rainforest and tropical beauty with a contagious laid back lifestyle that keeps Cairns a backpacker hot spot.

Top 5 Things to do in Cairns:

- Chill out at the **Cairns Lagoon**, it's free with loads of space to chill out, open for safe swimming all year round and there's even free community wifi. Cairns city lacks a beach but if the lovely lagoon won't do then hop on a bus up to the **Northern Beaches** and spend the day lazing in the tropical sun.
- Stroll along the **Cairns esplanade**, join in with many free activities like Zumba and yoga and enjoy the facilities like running tracks, work out gear and playgrounds, BBQs and volleyball.
- Visit the free beautiful and tropical **Botanic Gardens**.
- Cairns is a good base for many day trip, explore the rainforest, take the scenic train or cable car through the **rainforest to Kuranda**, a cute, if more than a little touristy, village in the rainforest and explore the markets there.

- For an adrenalin rush, try a **bunjee Jump** or **white water rafting** just outside Cairns.

Worth Splashing out on?

Cairns biggest attraction is the famous, UNESCO listed **Great Barrier Reef** and there are many ways to experience it from a snorkelling day trip to learning how to dive on a live abroad boat. A day trip snorkelling will set you back at least \$100, more for diving, but it's well worth it - you can't miss the Great Barrier Reef!

Where to Stay on a Budget in Cairns:

Cairns has loads of backpacker hostels, most of which feel more like a tropical resort than a hostel. The huge [Gilligan's Backpacker Resort](#) is always popular with a swimming pool, heaps of facilities, cheap meals and daily activities and a lively nightclub just don't come here if you want to get a good night's sleep! For something quieter but still with all the facilities of a tropical resort try [Travellers Oasis](#) with a homely atmosphere and no bunk beds! [Calypso Inn Backpackers Resort](#) also has a nice, laid back, sociable atmosphere and a nice pool.

Where to Eat and Drink on a Budget in Cairns:

Cairns has many backpacker orientated eating and drinking options, some you can even get a free or very cheap meal, often with vouchers given out by your hostel. **The Woolshed and The Jack** are pubs popular with backpackers. Cairns is also a great place for a night out, the **night club at Gilligan's** is always lively and the town has many more pubs all within a short walkable distance. There are also **free BBQ facilities** in Cairns, and most towns in Queensland so you can save money by buying your own food and enjoying a BBQ.

How to get to Cairns:

Cairns has an airport which is well served domestically but does not have many international flights. Cairns is connected by bus to the rest of Australia and most backpackers come here at the beginning or end of an East Coast Trip going from Sydney or Melbourne up to Cairns.

Where Next:

The world's oldest rainforest – the **Daintree Rainforest** and **Cape Tribulation** are not far north from Cairns. Inland, the **Atherton Tablelands** has beautiful waterfalls and can be a good place to find farm or fruit picking work or head south for Airlie Beach, gateway to the beautiful **Whitsunday Islands** and Whitehaven Beach.

Working in Australia



Along The Great Ocean Road

What is a Working Holiday?

There's a lot of reasons to head Down Under, however, Australia is by no means a budget destination, actually it's one of the most expensive places in world, add in the vast distances, and traveling here quickly eats up your hard earned cash.

But there is a solution ... **how about taking a Working Holiday in Australia?**

It would take a lifetime to see all of this vast and expensive country, but a year's Working Holiday Visa can be the perfect way to fund your travels and spend a year immersing yourself in the Australian culture.

"The Working Holiday visa is a temporary visa for young people who want to holiday and work in Australia for up to a year. It is a temporary visa that encourages cultural exchange and closer ties between Australia and eligible countries." Taken from the Australian Immigration Website.

So, if you're from an eligible country, and aged between 18 and 30, then a year's Australian Working Holiday Visa could be your ticket to swapping cold, grey skies with epic experiences under the Australian sun and with the Australian minimum wage being \$17.29 per hour there is also the chance to save some serious cash to fund your future travels.

A Working Holiday Visa allows you to:

- ❖ Stay in Australia for up to 12 months
- ❖ Leave and re-enter Australia any number of times while the visa is valid.
- ❖ Work in any kind of job in Australia (for a maximum of six months with each employer)
- ❖ Study for up to four months
- ❖ Subclass 417 holders have the opportunity to apply for a 2nd years Working Holiday Visa by completing 3 months regional work.

The price for 2015 is currently AUD\$420

Eligibility for a Working Holiday Visa

There are two streams to the Australian Working Holiday Visa – Subclass 417 and Subclass 462. They are quite similar but apply to different countries. The main difference is that Subclass 462 holders cannot extend their visa for 2 years.

Who is eligible for an Australian Working Holiday Visa subclass 417

To be eligible for an Australian Working Holiday Visa **Subclass 417** you must:-

- ❖ Be at least 18 but not yet 31 years of age
- ❖ Not have a dependent child accompanying you at any time during your stay in Australia
- ❖ Have a passport from an eligible country:-
 - ❖ Belgium
 - ❖ Canada
 - ❖ Republic of Cyprus
 - ❖ Denmark
 - ❖ Hong Kong
 - ❖ Republic of Ireland
 - ❖ Italy
 - ❖ Japan
 - ❖ Republic of Korea
 - ❖ Malta
 - ❖ Netherlands
 - ❖ Norway
 - ❖ Sweden
 - ❖ Taiwan
 - ❖ United Kingdom
 - ❖ Estonia
 - ❖ Finland
 - ❖ France
 - ❖ Germany

Who is eligible for an Australian Working Holiday Visa subclass 417

The criteria for the Australia Working Holiday Visa **Subclass 462** are the same. The eligible countries are:

- ❖ Argentina
- ❖ Bangladesh
- ❖ Chile
- ❖ Indonesia
- ❖ Malaysia
- ❖ Poland
- ❖ Portugal
- ❖ Spain
- ❖ Thailand
- ❖ Turkey
- ❖ USA
- ❖ Uruguay

Other Requirements:

You must also have no criminal record, be in good health and have enough money to support yourself initially.

When you arrive, you may be asked to show proof of funds in the form of a recent bank statement, from AUD\$5000 (approx £2700 / US\$4,350) if you arrive on a return ticket and enough additional funds, approx. total AUD\$7000, to purchase a flight home if you arrive on a one way ticket.

Visa requirements do change and can vary for each country so check on the [Australian Immigration website](#)

How to Apply for a Working Holiday Visa

In most cases you can apply online and usually it is a very simple process. The visa can be approved via an email in only 30 minutes but it's best to allow 4 weeks for approval.

To avoid any extra agent's fees it's best to go straight to the Australian Immigration Website. You can [apply for your Australian Working Holiday Visa directly with the Australian Immigration website here.](#)

The price of an Australian Working Holiday Visa for 2015 is **AUD\$420**. Once your visa is approved you have a year to enter Australia to activate the visa.

Preparing for a Working Holiday in Australia



Melbourne at night

A Working Holiday in Australia is an amazing experience, but it's not all sun, sea, sand and kangaroos in Australia, earning some money will probably be a top priority during your time in this expensive country.

Fortunately most **backpackers can expect to earn AUD\$20 – 25 an hour!** (the minimum wage is \$17.29 hour) and once you are earning Australian wages it feels a lot more affordable. But finding a job is not always straight forward.

First Steps:

Save Some Money

Even though you are going to Australia to work it doesn't come cheap so **don't arrive broke!** Australia is an expensive place and you can't guarantee that you will get a job in the first week and it's no fun being on the other side of the world with no money so arrive with some savings behind you.

But don't let this put you off as once you start earning Australian wages things feel a lot more affordable.

Save enough to cover your flights at least £500 one way from UK or \$800 from USA, the AUD\$420 visa fee (£227 / US\$ 365) and it's a good idea to have AUD\$5000 (£2700 / US\$4,350) the recommended funds that the Australian government states (bear in mind that you may be asked to show proof of funds)

Make sure you have enough money to see you through the first few weeks of your Australian Working Holiday.

Get to Australia!

This may sound obvious but usually there is little point trying to arrange work before you arrive in Australia for most backpacker type jobs, employers simply won't take you seriously and they will want you to be in country and ready to be interviewed and start as soon as possible.

Call your Aussie relatives or friends

Now is the time to call up your long lost, twice removed Aunt or any friends of a friend who moved to Australia and **find someone to stay with for the first week**. This will help you settle in a lot easier, save you money, and you'll be relieved to have a friendly face at the other end of a hellishly long flight.

Also, having a relative or friend to stay with should give you an all important address to use that will make it a lot easy to get all the paperwork in order to start your job hunt.

If you don't have a relative then [book yourself into a hostel](#), not only will you save money but you will also make loads of new friends and many can even help you find a job or if money is really tight then you could even check out [CouchSurfing](#) for a free place to stay and hopefully a new aussie friend.

Sorting out the Paperwork:

Setting up Bank Accounts, Tax File Number etc

So by now you already have your Australian Working Holiday Visa but there are a couple of other things you need to get sorted before starting to work in Australia.

It is possible to get a starter pack from companies like [STA Travel](#) who will sort out your documents (for a fee of course!) but it's not too difficult to do yourself, especially if you can sort out somewhere to stay for your first week.

Setting up an Australian Bank Account

You will need to set up an **Australian Bank Account** for your future employer to pay your wages into. With the [Commonwealth Bank](#), and [ANZ](#) you can do this before you arrive in Australia but it's also pretty easy to just walk in to a branch, all you need is your passport, visa grant letter and an address to open a bank account.

Getting an Australian Tax File Number (TFN)

You will also need a **TFN (Tax File Number)** so that you don't pay too much tax. You can find out more information about this and [apply for your Tax File Number](#) here but you have to wait until you are actually in Australia and it takes a week or two to arrive in the post. If you get one of the starter packs then they can sort it out and you don't need to wait but you will have to pay for the service.

Get Certified

If you're a tradie you will do well in Australia so make sure you **bring relevant qualification certificates** with you, although you may need to take extra courses to meet the Australian standards so it's best to research your industry before.



Responsible Service of Alcohol

A popular job for backpackers is working in hospitality. If you want to work in a bar or restaurant or somewhere where alcohol is served you will need an RSA (Responsible Service of Alcohol) qualification. It differs from state to state but most of the time can be completed easily online in just a few hours. [Get your RSA here.](#)

Apply for your Medicare Card

Australia has a **reciprocal health agreement with some other countries** like the UK entitling you to apply for a free [Medicare](#) card. Just go into the local Medicare office and apply but bear in mind that if you need to visit the doctors you will need to go to a practice that does 'bulk billing' or you may still need to pay.

Travel Insurance

Even if you have a Medicare card you still need travel insurance. Medicare isn't quite the same as the NHS and it doesn't cover everything and in some towns it's almost impossible

to find a Medicare practice instead of a private doctor. Plus travel insurance will cover you for any accidents or that of course no one wants to have but if it happens you want to focus on getting better not worrying about how you will pay for treatment.

Also check that your insurance will cover loss of damage or possessions, like smart phones and computers, any sports or activities that you are planning to do and make sure they cover for injuries sustained at work too.

[Nomads Insurance](#) is a good choice, the cover is comprehensive and what is unique about Nomads is that you can even buy or renew your travel insurance after you have left your home country, something that most insurers won't do.

Get Connected

You'll need an **Australian mobile phone sim card and number** so future employers (and new friends) can contact you. If you get your phone unlocked before you leave home then you will most likely be able to put an Australian sim card in to your existing phone without having to buy a new phone. **Telstra** has the best network coverage – the others are very patchy outside the major cities.



How to Find a Job in Australia



Flinders Street Station, Melbourne

Once you've got to Australia and sorted out all the paperwork start looking for a job.

What kind of jobs are available?

Officially, Working Holiday Visa holders can do any sort of work but actually many employers will not treat an application from a working holiday visa holder seriously, unless you have an in demand occupation like a nurse or trade qualifications. Some even state that applicants must hold permanent residency visa or Australian citizenship to deter applications from Working Holiday Visa holders.

Of course, if you do have a specialist qualification, skill or profession then you will be in great demand and find it easy to find work in your chosen field as long as your qualifications from your home country are accepted in Australia. It's worth doing some research first because you may need to take extra courses to meet the Australian standards.

Typical Backpacker Jobs

Be open minded and flexible to maximize your chances of finding a job in Australia. Knowing the limitations, and the reluctance of many employers to recruit working holiday visa holders, it's probably best to **focus your efforts on 'backpacker jobs'** especially in a field that you already have experience in back home.

Common jobs that Working Holiday Visa holders take on include:

- ❖ Bar, Hospitality and Tourism jobs
- ❖ Sales jobs and Office Temping work
- ❖ Farm work and Fruit Picking
- ❖ Childcare and Au Pair work

Get your Resume and Covering Letter Prepared

Before you apply for a job in Australia **get your resume and covering letter prepared** like you would for applying for any other job.

The Australian job market and application process tends to be less formal than the one the UK. Australians like your resume (CV) to have a photo and it's also useful to make your resume less formal, more brief and straight to the point. Make it easy for employers to clearly see your relevant experience for the jobs you are applying for. Job competition can be tough as there are many backpackers going for the same jobs so try to make your resume stand out.

Where to Start your Job Hunt

There are several websites that specialise in jobs for backpackers where the employers advertise jobs that they are happy receiving applications from backpackers.

You could start your job search by trying the following websites:

- ❖ [Backpacker Job Board](#)
- ❖ [Gumtree](#)
- ❖ [The Job Shop](#)

These sites are specifically for working holiday makers and are really useful but they do charge a fee to join:

- ❖ [Travellers at Work](#)
- ❖ [Jobs 4 Travellers](#)

Here are some more websites for job hunting in Australia that aren't necessarily just for backpackers:

- ❖ [Seek](#)
- ❖ [Indeed](#)
- ❖ [JobSearch.gov.au](#)
- ❖ [CareerOne](#)

Also, don't be afraid to **call up or take in your resume** into local businesses like pubs, restaurants, hotels, shops and farms and ask to speak to the manager. You have a better chance of beating the competition from other backpackers and getting the job if you make contact rather than just emailed over your resume.

Also ask around, some jobs aren't advertised so try asking friends, relatives or other backpackers for a recommendation, sometimes in Australia **it's about who you know** and a recommendation could be enough to get you a job and Australians are generally friendly folk that will try and help you out.



Country Queensland

More Tips for Getting a Job

Some backpackers have created a bit of a bad reputation for working holiday visa holders due to being more interested in drinking and partying and not being responsible, hard working or reliable; add the fact that you can only legally work for one employer for 6 months and perhaps it's not surprising that sometimes employers are simply not interested in employing backpackers for only a few weeks before they move onto the next job.

Remember, you may be in Australia on the trip of a lifetime and want to party but **a job is still a job wherever it is and needs to be treated professionally.**

Show that you are responsible and committed, that you will stick around for a while as many employers will want you to stay and work for 3 months to make it worthwhile employing and training you and it goes without saying to try and look as professional as you can if you are going in on spec.

How to Find a Job and Save Money

So you want to get a job not just to make ends meet but so you can save money for further travels. If you are working in a city a huge chunk of your wages will go on rent and food, leaving little money to save towards adventures in Australia.

Go for a Rural 'Live in' Job

You might be dreaming of a job overlooking Sydney Harbour but the reality is that many of the backpacker friendly jobs are out of the towns and in remote or outback hotels, roadhouses, farms or cattle stations. Australians don't necessarily want these remote jobs so it becomes the realm of the backpacker. **The best way to save money is to go rural.** Be prepared to be cut off from shops, bars, buses, amenities and even mobile phone signals but, as many of these jobs will be live in, this comes with the advantage of being able to save a good chunk of money.

Finding a **'live in' job** in hospitality or childcare that includes accommodation and food plus wages is your best bet if you want to save money for future travels. Working a 'live in' job in a remote, country pub, road house or as an au pair is a relatively easy way of saving money to further your travels in Australia and a great way to get to know lots of new Aussie friends and many include food and board plus wages and as there are no parties, shops or anything to spend your hard earned cash on you could save a lot of money in no time.

The Downsides of the Australia Working Holiday Scheme

Whilst the Working Holiday Visa scheme is a great opportunity for young people to enjoy exploring Australia and earn money to fund their travels there are some things that they don't tell you in the glossy brochures that you should be aware of to make the most of your time and money down under.

Scams and Employers who take advantage

Beware, there are employers that will try to take advantage of backpackers and there are a plethora of jobs that expect you to work just for food and accommodation or to work on commission only sales or charity door knocking jobs.

There are also job offers that are just scams, while Gumtree is a great resource, there can often be scam job offers on there. Be careful, don't get taken advantage of or fall for a scam, if the job sounds too good to be true it probably is and be wary of any requests for

too many personal or financial details when applying for a job and you should never have to pay to find a job.

I've heard of people taking on sales positions that are commission only or jobs in 'fly by night' businesses, like make shift tele sales or call centers, only to work for a few weeks and then find the rented offices cleared out and they haven't been paid.

Know your rights, **AUD\$17.29 is the standard minimum wage** in Australia (approx US\$13 or £9) and most backpacker type jobs should pay around AUD\$20. Some employers will try to get away with paying less than minimum wage, often when bundling up your wages into a weekly salary, check how much this equates to by dividing the hours you will be working and don't accept anything less than the minimum wage.

Job Limitations

It's not wise to come to Australia thinking of it as a career move, due to some of the limitations mentioned above it may be difficult to get a job in a higher than entry level position or in a field that is unrelated to your previous experience as employers don't want to put in the training only for you to move on in 6 months. With this in mind there are limitations to what work you can do. Also, officially you are only allowed to **work for any 1 employer for a maximum of 6 months**

Extending your stay in Australia

The Australian Working Holiday Visa (WHV) is designed to “**allow young people to have an extended holiday supplemented by short-term employment.**” It is not the right visa for you if you plan to come to Australia to work permanently, although there is the option to extend to 2 years if you complete the 3 months regional work. Of course, there are expectations and people have been known to get jobs on WHVs and then gain sponsorship for residency but just so you know - **securing a permanent residency visa can be a complicated and costly process.**

Of course there are always exceptions and some backpackers have gained sponsorship and made Australia their permanent home but just be aware that it doesn't come easy. Australia may be called 'the lucky country' but the path isn't always smooth sailing.

How to get a 2nd year Working Holiday Visa



Sugarcane in Queensland 1

If you hold a subclass 417 visa you can apply for a 2nd year Australian working holiday visa if you **complete 3 months (88 days) of regional work** in a specified industry.

Be aware that unfortunately this does not apply to Americans (and other 462 visa holders) as they are not currently able to apply for the 2nd year visa meaning that **Americans can't renew for the further year.**

Requirements for eligible regional work

The Australian government states the requirements for the regional work:

Specified work is work that is undertaken in a 'specified' field or industry in a designated regional area. Please see the section on [Regional Areas](#) below to check the postcode list of designated regional areas. Approved industries for specified work include:

- Plant and animal cultivation
- Fishing and Pearling
- Tree Farming and Feeling
- Mining
- Construction
- - **Note:** This must be the applicant's primary employment task and directly associated with the cultivation and commercial sale of plant produce, such as fruit and nut crops (commercial horticultural activities). General garden maintenance is not eligible.
 - **Note:** Maintaining animals for tourism or recreational purposes is not eligible.
 - **Note:** Secondary processing of animal products, such as small goods processing and retail butchery is not eligible.

- Supporting work, such as book-keeping or catering, in any industry described in the list above does not meet the definition of specified work.

For the full information and list of eligible regional postcodes, examples of eligible and non eligible work go to the [Australian Immigration Website](#) and look under the visa applicants and then regional work tabs.

Regional Jobs

There are a variety of ways that backpackers can earn a 2nd year working holiday visa but without any previous experience or specialist skills most backpackers work in fruit picking or general help on a farm.

Fruit Picking

Picking fruit or grapes is a popular way to do 3 months regional work to earn a 2nd year visa. However it's not an easy job and can be quite backbreaking, most fruit picking jobs are **paid a pittance by the weight picked**. It helps if you have your own transport and you will need to be in the right place and the right time.

Farm Work

Farm work can be anything from hard manual labour out in the fields with crops or fixing fences, to feeding animals and mustering cattle or general jobs around the farms. Many farm jobs are hard manual labour and some need specialised skills but there are still many things a backpacker can turn their hand too.

Where to find Regional Jobs

You can find jobs that are eligible for the 2nd year visa on the backpacker job websites mentioned before. [Travellers at Work](#) and [Jobs 4 Travellers](#) are useful as the job advert clearly shows whether the employer can sign off for the 2nd year visa or not. [Backpacker Job Board](#), [The Job Shop](#) and [Gumtree](#) also have regional jobs advertised.

If you are specifically looking for fruit picking work then get [The Harvest Guide](#), you can download this guide for information on the seasons and type of fruit picked in different locations, you need to be in the right place at the right time when the fruit needs picking! You can also call The National Harvest Telephone Information Service on 1800 062 332 with any queries or for help finding a job.

You may find some jobs advertised on hostel noticeboards or hostel job clubs and you could also try joining [Fruit Picking Jobs](#). There are also agencies that help to find farm work but will

charge a fee. Working Hostels could be an easy way to find a few weeks work and accommodation in a sociable atmosphere but less reputable establishments have been known to ask guests for pay for weeks or a month in advance above the odds for a bed in a shared dorm on the promise of work that fails to materialise or at the very least, takes a large chunk from your small pay packet. Check reviews before you pay, find working hostels and fruit picking jobs at [Working Hostels Australia](#).

Your best bet might just be **visiting farms in person** if you are in the area as some farmers prefer to deal with people face to face before hiring staff and it shows that you are there and ready to start.

Warnings about 2nd year visa jobs

Unfortunately, there can be a lot of competition for second year visa jobs, employers know how much you want that 2nd year in Oz and can take advantage of this, meaning that the majority of 2nd year visa qualifying jobs are now voluntary and it is hard to find an eligible job that pays well. Much of the work is done on a voluntary basis where **the only payment is food and accommodation**.

If you still really want that second year and don't mind volunteering then try [WWOOF](#), [Workaway](#) or [Helpx](#) to find farms that need your help in exchange for food and accommodation, just check that the work meets the 2nd year visa requirements.

However, be aware that the government proposes that after July 2016 voluntary work will no longer count towards the second year visa. Hopefully this will mean that it will be easier to find a paid job not harder to get a second year visa.

Make sure the job meets the requirements

Before accepting a job check that the postcode, industry and nature of the work meet the visa requirements and that the employer is able to sign off the 2nd Year Visa to avoid wasting your precious time. Hospitality jobs in country pubs, hotels or roadhouses in regional areas do not count and strictly speaking neither does work as a cook or au pair on a cattle station but some people have still been known to qualify in these jobs.

Put simply, employers know that you really want that second year visa which increases the chances of scams and bad practice and makes the changes of securing a decent, paid job quite difficult.

And Finally



Port Douglas, Far North Queensland

Don't forget to explore Australia!

It's easy to get stuck into the routine of work or tempted to work as much as possible to save more money for future travels. But don't work so much that you forget to do the very things you came all the way down under to do! You can sit in an office, graft away on a farm or work behind a bar anywhere, make time to explore the magnificent Outback, dive the Great Barrier Reef, soak in the glorious views of iconic Sydney, drive the Great Ocean Road, learn to surf or cuddle a koala. Have the time of your life and make some everlasting Aussie memories.

Get your Tax and Superannuation Refunded

Did you know that when you leave Australia you can often apply for a refund of some of your tax and superannuation back? The average **tax refund for working holiday makers is thought to be about AUD\$ 2,600 and AUD\$ 3,380 for superannuation refunds**. You could have a nice injection of funds ready for your next adventure, it's your money so make sure you claim it. It can be a bit tricky to navigate the system on your own so you may need to use an agency. Try [Taxback.com](https://www.taxback.com) as they specialise in this and can help you sort it out, even after you have left Australia.

Good Luck Down Under!

There is more to job hunting on an Australian Working Holiday Visa than the glossy magazines and adverts may tell you but don't be put off though!

Use your common sense and there are still jobs in Australia that allow backpackers to have the time of their lives, make new friends, learn new skills and really get to know this amazing country and to also save enough money to fund further travels. If you are serious about saving and getting off the beaten track then don't forget to look for a remote live in job to allow you to save as much money as possible.

Thousands of young people each year take the opportunity, make the leap and expand their skills and horizons, if they can do it, so can you, you won't regret the **experience of a lifetime.**



Proposed Changes

In the Australia Federal Budget in May 2015 the Australia government announced a set of proposed changes that will effect working holiday makers.

Currently people on working holiday visa pay no income tax in Australia until they earn close to A\$20,000, the same tax-free threshold enjoyed by residents. The proposed changes, due to come into effect in July 2016, could mean that anyone on a working holiday in Australia, for tax purposes will be considered "non-residents" for tax purposes, and pay tax on every dollar they earn. However, many employers who take on working holiday visa makers pay cash in hand for work done on a temporary basis anyway.

The changes also propose that voluntary work undertaken in a regional area will no longer count towards being eligible for a second year working holiday visa, only paid work will count. In some ways this may make it harder to find a job that counts towards the second year visa and may adversely affect small holdings who rely on this kind of cheap labour but hopefully it will also increase the opportunities for backpackers to finally get paid for regional work instead of too many employers taking advantage and offering only voluntary positions for that highly prizes second visa.

Of course, these proposals do not effect current working holiday visa holders but it's worth checking the requirements and the progress that these proposed changes make on the Official [Australian Immigration website](#).

Useful Resources

General

[Australia tourism](#)

[Australian Immigration Website](#)

[Australian Immigration Working Holiday Visa](#)

[Backpacker Price of Travel Index](#)

[Guide Books on Amazon](#)

[Lonely Planet Australia Guide Book](#)

[Medicare](#)

[World Nomads Travel Insurance](#)

[XE Currency Exchange Rates](#)

Accommodation in Australia:

[Agoda](#)

[Air BnB \(get \\$25 off here\)](#)

[Base Backpackers](#)

[Booking.com](#)

[Camps Australia Wide](#)

[Flatmate Finder](#)

[Gumtree](#)

[Hostelworld](#)

[Mind My House](#)

[Nomads Hostels](#)

[Trusted House Sitters](#)

[YHA Australia](#)

[Yonderbound](#) (get [\\$10 off here](#))

[Wiki Camps App](#)

Recommended Hostels:

[Sydney](#)

[Bounce](#)

[Maze Backpackers](#)

[Sydney Beach house YHA](#)

[Sydney Harbour YHA](#)

[Wake Up](#)

[Melbourne](#)

[Base St Kilda.](#)

[Melbourne Central YHA](#)

[Urban Central Backpackers](#)

[Brisbane](#)

[Base Brisbane Central](#)

[Brisbane City YHA](#)

[Bunk Backpackers](#)

[Perth](#)

[Billabong Backpacker's Resort](#)

[Spinners Backpackers](#)

[The Witches Hat](#)

[Cairns](#)

[Calypso Inn Backpackers Resort](#)

[Gilligan's Backpacker Resort](#)

[Travellers Oasis](#)

Transport

[Gumtree](#) – Buying a Campervan

[Greyhound Buses](#)

[Imoova Campervan Relocations](#)

[Momondo](#) - Flight Comparison

[Rail Australia](#)

[Rome to Rio](#) Route Planning

[Round the World Flights](#)

[STA Travel](#) – Round the world and multi stop flights

[Skyscanner](#) – Flight Comparison

[The Ultimate Backpacker Guide to Buying a Campervan in Australia.](#)

[VroomVroomVroom](#) – Campervan Rental Comparison.

Activities, Tours and Sightseeing

[Backpackers World Travel](#)

[Free walking tours in Sydney and Melbourne](#)

[Mad Travel Shop](#)

[PeterPans Travel](#)

[Wicked Travel](#)

Ways to Travel for Free

[CouchSurfing](#)

[Helpx](#)

Workaway

WWOOF

Working in Australia

Apply for your Australian Working Holiday Visa

ANZ – Set up an Australian Bank Account

Australian Immigration website

Commonwealth Bank – Set up an Australian Bank Account

Responsible Service of Alcohol Certificate

STA Travel - Working Holiday Starter Packs

Apply for your Tax File Number

Websites to look for a job:

Backpacker Job Board

CareerOne

Fruit Picking Jobs

Gumtree

Indeed

Jobs 4 Travellers

JobSearch.gov.au

Seek

The Harvest Guide,

The Job Shop

Travellers at Work

Working Hostels Australia

About the Author

Anna Phipps is a dreamer, explorer, writer, nomad and travel addict from the UK.

She quit her job and left the UK in 2012 to pursue her dreams of a life of travel and adventure. Anna has since travelled through most of Europe, India, Asia and Australia independently and on a budget, working as she goes and finding out all the best money saving tips to keep her on her life of indefinite travel.



Anna in the Yarra Valley, Australia

While in Australia, Anna saved over \$13,000 in under 6 months working in an outback pub and bought her own campervan to continue her adventures around Australia. Anna saw the difficulties some backpackers had with getting decent employment and wrote this book, based on combining research and her own and others experiences, to help you get the most out of your working holiday in Australia.

Anna shares stories and tips from her adventures around the world to inspire and help others to also realise their dreams of travel at her website www.global-gallivanting.com

The Small Print

By the way – all information was correct at the time of publishing but as always, requirements, prices and legalities can change so please double check first. All advice given here is taken at your own risk and we cannot be held liable for anything you choose to do. Some affiliate links have been used in this book, if you choose to book a hostel or another service through these links for no extra cost to you we receive a small commission that helps to fund this book. Thanks for your support!

For more budget travel tips, ideas on working around the world, travel stories or to get in contact please visit www.global-gallivanting.com

Thanks for reading and have the time of your life in Australia!