

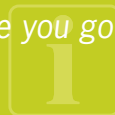


Australian Government
Australian Customs Service



Guide for travellers

know before you go



When you arrive at an Australian airport

Security measures are in place in Customs-controlled areas at airports. You should be prepared to respond to requests by Customs officers in these areas, which are clearly identified by signs. Passengers might be asked to terminate mobile phone calls in certain controlled areas.

Customs and Quarantine officers may question travellers at any time, selecting people and baggage for detailed examination for a number of reasons. Detector dogs might also be used to search for illegal drugs, prohibited exports and imports including food, plant or animal material.

Because Australia has strict border controls to prevent the possible introduction of exotic pests and diseases such as foot and mouth disease, all arriving travellers are screened

and, in many instances, luggage is inspected or x-rayed by Customs or Quarantine officers.

All food and other items of plant and/or animal origin need to be declared on your Incoming Passenger Card. If in doubt, declare the goods or ask a Customs or Quarantine officer for advice.

Many other items must be declared on arrival. These include items which might be prohibited or restricted (see pages 7-9) and items on which duty or tax might be payable (see page 10 for information about your duty free allowance). There are penalties for making false declarations and/or presenting fraudulent documents. In some cases goods may be seized.

Expensive items (such as computers and cameras) that you take out and intend bringing back to Australia can be registered on the *Goods exported in passenger baggage* form available from any Customs office or from the Customs website. Once registered, travellers do not need to declare these goods to Customs on return but should keep the form. To register you must have the goods inspected at the departure point. Goods for which you intend claiming a refund under the Tourist Refund Scheme and items that are difficult to identify cannot be registered. It will also help if you have receipts for items that cannot be registered, such as jewellery.

On departure, please present your passport, completed Outgoing Passenger Card and boarding pass to the Customs officer. The Customs officer can also register your *Goods Exported in Passenger Baggage* form on presentation of the goods.

Tourist Refund Scheme

Travellers might be able to claim a refund under the Tourist Refund Scheme if they:

- Buy a minimum of \$300 worth of goods from the one retailer
- Buy the goods no earlier than 30 days before departing Australia
- Ask the retailer for a single tax invoice for the goods
- Carry goods on board the aircraft or ship as cabin baggage; and

- Present their tax invoice, goods, passport and boarding pass to the TRS booth when departing Australia.

Further information on the scheme is available by calling Customs on 1300 363 263 or visiting www.customs.gov.au.

Carrying prescription medication

Prescription medicines are financially subsidised by the Australian Government under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS). Only Australian residents and other persons eligible to receive Medicare benefits can access the PBS. A person can take overseas with them a reasonable amount of PBS drugs for personal treatment for themselves or an accompanying person,

such as a child or elderly relative. It is advisable for persons intending to take personal use PBS medicines out of Australia to carry a medical or dental practitioner's letter or complete a *PBS Medicine Export Declaration* available from the Health Insurance Commission or Customs Information and Support Centres.

Warning

Penalties for possession of drugs differ from country to country and can result in heavy fines, imprisonment or even the death penalty. Travellers are subject to the laws of the country they are visiting.

Defence and strategic goods

Goods that are controlled at export include: advanced data encryption devices and software; advanced materials such as those with "stealthy" or armour or armour-defeating properties; certain chemicals; certain biological agents as well as any equipment, technology or material that might be diverted from civil use into a weapons-of-mass-destruction program. Export controls over these goods include exports as samples, exports after or for repair, and goods exported for demonstration or loan purposes.

For more information contact:

Defence Trade Control and Compliance

+61 2 6266 2586 (ph)

+61 2 6266 2996 (fax)

dtcc@defence.gov.au

www.defence.gov.au/dmo/DMO/export_controls.cfm

Currency

You must declare to Customs amounts of A\$10,000 or more in foreign or Australian currency (notes and coins) you take into or out of Australia.

For more information contact:

AUSTRAC

1800 021 037

+ 61 2 9950 0055 (ph)

+ 61 2 9950 0071 (fax)

www.austrac.gov.au

Heritage items

It is illegal to take or send out of Australia without a permit items identified as important to Australia's cultural heritage. These include works of art, stamps, coins, archaeological objects, minerals and specimens etc.

For information on requirements and permits contact:

Environment Australia
(Movable Cultural Heritage Unit)
+ 61 2 6274 1810 (ph)
+ 61 2 6274 2731 (fax)
www.ea.gov.au/heritage/awh/movable/index.html

Firearms and ammunition

You must obtain an export permit from either Customs or Defence before exporting firearms and/or ammunition (see page 8 for information about importing firearms, weapons and ammunition).

For information on Export permits contact:

Customs
1300 363 263
information@customs.gov.au
www.customs.gov.au

Defence
+61 2 6266 2586 (ph)
+61 2 62662997 (fax)
dtcc@defence.gov.au

Protected wildlife

Australia has strict laws controlling the import and export of protected wildlife and products made from protected wildlife (including some medicinal products).

For information on import restrictions and permit requirements contact:

Environment Australia
+ 61 2 6274 1900 (ph)
+ 61 2 6274 1921 (fax)
www.ea.gov.au

On arrival, please present your passport and your completed Incoming Passenger Card to the Customs officer, then collect your baggage and proceed to the green or red channel.

Green channel

If you have nothing to declare, follow the green channel.

Red channel

If you have something to declare or are unsure, follow the red channel.

Sea travellers

Immigration clearance may take place on board the vessel for travellers arriving by sea. A Customs officer will provide information and direction.

Unaccompanied goods

Unaccompanied goods do not receive the same duty/tax concessions as goods brought into the country with you - the goods may be subject to duty/tax unless they have been owned and used for 12 months or more. See the fact sheet on the Customs website or contact Customs for more information.

Business travellers

Contact Customs or refer to the brochures *Information for Importers* or the *Customs Guide for Importing and Exporting* for information on importing commercial goods (this includes samples and temporary imports).

Quarantine

You must declare any food, plant and animal goods and other items such as equipment used with animals, biological materials, soil and sand. You could be fined more than A\$200 on the spot or even face prosecution and imprisonment if you don't declare quarantinable goods.

Some goods may be allowed entry after inspection or treatment and some goods cannot be imported at all. A list of goods is available from the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service.

For more information contact:

Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service
1800 020 504
+ 61 2 9364 7222 (ph)
pr@aqis.gov.au
www.aqis.gov.au

Medicinal products

Declare all drugs and medicines including prescription medications, alternative, herbal and traditional medicines, vitamin and mineral preparations and performance-enhancing drugs or formulas.

Some medicinal products may require an import permit or quarantine clearance.

If you are carrying any drugs or medicines, it is advisable to have a letter or a prescription from your doctor or practitioner describing your medication and medical condition.

For more information contact:

Therapeutic Goods Administration
1800 020 653
+ 61 2 6232 8610 (ph)
+ 61 2 6232 8605 (fax)
www.health.gov.au/tga

Veterinary products

All veterinary drugs and medicines, including products that contain substances prohibited without a permit (these include narcotics, amphetamines, hallucinogens, barbiturates, vaccines, anabolic and androgenic steroids for veterinary use), must be declared on arrival.

For more information contact:

National Registration Authority
+ 61 2 6272 5158 (ph)
+ 61 2 6272 4753 (fax)
www.nra.gov.au

Currency

You must declare to Customs amounts of A\$10,000 or more in foreign or Australian currency (notes and coins) you bring into or take out of Australia.

For more information contact:

AUSTRAC
1800 021 037
+ 61 2 9950 0055 (ph)
+ 61 2 9950 0071 (fax)
www.austrac.gov.au

Firearms, weapons and ammunition

You must declare all firearms and weapons. These include real and replica firearms, BB air pistols, paintball markers, blowpipes, various knives, nunchukas, slingshots, pistol crossbows, electric shock devices and knuckle dusters.

Items may require a permit, police authorisation and safety testing before importation.

For more information contact:

Customs
1300 363 263
information@customs.gov.au
www.customs.gov.au

Protected wildlife

Australia has strict laws controlling the import and export of protected wildlife and products made from protected wildlife (including some medicinal products). Some examples of prohibited imports are black coral, orchids and ivory products.

For information on import restrictions and permit requirements contact:

Environment Australia
+ 61 2 6274 1900 (ph)
+ 61 2 6274 1921 (fax)
www.ea.gov.au

Quarantine (Biologicals Unit)

+ 61 2 6272 4578 (ph)
+ 61 2 6273 2097 (fax)
biologicals@aqis.gov.au
www.aqis.gov.au

Australian Sports Drug Agency
1800 020 506 (ph)
www.asda.org.au



Duty-free allowance (accompanied goods only)

From 1 February 2005, you may bring any of the following goods - duty and/or tax free - in your accompanied baggage:

General

A\$900 worth of goods (A\$450 for people under 18) including gifts, souvenirs, cameras, electronic equipment, leather goods, perfume concentrates, jewellery, watches and sporting equipment. Alcohol and tobacco products cannot be included in this allowance.

These goods can be:

- obtained overseas
- purchased in Australia duty or tax free before departure

- goods for which a tax refund has been approved through the Tourist Refund Scheme; or
- purchased from an inwards duty free shop on arrival.

Alcohol

2.25 litres of alcoholic beverages for each passenger aged 18 years or over.

Tobacco

250 cigarettes, or 250 grams of cigars or tobacco products for each passenger aged 18 years or over.

You can pool your duty free concessions if you are a family travelling together.

Most personal items such as new clothing, footwear, and articles for personal hygiene and grooming (but not fur or perfume concentrates) may also be brought into Australia in accompanied baggage free from duty and/or tax.

NOTE HOWEVER: if you exceed any of the concession limits set out above, Customs will charge you duty and tax on the entire importation or purchase within that group of items.

Quick information

For information on unaccompanied goods, contact Customs or an Australian Mission overseas.

Yellow fever vaccination is the only health requirement for travellers entering Australia and it is only required in some circumstances. You must tick yes on your Incoming Passenger Card if you visited Africa or South America during the six days before your arrival in Australia.

X-rays should not affect the contents of your baggage or normal photographic film.

There are severe penalties for Australian citizens or residents who engage in child prostitution. A pamphlet *Ending child sex tourism* containing further information about the law is available from Customs offices.

Fireworks, flammable liquids, corrosives and/or gas cylinders are not permitted on aircraft or in your baggage. Knives, sharp objects, cutting implements, knitting needles and sports goods may be carried in hold baggage but are not permitted in your carry-on baggage.

If you are taking medications with you, contact the consulates or embassies of countries to be visited well before departure to confirm that medicines and the quantities to be carried are permitted.

You might need vaccinations, depending on which countries you intend visiting. For further information, contact Health Services Australia on 1300 361 046 or your doctor.

Customs officers no longer routinely stamp Australian passports but, if you require evidence of travel, you may ask the officer to do so.

If you are receiving a payment through Centrelink, call 131 021 before you travel. Your payment might be stopped while you are away. You might have to pay back money if you do not contact Centrelink before departure.

If you are a temporary resident departing Australia, you might have money in Australia you don't know about. To find out more, visit the Australian Taxation Office, superannuation website www.ato.gov.au/content.asp?doc=/content/super/23357.htm

If you are travelling in the Asia Pacific region, you can keep in touch with events from an Australian perspective through the ABC's international services. ABC Asia Pacific Television and Radio Australia are available in hotels throughout the region.



Complaints & Compliments

To offer a comment on any aspect of Customs service, either complete a Tell us what you think brochure available from any Customs office, telephone 1800 228 227 (within Australia) or email comments@customs.gov.au

Travellers should be aware that under Australian law airlines can be required to provide information the airline holds on passengers travelling to or from Australia. This may include information that is personal information as defined in the *Privacy Act 1988*.

Customs Information and Support Centre

1300 363 263
information@customs.gov.au
www.customs.gov.au

Information valid at January 2005