

Australian Citizenship Test Cramming Guide¹

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Australian Citizenship Pledge

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.

Privileges:

1. To vote;
2. To seek election to parliament;
3. To apply for an Australian passport and to enter Australia freely;
4. To register children born overseas as Australian citizens by descent;
5. To seek full consular assistance from Australian diplomatic representatives while overseas;
6. To seek employment opportunities in the Australian Defence Force and the Australian Public Service.

Responsibilities:

1. To vote in federal, state and territory elections and at a referendum;
2. To serve on a jury if called on to do so;
3. To defend Australia should the need arise.

Australian values:

1. respect for the equal worth, dignity and freedom of the individual;
2. freedom of speech;
3. freedom of religion and secular government;
4. freedom of association;
5. support for parliamentary democracy and the rule of law;
6. equality under the law;
7. equality of men and women;
8. equality of opportunity;
9. peacefulness;
10. tolerance, mutual respect and compassion for those in need.

From 1949 people seeking Australian citizenship have been required to have knowledge of English.

¹ based on 'Becoming an Australian citizen', published by Commonwealth of Australia 2007

Australia's History

Discovery: In 1606, the Dutchman Williem Jansz landed on the western side of Cape York Peninsula. Later in the 1600s, Dutch sailors explored the north and west of the continent which they called 'New Holland'. The east coast of Australia was not explored by Europeans until James Cook reached it in 1770. He claimed this land for King George III on Possession Island in Torres Strait.

Indigenous Australians: Australia's Indigenous population is comprised of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Indigenous Australians have been here for 40,000 to 60,000 years. Hundreds of Indigenous communities were living in Australia before settlement. More than 700 languages were spoken pre-settlement with around 250 still active today. The Indigenous population has declined from 750,000 in 1788 to 483,000 today.

Settlement: British settlers, mainly convicts, started arriving in New South Wales from 1788. Until 1868, more than 160,000 convicts were transported to Australia altogether. From 1850s, with the discovery of gold, there was a rush of people from all round the globe.

'Australia': The name 'Australia' derives from the Latin word 'Australis', meaning 'southern'. The land was known as Terra Australis Incognita – unknown land of the south. In 1814, the name 'Australia' gained popularity due to Matthew Flinders's book 'A Voyage to Terra Australis'. Governor Lachlan Macquarie adopted it. 1824 the continent became officially named 'Australia'.

Exploring: In 1813 three men, Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson, got across the Blue Mountains by going up to the plateau and following the ridges. In 1848 Ludwig Leichhardt disappeared while trying to cross the continent from east to west. In 1860 Robert O'Hara Burke and William John Wills set out from Melbourne to cross the continent from south to north and also died in the journey.

WWI: Australian soldiers entered World War I in 1915 with an attack on Germany's ally, Turkey. The date of the landing at Gallipoli (25 April) is the unofficial national day – Anzac Day. John Monash became the commander of the Australian forces, known as 'the diggers'. Remembrance Day (11 November) is also a day on which Australians remember those who have served and died in war. Red poppies have been used as a symbol of remembrance since World War I, in which Australia had 25,000 casualties.

WWII: In World War II, Australians fought in the desert of North Africa against Germans and Italians. Australian soldiers were given the name 'Rats of Tobruk'. When the Japanese took the great British base at Singapore, 15,000 Australian troops were among those taken into captivity to work on the Thai-Burma railway.

Eureka Rebellion: on 3 December 1854 gold diggers protested against the collection of licence fee to dig and called for the establishment of a democratic and republican government. They were soon overpowered and about 30 were killed. This event has become a symbol of protest and popular rights.

Popular Rights: Australian workers were the first to enjoy an eight-hour working day. The Commonwealth Arbitration Court in 1907 set a minimum wage. Most men had had the vote from the 1850s; women then

gained the vote in 1902. Edith Cowan became the first woman parliamentarian when elected to the WA Parliament in 1921. Labor Party was created in 1891; all other parties combined into Liberal Party in 1910.

Federation: In 1889, Sir Henry Parkes, ‘the Father of Federation’, issued a call for a new nation to be formed who managed to assemble a convention of all the colonies in 1891 for a constitution to be written. In 1893, the constitution was accepted at referendum. Sir Henry Parkes died in 1896. The first Australian Government was sworn in in Sydney’s Centennial Park on 1 January 1901. The Prime Minister of the new nation was Edmund Barton. Alfred Deakin became the second Prime Minister in 1903. Australia was now a nation but still within the British Empire. It did not acquire full powers over defence and foreign affairs until 1931. An attempt to make Australia a republic was defeated in 1999.

Migration Policy: The founding population of Australia was made up of the English, Scots and Irish. The colonies took common action in 1888 to limit Chinese migration, believed that Chinese were inferior, but they also did not want a society with deep divisions or where foreign outcasts worked for low wages and lowered the dignity of all labour. After World War II, to build up its population, Australia operated a large scale programme to bring migrants from the countries of Europe. In 1967, the dismantling of the White Australia Policy began and in 1973 migration was placed on a totally non-discriminatory basis.

Indigenous Policy: In the years around 1900, the colonial and state governments moved to a policy of firmly confining Aboriginal people on their reserves. In the 1940s and 1950s Government policy changed to the assimilation of Aboriginals and in the 1960s to the integration of Aboriginal people into white society. Their civil rights and the right to vote were restored to them. Aboriginal people become full members of Australian society when in 1967 people gave an overwhelming YES vote (90 per cent) to a proposal to change the Aboriginal sections of the Constitution. The High Court in its 1992 Mabo decision restored unsold land to Aboriginal people.

Australia’s Geography

Territory: Australia is the 6th largest country in area in the world. 2x the size of India and 32x the size of United Kingdom. Australia stretches 4000 km from east to west and 3700 km from north to south. Only 6% of its land is suitable for agriculture. 77 million hectares of land and 65 million hectares of marine areas are protected. 17 parts of Australia are on the World Heritage List.

States and Territories: Australia has 6 states and 2 mainland territories:

1. ACT: established in 1911; designed by American architect, Walter Burley Griffin; ‘Canberra’ comes from Aboriginal word meaning ‘meeting place’.
2. NSW: Sydney is the nation’s largest city; home of largest number of Rugby League clubs.
3. VIC: most densely populated state; birthplace of Australian Rules football.
4. QLD: 2nd largest state; famous for its tropical rainforests and the Great Barrier Reef.
5. WA: largest state, same size of Western Europe; home of mining, agricultural and wine industries.
6. SA: home of agricultural and wine industries.
7. TAS: smallest state; unspoilt wild landscapes; popular tourist destination; destination of the annual Sydney to Hobart yachting event.
8. NT: twice the size of France.

Australian government also administers:

1. Ashmore and Cartier Islands
2. Christmas Island
3. Cocos Islands
4. Coral Sea Islands
5. Heard Islands,
6. McDonald Islands
7. Norfolk Island
8. Australian Antarctic Territory

Australia's Culture

Population: 21 million in total, 483 thousand Indigenous. Median age 37 years. 22% of the population was born overseas. United Kingdom, New Zealand, China, Italy and Vietnam are the 5 top birthplaces. More than 15% of Australians speak language other than English at home.

Religion: Australia has no official or state religion. 2/3 of Australians describe themselves as Christians. Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism and Judaism are the 5 major religions.

National Anthem: Advance Australia Fair is Australia's national anthem. It was composed by Peter Dodds McCormick and first sung in Sydney in 1878. It was proclaimed the national anthem on 19 April 1984.

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.
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Australia's Flags:

1. Australian flag:
 - a) Chosen in a world-wide competition in 1900. First flown on 3 Sep 1901;
 - b) Colour: blue, red and white;
 - c) Comprises: the 1) Southern Cross, 2) the Union Jack and 3) the Commonwealth Star.
2. Aboriginal flag:
 - a) First displayed on 12 Jul 1971;
 - b) Became official National Flag since 14 Jul 1995;
 - c) Colour: black (top), red (bottom) and yellow (centre).
3. Torres Strait Islander flag:
 - a) First adopted in May 1992;
 - b) Became official National Flag since 14 Jul 1995;
 - c) Colour: green (top and bottom), blue (middle), black (dividing line) and white (centre).

National Day: Australia Day is celebrated every year on 26 January. This commemorates the landing of the first governor, Captain Arthur Phillip, at Sydney Cove in 1788.

Coat of Arm: Australia's Coat of Arms was granted in 1912 by King George V. The Coat of Arms comprises:

1. a shield representing the six states, with a border representing federation;
2. a kangaroo and an emu supporting the shield on either side;
3. a gold Commonwealth Star sitting on a wreath of gold and blue;
4. a background of Australian wattle;
5. the word 'Australia'.

National Symbols: In 1988 the golden wattle, *Acacia pycnantha*, was declared the national floral emblem of Australia. Wattle Day is celebrated on 1 September each year – the first day of spring. The opal is the national gemstone. In Aboriginal legend, the opal was a gift from the sky – the fire of the desert – a rainbow that had touched the earth and created the colours of the opal. Australia's national colours are green and gold.

National holidays:

Fixed Dates:

1. New Year's Day (1 January)
2. Australia Day (26 January)
3. Anzac Day (25 April)
4. Christmas Day (25 December)
5. Boxing Day (26 December)

Variable Dates:

1. Labour Day
2. Easter
3. Queen's Birthday
4. Other public holidays (Canberra Day (ACT), Volunteer's Day (SA), Foundation Day (WA), Melbourne Cup Day (VIC))

Sports Heros:

1. The Melbourne Cup started in 1861. Phar Lap, the most famous racehorse, won the Cup in 1930.
2. Sir Charles Kingsford Smith and Charles Ulm completed the first trans-Pacific crossing in 1928 from the United States to Australia in the Fokker trimotor Southern Cross.
3. Sir Donald Bradman was the greatest cricket batsman of all time.
4. Sir Hubert Opperman excelled as a longdistance cyclist.
5. Walter Lindrum dominated on the billiards table.
6. Sedgman and McGregor, Hoad and Rosewall carried Australia to victories in Davis Cup.
7. In the 1960s and 1970s, Margaret Court and Evonne Goolagong won all the great international competitions.
8. Rod Laver is the only tennis player to have twice won all four of 'Grand Slam' single titles in the same year.
9. Australian Rules football was developed in Melbourne in the late 1850s.
10. Melbourne staged the Olympics in 1956; Sydney staged the games in 2000.

Nobel Laureates: Australia has become renowned for scientific and medical research. 9 Australians have been made Nobel Laureates.

Trading: Australia introduced decimal currency on 14 February 1966. Australia's top 4 trading partners are Japan, China, US and South Korea.

Australia's Political System

Form of Government: Australia is a federal nation. It is also a parliamentary democracy and a constitutional monarchy. Constitution establishes 3 separate arms of national government – a legislative arm, an executive arm and a judicial arm.

Monarchy: Australia's constitutional Head of State is Queen Elizabeth II. The Queen appoints the Governor-General on the advice of the Prime Minister as her representative in Australia.

Governor-General: The Governor-General normally acts on the advice of the Prime Minister and other ministers of the Australian Government. The Governor-General is not aligned to any political party and is Australia's effective Head of State.

Prime Minister: The Prime Minister is the head of the Australian Government, which has as its principal decision-making body a group of ministers known collectively as the Cabinet. Ministers are appointed by the Governor-General on the advice of the Prime Minister. The leader of the party that wins the majority of seats in the House of Representatives becomes the Prime Minister.

Legislative: Parliament is the national law-making body. The Parliament has two 'Houses', the House of Representatives and the Senate. The House of Representatives has 150 Members who each represents about 80,000 voters living in one particular area. All states have the same number of senators. The Senate has 76 senators – 12 for each of the six states, and 2 each for the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory.

Executive: Executive Government encompasses not only government ministers, but also the Australian Public Service and other Australian Government agencies.

Judiciary: The Judiciary encompasses the federal court system, which includes the High Court of Australia, the Federal Court of Australia, the Family Court of Australia and the Federal Magistrates Court.

Law making process:

1. The Bill is debated in both the House of Representatives and the Senate.
2. A majority of Members of the House of Representatives and of Senators must agree.
3. It must also be signed by the Governor-General, known as the Royal Assent.

Change of Constitution: The Australian Constitution can be changed only by a law passed by the Commonwealth Parliament and approved by a majority of voters across Australia in a referendum. Since Federation in 1901 only 8 out of 44 proposals to amend the Constitution have been approved.

Supremacy of Constitution: The Constitution allows each state to make laws with respect to the affairs of that state. However, laws of the Commonwealth Parliament prevail over state laws if there is any inconsistency.

Levels of Government:

The Australian (federal) Government is responsible for national laws including:

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| 1. taxation | 7. defence forces |
| 2. the economy | 8. trade |
| 3. immigration and citizenship | 9. airports and air safety |
| 4. employment | 10. relations with other countries (foreign affairs) |
| 5. postal services and telecommunications | |
| 6. social security (pensions and family support) | |

The state and territory governments are primarily responsible in their state or territory for carrying out the laws passed by their Parliaments in relation to:

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| 1. hospitals | 4. roads |
| 2. schools | 5. forestry |
| 3. railways | 6. police |

Local governments (or councils) are responsible for local, town or city matters including:

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| 1. street signs and traffic controls | 6. noise and animal control |
| 2. drains | 7. libraries and halls |
| 3. child immunisation | 8. rubbish collection |
| 4. parks, playgrounds, swimming pools and sports grounds | 9. building permits |
| 5. food and meat inspection | 10. local roads, bridges and footpaths |
| | 11. local environmental issues |

Major Political Parties:

1. the Liberal Party of Australia
2. National Party of Australia,
3. the Australian Labor Party.

Minor Political Parties:

1. the Australian Greens
2. Australian Democrats
3. Family First Party

State Government: In each State, the Premier is the leader of the State Government. In each Territory, the Chief Minister is the leader of the government. Each State, except for Queensland, has two Houses of Parliament. The Lower House, known as the Legislative Assembly or the House of Assembly, and the Upper House, known as the Legislative Council. The Queensland Parliament and the Parliaments of each Territory have only the Legislative Assembly.

There are about 850 local council areas in Australia.