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# **BANKING AND FINANCE**

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*This chapter gives a basic overview of the Australian banking system and provides information on the 4 main banks in Australia and information on their websites.*

Australia has an advanced banking system, with various types of institutions from large Australia-wide banks to smaller State or Territory banks.

Each individual bank will offer their own type of accounts and facilities. Below is a list of some of the common facilities they may offer:

- **Transaction Account** - Normally used for day to day banking needs. You will normally have to pay no interest or very low interest if you have a credit balance in your account
- **Savings Account** - Normally a savings account where you can either withdraw money on demand or you may have to leave your money in an account for a fixed notice period
- **ATMs (Automatic Teller Machines)** - Are located at most shopping centres. It is usually free if you use a machine linked to your bank's network otherwise you will be charged a fee

- **EFTPOS** (Electronic Funds Transfer at Point Of Sale) - This is where you use your bankcard to pay for goods and services. You will be able to use your card in most banks and retail outlets. Once you pay for something the amount is taken from your account
- **Credit Cards** - Mastercard, Visa and American Express cards are the most commonly available. It is advisable to shop around if you are getting a credit card as different companies offer a variety of features, such as no annual fee, interest-free periods and other rewards etc
- **Internet Banking** is offered by most banks enabling you to check your balance, transfer money between accounts, pay bills (BPAY system) and so on
- **Telephone Banking** is offered by most banks. You can access your account by phone as well as make payments and transfer money.

## How do I open a bank account?

You should open a bank account within 6 weeks of arriving in Australia. If you open an account within the first 6 weeks you will only need to provide your passport (after six weeks you will need additional identification to open an account, and you may have difficulty if you do not have many documents).

People in Australia usually keep their money in a bank, building society or credit union. Australians use bankcards and credit cards for many purposes. You should inform your bank of your Tax File Number (TFN) to avoid paying higher rates of taxation on any interest you may earn on your account.

There are 4 main banks in Australia. Please refer to the websites below for more information on each of the 4 main banks in Australia.

National Australia Bank - [www.national.com.au](http://www.national.com.au)

Australia and New Zealand Banking Group - [www.anz.com](http://www.anz.com)

Westpac Banking Corporation - [www.westpac.com.au](http://www.westpac.com.au)

Commonwealth Bank of Australia - [www.commbank.com.au](http://www.commbank.com.au)

