



04



WORKING HOLIDAY VISA

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You should read this chapter if you are interested in going to Australia on a Working Holiday Visa. This chapter contains information on how to apply for the Working Holiday Visa and some useful information on finding a place to stay and finding a job. You will also find other useful information. There are 2 Working Holiday Visas available. They are:

1st Working Holiday Visa

With this visa you can travel to Australia at any time within a 12 month period from the date the visa is granted. You can stay in Australia for 12 months from the date you first enter the country, and you can leave and re-enter Australia any number of times within the 12 months from the date you first entered the country.

2nd Working Holiday Visa

If you are in Australia and have a 1st Working Holiday Visa and are granted a 2nd Working Holiday Visa you can remain in Australia for 24 months from the date you first entered Australia on your 1st working holiday Visa.

If you are in Australia but did not hold a 1st Working Holiday Visa you can remain in Australia for 12 months from the date your 2nd Working Holiday Visa is granted.

If you are outside Australia you can travel to Australia at any time in the 12 months from the date your 2nd Working Holiday Visa is granted and stay in Australia for 12 months from the date you first enter the country on your 2nd Working Holiday Visa.

What information do I need to know about the Working Holiday Visa Program between Ireland and Australia?

The purpose of the Working Holiday Visa program is to allow you to combine a holiday with work and supplement your funds with incidental work in Australia. To apply for this visa you must be 18 years of age and under 30 years of age when you apply.

If you are granted a Working Holiday Visa you are permitted to do any kind of work while in Australia, for a maximum of up to 6 months with each employer. You are allowed to study or train for a maximum of 4 months. If you wish to study for a longer period in Australia you may be able to apply for a Student Visa.

If you are granted a Working Holiday Visa and an Electronic Travel Authority (ETA), you will activate the Working Holiday Visa on arrival in Australia. If you want to travel on the ETA you must first cancel your Working Holiday Visa. If you spend any time outside of Australia while on your 1st or 2nd Working Holiday Visa it will not extend the length of your visa.

You must comply with all your visa conditions while in Australia on the Working Holiday Visa. If you do not comply with these conditions your visa may be cancelled and you will have to leave Australia. You will need to show that you have sufficient funds AUD \$5,000 (about €3,000 - 2007 figure) to support your stay in Australia.

If you intend to work in your occupation in Australia you should be aware that you may need to register or obtain a licence. This applies particularly to health professionals. You should contact the relevant assessing body to find out if you need to be registered or have a licence to work in your occupation in Australia. For more information on this please refer to the website www.immi.gov.au

To be eligible for a 2nd Working Holiday Visa you must complete at least 3 months of seasonal work in regional Australia. For more information on the Working Holiday Visa please refer to the website www.immi.gov.au

For information on finding a job and seasonal work in the horticultural industry and harvest jobs please see the Australian Jobsearch website <https://jobsearch.gov.au>

What is the application procedure?

You must pay a non-refundable visa application charge when you lodge your application. The fee for this visa is AUD \$185/€120 (2007 figure). You can apply online for this visa through the website www.immi.gov.au. Alternatively you can download the application **Form (No.1150)** and forward it to the Australian High Commission in the UK as there is no visa processing service in Ireland.

If you do not have access to the internet you should contact the Australian High Commission in the UK for an application form. Once you receive the application form and fully complete it, you should return it the Australian High Commission in the UK to be processed. The contact details for the Australian High Commission can be found in **Chapter 15 - Useful Contacts**.

Your passport must be valid for at least 6 months from the time you lodge your application. You must use the same passport to travel to and from Australia as your visa will be linked to the passport number you use to make your application.

My spouse/partner and I would both like to participate in the Working Holiday Visa program. Do we need to make separate applications?

Yes, you will need to make separate applications as you cannot include family members in your application for a Working Holiday Visa.

I have just been approved under the Working Holiday Visa program. Are there any restrictions on when I can travel?

For the 1st Working Holiday Visa you must enter Australia within 12 months from the date the visa was granted. You will be allowed to stay for 12 months from date of initial entry to Australia regardless of whether or not you spend the whole period in Australia.

What is seasonal work?

Seasonal work is any type of work that is undertaken as the employee of a primary producer. Some examples of seasonal work include:

- Plant and animal cultivation and harvesting and/or packing of fruit and vegetable crops
- General maintenance crop work, cultivating or propagating plants, fungi or their products or parts
- Maintaining animals for the purpose of selling them or their bodily produce, including natural increase
- Fishing and pearling
- Tree farming and felling
- Planting or tending trees in a plantation or forest that are intended to be felled
- Felling trees in a plantation or forest or transporting trees or parts of trees that were felled in a plantation or forest to the place where they are first to be milled or processed or from which they are to be transported to the place where they are to be milled or processed
- Mining or operating equipment to excavate, load and transport minerals.

Regional Australia

Regional Australia is restricted to areas within the postcodes listed on the department's web site

www.immi.gov.au/visitors/working-holiday/417/postcodes.htm

Some useful tips for Working Holiday Visa participants

Plan your trip well

Going to Australia on a working Holiday Visa can give you a sense of freedom and a chance to explore and experience life in Australia. Australia is such a huge country so it would be a good to have an idea of what kind of work/holiday you are looking for.

Are you looking for fun and partying, action and adventure or are you interested in exploring some of the more untouched regional environments? No matter what you are looking for from rainforest areas, desert regions or the city life, Australia has it all.

Bankcards/ATM's

You will need a certain amount of money to travel even if you are working to supplement your holiday. Get your ATM card sorted before you go. Contact your bank before you leave and check with them that you will be able to use your ATM card in Australia so that you will be able to withdraw cash as you need it.

Remember remote areas may not have many ATM facilities so you may find it difficult to withdraw money. If you are visiting a remote area plan in advance and withdraw enough money to keep you going.

Itinerary

Try and organise an itinerary before you leave Ireland. Make sure to leave a copy of your itinerary with your family or friends so they will know where to contact you in case of an emergency.

It is also a good idea to have an itinerary so you can sort out what activities you will be able to do, where you will be able to visit and what you can fit in based on your budget and time limits.

Healthcare

Medical treatment in Australia can be very expensive and it is advisable to have both travel and health insurance. It is strongly advised that you take out private health insurance to cover yourself in Australia.

The Australian Government has signed a Reciprocal Healthcare Agreement (RHCA) with the Irish government, which entitles you to limited subsidised health services for immediately necessary treatment while visiting Australia.

Finding a job - helpful hints!

Make sure to have an up-to-date résumé (same as a CV) prepared before you go to Australia. It is a good idea to have a number of printed copies and also to have a copy of your résumé on disk so that you can email it to prospective employers.

Register with online employment services such as www.seek.com.au and www.mycareer.com.au

Checkout the Australian JobSearch website <https://jobsearch.gov.au> for information on finding a job, information on seasonal work in the horticultural industry and harvest jobs.

Check the classified ads in local papers for job vacancies.

Accommodation

It is a good idea to try to book temporary accommodation before you travel to Australia. You may find youth hostels to be a cheaper accommodation option to begin with. Have a look at the websites below for information on hostels in Australia.

www.yha.com.au/travel/states

www.hostelworld.com

www.backpackers-planet.com

www.backpackertours.com.au

If you want to rent an apartment or house check the daily newspapers, especially on Wednesdays and Saturdays in the 'To let' and 'Accommodation vacant' sections. You will also find properties to rent from real estate agents. Check out the following website for properties to let in Australia. You will also be able to find out how much you can expect to pay for rental property depending on the area you want to live and the type of property you want to rent.

www.vicnet.net.au/travel/travelaus/accommaus

www.realestate.com.au

www.rentaustralia.com

www.rent-a-home.com.au

www.domain.com.au/real-estate/rent/wa/3.html

www.rentalproperty.com.au

Tax

If you have a Working Holiday Visa you should obtain a Tax File Number (TFN). You can apply for this in person or online at the Tax Office's website www.ato.gov.au/individuals

If you start work before getting your TFN, you have 28 days to provide it to your employer. When you stop work ask your employer for a payment summary showing your total income and the amount of tax withheld, as you will need this to complete your compulsory tax return, or if you want to claim back tax. For more information please refer to the Australian Taxation offices website at www.ato.gov.au

Travelling around

Do not risk hitchhiking, as it is not safe.

If you are travelling by car make sure the car is serviced before you head off. Make sure that you have a full tank of petrol especially if you are driving in a remote region in Australia, where you could find yourself stranded for quite a while if you run out of petrol. Have a look at the website www.tacsafety.com.au you will find some great tips on travelling safely by car.

If you are travelling by bike you will need to be well organised and you will need to find out information about local conditions.

Make sure if you are cycling you have a helmet and you are wearing sun protection.

Getting around by train or bus gives you a chance to relax and enjoy the scenery. Wear a seatbelt if there is one available. Remember, you are very vulnerable when you are asleep so keep your wallet and any other valuables close by so it is hard for anyone else to get to them.

You may find the following websites good if you are looking for information on travelling and tourism in Australia.

Australian Tourist Commission - www.australia.com

See Australia - www.seeaustralia.com.au

Department of Industry, Tourism & Resources - www.tourism.gov.au

Personal safety

For your own personal safety:

- When you are out in bars and restaurants be wary of food and drink spiking and never leave food or drink unattended
- Do not hitch-hike
- Avoid walking through unlit and back streets at night
- Avoid travelling alone in train carriages. If you are travelling on a sleeper train, keep the carriage door locked

- Keep your hotel door locked and meet visitors in the lobby, not in your room
- Never give out your hotel name or room number to strangers
- Think twice before accepting an invitation to go out with a stranger alone
- If you are going out alone let someone know where you are going and approximately what time you intend to return.

Money and valuables

Try not to carry too much cash and remember that expensive watches, jewellery and cameras may be tempting targets for thieves.

Where possible leave passports, travellers' cheques and other valuables in a safety deposit box or safe at your hotel. If you have to carry them with you, keep your passport and valuables in something that can be worn around the neck, under your clothes and out of sight.

If you find yourself in situation where you feel you could be injured if you do not hand over your money, let the money go. You only get one life and serious injuries and trauma can affect you for a lifetime.

Before you go, make two photocopies of documentation such as your passport, tickets, visa and travellers' cheques. Keep one copy with you in a separate place to the original and leave another copy with someone at home.

Local knowledge

Get as much information as possible if you are visiting unfamiliar territory. Things you might take for granted at home or not ever think about can be life or death issues. Always check reliable local information about:

- Fresh drinking water
- Road conditions
- Hazardous wild life such as snakes, insects and crocodiles
- Isolated places like underground caves and deserts
- Health risks such as Dengue fever and gastroenteritis. For more information please see the website www.travelclinic.com.au/travel-health.asp

Breaking the law

Drugs

It is illegal to import or possess drugs such as marijuana, hashish, cocaine, heroin, LSD, amphetamines and all their derivatives. If the police suspect that you have drugs they can search you without a warrant. If you are caught in possession of illegal drugs you will receive a heavy penalty.

Visitors who have a medical condition requiring treatment should carry a letter from their doctor outlining their condition and the medication required. This is important if the drug is uncommon or contains narcotics, which may be a restricted import.

Alcohol

The minimum legal 'drinking' age is 18. Young people going to bars and discos should carry identification. No one may buy alcohol from a bar or liquor store unless they are at least 18. Buying alcohol for a 'minor' is illegal.

If you do not carry ID with you, you may be refused alcohol as the owner of the premises will be heavily fined if they are caught breaking the rules, so do not be offended.

Smoking

Smoking is prohibited on all international and domestic airline flights, inside all Australian airports, on all buses, trains, ferries and other forms of public transport and tourist coaches. It is not allowed in any cinema, theatre, gallery, government or private office building, except in restaurants or cafés that have a smoking section.

Pubs, clubs and hotel bars generally allow smoking though it may be restricted to certain areas. Smoking is not allowed in department stores and shops. Many rental car companies take the ashtrays out of their vehicles to discourage smoking, which is also prohibited in taxis.

Most hotels offer non-smoking rooms or floors of rooms. Otherwise you may smoke in your room, but not in lifts. You may smoke outdoors, but littering is an offence so dispose of your cigarette butt appropriately.

Useful contacts

You should bring contact details for any family or friends living in Australia in case you need to contact them in an emergency.

You should also have the contact details for your nearest Irish Immigration Centre and the Irish Embassies and Consulates in Australia. For more information on where to find the contact details for the Irish organisations and Embassies/Consulates please refer to **Chapters 16 - Irish Contacts**.

Before you go to Australia make sure to check that the contact details you have are up-to-date and correct.

Stay in touch

Always let someone know when and where you are going somewhere, for example, if you are going bushwalking or sailing.

Regular phone calls, postcards or emails will reassure family and friends that everything is okay. Give them your general itinerary before you go.