

# Fact Sheet



## Self Drive in Australia

### Renting a Vehicle in Australia

Australia has a vast network of well-maintained roads and highways with some of the most beautiful road touring in the world and vehicle hire is simple.

#### Drivers Licence

To rent a car in Australia you must have a valid driver's license issued in your country of residence and carry it with you when driving in Australia. Generally the renter must have held a valid driver's licence for at least 12 months and must present it at the time of rental. If the licence is not written in English, an International Driving Permit or an English translation must also be carried with the licence.

#### Age

Generally the minimum age to rent a vehicle in Australia is 25 years of age. In all States, drivers under 25 years of age are only permitted to rent car groups X-D. In some instances a surcharge may apply for renters under age 25.

#### Additional Drivers

Other individuals besides the main driver of the rental vehicle may be listed as additional drivers provided they are at least 25 years of age; present a valid driver's licence, complete an additional driver form and be present at the time of rental. Only people who are identified under the Hirer and Driver Information at the time of collecting the rental car are permitted to drive it.

#### Insurance

As the renter of the vehicle, it is your responsibility for ensuring that the vehicle is adequately insured for all damage. You are financially responsible for any damage – not covered by the rental insurance policy – caused to the vehicle. Tourism Australia accepts no liability in this area.

#### Filling your vehicle with fuel

Australian service stations are generally self-service and you will be required to fill your vehicle yourself with fuel. It is also your responsibility to pay for all fuel that you purchase. Fuel is available in several grades; the most common is Lead Replacement; Unleaded and Diesel. Some vehicles run off LPG Gas. To prevent extensive damage to your vehicle, and to ensure it runs at optimal performance, it is important that you fill your vehicle with the right fuel type.

#### Before you leave the car rental company check:

- The vehicle has been serviced recently.
- The vehicle is filled with fuel.
- The type of fuel the vehicle should be filled with eg unleaded.
- The tread on vehicle tyres.

- There is a spare tyre.
- There are no scratches or dents on the vehicle, and if there are, mark these clearly on the vehicle rental form.
- That you have necessary tools including a tyre pump.
- That you have a current road map with clear directions.

## General Road Rules

Before undertaking a self-drive trip in Australia it is important to familiarise yourself with Australian road rules.

### Keep Left

In Australia, all vehicles travel on the left side of the road. You must drive on the left side of all roads at all times.

### Seatbelts and helmets

Australian law requires all drivers and their passengers to wear a seatbelt at all times throughout the duration of their journey. Drivers and passengers who do not wear a seatbelt, can face heavy fines.

If riding on a motorcycle, moped, motor scooter or bicycle, (also non-motorised scooter in Victoria and South Australia) the rider and any pillion passenger, must also wear a crash helmet.

### Alcohol

The legal blood alcohol level for anyone driving a vehicle or a motorcycle of any type is 0.05% Blood Alcohol Content (BAC), however, the safest level is zero. Australia has strict laws and penalties for drink driving offences and police actively enforce these laws through random breath testing programs. It is compulsory to provide a breath test if requested by police. Heavy penalties, including fines, loss of licence and even jail terms, may be imposed on any driver caught driving with a blood alcohol level higher than 0.05 per cent.

### Speed Limits

The speed limit is the maximum driving speed allowed. Restricted speed limits apply in all areas across Australia and road signs will indicate changes to speed limits. Speed zones range from 40k/h in school zones and some suburban shopping areas through to 130k/h on some highways and freeways.

Drivers should always drive below the speed limit, at a speed that suits the road and weather conditions and their driving experience. Penalties apply where drivers exceed speed limits and all states and territories operate mobile speed cameras.

### Common Road Signs



**Stop sign:** This sign indicates to stop driving and give way to all other vehicles. Check for on coming traffic before continuing.



**Give way sign:** This sign indicates that the driver must give way to any vehicle or pedestrian at or near the give way sign or give way line.



**Wet weather sign:** This sign indicates that the road surface can be slippery in wet weather and to adjust speed accordingly.



**Roundabout sign:** This sign indicates that the driver must give way to all traffic on the roundabout and only go in a clockwise direction. Drivers should make sure to use the indicator (turn signal lamps) to exit the roundabout.



**Road sign:** This sign indicates that the road is winding and to adjust speed to suit the conditions.



**Animal signs:** This sign indicates that the driver should be aware of native animals in the area.



**Speed Limit signs:** These signs indicate restricted speed limits apply in this area. Road signs will indicate changes to speed limits.

## Driving Safety Tips

### Emergency Situations

In the case of an accident or emergency situation where police, fire or medical/ambulance services are required dial **000 for help**.

If you are involved in an accident:

1. Stop immediately.
2. Use headlights, indicator lights or hazard lights to warn on coming traffic.
3. If needed, assist the injured.
4. If needed, dial 000 (some mobile phones may require dialing 112 instead) to make contact with police and or ambulance services.
5. Exchange your name and contact details with the driver/s of the other vehicles. Ensure you exchange your addresses, vehicle registration numbers, the names of vehicle owner (if different from the driver) and insurer details.
6. Clear the road of broken glass and debris.
7. If anyone is injured in the accident, you must not leave the scene of the accident until you have been cleared to do so by police.

### Driving Tired

Driving tired is one of the most common causes of serious accidents in Australia. It is recommended that every two hours drivers take a break by getting out of the car and walking around for 15 minutes. In Australia there are designated rest areas every 80–120 kilometres on main roads allowing for drivers to pull over and rest. Facilities in rest areas often include seating, tables and shelter while some even contain barbecues.

## Driving in Remote Australia

If you are travelling to remote locations you are strongly advised to always tell local authorities such as local police of the intended route and advise people at the intended destination and the estimated time of arrival.

- **Road Conditions:** Road conditions can vary from a sealed surface to gravel and dirt. Be careful of holes, soft road edges, narrow roads with unstable edges, narrow bridges, changing surfaces and dusty roads. The environment can change rapidly; always check on local road conditions before leaving major roads.
- **If your vehicle breaks down:** If you are in a remote location and become lost or broken down do not leave your vehicle under any circumstances. Stay with your vehicle because it will provide you with shade and protection from the heat. Wait for help to come to you. A missing vehicle is easier to locate than a missing person. If you have properly informed people of your intended time of arrival, they should alert police that you are missing. Consider hiring appropriate emergency communication equipment, such as a satellite phone and an Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) device.
- **Flooded roads:** Roads may flood in certain parts of Australia depending on the season. If you come across a flooded road the safest thing to do is **not to enter**. Take an alternative route or wait until the water level has dropped – most flash floods recede within 24 hours.
- **Animals:** Watch out for animals on the road such as kangaroos and emus. Livestock also graze on the side of unfenced roads. The most active time for many animals is sunrise and sunset. If an animal crosses in front of you, reduce speed safely and do not swerve violently or you may roll the vehicle.

## Useful Websites

Australian Capitol Territory	02 6207 2500	<a href="http://www.urbanservices.act.gov.au">www.urbanservices.act.gov.au</a>
New South Wales	1300 131 122	<a href="http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au">www.rta.nsw.gov.au</a>
Northern Territory	1800 246 199	<a href="http://www.dpi.nt.gov.au">www.dpi.nt.gov.au</a>
Queensland	07 3219 0900	<a href="http://www.transport.qld.gov.au">www.transport.qld.gov.au</a>
South Australia	1300 361 033	<a href="http://www.transport.sa.gov.au">www.transport.sa.gov.au</a>
Tasmania	1300 135 513	<a href="http://www.transport.tas.gov.au">www.transport.tas.gov.au</a>
Victoria	03 9882 8111	<a href="http://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au">www.vicroads.vic.gov.au</a>
Western Australia	1800 013 314	<a href="http://www.officeofroadsafety.wa.gov.au">www.officeofroadsafety.wa.gov.au</a>

### Police Websites:

Australian Federal Police: [www.afp.gov.au](http://www.afp.gov.au)

NSW: [www.police.nsw.gov.au](http://www.police.nsw.gov.au)

NT: [www.police.nt.gov.au](http://www.police.nt.gov.au)

QLD: [www.police.qld.gov.au](http://www.police.qld.gov.au)

SA: [www.sapolice.sa.gov.au](http://www.sapolice.sa.gov.au)

TAS: [www.police.tas.gov.au](http://www.police.tas.gov.au)

VIC: [www.police.vic.gov.au](http://www.police.vic.gov.au)

WA: [www.police.wa.gov.au](http://www.police.wa.gov.au)

*Disclaimer: This fact sheet on self driving in Australia is intended as a guide only. Tourism Australia accepts no liability arising from death or injury or loss of or damage to property from any journalist participating in a self drive famil as outlined in the Tourism Australia Liability Release form. Please visit the relevant State Road and Transport Authority web sites before arriving in Australia to familiarise yourself with Australian road rules and safety regulations.*