

Welcome to **SYDNEY**



Aussie
Orientation
Services

people • passion • personal touch

www.aussieos.com.au

This booklet is provided to clients of Aussie Orientation Services. If you have acquired this booklet and require assistance in moving or relocating, please contact us on the below details for more information.



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About Sydney

Welcome to Sydney- the capital of NSW and the largest city in Australia. Sydney will welcome you with its vibrancy, diversity and so many fabulous things to do and see. Of course a huge part of this revolves around Sydney's divine harbour and waterways. Sydney's laid-back outdoor lifestyle and amazing beauty make it one of the world's easiest and most pleasant cities to live and visit. It has a constant buzzing scene of outdoor festivals, urban villages and modern city pleasures. It is a haven for food and drink buffs and home to world-class sporting venues and beautiful parklands. The people who live here are a friendly energetic crowd who love to live life and have a tell-it-like-it-is attitude. This guide will help you settle into life as a temporary or permanent resident of Sydney. We have provided some general information and contacts to allow you to settle in quickly and comfortably. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact us.

IMPORTANT FACTS

Population
4,627,345 (2012)

Area
12,140 km²

Climate
The weather in Sydney is rated among the best in the world.

Sydney temperature averages DEGREES CELCIUS (Bureau of Meteorology)

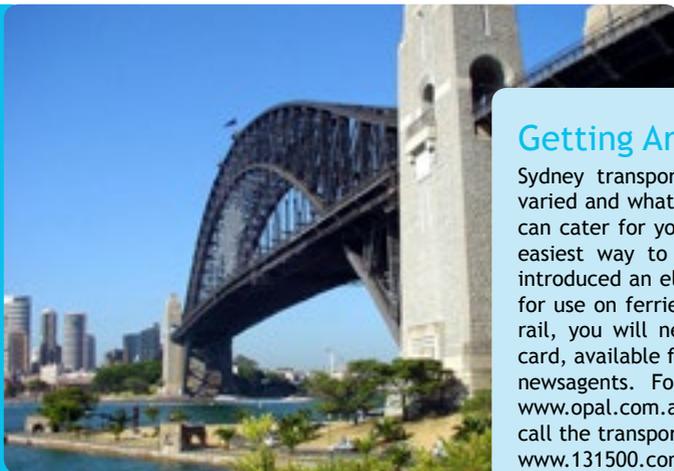
| Climate date for Sydney | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|----------|
| | JAN | FEB | MAR | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEPT | OCT | NOV | DEC | YEAR |
| Re. High | 45.3 | 42.1 | 39.8 | 33.9 | 30.0 | 26.9 | 25.9 | 31.3 | 34.6 | 38.2 | 41.8 | 42.2 | 45.3 |
| °C (°F) | (113.5) | (107.8) | (103.6) | (93.0) | (86.0) | (80.4) | (78.6) | (88.3) | (94.3) | (100.8) | (107.2) | (108.0) | (113.5) |
| Av High | 25.9 | 25.8 | 24.7 | 22.4 | 19.4 | 16.9 | 16.3 | 17.8 | 20.0 | 22.1 | 23.6 | 25.2 | 21.7 |
| °C (°F) | (78.6) | (78.4) | (76.5) | (72.3) | (66.9) | (62.4) | (61.3) | (64.0) | (58.0) | (71.8) | (74.5) | (77.4) | (71.1) |
| Av Low | 18.7 | 18.8 | 17.5 | 14.7 | 11.5 | 9.3 | 8.0 | 8.9 | 11.1 | 13.5 | 15.6 | 17.5 | 13.8 |
| °C (°F) | (55.7) | (65.8) | (63.5) | (58.5) | (52.7) | (48.7) | (46.4) | (48.0) | (52.0) | (56.3) | (60.1) | (63.5) | (56.8) |
| Av Low | 10.6 | 9.6 | 9.3 | 7.0 | 4.4 | 2.1 | 2.2 | 2.7 | 4.9 | 5.7 | 7.7 | 9.1 | 2.1 |
| °C (°F) | (51.1) | (49.3) | (48.7) | (44.6) | (39.9) | (35.8) | (36.0) | (36.9) | (40.8) | (42.3) | (45.9) | (48.4) | (35.8) |
| Rainfall mm (inches) | 101.5 | 118.1 | 129.3 | 126.3 | 121.2 | 130.5 | 98.6 | 80.6 | 68.9 | 77.4 | 83.8 | 77.9 | 1,213.2 |
| | (3.996) | (4.65) | (5.091) | (4.972) | (4.772) | (5.138) | (3.882) | (3.173) | (2.173) | (3.047) | (3.299) | (3.067) | (47.764) |
| Avg. rainy days | 12.2 | 12.4 | 13.5 | 12.8 | 13.2 | 12.5 | 11.2 | 10.4 | 10.6 | 11.7 | 11.7 | 11.5 | 143.7 |
| Mean daily sunshine hours | 7.1 | 6.7 | 6.4 | 6.4 | 5.9 | 5.5 | 6.4 | 7.1 | 7.2 | 7.2 | 7.8 | 7.6 | 6.8 |

Time Zones

Time in Australia is calculated using standard time, with three zones: Australian Western Standard Time (AWST), Australian Central Standard Time (ACST) and Australian Eastern Standard Time (AEST). The three zones use three standard UTC offsets: western (UTC+08:00), central (UTC+09:30) and eastern (UTC+10:00). Time is regulated by state governments and within the three standard time zones daylight saving time (DST) differs between the jurisdictions. Australia's external territories observe different time zones.

| Time Zones | | |
|------------------------|-----------|--------------|
| Standard | DST | Zone |
| UTC+08:00 (year round) | | Western Time |
| UTC+09:30 (year round) | | Central Time |
| UTC+09:30 | UTC+10:30 | Central Time |
| UTC+10:00 (year round) | | Eastern Time |
| UTC+10:00 | UTC+11:00 | Eastern Time |

DST is used in South Australia, New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania, and the ACT. It is not used in Western Australia, Queensland, or in the Northern Territory.



Getting to Sydney

Sydney, being the largest city in Australia, is easily accessible by air, car, coach, cruise and rail. Sydney's airport caters to over 40 international airlines and provides non-stop or one-stop services to and from Australia. It is based in Mascot which is approximately 10kms South East of the CBD, so extremely central. Taxis are readily available at the airport. There is also a 25 minute AirTrain CityLink passenger rail service available to link the International Terminal and Domestic Terminal to the Sydney CBD. There is ample short and long-term parking available at both airport terminals. Shuttle buses and taxis are plentiful and are located outside the main entrance of both airport terminals and car hire is also available from within the terminals. Please note - Sydney's airport, due to its central locality, has a curfew of 11pm and reopens each morning at 6am. No flights arrive or depart between these times.

If arriving into Sydney via Rail or Coach, the main depot is Central Station which is smack-bang in the centre of town.

If arriving by cruise ship these dock at the Passenger Terminal at Circular Quay, in the city or at Wharf 8, Darling Harbour Passenger Terminal (about 1.5 kms from the city).

If you want to know more about travel security, in particular at Australian airports, you can check out the website: www.travelsecure.com.au

Getting Around Sydney

Sydney transport options are many and varied and whatever your budget, Sydney can cater for you. Public transport is the easiest way to get around. Sydney has introduced an electronic ticketing system for use on ferries, trains, buses and light rail, you will need to purchase an Opal card, available from transport outlets and newsagents. For more information see www.opal.com.au For more details, you can call the transport line on 131 500 or go to www.131500.com.au

Taxis - there are a number of taxi companies operating in Sydney. Two key ones are:

Silver Cabs 133 100 or book online via www.silverservice.com.au/index.htm

Taxis Combined 133 300 or book online via <https://www.taxiscombined.com.au/Booking/Pickupdetails.aspx>

Taxi fares are approximately \$2/km or \$0.75/minute but incur flag fall and booking fees, depending on the time of trip. Passengers are also responsible for all tolls and road charges. An additional fee is charged for all taxis leaving the International and Domestic airports. There are many taxi ranks established in hub areas, however you can also flag one down if you need on most main streets. Look out for the light on the top of the cab - that means it is available for hire.

Of course there are also water taxis available which are a wonderful way to travel for work or pleasure. There are also a few companies servicing our waterways. One contact is Sydney Water Taxis, ph: 9555 8888 or online at www.sydneywatertaxis.com.au be aware - water taxis are definitely more expensive than other forms of transport.

For more info on taxis, you can go to the website: www.nswtaxi.org.au

Buses

Sydney Buses have a great network in and outside of the city. To check routes and fare details go to www.sydneybuses.info. Please note - many buses from the CBD now only accept pre-paid tickets, so you can't buy them on the bus.

Trains

Sydney has an extensive rail network that operates in and around the city centre and beyond the greater metropolitan area. There are a number of rail hubs where numerous train lines go from, including the main one, Central Station, North Sydney, Bondi Junction and Strathfield. Please note - most train lines do not operate between midnight and 4.30am however NightRide buses are provided between these hours. More details can be found at www.cityrail.info

Ferries

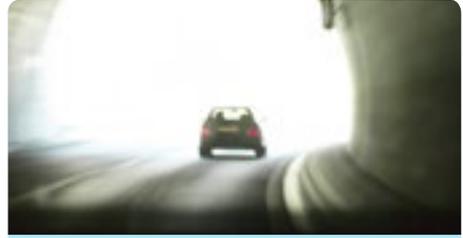
What a way to travel around Sydney! Sydney Ferries transport commuters around one of the worlds most divine harbours. There are regular services to Manly, Parramatta, Balmain, Watsons Bay, Homebush, Toronga Zoo and other locations. The main ferry hub is at Circular Quay in the city. More details on ferry routes and fares can be found at www.sydneyferries.info

Driving in NSW

Drivers' Licences

In order to drive on NSW roads, you should first check the Department of Transport and Main Roads current requirements. www.rta.nsw.gov.au/licensing

When you take up permanent residency in NSW, you are no longer considered to be a visitor. You must apply for a NSW driver's license for more information please refer to the above website.



When driving on a road in NSW under your valid foreign driver licence you must:

- only drive the class of motor vehicle authorised on that licence
- comply with the conditions (if any) of your licence
- show your licence to a police officer when asked to do so

If your licence is in a language other than English you should carry a recognised English translation of the licence.

Hire Cars

If you don't require a vehicle for regular use, a hire vehicle is an easy alternative. There are many companies with vehicles ranging from small and large cars to utes, trucks and vans. Prices vary depending on the type of vehicle, length of hire and the distance and amount of kms you will drive. Some companies include:

Avis: www.avis.com.au

Hertz: www.hertz.com.au

Budget: www.budget.com.au

Goget: www.goget.com.au

Thrifty: www.thrifty.com.au

Buying a car

New and used cars are advertised in the classified sections of most newspapers as well as being available from car dealers. Car dealers are scattered across Sydney so there is no longer one particular area to go to buy a car. It is worth checking carsales.com.au. A vehicle's purchase price does not usually include the costs of registration, stamp duty, change of ownership and compulsory third party insurance.

You can arrange vehicle insurance, motoring advice, roadside assistance, finance and travel information via the NRMA website -

www.nrma.com.au or AAMI - www.aami.com.au. However there are many vehicle insurance companies so it is sometimes worth shopping around for the best insurance price.

Car Safety for Children

Children and adults must be properly restrained to ensure their safety while travelling in motor vehicles.

A revision of the Australian and New Zealand standard for the design and performance of child restraints was released on 24 February 2010 that classifies restraints based on approximate age and seated height, rather than the previous weight and age range. From 11 March 2010, it's the law for all children up to seven years of age to be correctly restrained according to their size and age. It is important that the correct child restraint is chosen and installed.

If the car has one row of seats only (for example, a ute)

A child of any age can sit in the front seat if the vehicle has only 1 row of seats and they are properly restrained.

If the vehicle has a passenger airbag fitted, a rearward facing child restraint should not be used if the restraint is in front of the airbag.

Where there are 2 or more rows of seats

A child under 4 years of age cannot sit in the front row of a vehicle that has more than 1 row of seats, even if the child is 3 years of age and large enough to be seated in a booster seat. A child aged between 4 and 7 years of age cannot sit in the front row of a vehicle that has more than 1 row of seats unless all the other seats are occupied by children under 7 years of age. Please note: If the back seat has 2 child restraints fitted and there is no room for a third child restraint, a no tethered booster seat or booster cushion can be used, providing the child using the booster seat is between 4 and 7 years of age.

There are heavy penalties if you do not abide by the above rules.

A great guide is available at the following link, which answers many of the frequently asked questions.

www.rta.nsw.gov.au/roadsafety/children/childrestraints/index.html

Sightseeing

Sydney has so much to offer. Outlined below are the absolute must-do's. However there are so many more experiences Sydney can offer. To explore these, checkout such websites as:

www.whatsoninsydney.com.au

www.sydney.com.au/sights.htm

The 'City and Bondi Explorer' is great way to see the city, Sydney's most well-known Tourist Bus Service.

Don't miss a thing aboard the open-top double-decker bus - both tours are included in your ticket price making this great sightseeing value. The 24 or 48 hour Hop On - Hop Off Ticket allows you to plan your own itinerary and visit the landmarks and attractions at your own pace. Buses run frequently so rejoining the tour is easy! Both tours feature an entertaining and informative commentary that enhances your journey around our stunning harbour city. The commentary is available in English or, on select buses, a choice of 7 languages including Spanish, German, French, Mandarin, Korean, Japanese and a special Kids' channel. Be sure to bring your camera to capture all the excitement! Tours Run All Day, Every Day .

Go to www.citysightseeing.com.au for more detail.

City Centre: The CBD offers a range of retail and commercial experiences. The Pitt Street Mall has over 500 shopping outlets ranging from designer labels to boutique and mainstream outlets. You can enjoy the glamour of the Star City Casino, the historic sandstone buildings such as Town Hall, St Andrews Cathedral and St Mary's Church, all within walking distance of each other. The tallest free-standing structure in the city centre is Centre Point Tower, definitely worth a visit. You can even take a walk there on the Skywalk - Sydney's highest open-air experience, a fabulous way to overcome a fear of heights! The best railway stations to access the city are Wynyard, Town Hall or Central Stations.



The Harbour Bridge -

The Sydney Harbour Bridge is one of Sydney's most famous landmarks. Completed in 1932, the construction of the bridge was an economic feat as well as an engineering triumph. Locally known as the "Coat Hanger", it took eight years to build, including the railway line. The bridge was manufactured in sections on a site that is now occupied by Luna Park fun fair. Recommended for all visitors to Sydney is the Pylon Lookout. Inside the Lookout is a fascinating display on how this bridge was built. Entry to the Pylon is from the pedestrian walkway on the Harbour Bridge. You can get to the walkway via the stairs in Cumberland Street, The Rocks, or from near Milsons Point Station on the north side. The Pylon Lookout is open every day except Christmas Day. An exciting experience while in Sydney is to take on a Bridge Climb. It's an experience you won't forget in a long time and it gives a rare glimpse of the Sydney cityscape. For more info on the Bridge Climb, please visit www.bridgeclimb.com.

The Royal Botanic Gardens -

The Royal Botanic Garden, Sydney, is a place of natural beauty, where people come for peace, relaxation, education, and to learn more about plants and horticulture.

Established in 1816, it is the oldest botanic garden and scientific institution in Australia. It is home to an outstanding collection of plants from around the world with a focus on Australia and the South Pacific. The Botanic Garden is set on Sydney Harbour, next to the Opera House. It sits at the heart of the city's cultural domain of art galleries, museums and performing arts. The Botanic Garden is surrounded by unfenced botanical parkland known as the Domain, which is accessible to the public 24 hours a day. Its green spaces, playing fields and harbour views play a central role in Sydney's biggest festivals, celebrations and events and in the recreational, sporting life and physical fitness of the city workers and residents. More info at www.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au

Circular Quay and The Rocks -

The Rocks is one of the most-visited parts of Sydney. It is not hard to see why. Nestled at the foot of the Sydney Harbour Bridge and on the western shores of Sydney Cove, The Rocks is the foundation place of Sydney and Australia, and of enormous historical significance. It is often described as “Sydney’s outdoors museum”. The Rocks is the oldest area of Sydney and has recently undergone an amazing metamorphosis, the old district being transformed into a vibrant pocket of cafes and restaurants and interesting tourist shops and stalls. This has been achieved without destroying the area’s Old World charm and historic buildings. Sydney’s town planners have put in place a sensitive conservation program that has preserved the heritage and character of The Rocks and brought about an interesting fusion of modern amenities in an old and valued setting. Most activities centre around walking, looking and of course eating and drinking. The Rocks is Sydney’s oldest preserved colonial district so the main emphasis is on the historical importance of the area. The Sydney Visitor Centre, Corner, Argyle and Playfair Streets, The Rocks (Open daily 9.30am to 5.30pm [Closed Good Friday and Christmas Day]), is a logical and excellent starting point. This centre has a wealth of information on points of interest around The Rocks and provides free information and literature, as well as having souvenirs and mementos that can be purchased. There are many tours held including, if you’re up for an adrenalin rush, a night ghost tour.

Sydney Opera House

The Sydney Opera House, situated on Sydney Harbour at Bennelong Point, is considered by many to be one of the wonders of the modern world. Designed by Jørn Utzon and constructed under some controversy, it was opened in October 1973. The Opera House is one of Sydney’s most popular icons with tourists and travellers’ from all over the world visiting, photographing and standing in awe of the cultural centre of Sydney. Definitely check out a performance while you are in the city and/or you can do a behind-the-scenes tour which is amazing. More details can be found at www.sydneyoperahouse.com

Darling Harbour and Cockle Bay

Darling Harbour is intended to be one of Sydney’s “buzz” places, although some visitors find it lacking in character (and greenery). A former dockside area, the small harbour has been transformed into a major tourist site, leading convention and exhibition centre.

A monorail service runs from the Central Business District to Darling Harbour and skirts the harbour, making stops at points around the harbour. The key attractions are the 3D IMAX theatre, The Chinese Garden of Friendship, the Sydney Aquarium and the National Maritime Museum.

Fort Denison

Fort Denison, which can be seen from Mrs Macquarie’s Chair was used in the early days of settlement as a place of punishment and confinement for the convict population. During the mid 19th century a fort was built on the island to protect Sydney Harbour. Fort Denison is now a tourist destination and is open seven days a week for lunch at the cafe, for picnics or for a leisurely walk around the island taking in the sights.

If you want to do it a little more formally then join a tour group. There are two tours daily to Fort Denison and tours can be booked by visiting the Sydney Harbour National Park Information Centre, located in Cadmans Cottage at The Rocks or by ringing +61 2 9253 0888.

If you do it make sure to take in the Martello Tower museum for their collection of colonial artifacts. Selected Hop-On Hop-Off Cruises stop at Fort Denison. Entrance Fees apply. Some other islands on Port Jackson (Sydney Harbour) worth exploring include:

- Goat Island
- Clark Island
- Shark Island
- Cockatoo Island

Sydney Beaches

With so many beaches and bays close to Sydney's city centre, it's no wonder that Sydneysiders choose to enjoy a summer holiday at home. You'll find them starting the day with a run along a beach, taking a leisurely walk, going surfing or enjoying a coffee at a beachside cafe.

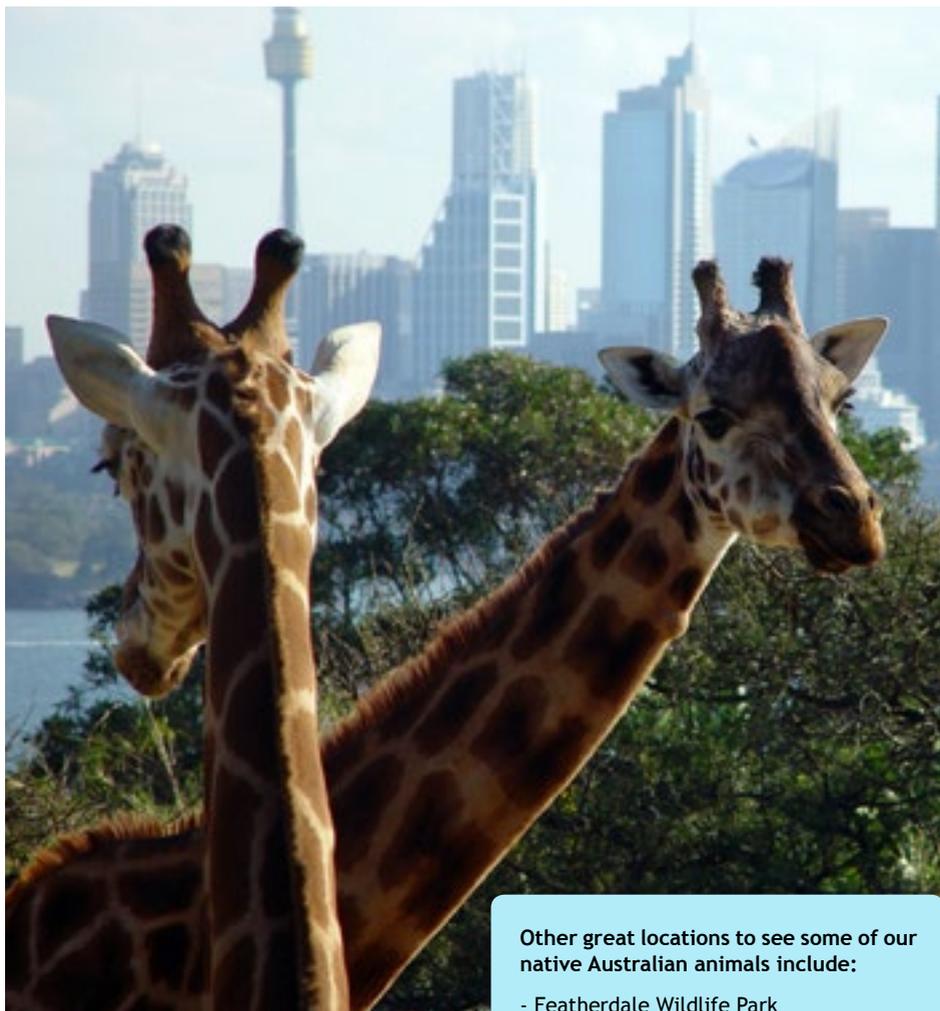
Enjoy some of the world's most famous beaches, such as Bondi and Manly with their unique combination of surfing, shopping and beachside dining. Or find your own patch of sandy paradise, on the East from Tamarama to Coogee or on the North Dee Why to Palm Beach. Further south is the infamous and beautiful Cronulla Beach. And so many in between - there are just too many to mention. There are many secret beaches as well dotted around Sydney Harbour and the eastern coastline such as Jibbon Beach in the Royal National Park to enjoy the shade and the sounds of the sea.

If you prefer to add some action to your time by the beach, why not learn to surf or scuba dive - or take advantage of all the activities available on one of the most beautiful harbours in the world. Go sailing, take a Sydney Harbour cruise, take up kayaking or paddle boarding, or enjoy the thrill of a high-speed jet boat.

Watson's Bay

Watsons Bay is located on the southern head of the entrance to Sydney Harbour. To the east is the Tasman Sea and to the west is the Harbour with a glorious view of the city of Sydney in the distance. Watsons Bay is where Governor Phillip first landed in Australia. It's also recognised as Australia's oldest fishing village, having been established in 1788. The Bay is famous for being the home of the first Doyles Restaurant. The site on which the restaurant now stands is where Doyle originally sold his daily fish catch in 1845. It's well worth the trip to Watsons Bay to eat at the restaurant or, alternatively, for a more informal meal, buy a take-away lunch from Doyles' fish and chip outlet, located on the wharf, and eat it in the park and feed the seagulls. There are two walking paths from the wharf, both require around one hour for the round trip. From the wharf you can walk north past Lady Bay (see their nude beach) and on to South Head and see the Hornsby Lighthouse. Alternatively, you can walk south past The Gap and take in Signal Station and Macquarie Lighthouse. See the site of the wreck of the Dunbar.





Taronga Zoo

Taronga Zoo is the nation's leading zoological garden, featuring Australia's finest collection of native animals and a diverse collection of exotic species. What makes it so special is its location - the animals have one of the best views of Sydney Harbour! It is located at Bradleys' Head, Mosman on the North of the Harbour Bridge. To experience the zoo at its best, during summer you can stay overnight there plus they hold fabulous outdoor concerts.

For more info, go to www.taronga.org.au

Other great locations to see some of our native Australian animals include:

- Featherdale Wildlife Park
- Sydney's Wildlife Zoo

Special deals can be found in many places, especially if you are visiting a number of locations across Sydney.

The following websites are worth a visit -

www.seesydneypass.iventurecard.com/sydney-tourist-attractions/

www.experienceoz.com.au/sydney/attractions

Entertainment, Arts and Culture

Blockbuster exhibitions, museums showcasing exquisite Aboriginal arts, seafaring history, interactive science displays and contemporary art galleries will capture your interest whatever it is. Best of all, you can experience Sydney's flourishing arts and culture scene at any time of the year. The performing arts attract audiences to shows in venues as iconic as the Sydney Opera House and The State Theatre and as innovative as The Sydney Theatre Company's home base at Walsh Bay.

Sydney in summer wouldn't be complete without the annual Sydney Festival with international artists, free outdoor concerts and eclectic theatre, burlesque circus, indigenous performances and family programs all on offer.

Museums and Galleries-

There are a plethora of art galleries and museums scattered around Sydney. Our main art gallery is The NSW Art Gallery based in the CBD near the Botanical Gardens. Other art locations can be found at www.art-almanac.com.au/whats-on/sydney. And our biggest museum is the Australian Museum also based in the CBD, opposite Hyde Park.

Just to name a few well-known areas populated with great pubs:

- The Rocks
- Surry Hills and Darlinghurst
- Balmain

For a great listing of bars and clubs see www.sydneypubguide.net and www.timeout.com/sydney/bars.

Cinemas

Sydneysiders still love the movies and there is usually cinemas within every 5-6 suburbs and in particular are in most large shopping malls around Sydney. The best websites to seek movie info include -

my247.com.au
movies.com.au

Outdoor cinemas are very popular in the summer months. The best ones are at Mrs Macquarie's Chair, Centennial Park and North Sydney.

Nightlife and Pub scene

Sydney, like most Australian cities, has a fabulous pub culture. And every pub offers so much history and meaning either to Australia, Sydney or the locals. You will no doubt find a pub, or 2 if you're lucky, in most suburbs. Pubs now are infamous for not just being drinking holes but also wonderful eateries and social hubs.

Annual Festivities

Sydney offers numerous festivals and events throughout the year. The main ones are of course at New Year's Eve where Sydney's fireworks are known to be one of the best, if not the best, display of pyrotechnics in the world. They are mainly held off the bridge and in the main harbour area, however, now have firework displays running in sync right up the Sydney waterway system. So vantage spots are a plenty. Warning - wherever you decide to go, look up whether or not there is a fee plus get there early because spots go fast!

The Sydney Festival runs for most of January where you can be indulged in a huge array of cultural and artistic events.

Other events that are always a wonderful spectacle to be a part of include Chinese New Year including Dragon Boat Racing, The Royal Easter Show, The Sydney Wine Festival, the Taste of Sydney, the City to Surf run, Iron Man/Woman events and many many more.

Sport and Outdoor

Like all Australians, we love the outdoors and our sport. There are again many places to see your favourite sporting activity or spend active time outdoors. Just to name a few:

- Sydney Cricket Ground and Football Stadium
- ANZ stadium at Homebush
- Sydney Olympic Park at Homebush which holds many international events
- Cycle around Centennial Park

Walks

From urban coastal walks to treks in the National Parks, Sydney is a city made for walks and hikes in the great outdoors. The harbour foreshore is home to at least 16 walks. Head to Cremorne Point for harbour views and cliffside gardens, or take the Taronga Zoo to Manly for an intense three-hour excursion that includes historic hot spots en route. The famous Bondi to Coogee is a must do.

For a leisurely stroll, seek out the leafy tranquillity of Centennial Parklands. Crank things up with the three-day southern coastal walk starting from Cronulla, and combine this with the four-day northern beaches walk from Barrenjoey to North Head to complete Sydney's great coastal walks.

For a dose of history, explore Newington Armory at Sydney Olympic Park by foot. Set amid 52 hectares of riverside hills and woodlands, the site features more than 100 heritage buildings. South of Sydney the Royal National Park's spectacular Coast Track combines amazing scenery and a unique historical heritage. Take the walk in sections or complete it as a two-day trip with an overnight stay at a secluded beach.

For a more luxurious experience, Sydney Coast Walks hosts overnight trips with sumptuous catering and camping under the stars. So many more wonderful walks too. For more information, checkout www.sydney.com/things-to-do/nature-and-parks/walks

Beyond Sydney

Blue Mountains

The Blue Mountains is a magical place any time of the year. Glowing in autumn, cool in winter, colourful in spring and refreshing in summer. The Blue Mountains is densely populated by oil bearing Eucalyptus trees. The atmosphere is filled with finely dispersed droplets of oil, which, in combination with dust particles and water vapour, scatter short-wave length rays of light which are predominantly blue in colour. The Greater Blue Mountains was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2000 and was one of 15 World Heritage places included in the National Heritage List on 21 May 2007. It is approximately 1.5-2hrs west of Sydney and is a must-see. For planning your trip see bluets.com.au

Hunter Valley

Take a visit to Australia's oldest & most well-known wine region, Hunter Valley Wine Country. Savour a mixture of wine varieties & styles from fifth generation winemakers to up & coming 'young gun' winemakers. Self-Contained Cottages, Resorts, boutique hotels & guest houses, motels and B&B's enrich your total experience when visiting the Hunter Valley region. Settle in with one of the Hunter's best drops, indulge your palate in the many restaurants to choose from, rise above the world in a hot-air balloon, or enjoy a wine tour operating daily from Sydney or within the Hunter Valley. It is an approximate 1.5-2hrs drive northwest of Sydney.

Coastal - North Coast

On the scenic North Coast of NSW, you'll discover a hinterland of lush river valleys and a coastline of sparkling uncrowded beaches that are easy to get to. The North Coast has some of the best, and most well known, beaches in Australia at Byron Bay, Lennox Head, Coffs Harbour, Port Stephens and Newcastle. North Coast holiday choices are many and varied. You can tackle the vast sand dunes of Stockton Beach, north of Newcastle, by 4WD or go scuba diving at Solitary Islands Marine Park, off the coast at Coffs Harbour. Hiking through forests,



thousands of years old, in World Heritage-listed Dorrigo National Park is a real adventure as is being part of the alternative vibe at famed Channon markets on the scenic, meandering drive to Lismore.

Coastal - South Coast

The stunning South Coast of NSW is a perfect holiday destination at any time of the year. The region includes Kiama, Shellharbour, Jervis Bay and the Shoalhaven towns of Nowra, Mollymook, Uludulla and Batemans Bay. You'll find an endless list of things to do on the South Coast. Pristine white sand beaches such as Hyams Beach and Murrays line Jervis Bay Marine Park while Pebbly Beach and Pretty Beach are as famous for kangaroos as waves. Montague Island off the coast at Narooma, is a marine reserve that's just one of 30 national parks, marine parks and nature reserves on the South Coast.

Activities in national parks not to miss include the Light to Light Walk in Ben Boyd National Park, bushwalking and fishing at Depot Beach, walking and canoeing in Kangaroo Valley and Pretty Beach in Murrumbidgee National Park. Pretty seaside towns and historic villages can be found dotted along the coast. If you love water sports, the South Coast offers plenty of choice such as fishing, diving and snorkeling, sailing, canoeing and kayaking.

Whale watching is also popular at many locations along the North and South Coast. During their northern migration, most whales come within 3 km of the NSW coast so you can see them from headlands and lookouts in national parks. Humpback whales and southern right whales migrate along the NSW coastline throughout June and in the first week of July, and return southwards from around September to November. You will find a number of whale watching tours available.

Parks, Playgrounds and Picnics

There are too many to list however the following is an article from the Sydney Telegraph on the Top 10 Sydney Picnic spots:

“SYDNEY” summers are synonymous with long, lazy days and there is no better way to enjoy the warmer weather than taking the family and a picnic basket full of delicious goodies and heading to a beautiful location.

Whether in a park, in bushland or by the beach, there’s no shortage of spectacular places to enjoy a picnic. All that’s needed is a trip to the supermarket to stock up on food and drinks, a ball or cricket set, or a bucket and spade for spots near the beach.

Adventurous types can head to one of the state’s many national parks and tie in a picnic lunch with a long walk. Brisbane Water National Park has interesting historic tracks and a beautiful dedicated picnic area at Girrakool, while Audley Weir in the Royal National Park is an excellent well-shaded riverside location adjacent to a popular walk down the Lady Carrington Drive fire trail. Little Manly Beach and Nielsen Park are great harbourside places for young children to paddle, with safe swimming spots and shaded, grassy areas behind the beach for picnics.

Head west to enjoy some beautiful picnic grounds and gardens, such as Mount Annan.

A day out in any of these parks will please the whole family: children can let off steam exploring in a designated playground or kicking a ball around while parents relax. And don’t forget the camera - these picturesque parks provide plenty of photo opportunities.

WISEMANS FERRY PARK

- Great North Rd

Located next to the ferry crossing, this park is framed by the natural beauty of the Hawkesbury River. The park is home to parts of the Wetlands Complex, which is a natural habitat for native fauna species such as frogs and small birds. It is one of the last remaining sections

of the complex within the Baulkham Hills Shire area and searching for evidence of the fauna, or the creatures themselves, is a great way to keep children entertained. The park features a couple of barbecues, a kiosk, toilets and play areas for children. The grassy areas along the riverbank are ideal for laying out a blanket and admiring the dramatic hills on the other side of the river in Dharug National Park. There are also plenty of shaded areas. Energetic families can cross the river on the ferry and explore the national park. The Wisemans Ferry Park gates are locked at sunset.

GIRRAKOOL PICNIC AREA

- Quarry Rd, Brisbane Water

National Park

Set on the Hawkesbury River in the Central Coast region, this is a popular spot for bushwalkers. Motorists must buy a day pass to the park. It costs \$7 and there is a pay-and-display machine, but remember to bring exact change. This is a peaceful place for a family picnic. There are facilities, including gas barbecues, cooking shelters, picnic tables and toilets. This picnic area is also the starting point for a number of walks, including the 6.5km Girrakool-Patonga Nature Walk, which is medium difficulty and takes about four hours, or a short version of the Mooney Nature Walk, which is about 3km and takes up to two hours. The park is home to lots of native wildlife including wallabies, platypus, gliders, bush rats, echidnas, marsupial mice, possums and 175 species of birds.

ALLAMBIE HEIGHTS, MANLY DAM

- King St

From kayaking and fishing to water skiing and mountain biking, there is no shortage of ways to keep the children entertained at this picnic spot. Manly Dam, officially known as Manly Warringah War Memorial Park, is a hub of activity with families and leisure-lovers on weekends. There are picnic spots along the waterfront on the southern side of the dam, plus boat launch ramps and a swimming area. Some of the picnic areas have barbecues, and there are public toilets along Sir Roden Cutler Dr in the park. Visitors can park inside

the area for a \$7 fee (free for locals). There is a speed limit of 20km/h. Nature-lovers will enjoy the park's Wildflower Walk and Nature Trail, or those who want to do a longer walk can take the Park Circuit Track, which traces the perimeter of the dam towards the northern end of the park.

MANLY, LITTLE MANLY POINT

- **Stuart St**

On the harbour side of Manly, this point has spectacular views across the harbour as well as the essentials for a great picnic spot. It has barbecues, a children's playground and a flat grassy area shaded by trees that is ideal for laying out a blanket. The point is a short walk from Little Manly Beach, which has toilets, a small kiosk (daily 8am-5pm daylight savings) and an enclosed swimming area, perfect for families with young children, especially as the harbourside beach is nearly always calm. There is a small car park off Stuart St, but the area is an easy walk from Manly Wharf, so public transport is a good option. After lunch, families can walk around Spring Cove and into Sydney Harbour National Park to secluded Collins Beach for a splash in the gently lapping water, or walk further to Fairfax Lookout at North Head.

LAKE PARRAMATTA

- **Lake Parramatta Reserve, James Ruse Drive**

This dam was created on Hunts Creek in 1855 as a fresh water source, but is now used for recreation. During the 1920s and '30s the lake was a popular paddling spot for locals, but was closed to swimming because of high pollution levels in the 1980s. In late 2006 the lake was opened for swimming again, but only on specific days. Even when visitors aren't permitted in the water, the lake provides a picturesque backdrop for a family picnic. Gates to the reserve open at sunrise and close at sunset, and there is a kiosk, play area, parking, barbecue and toilet on the southern side of the lake. Set up a blanket to lunch on the flat grassy area while watching abundant birdlife in the bushland and on the water. There is also a walking track on the eastern side, heading north to the top of the reserve.

MERRYLANDS, CENTRAL GARDENS

- **Merrylands Rd**

This large park sits on the corner of Merrylands Rd and the Cumberland Highway and is a popular weekend picnic spot for families. Visiting the animal enclosure is a must with wallabies, emu, kangaroos and many birds including native waterfowl, galahs, parrots, rosellas, and cockatiels. Many of the species have their own enclosures and a path winds through them all. There is also a man-made pond that is home to water birds and carp. Set up a blanket beside this pretty pond and watch the wildlife. There are designated picnic areas in the park and all have barbecues and picnic tables. Trees provide natural shelter and there is also parking, toilets and children's play areas. A large gathering will require booking (call Holroyd Council on 98409840). The park is open 9am-7pm on weekends (daylight savings) and 9am-5pm on weekdays.

VAUCLUSE, NIELSEN PARK

- **Vaucluse Rd**

The spectacular views and calm harbour beach are just two of many factors that make this a popular family picnic spot. There are public toilets and a kiosk to purchase last-minute picnic supplies. Families will find picnic tables, but leave the meat at home as there are no barbecues. The park fronts Shark Beach, which has a netted section for safe Harbour swimming. Unless there is a big swell, the water laps gently to shore, making it a great beach for younger children and less experienced swimmers. There are also several interesting walks, such as the Hermitage Foreshore Track, with views to the Sydney Harbour Bridge and Opera House. Walk up to Mount Trefle, the highest point in the park, which was named after the Secretary for Lands between 1912-15, J.L. Trefle. The park is open daily from 5am-10pm.

CRONULLA, SHELLY PARK

- **Ewos Pde**

Fronting popular Shelly Beach, this modern park has all the essentials for an enjoyable family day out, with picnic tables, free electric barbecues, water bubblers, public toilets

and off-street parking. In close proximity to Cronulla train station, the scenic walk along the seafront from Cronulla Beach via The Esplanade is a pleasant start to a day out. A large play area inside the park has swings, a junior slide, a rope climber and a Liberty Swing for children in wheelchairs, guaranteed to keep youngsters entertained for hours. The play area is shaded by trees and there is also a shade cloth over the Liberty swing. Take a dip in the ocean at Shelly Beach, or head over to the nearby rockpool for more protected swimming. There are change rooms near the rockpool and a basic pavilion and shelter behind Shelly Beach.

MT ANNAN, MOUNT ANNAN BOTANIC GARDEN

• Mt Annan Drive

The gardens make for spectacular picnicking year-round and the large grounds mean there is plenty of space for children to let off steam. The 410ha park has picnic areas dedicated to different feature gardens such as the Banksia, Wattle, Bottlebrush and Terrace Gardens and the Woodland Picnic Area. The native plant garden is the largest botanic garden in Australia and is designed to display the diversity of Australian flora. Stop at the visitor centre to find out about different sections or drive slowly through the grounds to find a picnic spot, spread a blanket and enjoy the lush surroundings. The garden has parking, toilets, barbecues, picnic tables and shelters, plus a children's play area. The grounds open 10am-5pm October-March (adults \$4.40, child \$2.20).

AUDLEY WEIR

• Royal National Park, Princes Highway turn-off, Loftus

The most difficult part of packing a picnic and heading to the Royal National Park is deciding which spot to choose. The many beaches provide pretty and peaceful waterside settings, but Audley Weir, just a short distance from the main entrance to the park at Loftus, is also a popular picnic spot. There are designated picnic areas on both sides of the weir - Allambie Flat to the north and Ironbark Flat to the south. Both have barbecues, parking (day pass \$11) and toilets. At Ironbark Flat there is also a kiosk and picnic shelters to escape the heat. Both have grassy areas ideal for spreading

out a picnic blanket. Paddle and row boats can be hired on the Allambie Flat side, but no swimming is permitted. The area also marks the start of Lady Carrington Drive, a 10km walking/cycling track."

Gyms

Most gyms carry a membership fee and can work on a monthly payment plan. For a great listing of Sydney (and interstate) gyms, visit www.goodgymguide.com.au

Shopping

Sydney is home to a variety of shopping experiences such as huge department stores, boutique, vintage and alternate treasures and can boast internationally recognised local fashion. The large shopping centres are mainly Westfield's. Other than the city and local shopping centres, Oxford St in Paddington and Bondi Junction is a great clothes-shop mecca.

Sydney is home to some of Australia's best markets, featuring fresh food, beautiful gifts, stylish fashion, vintage furniture, free entertainment and much more. A trip to the markets is the perfect way to spend a day exploring the city, picking up everything from quirky souvenirs to ugg boots, jewellery and vintage fashion. Some well-known markets include :

- Paddington Markets
- The Rocks Market
- Parklea Market
- Glebe Market
- Bondi Beach market
- Sydney Growers Markets
- Paddys' Markets

Trading Hours

Businesses in Sydney traditionally trade seven days a week. Generally, trading hours are as follows:

Monday - Wednesday and Friday: 9am-5.30pm
Thursday: 9am-9pm
Saturday: 9am-5pm
Sunday: 10am-4pm

However, it is best to check individual stores or centres for exact opening hours. Some stores operate outside of these hours.

Accommodation

Cost of Living

Many prospective migrants and visitors want to know about the cost of living in Australia and whether they will have a better standard of living if they make the move.

This is not an easy question to answer and everyone's situation is different. The following website can provide some helpful evaluation tools: www.aussiemove.com/aus/costlive.asp

Where to Live

Sydney can be loosely separated into 10 main geographical areas: Inner City, Inner West, Northern Beaches, Upper North Shore, Lower North Shore, The Shire (South), The Eastern Suburbs, South West, North Western suburbs and Western Suburbs.

A further divide and brief description of the choices are as follows:

Inner City - Like in any inner-city suburb, it can boast location, location, location; however, it comes at a cost. Plus sometimes, size must be compromised. Most inner city suburbs are comprised of units, townhouses and semi-attached housing. CBD and inner suburbs include Darlinghurst, Surry Hills, Redfern, The Rocks and Walsh Bay. The inner city has some great schools such as St Andrews, Sydney Grammar and SCECGS Darlinghurst.

Inner West - the highly popular inner west suburbs, are predominantly located along the southern shore of Port Jackson (Parramatta River). Conveniently located near Anzac Bridge, the alternate route across the harbour to the city, it boasts a fabulous café /restaurant and pub culture. Housing can be costly here and often not large properties however it offers a great lifestyle. Suburbs here include Balmain, Rozelle, Drummoyne, Galdesville, Five Dock, Glebe, Newtown and Marrickville. A few of its' well known private schools include Newington, Trinity, MLC and Meriden.

Northern Beaches - the upside is definitely gorgeous beaches on the Peninsula and nowhere you live there will be far from one of those beaches; the downside is only one way

in and out so traffic can be difficult. Suburbs here include Palm Beach, Avalon, Whale Beach, Newport, Bilgola, Dee Why and Manly.

Lower North Shore - a very convenient location as it is just on the north side of the Harbour Bridge, extremely handy for the city; it is known for the more prestigious suburbs such as Kirribilli, Milsons Point, Neutral Bay, Balmoral, Cremorne, Wollstonecraft, North Sydney and Crow's Nest. Most areas in the lower North Shore are very close to the water and can also be quite costly. Some great private schools are based here such as Loreto Kirribilli, Monte Saint Angelo, Wenona, Riverview, Joeys and Shore.

Upper North Shore - if you continue north through the Lower North Shore, you get to the beautiful leafy suburbs of the Upper North Shore. Here you can usually find larger blocks of land, often quite prestigious and therefore quite pricy, however being further away from the city means you can find some very good rental and purchasing opportunities; it is very close to Kuringai National Park and the F3 highway heading North, and boasts some of the best private schools in Sydney such as Knox, Sydney Grammar Junior, PLC, Ravenswood, Roseville College, Brigidine, and Barker College.

Eastern Suburbs - The prominent Eastern Suburbs ranges from Rushcutters Bay and Paddington to Vaucluse and Rose Bay including Bondi, Randwick, Coogee, Bronte and Clovelly. The East is a very popular living area as it is close to the city and offers a variety of accommodation types from very small units to exotic mansions, often home to the famous. Here you will find very handy beaches, some great shopping areas and a very eclectic mix of people, including many tourists. Because of this it is constantly buzzing and busy. Also renowned for its private schools, some having the best views in Sydney, including Kambala, Cranbrook, Ascham, and Scots College.

North Western Sydney - locally known as the Hills District, is a combination of long established suburbs, as well as new housing estates. Usually housing here consists of larger houses with larger blocks, as it is further away from the CBD. The newly established Norwest Business Park has revitalised the Hills District and attracted many employees from Norwest to

move to the leafy suburbs. Some of the suburbs include Castle Hill, Baulkham Hills, Pennant Hills, Rouse Hill, Winston Hills (hence the ‘Hills District’ name) and Parramatta. Kings Grammar school is based in the Hills, in North Parramatta.

South Western - also referred to as the Macarthur Region includes suburbs such as Liverpool, Canterbury, Campbelltown and Camden.

South - more commonly known as ‘The Shire’ includes St George, Sutherland areas and also some great beaches such as Cronulla.

Western Suburbs - referred to as the Greater Western Sydney region and extends to suburbs at the base of the Blue Mountains including Penrith and Emu Plains.

There are many factors to consider apart from location; quality of housing, standard of schools, number of parks and open spaces. Naturally the median house price is a good indicator of how desirable the suburb is, taking into account all of these attributes.

Aussie Orientation Services will provide you with a detailed list of potential suburbs based on the criteria you have already provided to us.

Renting Property

Properties in Australia are usually rented through Real Estate Agencies or directly through private owners/landlords. Available properties to rent, share and buy are listed in newspapers and on property websites. There are two main websites to use for this purpose:

www.realestate.com.au
www.domain.com.au

Furniture

As most properties in Australia are rented unfurnished, you will need to rent or purchase furniture. There are many furniture stores in Sydney, however, it can be easiest to go to a Homemaker Centre. These centres will have a variety of stores to help you furnish your new home. Possibly the more affordable and popular choices are stores such as Freedom and Ikea, however, there are so many others to choose from. If you are interested in renting all of your housing interior such as furniture, white goods,

electronic goods, linen and crockery, we have two recommendations:

1. Living Edge www.livingedge.com.au
2. Valiant Hire www.valiant.com.au

Aussie Orientation Services can help introduce you to one of these two businesses if this is your preferred approach.

Setting Up Your Home

Whether you rent or buy a property in Australia, you will need to get the Electricity and Gas (if applicable) connected. There are a number of Electricity Networks (distributors) and the majority of them do Electricity / Gas bundles. The main ones are:

Energy Australia

www.energyaustralia.com.au
131 502

Origin

www.originenergy.com.au
132 463

AGL

www.agl.com.au
131 245

It is best to make your comparisons using the Switchwise site www.switchwise.com.au or the iSelect site www.energy.iselect.com.au

Water

Sydney Water delivers water and wastewater services to customers in Sydney - www.sydneywater.com.au

Tenants do pay for their water usage so you will find most lease agreements will define how and when that is paid.

Insurance

It is recommended that you take out a Home and Contents insurance policy to protect you from any fire and flood damage, theft etc that may occur. There are many sites that compare policies for you, such as iselect.com.au and youi.com.au and most of these go through a broker. Alternatively you can go directly to companies such as NRMA - www.nrma.com.au or AAMI - www.aami.com.au to obtain a more individualised quote.

Pets

Many families have pets they would like bring to Australia. Australia is free from a number of cat and dog (and other animal) diseases and has a hugely favourable animal health status. Quarantine allows the Australian Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) to maintain the safety and integrity of its human, animal, flora and fauna life. The time your animal is in quarantine varies depending on what category the country you are travelling from is classified as under Australian DAFF guidelines. There is a minimum of 30 days quarantine, regardless of where you are travelling from and you will need to check with DAFF for more individualised information. DAFF's website also offers tips for animal pre-adjustment measures, safe travel etc. Please note that Heat Stress is a common concern for all animals travelling to Australia. For more information on bringing cats and dogs (and other animals) into Australia contact: Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry www.daff.gov.au/aqis/cats-dogs Dogtainers www.dogtainers.com.au 1300 135 252.

Also bear in mind that not all rental properties accept pets, so you will have to mention this when applying for leases.

Staying in contact

Mobile Phones

Most mobile phone companies will not allow you to enter into a contract unless you are a permanent resident of Australia. The following mobile companies offer pre-paid mobiles:

Optus

www.optus.com.au

Telstra

www.telstra.com.au

Virgin

www.virginmobile.com.au

Vodafone

www.vodafone.com.au

It is best to shop around before deciding on your mobile service provider as the costs vary between providers.

Landline/Home Phones and Internet

Australia has two major telecommunications companies that provide landline/home telephone services. Both companies provide mobile and internet services, bundling your communications will give some discounts.

Optus

www.optus.com.au

Telstra

www.telstra.com.au

There are many internet service providers and we recommend you research the best deal for your internet needs.

State Area codes when calling a landline number

Queensland (07)

NSW and ACT (02)

VIC and TAS (03)

NT, SA and WA (08)

Family and education

The three main education providers are the State Government (67%), Catholic Education (18%) and the Independent schools sector (15%). Government schools are often called State Schools or Public Schools. Non-government schools are usually called Private schools. Most Private schools have a religious affiliation, but some are non-denominational, although all religions tend to be accepted at all schools. All NSW State schools are non-denominational. Most NSW Government Schools are co-educational, however there are some single sex Government schools at the Secondary level. In the Private sector there are co-educational, as well as single-sex schools, at both Primary and Secondary level. There are 3136 schools in New South Wales, with about 1488 schools in Sydney.

General information about the NSW school and education system can be found at -

Department of Education NSW

www.dec.nsw.gov.au

(02) 9561 8000

Schooling Levels: Children in NSW have 13 years of schooling: One year in Kindergarten; six years in Primary school and six years in

Secondary school. Many schools also have pre-kinder classes, also known as ‘K minus one year’ classes. Not many Government schools are combined Primary and Secondary schools, but some Catholic schools, and many Private schools, are combined Primary and Secondary schools.

In NSW schools your child can start Kindergarten at the beginning of the school year if they turn 5 on or before 31 July that year. Private schools have different guidelines so you will have to check with the particular school you wish to enrol in.

Primary School Curriculum There is an emphasis on seven key learning areas in Primary school: English; mathematics; science and technology; human society and its environment; languages; creative arts; and personal development, health and physical education.

Secondary School Curriculum Core subjects in Years 7-10 in NSW are: English; mathematics; science; human society and its environment; personal development, health and physical education; creative arts; technology and applied studies; a language other than English. Students are awarded The School Certificate at the end of Year 10.

Years 11 and 12 Students in Year 11 and 12 study for the Higher School Certificate (HSC) or Vocational Education Training (VET). HSC results are based on state-wide examinations and school-based performance and the HSC is Some secondary private schools also offer the International baccalaureate - for more information see www.ibo.org/country/AU generally a pre-requisite for study at University. VET courses include hand-on, practical experience. Students can study VET courses through TAFE NSW or at schools that offer the courses, as part of their HSC. Some VET courses can also help gain a place at a university, as well as getting an industry qualification at the same time.

Language subjects are called Languages Other Than English (LOTE). Studying one or more languages is part of the school curriculum. Year 7-12 students can study a language they speak at home, if a course in that language is not offered at their own school at the Saturday School of Community Languages, which has

several locations.

Specialised Studies: There are several NSW schools dedicated to a particular area of learning, such as sport, music, performing arts or agriculture. Many other schools also provide facilities and courses that cater to students talented in a particular area.

Scholarships: Many Independent and Catholic schools offer scholarships to students for academic excellence. Some also offer scholarships to students who display excellence in other areas.

Selective Schools: There are 17 fully selective and 12 partially selective high schools for students of a high academic standard in NSW. There are also 4 Agricultural high schools offering selective placements.

Special Needs Schools: There are Special Needs Schools for children with disabilities in both the Government and Private sector in New South Wales. Some mainstream schools have programmes for Special Needs students on their campuses.

Alternative Schools: All schools in NSW with an alternative philosophical approach to education, such as Steiner or Montessori, are Private schools.

Distance Education: The NSW government provides education for students in remote areas or those unable to attend school.

Boarding: There is a wide variety of Boarding schools in the Private school sector at Primary and Secondary level in New South Wales. Three Government Agricultural Secondary colleges offer Boarding facilities too.

International Students: International students can study in many types of schools in New South Wales.

Finishing school: Nearly all students continue their education to The School Certificate standard at Year 10. Most students study until Year 12 and attain the Higher School Certificate. Further studies can be continued at Universities or TAFE (Technical and Further Education).

School Uniforms: Most schools expect students to wear uniforms. Uniforms are usually unique to the school.

School Term Dates: There are four school terms in NSW schools, with the main holidays over summer Christmas period. All Government schools follow an annually determined set of term dates. Private school term dates can vary a little from these and from each other. You can check school term dates @ www.schools.nsw.edu.au/calendar/?do=setViewperiod&categoryid=21&viewType=yearView

Enrolment

To enrol your child in a school, contact the school by telephone or in person. You will need to take your visa and entry to Australia documents, proof of their date of birth and any papers relating to their previous education, immunisation record and proof of address.

Childcare and Early Childhood Education

There are many types of full and part-time childcare services available for children too young to attend school, and for outside school hours.

These include:

- preschools and kindergartens which prepare children for school;
- child care and day care centres which look after younger children during the day and school age children before and after school; and
- family day care where children are looked after by another parent along with their own family.

The National Childcare Accreditation Council (www.acecqa.gov.au) is a great place to see the options available in your area.

You can also access information through the Child Care Access Hotline - a telephone service established by the Australian Government. Professionally trained operators will advise you on:

- Types of child care available.
- Quality issues; and
- Government financial assistance with the cost of childcare.

Call 1800 670 305 to speak to an operator about your child care requirements.

NSW Government areas provide some useful information -

www.dec.nsw.gov.au/what-we-offer/regulation-and-accreditation/early-childhood-education-care

www.bubhub.com.au/directory/find/early-childhood-health-centres-sydney

Primary and Secondary Schools

Useful websites are:

www.myschool.edu.au

www.schools.nsw.edu.au/gotoschool/types/secondaryschools.php

bettereducation.com.au/school/secondary/nsw/sydney_top_government_secondary_schools.aspx

www.australianschoolsdirectory.com.au/educationinformation.php?region=29

www.abc.net.au/unleashed/2729036.html

Post-secondary, Tertiary and Vocational Education and Training (VET)

Many Secondary schools offer alternate academic as well as practical pathways into university and employment. It is best to speak to the Principal of your chosen school to gain information on who to speak with in relation to your child's study options. The following sites may also be of some help:

www.business.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/7544/NSWTertiaryEducationPlan_1.pdf

<https://www.tafensw.edu.au>

www.apprenticeshipscentre.com.au/Home

www.training.gov.au

www.uac.edu.au

Community Groups

Depending on your interests or needs, there will be many community groups in your area to consider. A starting point may be to check out: www.communityguide.com.au/community.cfm?/newsouthwales/

Or

www.newcomersnetwork.com/australia/sydney/networks_groups_communities.php

There are many mothers groups available as well:

moms.meetup.com/cities/au/sydney/

NSW WARNINGS or DANGERS

Skin Cancer and Sun Safety

Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world. The hot sun means there is increased exposure to the heat and the sun's rays (UV rays).

About UV

Ultraviolet radiation (UVR) is the part of the sunlight that causes sunburn and skin damage, leading to premature ageing and skin cancer. Damage to the skin occurs as soon as skin is exposed to UVR, with sunburn being the result of extreme damage. The effects of UVR on skin are cumulative, so damage builds up even without burning.

There are three types of UVR:

UVA - responsible for causing sunburn and skin damage like wrinkles and discolouration.

UVB - responsible for causing sunburn and skin cancer.

UVC - does not reach the earth's surface but can be produced artificially (eg. by arc welding equipment).

Lifeguards and lifesavers treat dehydrated persons almost every day during summer and getting sun burnt is far too common, which may

have serious immediate results and later on in life. Ongoing over-exposure to the sun without proper protection can have immediate results such as soreness of your skin, becoming too hot and feeling sick. A common long term result is skin cancer.

Australia has the highest per person rate of skin cancer (melanomas) in the world! The heat created by the sun can affect you in a number of ways. It can cause your body temperature to rise and lose fluids by sweating. If you are not mindful of this you can become dehydrated, which essentially means you become too hot and do not have enough fluids in your body. Headaches and fatigue are common symptoms of dehydration.



To avoid sunburn and dehydration while you enjoy a day outside, follow these simple steps:

SLIP - Slip on a long sleeve shirt to get the best protection from the sun's rays

SLOP - Slop on some SPF30+ sunscreen at least 15 minutes before you go out in the sun and then don't forget to reapply every two hours after that

SLAP - Slap on a hat, a wide-brim hat will provide the best protection to your head and face

SEEK - Seek some shade, particularly between the hours of 10am and 3pm when the sun is at its hottest

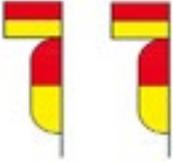
SLIDE - Slide on a pair of UV rated sunglasses

SLURP - Drink plenty of water in moderation and avoid fizzy and alcoholic drinks that will dehydrate you

Beach Safety

Every beach has permanent and occasional hazards that you may need to look out for. To assist you in looking out for these hazards and to show supervised areas, lifesaving services use a number of safety flags.

Red and yellow flags



The red and yellow flags show the supervised area of the beach and that a lifesaving service is operating. No red and yellow flags indicates there is no supervision. NO FLAGS = NO SWIM

IT IS ONLY SAFE TO SWIM BETWEEN THE RED AND YELLOW FLAGS.

RED ONLY FLAG: Indicates that the beach is closed and that you should not enter the water.

YELLOW ONLY FLAG: Indicates that there are potential hazards in the water. Look out for the yellow warning sign that should be displayed with the yellow flag for further advice.

Always swim between the red and yellow flags

When you see red and yellow flags on a beach it indicates that there is currently a lifesaving service operating on the beach. The lifeguards have chosen a section of the beach that is best for swimming and they will closely supervise this area. Lifeguards pay more attention to the area between the red and yellow flags than any other part of the beach.

Read the safety signs

Before you go on to the beach be sure to read the safety signs. This will ensure you are aware of any warnings or dangers on the beach. You can also find other helpful information to make your day at the beach more enjoyable. You might also find single signs placed on the beach to highlight specific warnings.

Ask a lifeguard for safety advice

Lifeguards are highly trained and very knowledgeable about beach safety and conditions. When you arrive at the beach look for and identify the lifeguards. Feel free to ask them about the day's conditions, as well any additional beach safety advice they might have for that specific beach - because every beach is different.

Swim with a friend

Not only is swimming with a friend (or family member) a fun way to enjoy the beach, it is also very sensible. While you are swimming together you can keep an eye out for each other, and if further assistance was required, one person could call or go for help. If everyone swimming together knows their own limits it is a good idea to let the others know so you can all stay within everyone's comfortable limits.

If you need help, stay calm and attract attention

Even the most careful people can find themselves out of their limits. If you are not feeling comfortable in the water and you require assistance by a lifeguard to get back to shore, stay calm, raise your arm in the air and wave it from side to side. This will attract the attention of a lifeguard who will be able to come to your assistance. You should conserve your energy by floating on your back and staying calm, this will ensure you have the energy to remain afloat until assistance arrives.

Dangerous Animals

Australia is famous for cute koalas and kangaroos but is also home to some of the world's most painful and poisonous creatures. It is easy to avoid these creatures by following a few simple guidelines:

- Never ignore warning signs, they are there for a reason.
- Many spiders, snakes and other dangerous creatures live under logs and rocks. Be careful when picking up things such as rocks, logs or shells on the beach as they can be home to spiders, snakes and other dangerous creatures. Redback spiders are very common in WA, even in the metro area, check for them on children's play equipment as a bite can make children very ill.

- Shake your shoes before putting them on.
- Don't be tempted to try picking up animals or reptiles as you are very likely to get bitten.
- If you go walking in the bush stamp your way through. This gives any snakes that may be around advanced warning that you are coming. They will usually move out of the way.
- If you are unfortunate enough to come face to face with a snake stay still and wait for the snake to leave.
- Sharks are most likely to attack at dawn or dusk, so avoid swimming at these times. Perth beaches are patrolled by helicopter during the summer months so look out for any warning signs and get out of the water if you hear a siren.

Pool safety

Every year in NSW children drown in home swimming pools. These tragedies can be avoided by:

- Active adult supervision of children in the pool;
- An effective and well maintained fence or barrier around the pool;
- A self-closing, self-latching gate.

Home Pool Safety Checklist:

If you own a property with a pool you are responsible for maintaining the safety of that pool. If you are renting, the landlord is responsible and you should contact them with any concerns about pool safety.

At a minimum:

- Children must be supervised within arms' reach when in, on, or around the pool or spa.
- The pool must be fenced effectively.
- The gate must be self-closing and self-latching and never propped open.
- The pool should be regularly maintained (checked at least once a month).

Visit www.homepoolsafety.com.au for a complete checklist.

CPR TRAINING

There are a number of CPR (Cardio-pulmonary Resuscitation) training programs offered in Sydney. The most popular and well known is St Johns Ambulance Australia, www.stjohnsw.com.au or call 1300 360 455.

BANKING TAX and SUPER

Setting up a Bank Account

Opening a bank account in Australia is quite simple. You will need your passport and one other form of ID (credit/bank card, photo driver's license or student card). If you wish to open a joint bank account both parties need to be in NSW to activate it.

Australia has a number of banks with a variety of banking products and services available. We recommend you shop around before opening your account to find the one best suited to your needs. Bank charges are applicable to all accounts and you should compare all banking fees and interest rates before deciding on a banking institution.

You can withdraw cash from international bank accounts through most local banks and ATMs (Automatic Teller Machines) provided your bankcard has an international symbol, such as Cirrus or Maestro.

Some commonly used banks are:

ANZ

www.anz.com.au

Commonwealth Bank

www.commbank.com.au

National Australia Bank

www.nab.com.au

St George

www.stgeorge.com.au

Westpac

www.westpac.com.au

Tax in Australia

If you are planning to work in Australia we recommend you apply for a tax file number (TFN). A TFN is not compulsory but it will save you paying more tax than necessary.

You can apply for your TFN at any main taxation office. It takes around four weeks to process. You will be issued with a registration notice allowing you to work in the meantime.

You can apply for a TFN online if you are currently in Australia and you have a valid:

- permanent migrant visa, or
- visa with work rights, or
- overseas student visa, or
- visa allowing you to stay in Australia indefinitely.

Only one TFN will ever be issued to you. Once you have a TFN you don't need to reapply for one if your circumstances change, for example if you change your name, have investments, or claim government benefits.

If you already have a TFN but do not know what it is, go through this application process and indicate that you already have a TFN. A notice with your TFN will be forwarded to you. If you know your TFN but wish to advise the Tax Office of changes to your details, go through this application process and enter your updated details.

It is important to determine if you are a resident or non-resident for taxation purposes.

Non-residents pay tax differently from residents. Fact sheets which outline how to determine if you are a resident for tax purposes are available at the ATO website.

Tax in Australia is paid on a sliding scale and the ATO website has current income tax bracket information as well as a handy tax calculator.

Australian Tax Office

Phone: 13 28 61
www.ato.gov.au

Superannuation

Superannuation is best explained as a compulsory pension contribution. Superannuation contributions are compulsory, even for temporary residents. The current contribution is 9% of salary and your employer will automatically pay this on your behalf to a Superannuation Fund.

Generally, employee superannuation must be held in a complying superannuation fund or RSA until retirement age, currently 65 for men and between 60 and 65 for women. Eligible temporary residents can access their superannuation upon permanent departure from Australia, subject to a withholding tax.

While employed in Australia it is important that temporary residents;

- Are aware of the superannuation fund that their employer is contributing to on their behalf;
- Keep a record of the amount of superannuation that they have; and
- Contact their superannuation fund before leaving Australia to find out if they are eligible to access their superannuation contributions.

For more information on superannuation and accessing superannuation when departing Australia call the Tax Office Superannuation information line on 13 10 20 (This number is only available in Australia) or visit the Tax Office website www.ato.gov.au/super

Finance

Aussie Orientation Services can recommend Orange Mortgage Brokers and Financial Pathfinders Financial Planners. Orange Mortgage Brokers can assist on how to buy property in Sydney and strategic financial planning.

An established licensed and regulated mortgage advisor we can help you select the most appropriate mortgage for your situation, streamline the loan process from application to settlement and answer any difficult questions about finance and property you may have.

Laszlo Szollosi B.Com. (Hons), B.Eng. (Hons)
Director Orange Mortgage and Finance Brokers
Email: Laszlo@orangefinance.net.au
Phone 0425 212 636



Health and medical

The Australian Government has signed Reciprocal Health Care Agreements (RHCA) with the governments of the United Kingdom, Sweden, the Netherlands, Finland, Norway, Malta and Italy which entitles you to limited subsidised health services for immediately necessary treatment while visiting Australia.

If you are a resident of one of these countries (excluding Malta or Italy) you are covered for the duration of your approved visit to Australia.

As a resident of Malta or Italy you are covered for six months from the date you arrive in Australia.

As a resident of one of these countries you are entitled to the following for any ill-health or injury requiring immediate treatment while in Australia:

- Free treatment as a public in-patient or outpatient in a public hospital.
- Subsidised medicines under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.
- Medicare benefits for out-of-hospital medical treatment provided by doctors through private surgeries and community health centres.

You should enrol upon arrival in Australia, this can be done at any Medicare office. If you receive treatment before you enrol, Medicare benefits will be back paid if you are eligible.

To enrol in Medicare you will need to take:

- Your passport with a valid visa.
- Identification showing you are enrolled in your country's national health scheme (for example, a National Health Service card or similar certificate).

If your application to enrol in Medicare is approved, you will receive an Australian reciprocal health care card in the mail.

Medicare does not cover:

- Medical or hospital treatment that is not immediately necessary.
- Medicines not subsidised under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.
- Dental work and chiropractic services.
- Treatment arranged before your visit to Australia.
- Accommodation and medical treatment in a private hospital.
- Accommodation and medical treatment as a private patient in a public hospital.

For more information see www.medicare.gov.au



Private Health Insurance

A number of private health funds provide health cover for overseas visitors. Benefits available, membership costs and eligibility can vary between funds. Private health funds cover you for treatment in private or public hospitals and include some services Medicare does not cover, such as dental, optical and chiropractic services. Please note, there is a waiting period with some health funds and you are unable to claim for most services during this time.

We recommend you shop around before deciding on your health cover provider as the costs and benefits vary between providers.

Some commonly used Private Health Insurers offering overseas visitors health cover are:

AHM: www.ahm.com.au

BUPA: www.bupa.com.au

HCF: www.hcf.com.au

Medibank: www.medibank.com.au

Emergencies

In an Emergency dial 000 for Police, Ambulance or Fire Brigade. Dial 112 from your mobile phone in an emergency.

Police

For non-urgent matters call 131 444.

Ambulance

If you need an ambulance, call 000. The use of ambulances will incur a charge. This charge can be claimed back if you are part of a Private Health Fund.

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

Emergency treatment can be obtained through Emergency departments of hospitals and some medical centres. Public and Private hospitals are listed under 'Hospitals' in the White Pages Directory www.whitepages.com.au. You can also find a list of all hospitals at www.myhospitals.gov.au/browse/nsw/sydney

AN AMBULANCE CAN BE REQUESTED BY CALLING 000

IN AN EMERGENCY DIAL

000

For Police, Ambulance or Fire Brigade.

Listed below are some of the contact details for the main large Sydney hospitals:

St Vincents Hospital

390 Victoria Street
Darlinghurst NSW 2010
(02) 8382 1111

Royal North Shore

Reserve Rd
St Leonards NSW 2065
(02) 9926 7111

Balmain Hospital

29 Booth Street
Balmain NSW 2041
(02) 9395 2111

Concord Hospital

Hospital Road
Concord, NSW 2139
(02) 9767 5000

Hornsby Hospital

36-76 Palmerston Road
Hornsby NSW 2077
(02) 9477 9123

Manly Hospital

150 Darley Road
Manly NSW 2095
(02) 9976 9611

Mona Vale Hospital

Coronation Street
Mona Vale NSW 2103
(02) 9998 0333

Prince of Wales Hospital

320-346 Barker Street
Randwick NSW 2031
(02) 9382 2222

Royal Prince Alfred Hospital

50 Missenden Road
Camperdown NSW 2050
(02) 9515 6111

Ryde Hospital
Denistone Road
Eastwood NSW 2122
(02) 9858 7888

St George Hospital
30 Gray Street
Kogarah NSW 2217
(02) 9113 1111

For after-hours Pharmacy locations try the following site:

www.pharmacies.com.au/directory/after-hours-pharmacies/nsw/sydney/

For non-emergency treatment, your first step should be to go to a GP or a medical centre. It is best to call first, as some require you to make an appointment. To find one closest to you check the Yellow Pages Directory (www.yellowpages.com.au) under 'Medical Practitioners'.

Some GPs and medical centres bulk bill with Medicare and do not require you to make a payment up front. If your doctor does not bulk bill you will be required to pay up front and can then claim the cost back from Medicare (if eligible).

If you are unsure whether your complaint is an emergency and are uncertain how to proceed, Healthdirect Australia 1800 022 222 is a toll free 24 hour, seven day a week health advice line to all people calling from within Western Australia.

Healthdirect's experienced nurses will give you immediate professional advice on how urgent your health concern is and what to do about it. Healthdirect will also be able to locate a locum doctor to come around late at night if needed.

Dental Services

If you need to visit a dentist while in WA you can find a list of dentists in your area through The Dental Association.

www.dentist.com.au

Dental treatments can be expensive and most will require payment immediately following the service. Medicare does not cover dental treatments. Private health cover may pay some part of the cost, depending on your level of cover and waiting periods.

USEFUL LINKS

Taxation
www.ato.gov.au

Immigration and Customs
www.immi.gov.au

Medical and Health
www.medicare.gov.au
www.health.gov.au
www.medibank.com.au
www.hbf.com.au
www.bupa.com.au
www.myhospitals.gov.au/browse/qld/brisbane
www.afterhourschemist.com.au

Childcare
www.careforkids.com.au/child-care/sydney-city www.echildcare.com.au

Schools, Education and Training
www.myschool.edu.au
www.goodschools.com.au
www.bettereducation.com.au
www.australianschoolsdirectory.com.au

Migration Services
www.immi.gov.au

Public Transport, Driving and Flying
www.131500.com.au
www.rta.nsw.gov.au
www.nrma.com.au
www.qantas.com.au
www.virginaustralia.com
www.jetstar.com
www.webjet.com.au
www.flightcentre.com.au

Hire Car and Airport Parking
www.avis.com.au
www.hertz.com.au
www.budget.com.au
www.thrifty.com.au
www.sydneyairport.com.au/go/car-parking

Business Directories
www.whitepages.com.au
www.yellowpages.com.au

Maps
www.whereis.com
www.maps.google.com.au/maps/mm

News

www.smh.com.au (Sydney Morning Herald)

www.dailytelegraph.com.au

www.abc.net.au/sydney/news/

Climate and Weather

www.bom.gov.au

www.weatherzone.com.au

www.weatherchannel.com.au

Employment

www.seek.com.au

www.mycareer.com.au

www.careerone.com.au

www.jobsearch.gov.au

Buying a Car

www.carsales.com.au

www.redbook.com.au

www.drive.com.au

Real Estate

www.realestate.com.au

www.domain.com.au

TRAVEL, SIGHTSEEING, ENTERTAINMENT and OUTDOORS

www.visitbrisbane.com.au

www.brisbane.qld.gov.au

www.brisbane-australia.com

www.new2brisbane.com.au

www.bnecity.com.au

www.romastreetparkland.com

www.visitsouthbank.com.au

www.brisbanefestival.com.au

www.seaworldresort.com.au

www.dreamworld.com.au

www.wetnwild.myfun.com.au

www.movieworld.com.au

www.whitewaterworld.com.au

www.qagoma.qld.gov.au

www.qm.qld.gov.au

www.weekendnotes.com

www.webchild.com.au

www.ticketek.com.au

www.ticketmaster.com.au

www.showbiz.com.au

www.eventcinemas.com.au

www.hoyts.com.au

www.lifesaving.com.au

www.beachsafe.org.au

www.sunsafety.qld.gov.au

Accommodation

www.stayz.com.au

www.wotif.com

www.lastminute.com.au

www.medina.com.au

Dining

www.gourmettraveller.com.au

www.agfg.com.au

www.eatability.com.au

www.urbanspoon.com

www.yourrestaurants.com.au

Networking - Parent, Professional and Single

www.playgroupaustralia.com.au

www.lindekin.com.au

www.rsvp.com.au

www.eharmony.com.au

www.meetup.com

Shopping

[www.sydney.com/things-to-do/fashion-and-](http://www.sydney.com/things-to-do/fashion-and-shopping/city-centre-)

shopping/city-centre-

www.sydney.com/things-to-do/fashion-and-

shopping/shopping-precincts

www.westfield.com.au/sydney

Hardware

www.bunnings.com.au/Sydney

www.sunlitemitre10.com.au

Supermarkets

www.coles.com.au

www.woolworths.com.au

Utilities**Telephone & Internet**

www.telstra.com.au

www.optus.com.au

www.vodafone.com.au

Banks and Finance

www.anz.com.au

www.commbank.com.au

www.nab.com.au

www.westpac.com.au

www.stgeorge.com.au

UK Pension Transfers and Financial Advice

www.genesyswealth.com.au

