



# Australia



Australia is a country, an island and a continent. It is the world's smallest continent and the sixth-largest country. It is located in the Southern Hemisphere, below the equator, between the Indian Ocean and the Southern Pacific Ocean. This country has an area of 7.682,300 square kilometres.



Australia has 6 states and 2 territories. 18.3 million people live there. Canberra is the capital of Australia.



Australia has a population about 20 million people. Most of Australia's population lives on the fertile plains of the eastern and southeastern coasts. The interior of Australia (called the Outback) is dry with many deserts. Not very many people live in the outback.



In the outback, there are some sheep and cattle ranches. There are about ten times more sheep than people in Australia. Sheep are raised for wool and for meat. In Australia there are lots of farms (stations). Stations are very big.

There are not many schools in the outback. Children who live on stations and cannot go to school use a two-way radio or the internet to have their teachers' lessons.



The first people to live in Australia were aborigines. Today there are still aborigines in Australia. Some live on reservations, some live on ranches (called stations) or in cities.



But most people live in or near cities. The predominant language spoken in Australia is English but there are also about 80 languages spoken.



The weather in Australia is warm and pleasant. The warmest months in Australia happen when we are in winter in Spain. January and February are the warmest months. June and July are the coldest months.

# Animals

The most famous animals in Australia are marsupials. A marsupial is a mammal that has a pouch to carry its young.



There are many other interesting animals in Australia. When the kookaburra calls, it sounds like a laugh.



# Other facts

The Great Barrier Reef is also in Australia. It is made of coral and algae. Coral are tiny invertebrate animals. The Great Barrier Reef is about 1250 miles long. It is the largest deposit of coral in the world.



Today Sydney is Australia's largest city. The Sydney Opera House is one of the strangest buildings in the world.



Australia's national sport is Cricket. Another favourite sport in Australia is Australian Rules Football. Rugby and soccer are very popular too. Australia is also famous for the boomerang. The aborigines used the boomerang as a weapon. Today, children use it as a toy.



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<http://teachit.acreekps.vic.edu.au/animals>

[http://www.solarnavigator.net/animal\\_kingdom/marsupials.htm](http://www.solarnavigator.net/animal_kingdom/marsupials.htm)

<http://animals.about.com/od/habitatprofiles/ig/Visual-Guide-to-the-Great-Barr/Geography-of-the-Reef.htm>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australia>

**Pictures:**

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