



Living in Australia – Talking Australian!

Is Australian a language?

For Australians it is very impressive when people speak different languages. Which when you're coming from Europe is mainly the case. They then answer: "We speak English and Australian."

Of course it is both English and related. But there are fine differences. And in some parts of the country even native English speakers will struggle to understand a word. But let's focus on phrasing rather than pronunciation. That's easier for a written medium.

This Info letter will give you a little insight of everyday situations related to private and social environments. They might also be applicable in workplace interactions.

G'day mate

There are many ways of saying "hello" in Australia. In general they are brief so you're able to say them when crossing paths. The following greetings and responses can be combined in various ways:

G: "G'day mate!"

R: "How're-ya goin'?"

G: "Hey, how're-ya doin'?"

R: "Good thanks. Yourself?"

G: "How are you goin'? Alright?"

R: "Not too bad. Yourself?"

G: "How're-ya goin' mate?"

R: "Good mate! Good!"

People don't necessarily ask about your wellbeing, so don't be tempted to tell them what is bothering you. If you do, they might change the topic very quickly. And instead of having someone who listens and gives you the support you implicitly asking for, you feel left alone.

Nice to meet you

When being introduced to people by someone it is considered as polite to respond in a certain way. You can either express the pleasure of meeting them or less formal ask how they are doing.

A: "Bob, this is Chris."

B: "Hello Chris, it's a pleasure to meet you."

C: "Nice to meet you, too."

B: "My pleasure!"

C: "Likewise."

B: "Chris, how're you doin' mate?"

C: "Good, thanks Bob. Yourself?"

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Living in Australia – Talking Australian!, *Continuation*

Nice to meet you, too

Sometimes the meet and greets come out so quickly that they are said nearly simultaneously. This could lead to a situation like this:

A: "Bob, this is Chris."

B: "Hi Chris, how're you doin'?" C: "Yeah, nice to meet you, too."

This example shows that the sayings are not really referring to the other person or what has been said. As Australians like things easy they stick to standards. But sometimes these customs don't match.

It can be quite embarrassing to start off a relationship like this, not listening to each other. Take a little time and make sure you respond in a suitable way.

Don't show off

The Australian climate enables to grow great wines. And Australia has a quite elaborated drinking culture. Only the way they talk about wine is not. Friends took me to their local wine shop with a respectable selection of local, national and international wines.

"You have to try this CabSav." CabSav? I had a look at the label. "Ah, Cabernet Sauvignon. It's a blend of the two French grape varieties: Cabernet and Sauvignon!" So they repeated: "Cabernet Sauvignon." Then they explained: "You know we prefer to call it CabSav. Why bother?"

It is not a matter of ability. Believe me even if they can they prefer to simply call it CabSav. Pronouncing it with a proper French accent would come across too smart. And you don't want to show off.

Talking Australian

Being an Expat in Australia or visiting the country you will notice that the language is different from what you are used to.

To demonstrate that you are integrating in your Australian surrounding it helps to pick up some of the sayings Aussies use. And there are not only the ones suitable for publication. However people will appreciate if you express things the Australian way. Talking Australian means not only speaking English but expressing things the Aussie way.

