

moving to *Perth* 101

*Your must have guide to moving,
settling and making WA your home!*



moving to perth 101

What's *inside*

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Getting a SIM card

Getting a bank account

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Shopping & other essentials

Things to do

For the South Africans

Thank you for reading

Key icons

For ease of skim reading, I have included icons to help you navigate the eBook.



Do before leaving

Things you can or should do before leaving home



My opinion

Feel free to agree or disagree with my hot takes!



Template

There's a downloadable template for you #yoursowelcome



Specific to South Africans

Applicable mainly/only to Saffas





Why hi there!

Moving to Perth or thinking of heading over? I am so excited for you! My husband and I started dreaming of moving to Perth in 2021 and made it a reality in Jan of 2024. As with any kind of big move, there have been many learnings along the way, so if I can help someone else do it smoother then best believe I will! Bear in mind that we moved from Cape Town, South Africa which has a similar-ish climate and “vibe”, so there might be slightly more nuances depending on where you are from e.g. if you are moving from the Northern hemisphere, or find it to be more of a culture shock than us.

If however you are South African, I have included a section at the end just for you. Wishing you lots of luck with the big move. Please do feel free to get in touch with me if you have any feedback for me on my content: hello@megshollis.com

Special thanks to my brother and sister-in-law, Peter & Linda for teaching us everything we know about Perth, so we can pay it forward now too #BeLikePeteandLinda

Megs x



flying to *Perth*

Flying to Perth

I have flown Singapore Airlines (via Changi airport, Singapore), Emirates (via DXB Dubai International) and Qatar (via Hamad International, Doha) to get from Cape Town, South Africa to Perth, Australia. They are all really world class and I didn't have any complaints, but it's best to check their respective baggage allowances so you are 100% familiar with what luggage you can take:

- [Singapore Airlines baggage allowance](#)
- [Emirates baggage allowance](#)
- [Qatar baggage allowance](#)

Remember not to pack batteries in your check in luggage or big liquids in your hand luggage and read this "[Can you bring it in](#)" Border Force article, especially the [Prescription medication section](#).

You are normally handed a "Passenger Card" by the airline as you board the flight to Aus, so make sure to bring a blue or black pen so you can fill this out from the comfort of the plane.

Passenger card

- Family/surname, given names and passport number
- Flight number or name of ship
- Intended address in Australia
- If they intend to live in Australia for the next 12 months
- Declarations relating to customs and quarantine
- The country in which they boarded the flight/vessel
- Their date of birth and usual occupation
- Nationality as shown on their passport
- Contact details in Australia and emergency contact details



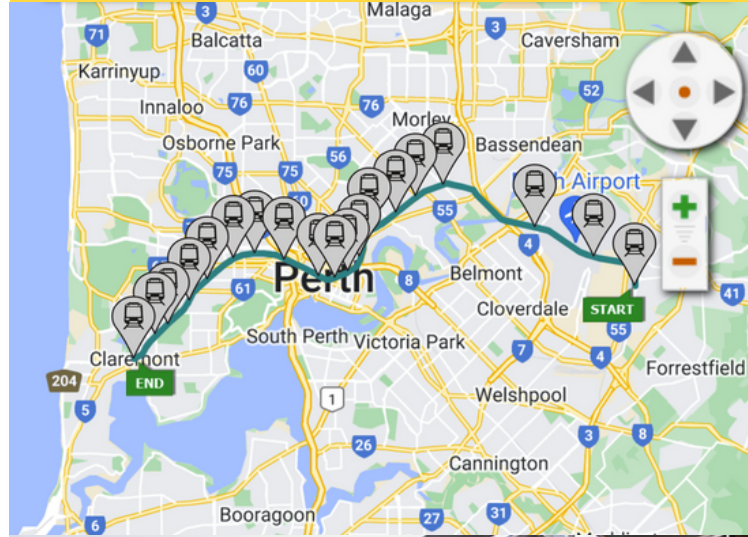
Note for South Africans

- Note that codeine requires a prescription Australia. Make sure you aren't carrying over the counter painkillers which contain codeine (that you don't have a script for) e.g. Myprodol/Genpayne
- I have been asked if I have biltong (when looking at my SA passport, lol) so this is definitely something border patrol know to look for from meat-loving South Africans, just don't do it!
- Our 491-visa was electronically picked up when scanning our passports on the way in, so you don't "need" print outs of your visa, but sometimes the airlines do ask about your visa to make sure you have one, so I would suggest doing it regardless
- It is a very long flight regardless of which route you pick so choose your outfit wisely (best to wear some kind of sneaker and loose/track suit pants, and have something warm for the plane)
- If you have two passports (e.g. SA and British), note that even though your visa may be on your British passport, you still have to stamp out of the country on your South African passport

Arriving in *Perth*

The Perth airport is small and easily navigated!

- If you are worried about knowing which terminal you will arrive to, you can take a look here but I see that Qatar, Singapore Airlines and Emirates all arrive at Terminal 1
- I would suggest booking an Uber ahead of time so you don't have to stress about this, they ask for your flight number so you don't need to worry if the plane is delayed, and there is free WiFi throughout so you can just jump on Uber and confirm you have arrived as you land
- More info on e-hailing services from the Airport here
- You can also look at the public transport options here although if you have a lot of luggage (or arrive late at night), this might not be feasible
- There is a newly constructed train line which runs from the airport to the CBD and on to Claremont
- The airport is in the east of Perth and the train line takes you towards the coast on the west effectively :) You can also easily get out in Perth CBD and catch the train heading North (e.g. Butler) or the train heading South (e.g. Cockburn or Mandurah) so it's pretty nifty if you're feeling adventurous straight off the bat!



In case “Australian Border Patrol” has made you as anxious as it made me to arrive in Aus, it is not actually a nerve-racking process! Just make sure you don't have anything weird and wonderful with you or in your bags, or dirty shoes! You may be asked to walk over a mat to help prevent foot & mouth disease entering Aus, and you get put into three queues, one which you don't have your bag checked, one where you do, and one where they have sniffer dogs, so it's just luck of the draw and none need to make you nervous if you respect the rules :)





your first week *checklist*

Your first week *checklist*

1. Get local SIM card from grocery store

I got the AUD12 Telstra one from Woolworths

2. Get a Transperth card

You can purchase them from an [InfoCentre](#) or [at these retail stores](#)

2. Go to bank to make an appointment to open an account

If you choose ANZ, remember you'll have to make an appointment

3. Get several printouts from bank showing address

You will need this for your driver's license.

4. Apply for Medicare card

You'll need your bank account nr, passport and visa

5. Once your bank card(s) arrive:

- Change your App or Play Store location to Australia so that you can download banking app
- Set up "Autoload" on your Transperth card using your card details, switch your Uber over to your Aus card etc

6. Apply for a Tax File Number (TFN) [All the info is accessible here.](#)

7. Be kind to yourself :) Change is scary.

Getting a *sim card*

- The biggest mobile & Internet providers are Telstra, Optus and Vodafone.
- You can buy SIM cards from the supermarkets (I bought a Telstra one from Woolworths) which you activate online
- I downloaded the app and once I had an Australian bank card, linked this on the app to make recharging easy
- You don't need proof of residence or anything like that which South Africans are used to
- I find the cost of data expensive compared to Singapore/SE Asia, but on par with South Africa
- Telstra pre-paid is about AUD12 for 3GB which I think is a bit of a rip-off, but apparently Telstra has some of the best coverage so maybe that's why it's pricier. But you can look into other options (like Felix) when you are here longer term, and many have uncapped options.



your first month *checklist*

Your first month *checklist*

1. Go to flat/house viewings

Lots more info on this in the “Finding a place to stay” chapter including templates you can adapt.

2. Buy a car

I have included all my experiences & tips for second-hand car shopping, if you decide to get a car.

3. Convert your license into a WA drivers license

You'll need your drivers license, passport, bank letter showing address, and a medicare card for this. You can find more information on the Department of Transport [“DOT” website](#).

4. Look into medical insurance. Note that you need your medicare card in order to do this. Big, trusted options* include:

- a. [Bupa](#)
- b. [Medibank](#)
- c. [Nib](#)
- d. [HBF](#)

*I am by no means a health care expert yet, so please do your own research! From my rudimentary understanding, medical insurance (a) has tax implications and (b) expedites how quickly you receive certain kinds of treatment. From the Bupa website: *If you earn more than \$93,000 as an individual or \$186,000* as a couple or family, you may have to pay the Medicare Levy Surcharge (MLS) if you don't maintain a sufficient level of private hospital cover.*



Getting a *bank* account

All banks in Australia require you to pass a 100 point identification check when opening a bank account. As a result, it seems it's not really that viable to open a bank account prior to arriving, with the exception being Commonwealth Bank which allows you to open one 14 days before you arrive in Australia. Note that going to a bank in person with your passport seems to be sufficient to identify yourself, so don't worry too much about the intricacies of the system, it's more to explain their logic (you don't need your Australian driver's license or anything else fancy).

My husband and I chose to open our bank with ANZ. We went to the Murray Street branch despite its poor reviews on Google Maps, and we had a really positive experience. We popped in, and made an appointment to return the next day. I wasn't sure why you needed an appointment until we were there for about 90 minutes in the consultation! We opened an account each, as well as a joint account, and were assisted by the bank manager who was really kind and personable.

What to take with you to your appointment:

- Your passport
- Your address in Aus
- Your Aus number

Top tips when you go to the bank:

- Be sure to ask the person assisting you to print out three "banking confirmation" letters for you so that you have proof of residence. It can be a friend or family's house or an Airbnb, so it's not exactly watertight, but you will need this for your driver's license :)
- Ask for the SWIFT code of the bank for when you transfer money into the account from your international account
- You will be given a CRN (customer reference number) and be asked to set a password, this is what you use to login to your internet banking



Other *options* apart from ANZ

- You can open a Commonwealth Bank account up to 14 days before you arrive in Australia
- You can open a Westpac Choice everyday bank account and debit card if you have arrived in Australia in the last 12 months
- You can no longer apply for a NAB Bank account before you arrive in Australia

Things to bear *in mind*

- You can't download a banking app (or even some of the car apps) while your Apple Store or Play store is set to another region other than Aus
- AND you can't change the region until you have valid Australian bank account details linked to your phone
- As such, you would have to use the website equivalent (e.g. log onto internet banking using the normal website or use the car website and not the app)



Changing ZAR > AUD



- If you are worried about converting rands into Australian dollars, then I would suggest opening a Shyft account before you leave for Australia
- To use Shyft, you must be a permanent South African resident, a foreign national residing in South Africa, or a Botswana resident, 18 years or older
- You can “buy forex” i.e. exchange your rands for AUD on the app (quickest if you are a Standard Bank user) at a reasonable exchange rate, with a flat rate transaction fee of AUD18, irrespective of the amount of money you are transferring
- For example, today the exchange rate is 12.38 rand to the AUD, and on Shyft the rate is 2.58
- **Why would you do this?** You can monitor the exchange rate in the months and weeks leading up to your departure (with your money in the Shyft account), and not just have to buy as you arrive, and it is likely to be a better rate than a straight transfer



A word of *caution*

- In addition to letting your bank know that you are travelling / emigrating, you also need to be aware of their international transaction fees
- Standard Bank (for example) will charge you for drawing cash at an ATM (in the region of R80 for me) or swiping your card (a % of the transaction fee)
- You will feel like you are “stuck between a rock and a hard place” for a while because it does take some time to get your Australian bank cards posted to you, so even if you have opened your bank account, you may still be waiting for your money to clear and/or for the actual cards
- There is no real way to get around this, as I wouldn't say “cash is king” in Aus. Especially post-COVID, you very rarely see people paying cash. But maybe having AUD200 back up (in case your card gets blocked or doesn't work for whatever reason) and shutting your eyes each time you swipe until you get your Aussie card is the only real option. There are much better international options for the non-South Africans e.g. Monzo I know is very popular as a great travel card for people from the UK

Financial emigration

- You'll definitely be contemplating financial emigration as you leave your country and when you arrive in WA but we are still way away from any clarity here
- We consulted with an financial emigration advisor to understand the basics, with anything money-related you can truly never be too cautious
- I will definitely share more info in the future when this part of the move is less terrifying to me!
- There are great resources out there about Financial Emigration, and practitioners who can advise on your specific circumstances, and explain tax implications in more detail
- I found this read very insightful "[Tax Emigration from South Africa: What You Need To Know](#)"





Getting around *Perth*

Public Transport



The most convenient way to get around on public transport (Transperth) is with a SmartRider card. You can purchase them from an InfoCentre or at these retail stores. They cost AUD10 and you can load a minimum of AUD10 onto them (AUD20 total). They allow you to “tap and ride” on buses, trains and even the ferry.

Plus, just by using it you get a 10% discount off every fare. You get an additional 10% off when you set up “Auto reload” which is when you link your bank card on the app, and when your balance gets low, it will debit your card to ensure you never run out of credit. Most of the time though, the remaining balance appears on a screen as you tap it so you can remember to top up if you would prefer not to link a bank card.

Here are all the ways you can check your balance for your SmartRider card.

Google Maps has gotten so advanced that it is usually the easiest way to pick a route, so you can see whether train, bus, walking, cycling or driving is best. However, I would definitely also suggest downloading the Transperth app. If not for planning your route, then its live tracker is a gamechanger. You can see live data, so it feels more like waiting for your Uber than anything else ;)



How much does public transport cost?

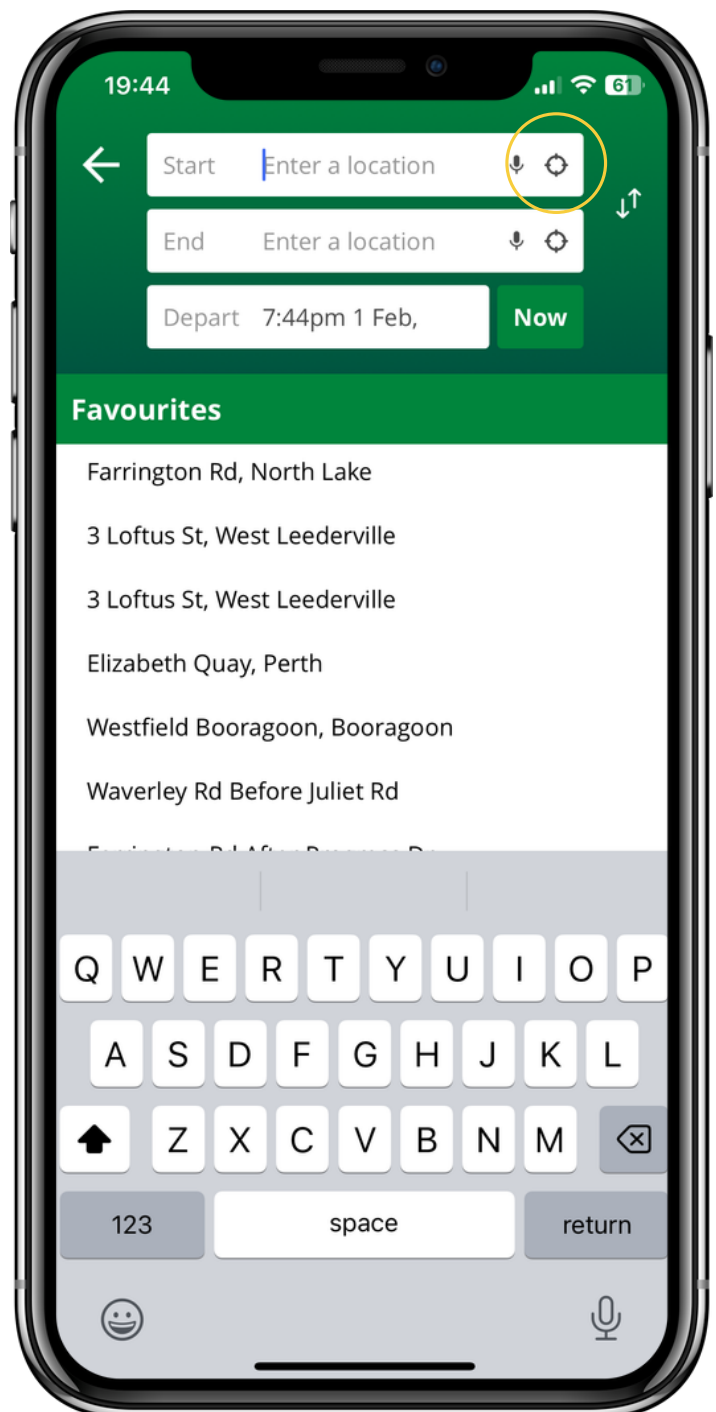
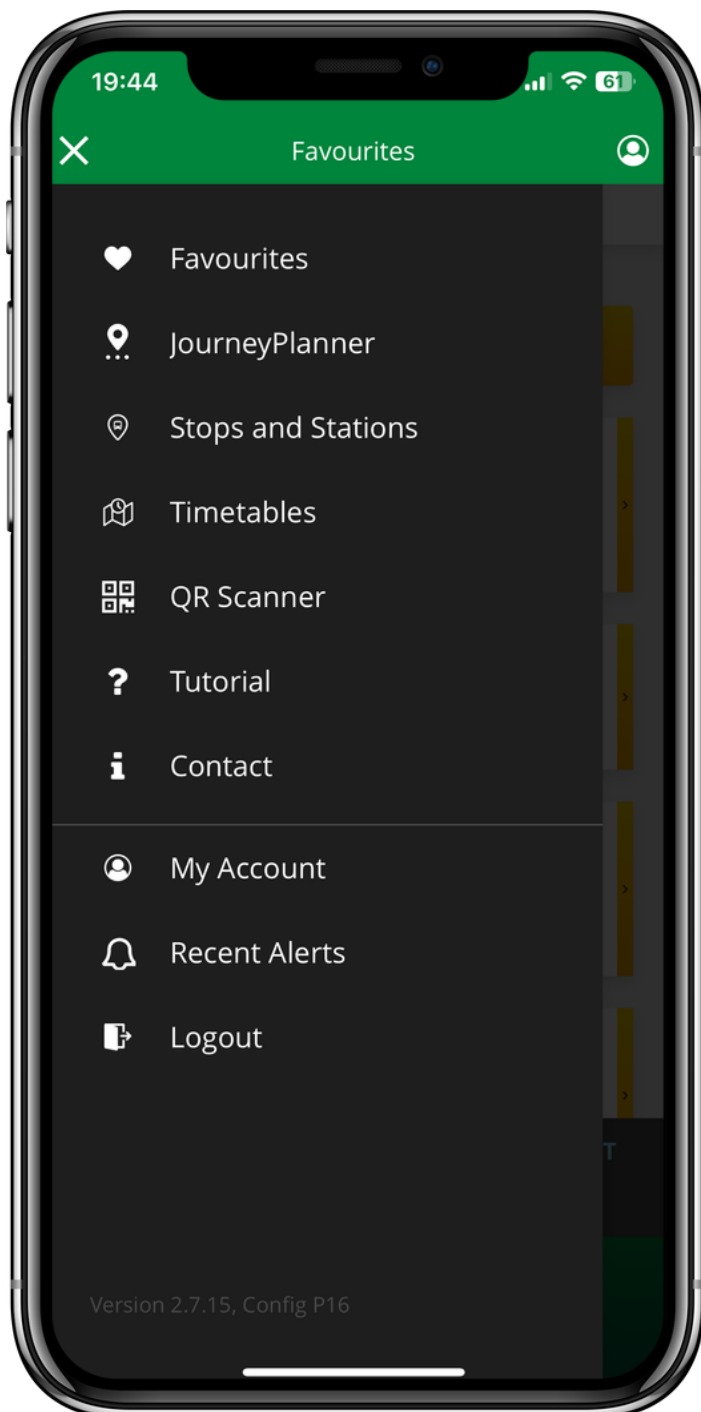
Transperth’s public transport service area is divided into nine zones, which are defined by circles centred on Perth city. Note that despite this, all journeys on the Transperth system are capped at a two-zone fare.

- If you travel within the one zone, you will be charged a one-zone fare
- If you travel over a zone boundary into another zone (or through literally all nine zones!), you will be charged a two-zone fare
- Note that Perth City has a Free Transit Zone (FTZ) for buses and a SmartRider FTZ for trains.

Transperth App

The Transperth app allows you to plan your journey (like Google Maps) but has more granular information as you may expect. You can easily work out things like the closest bus or train station using it, and live data is accessible to see if your bus or train is running late.

TOP TIP: Not sure where you are? Just use the circle button to use your GPS location. And don't forget to favourite the main stops you are likely to need. The bus stations have quite long names like X Street after Y Street, so I like to do this before I head out.



Top tips when catching a *bus*

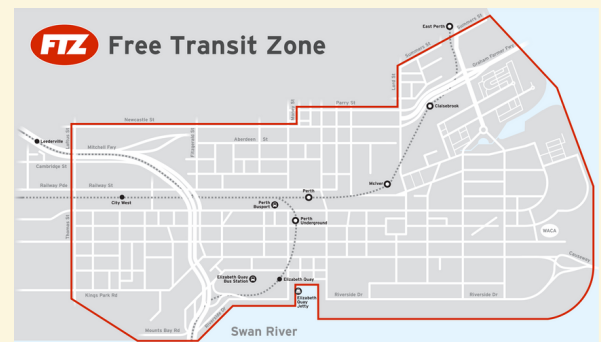
- Buses won't stop unless you hail them or someone in the bus pushes the button, and the buses zip through the streets at a rather alarming speed. In the suburbs, they are often on pretty major roads and I worry that I won't stand up in time to hail it. If I use the live tracking feature on the Transperth app, I can stand up and take my Transperth card out while the bus is at the previous station for example.
- Unless it's a free CAT bus, always get on at the front of the bus. You can get off at the front or the back, but the bus driver has to monitor that you have tagged on, so you're likely to get in trouble by trying to get on in the middle (this is likely to be more obvious if you come from a country with lots of public transport but might not come as naturally to those of us who didn't)
- Try to always greet the bus driver, and say thank you when you get off. You'll notice this is super common and most of the time, the drivers are pretty friendly or at least smile at you when you do this.
- Give up your seat for the elderly or to someone who needs it more than you (e.g. a pregnant woman, someone with a child etc)
- You can pay cash to the bus driver if you don't have a ticket but not only is this extremely uncommon, you also won't get change! (This is since COVID and they want to avoid handling cash)



Bus



CAT Bus



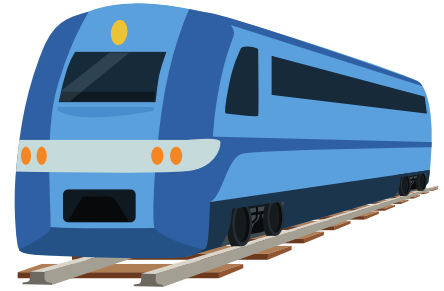
FTZ

Map accessible here.

- Two things which may confuse you :)
- All CAT buses are free, but not all free buses are CAT's (inner city buses can also be free if they are in the FTZ or free transit zone).
- Regardless of the "colour" of the CAT line (red/purple/yellow), the CAT on the side of the bus is always black ;)

Top tips when catching a *train*

- The tap-off machines aren't always super obvious! At the major stations like Perth station, Elizabeth Quay etc you typically go through a turnstile. But at smaller stations like West Leederville, City West etc it's basically just on a pole. If you don't tag off I think you are billed the max amount for the ride, so it's definitely not a habit you want to get into!
- The carriages in the middle are the ones which line up with the escalators in the bigger stops. This means that they are the busiest! ;) It's normally better to get on the first or last carriage if you don't mind walking a bit further.
- When you catching an escalator up or down to a train station, remember to stand to the left or pass on the right. People are often in a rush either to get to work or get to their train, so almost everyone will do this to avoid getting in someone's way, and it becomes very obvious who the foreigners are :)



Catching the *ferry*

- There are three ferries (the MV Phillip Vendal, MV Shelley Taylor-Smith and MV Tricia) which make up to 134 trips a day depending on the season
- They all go the same route, and run between Elizabeth Quay and South Perth and you can use your normal Transperth card to catch them
- Incredibly, there is just one person operating the ferry, so it is and has to be a very slick operation getting people on and off

Bikes / eBikes / eScooters

- You can't take a bike on a bus, but you can take it on a train at off-peak times or the ferry at any time.
- Peak periods are Monday to Friday between:
 - 7.00am and 9.00am (travelling towards the city)
 - 4.30pm and 6.30pm (travelling away from the city)
- No bicycles are allowed to enter Perth, Perth Underground or Elizabeth Quay stations during peak times. The closest alternative stations are City West, Canning Bridge, Leederville and McIver
- You can take an e-scooter on a bus, scooter or ferry provided it is folded and the maximum dimensions are no more than 120cm x 68cm x 40cm, and you aren't allowed to enter Perth, Perth Underground or Elizabeth Quay stations during peak times

Rent an e-scooter

The City of Perth has an E-Scooter Share Scheme (ESS).

They've partnered with Beam Mobility and Neuron Mobility (Australia) to trial the scheme for two years. You can hire an e-scooter from more than 80 sites across the City. (I believe you pay per 15 min)

How do I use an e-Scooter?

Simply download an app and follow the instructions, our partners have everything you need:

[Beam Mobility](#)
[Neuron Mobility \(Australia\)](#)



beam

neuron

E-Hailing e.g. Uber / Didi

- Uber works perfectly here! Seems to often be university students who drive you. You can prearrange an airport Uber, which is what we did (because we landed at night so trains and buses weren't an option). It would work out to be an expensive way around longer term but if convenience is what you are after then go for it!
- If you are catching it from the Perth airport, just walk out the terminal and turn left and there is a designated e-hailing section.
- I haven't tried Didi but it often comes up as an option on Google Maps when public transport doesn't take you exactly where you need to go.

How 'good' is Perth's *public transport?*

What amazed me is that people criticise the public transport system in Perth. I would find it very hard to find fault with a system which offers free rides on a Sunday (used to be first Sunday of every month, this has recently changed), is air conditioned and takes you 95% of the places you want to go :)

Perhaps if you come from Japan or somewhere with an even more sophisticated train infrastructure then I can understand, but from someone who has lived in Germany and Switzerland and has ridden the metro in France, Dubai, and Singapore, I have been really impressed by it. I have never experienced a bus or train being more than 5-10 minutes late.

Minor and I mean **really** minor comments would be it's best to avoid travelling during commuting hours (if you want a quiet trip) and if you are in the suburbs and catching a bus around 3pm, they sometimes slightly deviate to pick up school children from neighbourhood schools. Mainly, all that strikes me when this happens is how incredible it is to live in a safe country where kids can catch public transport by themselves ;)



Buying a *second-hand car*

Although the public transport is very good, there are still major perks of buying a car! Main drivers (see what I did there) of this are:

- If you do site work or visit clients (might not always be convenient or possible without a car)
- If you want to pick up Facebook marketplace purchases on the regular ;)
- If grocery shopping on the bus feels a bit ambitious

There are plenty of car websites (which I have ranked in order of personal preference) including:



John Hughes



Easy Auto 123



CarGiant



Carsales.com.au



Cars4You

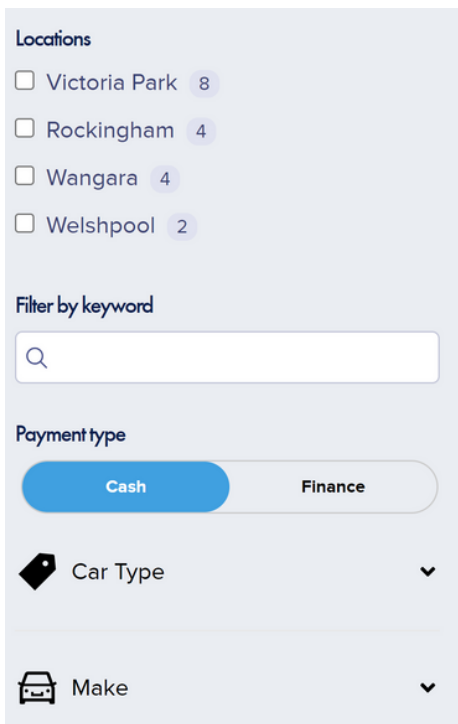
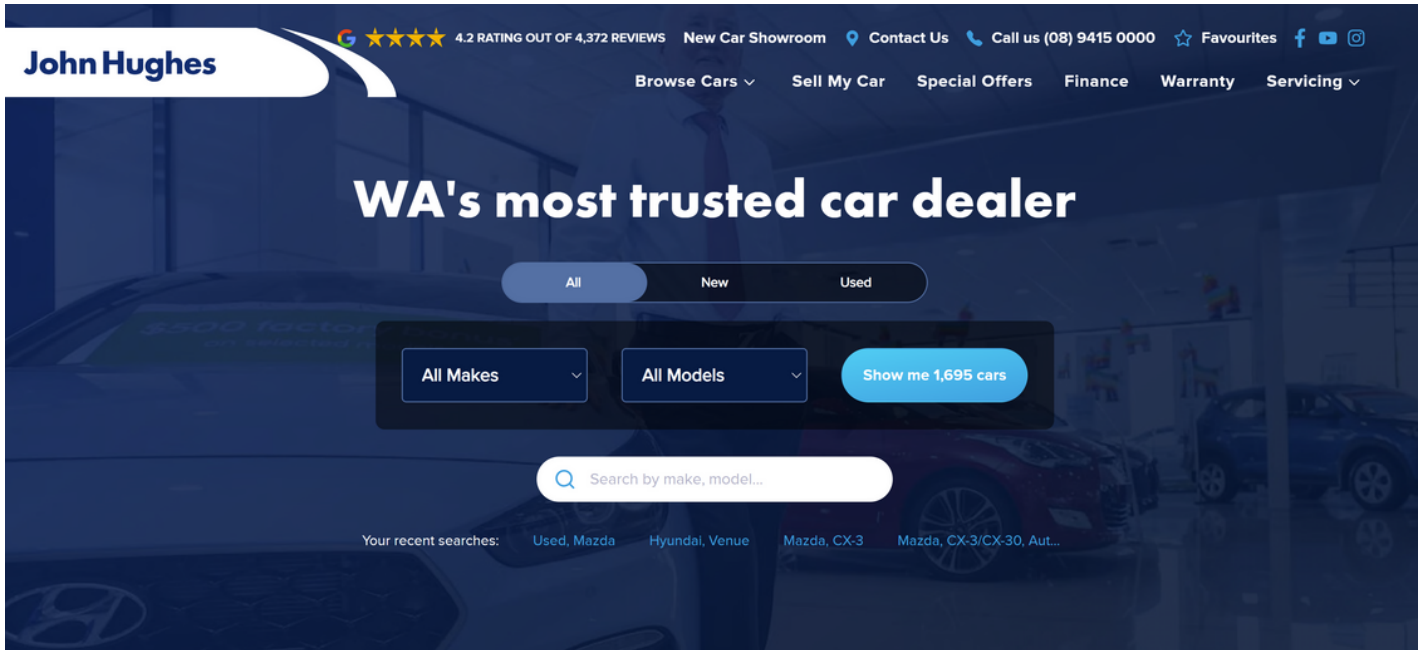
Top tips

- **Small SUVs, large SUVs and “utes” are what seem to be most common, with popular brands being Toyota, Mazda, Ford, KIA, Suzuki etc**
- **Budget friendly options include a lot of MG's. Fancier options include Teslas, Mercs, BMWs etc.**
- Don't buy into the naysayers of “Perth is the most isolated city in the world” **unless** it comes to trying to get your hands on a car ;)
- Buying new is likely to result in a 3-6 month wait, and as a result, the second-hand market can also get red hot
- Manual cars are not very popular in Aus, if you are looking for a steal and know how to drive “stick” as the Americans say, then this is one way of getting a better deal
- Again, totally my own opinion but I would suggest looking for cars with less than 60 000km, with a full service history and which were not smoked in. If the vibe feels “off” then trust your gut
- We went to an unnamed dealership (not unnamed because I am trying to protect them, unnamed because I don't think they want you to know the business name) and there were resprays, cars which had clearly been in accidents that have tried to be covered up, and when you asked about service history were told to check the cubby. Um, no.



John Hughes

John Hughes website is one of the most user friendly and their service is incredible, so this is the route I would try first if you value premium service and someone who will take the time to understand what it is that you want and need from a second-hand car.



- If you do choose to go with John Hughes, use the search filters on their website to tick Victoria Park (most central) and Welshpool (less central but very doable). Wangara and Rockingham are further out so unless you feel up for a trek, these are slightly less convenient (although of course totally worth it if you need to broaden your search). I would suggest asking for Han (pronounced Haa-hn) from Vic Park and Alex from Welshpool if you can :) They were both lovely.
- It's best to look at what is available on the website first before visiting a branch as the car salespeople use the same website to find what you are looking for (could be awkward just dictating the search terms with no idea of what it might show you) so it's good to have a reference point, even if it's a car marked as sold
- The salesperson can check what is coming into stock and if you are willing to put down an AUD500 hold fee, they won't load that car onto the website until you have seen it (like right of first refusal). We noticed that cars sold very quickly, so if you are able, this is a good method to at least take the first look. We were very specific on colour and model so this made most sense to us.



Financing

- Unless you have Australian payslips to show, financing won't be possible and you will need to pay cash
- You can pay with your bank card for a car (which is something you would never do in South Africa!) provided your limit accounts for this
- You are likely to need an additional AUD2k over and above the purchase price of your car, to cover insurance costs and "rego" (registration)
- Definitely Google how this works in more detail!
- When people refer to the DOT they are referring to the Department of Transport
- There is a DOT in West Perth

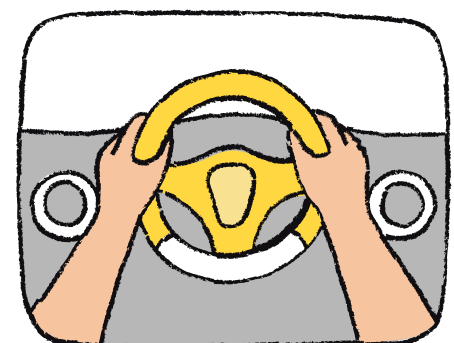
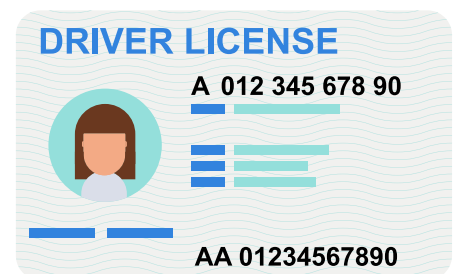


Viewing a Car

- It is by far the easiest to phone ahead with the reference number for the 1-3 cars you are interested in
- This way, the sales person can confirm if they are still available or not, and will usually make sure the car is accessible for you when you arrive and not parked in
- Due to the size of the warehouses (they are huge!), it's pretty difficult to arrive without having researched the stock they have, and you can spend more time with the handful of the cars you are genuinely keen on
- The one thing I did find a bit frustrating (though this is probably true of second hand car dealerships worldwide) is that they never make any mention of imperfections on the car. I don't mean minor cosmetic damage, I mean (can you tell I am speaking from experience), that the front and rear bumper is damaged and a section of the service book has been torn out... LOL.
- CHECK THE SERVICE BOOK, and photograph where it has been serviced so you can see (a) if the car is from Perth (b) if it was taken to a crusty mechanic or to a reputable service spot
- Ask if the car has both the key and the spare key ;)
- On the whole, the darker cars we looked at (e.g. dark red/grey/navy) tended to fare worse to stonechip damage (guessing this is from rural driving) than the white / silver cars (which are also cooler). White cars definitely seem to be the most popular, and it's no wonder why :)

Test Driving a Car

- Some of the dealerships will let you go for a test drive by yourself (both John Hughes Vic Park and Welshpool) but the salesperson came with us for drives at EasyAuto123 and CarGiant
- They don't mind that you have a foreign license, so don't worry about needing an Aus license yet
- Sometimes they will photocopy your license before you drive the car, other times they don't even ask to see it



Tips for driving a car

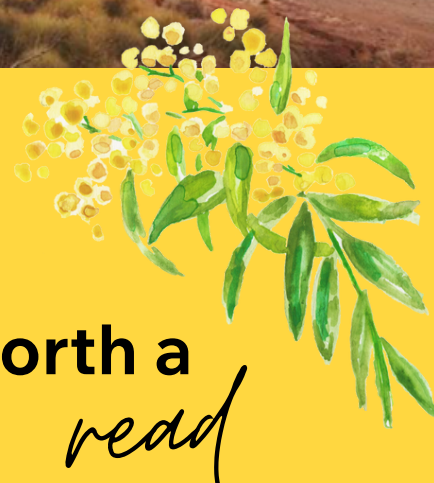
- Australia drives on the left hand side of the road, same as the UK/South Africa
- Get a phone mount. You are not allowed to look at your phone while driving, even to look at Google Maps
- If you are South African, bear in mind that “robots” = traffic lights and “roundabouts” = traffic circles here
- During the public holiday long weekends, there are double demerit points from Thursday night till Monday morning. The police will have a stronger public presence during this time and booze buses will be stationed at many stretches of road
- Parking charges can be paid using street side parking ticket machines. Be sure to display your ticket on the dashboard after you have bought it. Also note that there are time limits which you cannot exceed in the particular location, this can vary from anything between 15 minutes to three hours

What's the *difference?*

- I can only comment on the difference between driving in South Africa and driving in Australia, so not all of the below will be applicable to non-South Africans.
- The main difference is that while we are used to turning on a green light after checking no cars are coming, here they rely on a green **arrow** for safety most of the time
- SA defaults to 60kmph/80kmph/120kmph most of the time, here it is normally 50kmph/80kmph/110kmph
- They are also fond of “traffic calming” opposed to speed bumps. This means that you have to pay close attention to when you need to yield to oncoming traffic, as a two-way road becomes a one-way road (and they sometimes do this three times in a row, where sometimes you yield and sometimes you go. Ick! Make sure to watch the signs to know who needs to stop
- There are less pedestrians walking on the roads in Aus, but also far fewer traffic “zebra” crossings, which means walking near roads can feel a bit hazardous (would be lovely if the approach was a bit more pedestrian friendly but sadly that’s not really the case here)

How fast can I drive?

- Within the city centre and suburbs, the speed limit is 50 kph unless otherwise indicated (i.e. 60 or 70 kph)
- On the freeway, speed limits range from 80 kph to 100 kph
- When you're further from any town/city centre, speed limits can rise to 110 kph (these limits are indicated on road signs)



Worth a *read*

- [How to fill up with fuel](#)
- [Demerit Points](#)
- [Regional Driving Conditions](#)



finding a place to *stay*

For short term stays, Airbnb is the usual option, and is probably a good idea while you familiarise yourself with Perth and which neighbourhoods you may wish to live in. Once you are starting to think about a longer term lease, head to [Property.com.au](https://www.property.com.au) or download their app.

Narrowing down suburbs

Everyone will have their own opinion on the “best” place to stay in Perth, but in my opinion, there are plenty of incredible options. Below is purely based on my opinion, so feel free to agree or disagree with me!

I would suggest considering the following three variables when making a housing decision:

- 1. Size**
- 2. Accessibility/convenience**
- 3. Budget**

For example, my husband and I wanted a 2-3 bedroom apartment/villa/townhouse which is close to both trains and buses (as we would be sharing a car, meaning someone would need to take public transport to work), with a rough budget AUD500-600 weekly (note the rent is quoted in weeks and not months here!) This resulted in the following shortlisted suburbs for us: Subiaco, West Perth, Como, South Perth. This would likely be very different as soon as you have different priorities than us!

To contrast this completely, my brother lives in the south of Perth. He loves it because of its proximity to Bibra Lake, how quiet it is and the fact that you aren't on top of your neighbours. Although we LOVED staying with him, you need to either bus-then-train or bike-then-train it to get into town (approx 30 min - 1 hour). He drives a car to work as he works on sites, so being closer to town is neither practical nor affordable for someone who loves lots of space and doesn't want to hear their neighbours. If you have kids, it's also a strong argument for the suburbs in the south.

It's a good idea to look at the address on Google Maps and toggle to Streetview to get a better understanding of the area and suss out proximity to things like:

- **Bus stations (and which routes run from them)**
- **Train stations (and which routes run from them)**
- **Cycle paths**
- **Parks and beaches**
- **Shops and malls**
- **Freeways & Highways! For example, parts of Como are right on a major freeway (Canning or Kwinana), which results in a lot of noise.**

Letter of *recommendation*

If you are currently renting, I would strongly suggest asking your landlord to write you a letter of recommendation that you can attach to your new application. I have included something along the lines of what we wrote (and asked our landlord to tweak & sign), but is really just intended to give you the gist of what to say. You can always use ChatGPT to write your own version of this one, [accessible in G Docs here](#).



To whom it may concern.

Re: Letter of Recommendation for XXX and XXX

I am writing this letter to highly recommend XXX and XXX as kind and considerate tenants. They have been residing in my property for the past X and X years respectively, and throughout this time, they have proven to look after the flat, keeping it clean, tidy and well-maintained.

They treated the property as if it were their own, and took great pride in their living space, promptly reporting any issues and ensuring that necessary repairs were carried out timeously.

They were always happy to liaise with plumbers, electricians, painters or gate technicians as needed.

They also love gardening over the weekends, and planted native, water-wise plants in the front and back gardens, and in pots surrounding the flat.

In addition, they consistently paid their rent on time, and their communication with me has always been open, transparent and respectful.

They vacated the flat in XXX, and it was left meticulously clean, without any damages. I can wholeheartedly recommend XXX and XXX as reliable, responsible, and trustworthy tenants.

Sincerely,

Letter of *Motivation*

In addition to your letter of recommendation, you can also motivate why you want a particular property. Again, because I want to help you get your dream spot, I have included a draft one so that you can draw some inspiration.



Hi there,

LETTER OF MOTIVATION

I trust this letter finds you well. My husband and I are writing to express our keen interest in renting the [Flat Address] in Perth. Having carefully reviewed the property details and its suitability for our needs, we are excited about the possibility of making it our home. Having just relocated from Cape Town, South Africa, after getting married in December, we are really looking forward to a quiet nest to call our own.

As dedicated professionals), we believe that our commitment to cleanliness, responsibility, and pride in our living space aligns perfectly with what you as a landlord may hope for.

We are tidy and considerate individuals who take great care in ensuring our living environment is not only aesthetically pleasing but also well-maintained. I have included photos of our previous home for reference.

We are conscious of the impact of our habits on our surroundings and fellow residents, and we can assure you that our lifestyle choices contribute to creating a pleasant and harmonious living atmosphere. This includes being non-smokers who spend a lot of time outdoors hiking, kayaking and running.

One of our shared passions is gardening, and we find joy in cultivating green spaces. We would be more than happy to contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of any outdoor areas associated with the flat (anything which requires a Bunnings trip, we are in!). We also do not have any pets.

You can expect timely rent payments and adherence to all rental agreements and have attached a letter of recommendation from our previous landlord, XXX.

We would be delighted to discuss our application further or provide any additional information that may be required.

Thank you for considering our application.

Tips to securing a *place*

- Attend inspections as soon as possible
 - Make sure you attend the first advertised inspection for a rental property
 - If you miss it, somebody might get accepted for the property before you even get a chance to view it
 - Where a property doesn't have inspection times listed, be proactive and contact the property manager to arrange a viewing as soon as possible
- Put your best foot forward & consider what the landlord might be looking for
 - Be friendly, polite and presentable
 - Even if you miss out, a property manager will keep you in mind for any future rentals
 - When viewing the property, take some time to talk to the property manager/leasing agent and let them know how your situation would suit the property
- Account for your rental history
 - Tenant checks provide property managers with all the necessary information to determine your tenancy viability
- Prepare your paperwork
 - Property managers get inundated with applications for rentals in a competitive market, therefore, the first viable applications may be presented to the landlord quickly
 - Application forms can usually be found online, allowing you to fill them out before the inspection and hand in on the same day
 - As well as the completed application form, make sure you have copies of your identification, proof of income, previous utility accounts, and references on hand
- Write a cover letter
 - A cover letter isn't standard practice for a rental application; however, it could be helpful. Give a fuller picture of yourself and your situation, reiterating your viability and explaining any gaps or breaches in your rental history



Tips to securing a *place*

- **Prepare your references**
 - The final step property managers take in the tenant decision process is to check references
 - As a courtesy, it's good practice to inform your referees ahead of time
 - A landlord is unlikely to ring a reference more than twice if they don't answer, so consider providing a few extra references as a contingency
- **Prepare your finances**
 - Make sure you have your bond and the required number of weeks' rent ready in advance
 - You may tick all the boxes during the rental application and reference process, but you will miss out on securing the property if you don't have the funds ready
 - Paying the bond and deposit, or initial rent, will be the final step in securing the property, along with signing the tenancy agreement
- **Be responsive**
 - Once you've applied for a property, be on standby ready to respond to calls or emails from the property manager or get back to them as soon as you can, and make sure you have got everything ready if you are approved
 - If you are approved for a property and have other applications pending, make sure you withdraw any other applications quickly so as not to waste anyone's time or have other prospective tenants thinking they have missed out on the property
- **Rental scam warning signs**
 - If you're asked for a viewing fee, a holding fee to secure a property, or any other kind of upfront fee (usually in the form of an electronic transfer), STOP IMMEDIATELY. This isn't standard practice and is deeply suspect.

Summarized from this article:



10 tips for securing a rental in a tight market

There's a rental crisis happening in many parts of the country right now, with vacancies at historic lows. Here are our 10 tips to help you find and secure a rental in a tight market.

 Belle Property / Mar 8, 2023



Finding a *job*

Finding a *job*

It's an impossible feat to write anything that would be applicable to anyone job hunting in Perth as it is going to greatly depend on industry, experience, connections and much more. But I will try my best!

Job platforms



- I have used LinkedIn jobs, Seek and jobs.wa.gov.au (for government jobs) the most. I would suggest using the mobile app versions so you can keep up to date with new listings and save listings you're interested in, so you can revisit them when you have time to write a cover letter.
- Many of the job applications ask for a 1, 2 or even 3 page cover letter which can feel exhausting, but they are really important.
- For the non-government jobs, I would suggest using the keywords for the core responsibilities they have mentioned in the ad and compile a strong argument as to why you think you are the right candidate
- For the government jobs, they make it really clear what they want the cover letter to address usually, which makes this a bit easier (or at least, more specific)
- In Australia, it's illegal for employers to ask you about by your age, gender, marital status, religion, sexual orientation and nationality. Make sure you keep your personal information to just your name and contact details.*
- Employers typically take 6-7 seconds to decide if they want to read or pass on your CV. If they glance at your CV and see a lot of unnecessary information, that isn't good for you.
- Many recruiters in Australia use Applicant Tracking System software, when processing digital resumes. This software doesn't recognise graphics, and can get confused when tables, charts, or images are included in your CV.
- You have to accept that there will be some loss of context when an Australian is reviewing a non-Australian CV, that is why universal certifications are so NB. For me (in digital marketing) this means doing certifications from Meta, Google and Shopify).

SOURCE: [7 Checks to Format Your Australian CV](#)

Recruiters

I have never had much luck working with recruiters, including getting in touch with them in Australia. However, I am sure depending on your industry they may be more or less important.

Common ones you see listing jobs:

- Michael Page
- Hays

“Australia is an egalitarian society. You are not respected based on your position or the amount of money you have. You are respected because you are honest, dependable and modest.” - Quora

I loved this quote I found [in a Quora forum](#). I find Australians are less title obsessed are more about the work, which is very refreshing. Perth especially strikes me as more “blue collar” than “white collar”.

Other musings

- I anticipated that people would want more context where I have previously worked as they won't recognise the company names
- Things I would say in an interview:
 - My previous role was working for Yuppiefchef. It's very similar to your **Kitchen Warehouse**.
 - I worked as Digital Marketing Manager for the V&A Waterfront. **It's the largest tourism destination in Africa.**
 - I am fascinated by Australia's ecommerce market. According to the 2023 Inside Australia Online Shopping Report, Australia is the 12th largest eComm market in the world. **In South Africa we only rank in the 50s!**
- Can you spot the pattern? I've done research to "mind the gap" of any possible differences and pre-emptively managed what could otherwise be a more awkward conversation
- It's really important outside of the job hunt, too. When I caught a flight to Perth with my parents on Singapore Airlines, I overheard the lady in front of me (rudely) asking for "Five Roses" (a particular South African tea brand) and becoming progressively more rude as the (Singaporean) air hostess stared at her blankly. The moral of the story is that things are different here! Learn to laugh it off, and clarify what you meant in universal terms.
- On the contrary, in interviews I have had, people have asked questions like, "would you feel comfortable if a client got you on the blower for a yarn?" You have to have some level of understanding of Australian slang to manage these!
 - The blower = the phone
 - Have a yarn = have a chat
 - Crack the shits = lose your temper
 - Smoko = cigarette break
 - Loads of [Ozzie slang for you here](#), who am I kidding, I am no expert.
- The good news? Laughing is universal. In the wise words of Taylor Swift, you gotta shake it off.

"When I caught a flight to Perth with my parents on Singapore Airlines, I overheard the lady in front of me (rudely) asking for "Five Roses" (a particular South African tea brand) and becoming progressively more rude as the (Singaporean) air hostess stared at her blankly. The moral of the story is that things are different here! Learn to laugh it off, and clarify what you meant in universal terms."





Shopping & other *essentials*

Supermarkets

I have always been very impressed by Australian grocery stores. Expensive as they may first seem on arriving, they also strike me as being clean, mostly well-stocked and there is also both a big focus on local (e.g. WA dairy products and meats) and health (if you love kombucha, it's imperative you move here immediately).

I have broken down the major shops below:

- [Aldi](#) (considered the cheapest place to shop)
- [Woolworths](#) (probably my top pick of store, mainly because it reminds me most of South African grocery stores)
- IGA (independent, sort of like a Spar if you are familiar with that)
- [Coles](#) (kind of neither here nor there for me. Some things are cheaper here than Woolworths, other more expensive).

Self check-out

This might be par for the course if you are from somewhere like Singapore, but self-check out is super popular here! As the cost of labour is high in Australia, anything which can be DIY, will be. There is almost always someone to assist you if you get stuck, but you normally scan an item, put it on the scale on the other side, scan your next item, put it on the scale etc.

If you are not familiar with this process, you may well put your whole bag of groceries on the scale side first (rookie error!) or if you're like my dad, try to hold the grocery bag's handles while it's on the scale side (it is weighing things to check that you are buying whatever you have scanned the tag of, so anything which prevents it doing this will likely result in you feeling like a bit of a tit).

Reduce, reuse, recycle

Don't forget your shopping bags and your [reusable bags for vegetables and fruit](#). Plastic is sooo last year, and don't the Australians know it!



“A basket of 46 commonly bought goods at Aldi would set a shopper back \$199.69, the data shows, whereas a comparable shop at Woolworths costs \$208.85 and \$214.32 at Coles.”

- It pays to shop around for the cheapest groceries, Finder data reveals



Interesting Reads:

- [It pays to shop around for the cheapest groceries, Finder data reveals](#)
- ['How much more expensive can it get?': We compared the price of the same shopping basket over a 12-month period](#)

Clothes shopping

Best places to check prices for clothing:

- [Kmart](#)
- [Target](#)
- [Big W](#)
- [Meyer](#)
- [Runway the Label](#)
- [White Fox Boutique](#)

Furnishing your house

- When we ran the numbers, we realised that the premium you pay for a furnished place in Perth just wasn't worth it for us. Of course, if you came to Perth solo or want somewhere to rest your weary head immediately then it does make sense but we found that furniture can be found affordably and we sought comfort in the idea of making a home with a comfy set up of our own doing.
- If you choose this route, I can highly recommend Facebook Marketplace and Kmart. You would be surprised with what you can pick up for AUD50 through either option! Other cheap-ish options include Amart. More pricey option: Freedom and Aclairs.

FB Marketplace

- It is far more common to list things for free on FB Marketplace compared to South Africa. I am sure the safety factor plays into things, but it's also a big part of Aussie culture to put things on the verge so people can take what they need for free
- Or people do a combination, popping something on the verge and then listing it on FB Marketplace so more people have the chance to see it
- Of course, you are somewhat constrained by your mode of transport, but I have seen in vlogs that people might rent a ute (small truck or bakkie if you are South African) and collect a few things in one day
- You can also get a [trailer from Bunnings](#), so that might be an option worth exploring
- There are also ["Buying nothing" FB groups](#)



My favourite malls are:

- Booragoon Mall
- Hay Street Mall
- Watertown Brand Outlet Centre

I also love thrifting clothes and have been using [Depop](#) to do so :)

I type in label brands I love like "Never fully dressed" and "Runway the Label" to see what I can score. Delivery is typically AUD10 so you just have to factor that into the costs (more economical to bundle).



Buying Appliances in Perth

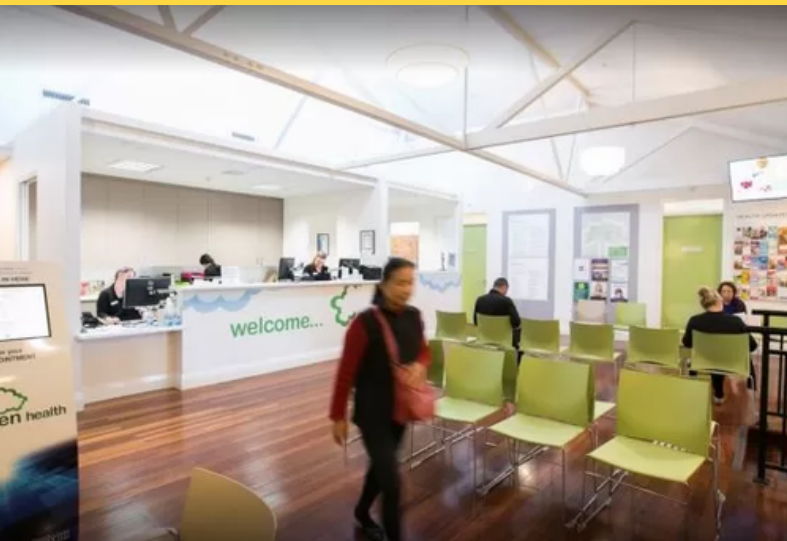
- [Good Guys](#)
- [Harvey Norman](#)
- [Kitchen Warehouse](#)

Buying Electronics in Perth

- [Amazon](#)
- [JB Hifi](#)
- [Retravision](#)

Doctors in Perth

If you want to easily book an appointment online Monday-Sunday (yup, you read that right) then [Ellen Health](#) is a super convenient option. They are a multidisciplinary team of 30+ doctors, specialists, psychologists, and seven registered nurses. I went to [Dr. Poplawski](#) and he was really lovely, but each have different specialties so it's probably best to take a look at their [team](#) or if it's urgent, find someone with the next available appointment. Bear in mind if you do go on the weekend, you pay about AUD110 for an appointment, where I believe a normal consultation is more like AUD75 or so.





Things to *do*

Things to do

Absolute best sources of fun things to do see and do are PerthisOk and UrbanList Perth. They are trendy and up to date!

- [PerthisOk](#)
- [UrbanList Perth](#)

Best brekkie spots

- [The Best Breakfast Spots in Perth](#)
- [The Best Cafes in Perth](#)
- [The 40 Best Perth Breakfasts To Start 2024 Right](#)

Foodie favourites

- [54 Perth Restaurants To Tick Off In 2024](#)
- [Perth's Best Bottomless Brunches, Lunches And More](#)
- [The Best Fremantle Restaurants To Dine At Right Now](#)
- [The 20 Best Margaret River Wineries To Sip At Right Now](#)
- [The Best Perth Happy Hours And Meal Deals To Hit In 2024](#)
- [Perth's best sports bars](#)
- [The best cheap eats around Perth](#)

Other fun ideas

- [50 Awesome Things To Do In Perth](#)
- [The best beaches close to Perth](#)
- [The best Farmers' Markets around Perth](#)
- [20 Things To Do With Kids In Perth Right Now](#)
- [20 Of Perth's Best Family Friendly Restaurants To Take The Kids](#)
- [11 Of Perth's Best Kid Friendly Cafes To Get Your Caffeine Fix](#)

URBAN LIST

Perth is OK!

My faves

- [All my favourite spots from my visits to Perth \(vlog\)](#)
- [Yanchep National Park](#)
- [Picnic Boat](#)
- [Tamara Yoga](#) (amazing Yin yoga)
- [Orienteering](#)

Freeo faves

- [Cappuccino Strip](#)
- [Fremantle Markets](#)
- [Bread in Common](#)
- [Bib & Tucker](#)

Free & fab

- [Perth Hills](#)
- [Mundarig Weir](#)
- [Heirisson Island](#)
- [City of Perth Library](#)
- [Matagarup Bridge](#)
- [Cycling around Bibra Lake](#)
- [South Beach](#)
- [Blue Boat House](#)
- [Kings Park](#)

Wishlist

- [Rottneet Island](#)
- [Omeo Wreck \(Coogee\)](#)
- [Indigo Oscar \(Cottesloe\)](#)
- [Rent SUPs](#)
- [Bike Bar \(Applecross & Claremont\)](#)
- [Little Creatures Brewery](#)
- [Pay as you feel Yoga in Hyde Park](#)
- [ColdNips \(Early Wed swims\)](#)



Libraries in Perth

Where to begin! Perth has amazing libraries, including:

- City of Perth Library
- State Library of Western Australia

I have provided brief overviews of both for you :)

City of Perth Library

Pretty much my favourite place in Perth, if I am honest! You don't need to sign up for anything to sit and use their wifi here, grab a coffee from their cafe or snuggle up to a great book. They have a remarkably contemporary collection (like latest bestsellers) and the building is seriously incredible. You can follow them on Facebook to find out latest events and announcements. I have seen things like free English lessons and more, so it's really an amazing way to dial into the community here. You can also pay a small fee to scan and print, which is helpful before you have your home office set up.

What has me shooketh is that if you do decide to sign up for a library card in order to take out books, you also get free access to LinkedIn Learning (is it just me or is this next level?!)



State Library



- The State Library definitely has a different “vibe” - it has a lot more space so attracts a diverse group of students, elderly folk and kids (more of a melting pot)
- Much easier to find a spot to sit (due to sheer size) but if you like an intimate setting, this isn't really that
- It is more research focused but does have fiction and non-fiction focusing on WA writers (think J.M. Coetzee!)

Some other options listed in here.



From my gallery



Black Cockatiels



Willie Wagtail



Elizabeth Quay



Kings Park



Yanchep National Park



Perth Hills

From my gallery



Black swans, South Perth



Perth Hills



Canoeing in the Swan River



Bibra Lake



Queens Gardens

From my gallery



San Churro, Fremantle



Kings Park



Elizabeth Quay



Containbow, Fremantle



City of Perth Library



For the *South Africans*

Saffas in Perth

- According to the [2021 Australian census](#), 189,207 Australian residents were born in [South Africa](#), making up 0.7% of the country's population. In Perth, it seems the South of the river neighbourhoods are favoured by the Saffas e.g. Joondalup
- If you are looking for support while planning a move from South Africa to Australia then the [Aussiekaners Facebook group](#) may be helpful to you. I enjoyed using the search function to look for “491” (or whatever visa subclass you are interested in) and then reading about people’s experiences/timing etc.
- There is also the [“Proudly South African in Perth”](#) Facebook group

South African Stores

- [Ultimate List of South African Stores in Perth](#)
- [Looking for a great boerie?](#) Check out Kalahari in Wittleton
- But also make sure to try out an Aussie classic, a [“sausage sizzle”](#) - especially one from Bunnings in support of a good store!

Visas & Agents

- According to Proudly South African in Perth, there are [74 different visa types](#) for getting into Australia. Unless you are one of those rare superhumans who enjoys a lot of ambiguity and admin, I would suggest finding an [OMARA agent](#) to assist you with your emigration paperwork
- Everyone has a different set of circumstances depending on a large number of factors including:
 - Your passports
 - Your professions
 - Your age
 - Your ideal Australian city
- You get the picture! You can get quite far with the MyImm website and reading about other people’s experiences of certain visa types but if you are able to invest in greater peace of mind, then it’s a real luxury we were so grateful for
- We used [Stephen Dickson of Migration Outcomes](#) and he was wonderful, so if you are still looking for a great agent, it is definitely worth getting in touch with him



You will need to buy a [Travel adapter](#) for your two-prong plugs (this one is AUD6 from Bunnings or you can get ones from JB Hifi like we did for +/- AUD12. For your three prong plugs (e.g. laptop cables) you can either buy a new cable, change the plugs (if that’s your thing) or get a three prong adapter (I never investigated this).





“I hope you live a life you’re proud of. And if you find that you’re not, I hope you have the strength to start all over again.” - F. S. Fitzgerald

I hope this eBook has proven helpful in providing some tips, tricks and hacks for making a great life in Perth :) As with anything in life, it’s what you make of it.

Thank you so much!

- Thank you for reading my eBook, it means the world to me to be able to help others when they are feeling anxious/unsure
- I have put a lot of love into it, but I am sure it's a long way from perfect. Please feel free to send me (constructive) feedback or inclusions you think would make it more helpful, I am all ears: hello@megshollis.com
- **A reminder to all of us: You will have good days and bad days but it will get easier :)**

Megs x



