

# Homestay accommodation

Our homestay families reflect the diversity of life in Australia. They include young, senior and single parent families and couples with and without children. Hosts have varying ethnic backgrounds and different interests and lifestyles.

## Your life in a homestay

Living in a homestay will allow you to practise your English in a real-life setting. It is important to remember that you are both part of a family and a guest at the same time. You may have to help with household chores, keep your bedroom tidy and make your bed each morning. Water is in short supply in Australia. It often does not rain for six months or more, so remember to take short showers (5 minutes maximum) and conserve water. Make sure you always ask permission to bring friends round and remember to ask before you change channels on the television!

## Meals

**Breakfast:** Breakfast is usually a light meal consisting of cereal, fruit, toast, juice or coffee. Often these foods will be made available to you and you will prepare your own morning meal (otherwise known as 'help yourself').

**Lunch:** You will be responsible for purchasing your own lunch at the school, a local restaurant or from the local shops.

**Dinner:** Dinner may be a shared meal in the evening, or occasionally you may prepare your own meal with food supplied by your host.

## What to bring

You can purchase toiletries and other personal needs locally, but if you have specific items that you need, you should bring them with you. Your host will provide you with bed linen and towels. If you have any prescription medications that you are required to take, you should bring a supply with you.

## Telephone use

You should purchase a phone card or use your mobile phone to make telephone calls. Your hosts' telephone should only be used for emergency incoming calls. Remember to notify your family of any time differences to avoid calls in the middle of the night. It is often very expensive to make international calls from a home line, which is why we recommend using a phone card. Always ask your host family for permission to use the home line.

## Laundry facilities

Depending on your selected location and homestay option, you may have access to laundry facilities at your host family's home, and some families prefer to do the laundry for you. If your hosts do not do your washing, please ask them how to use their washing machine or take your laundry to a launderette to wash and dry. Do not wash clothes in the bathroom or dry them in your bedroom or cupboards or on heaters. The average cost per load of washing in an Australian launderette is AUD 2.80 and AUD 1.00 per ten minutes of drying time.

## Getting to and from school

Your host will help you to find your way to and from school on your first day and will show you how to use public transport. Journey time will depend on the location of your homestay. Explore several options when considering transport to school such as trains, buses or even bike riding.

## Smoking

When you book your accommodation, please request a homestay that allows smoking if you smoke. Most hosts will ask smokers to smoke outside. Always ask your host family upon arrival for their specific house rules regarding smoking. It is general courtesy to ask someone for permission to smoke next to them, even if you are outside. In Australia it is against the law to smoke in a restaurant or any area where food is being prepared.

## Things to remember.....

- You are a guest as well as part of the family
- You may have to take part in family chores
- Purchase a phone card for international calls
- Do not hang your laundry to dry in your room
- Ask permission to have a friend come visit you
- Notify your family if you are not coming home for the night
- Ask permission to smoke