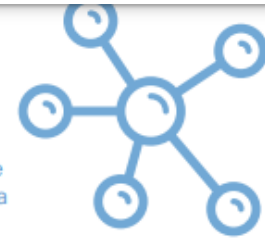


# Australia



## Quick summary



Australia is the smallest continent of the seven continents and many consider it as the largest island in the world. Greenland, however, is the biggest island country. Australia is the sixth largest country in the world, after Russia, Canada, USA, China and Brazil. Its official name is the Commonwealth of Australia. It is part of the Commonwealth and sees Queen Elizabeth II as its queen. It has a democratic government and a population of around 25 million, 90 per cent of whom live in urban areas. Its capital city is Canberra and its official language is English. The currency is the Australian dollar. Its official national emblem is a golden wattle (a flower) but many use the kangaroo. It celebrates a national holiday on 26 January (Australia Day).



## Location

Australia is a continent and a country in the southern hemisphere. Australia is an island continent surrounded by the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean.



## Physical features

The country's interior, which covers two thirds of the country, consists of desert landscape which is referred to as 'outback'. The highest mountain of Australia is Mount Kosciuszko. Ayers Rock, also called Uluru, which is in the centre of the country, is the largest lone standing rock in the world. The longest river in Australia is the Murray River which is 1,558 miles long. The Great Barrier Reef in eastern Australia is the biggest coral reef in the world. The reef consists of more than 3000 reefs in which more than 350 species of corals and over 1,500 species of fish live.



## Human features

The country is divided into six states (South Australia, Western Australia, New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria and Tasmania) and two self-governing territories: Northern Territory and Australian Capital Territory (which is around Canberra, the capital city). The main cities in Australia are: Sydney, Melbourne, Perth, Brisbane, Darwin, Adelaide, Hobart and Canberra – the capital city. The cities are all located at the coast or close to the coast. The main city in the country's interior is Alice Springs.



## Vocabulary

**Commonwealth:** the UK and a group of countries that, in the past, were ruled by the UK

**democratic:** relating to a form of government in which people choose the leaders by voting

**urban:** relating to a town or city

**surrounded:** all around somewhere

**lone:** alone

