

Homestay Guidelines

Welcome to Australia! You have chosen to stay in a homestay which is a great way to improve your English, make new friends, and feel safe and secure. These are the general guidelines for Homestay but each household is different and will have their own set of house rules.

It is important to be respectful to your host family. They are inviting you into their private home. Homestay is not like staying in a hotel. Please be polite, respectful and friendly to all members of your Homestay family and respect their property. Treat your host parents like you would treat your own parents.

1. YOUR ROOM- You will have your own room unless you have opted to share a room. It is your responsibility to keep your room clean and tidy. It is rare to have locks on bedroom doors in Australian homes so don't expect this. However, you are entitled to your privacy. Other members of the household should always knock before entering

2. WIFI/INTERNET- Your homestay family may provide WiFi but it is not a requirement. Internet is not free in Australia and most families charge an average of \$10 per week for internet. This does not give you unlimited access. You can purchase your own pre-paid internet. You will have access to the student WiFi at Milner College for free.

3. MEALS- You will receive breakfast and dinner 7 days a week, plus lunch on the weekends. A normal breakfast in Australia consists of toast or cereal and you may sometimes have to help yourself.

Lunch in Australia is usually a sandwich and a drink. Your hosts might make you a "packed lunch" to take with you if you are going out for the day at the weekend, or just leave you something that you can have at any time that suits you.

Your host family will let you know how meal arrangements work.

Please give your homestay at least 24 hours' notice if you will not be home for meals.

If you would like to buy some food for yourself please ask your host family if you can have a special place in the refrigerator to put it.

Do not help yourself to food unless it is something you have brought.

4. FOOD/DIETARY REQUIREMENTS- If you have any food allergies please let us know so we can make your host family aware.

Treat mealtimes as an adventure: be open-minded and try new foods. Australia is a very multicultural place and Australians cook a variety of cuisines such as Chinese, Italian, Indian, and Thai.

As a nice gesture you may offer to cook your hosts a meal from your own country. They'll enjoy the treat and you'll get to eat your favourite food.

5. WASHING- The homestay family will provide a washing machine. Some homestay families will offer to wash your clothing, others will ask that you do your own. Your host family will explain how their laundry system works when you arrive. Offer to supply your own washing detergent.

6. SHOWERS – Australia is a very dry country. Water is expensive and we must be very careful with it. Please don't stand under the shower for too long. Showers should be limited to just 5 minutes.

7. TOILETRIES- Do not use shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste, soap etc. which belong to your host family. Provide your own.

8. FRIENDS/PARTNERS & FAMILY MEMBERS –If you want to bring your friends to your homestay please ask permission beforehand. Do not ask your homestay family if your friends, partners or family members can stay the night or for a meal.

9. SMOKING- NO SMOKING INSIDE THE HOUSE. You need to tell Milner College if you are a smoker before you arrive in Australia. If you are a smoker your homestay family will tell you where you can smoke outside the house.

10. TELEPHONE- You should purchase a mobile phone or sim card when you are in Australia to make calls. If you need to use your homestay family's phone you must ask permission first and you must pay for the call. You can purchase an international phone card to make calls to your home.

11. HEALTH/MEDICAL – We strongly recommend you get health insurance. Neither your host family nor Milner College takes any responsibility for injuries or illness you might suffer or your medical or emergency medical expenses. For everyday illness or injury, get the address of a day or night doctor from your host family or Milner College. A hospital is not cheaper and you'll have to wait longer.

12. HOUSEWORK- Homestay is not a hotel. Offer to wash your dishes, help with tidying the table after meals and keep your room clean and tidy.

12. COMMON COURTESIES:

- Tell your family if you are going to go out. If you are not going to come home until the next day, please let them know so they don't worry about you! Do not stay out too late too often.
- It is always good manners (in any country) to say please and thank you.
- It is not polite to go into other bedrooms in the house unless invited. You should always knock on closed doors and wait for a reply before entering, and never open private desk drawers or bedroom cupboards unless invited to do so.
- Don't forget to turn off the lights! Turn off the TV and radio when you are not using them.
- In Australia – sexes are equal. Treat women with the same respect as men, especially during conversation.
- Australia is a multicultural country and we respect all cultures and religions. Our host families are different in race, religion, age and family dynamic.
- Your hosts will appreciate it if you chat to them, ask them about their day, tell them about your day or just start a conversation.
- In Australia clothes are normally dried outside on a clothesline. They are not dried in the bedroom because the wetness causes mould to grow and damages furniture.
- Recycling is common in Australia so make sure you put your rubbish in the right bin.

If you have an emergency situation we understand that you may need to leave your homestay early. If you want to move to other accommodation you need to give the office and your homestay notice of at least ONE WHOLE WEEK. We will then refund you the difference.

While your host family is being paid to host you, they have made considerable sacrifices to have you in their home. Homestay saves you the trouble and expense involved in renting your own flat. You'll be moving into a fully furnished room in a secure house with most expenses included in the weekly rate. If you were renting or sharing a flat you would need to buy and transport furniture, install or connect a phone, and pay electricity bills.