



Budget Planner for Study in Australia

Summer 2015

To begin the process of determining your personal study abroad budget, you should cross-reference this guide with [Preparing to Study Abroad](#), *Money Matters* and the Australia summer program fees listed on our website, www.ifsa-butler.org.

The information in this guide was compiled by our Australia office and is based upon personal experience and student feedback. Despite years of experience, however, we have yet to create a "failsafe" budget. If you're honest with yourself about your expectations and lifestyle, this guide will give you a good idea of how much money you will need abroad.

Note: All prices listed in this guide are in U.S. dollars unless otherwise stated.

Tips for Determining your Budget

- When figuring your budget, enter the minimum amounts on which you think you could manage.
- Estimate a second set of figures that are more generous. Include money for items such as restaurant meals, personal expenses, entertainment and vacation travel. You might be able to afford the more generous projection.
- If your resources are limited, go back and make adjustments based on questioning of what you *really need*, what would be *nice to have* and what you *can do without*. Your final budget should fall somewhere in the middle.

The budget worksheet (see the last page) estimates costs for your study abroad experience and has three parts: **fixed expenses**, which are expenses prepaid in the United States in U.S. dollars; **variable expenses**, which are mainly in Australia and include start up and semester costs; and **vacation expenses**, which are expenses for your university vacations in Australia and at the end of the program. We also have added a line where you should enter your personal resources, from which you will subtract your estimated expenses to determine a budget.

Fixed Expenses

All students have the fixed expenses of the program fee and transportation to and from Australia. Others could include passport costs and transportation from the host university city at the end of the summer in Australia.

- **Program fee:** Use the "Services Included in the Program Fee" information in [Money Matters](#), but remember that your \$500 program deposit is credited to the fee.
- **Transportation costs:** Enter the cost of travel from your home city to Sydney. Transportation from orientation in Sydney to your host university city is included in the price of a group flight ticket, but you are responsible for arranging and paying for return travel from your host university city at the end of your semester or year in Australia.
- **Cost of medical, travel and personal property insurance:** While in Australia, you will have medical coverage through an IFSA-Butler group medical plan, which is included in your IFSA-Butler program fee. It is your responsibility to make sure you are properly insured to travel and study abroad; please look into personal property and travel insurance.
- **Passports:** The fee for obtaining a U.S. passport is \$165 or \$140 for renewing an expired one. If you already have a U.S. passport, ensure that it is valid for six months past the time you will be in Australia.
- **Australian student visa:** All summer students must be issued an airline ticket with an Electronic Travel Authority (ETA). Budget \$25 to obtain your ETA. If you are not a U.S. citizen, contact the Australia Embassy in Washington,

D.C., to determine whether a visa is necessary for you to participate on the program.

Variable Expenses

- **Personal items:** Estimate what you will spend on clothing, a new backpack, travel items, etc. You will want to bring comfortable, color-coordinated clothes and shoes suitable for walking and outdoors activities. Consider bringing an extra set of “going out” clothes, as most restaurants and clubs in Sydney are dressier. See the “Packing” section of [Preparing to Study Abroad](#) for more information.
- **Textbooks:** Textbooks are more expensive in Australia than in the United States and used books are hard to find, so Australian students rarely purchase textbooks. Instead, students usually are required to purchase readings at copy shops on campus and to use books and articles placed on special reserve in the university libraries. Budget at least \$150 for reading materials and other academic resources.
- **Emergency reserve:** Whether it’s a credit card or a cash reserve, having money set aside for emergencies is always a good idea. Consider keeping a credit card or a cash reserve of \$100–250.
- **Meals:** Students report spending an average of AU\$140 per week on food when in Sydney; students may spend AU\$100 per week in other large cities and about AU\$90 in smaller cities. Your food expenses will, of course, depend on your own habits and preferences.

University campuses are serviced by a wide range of usually subsidized cafes, restaurants and snack bars. Additionally, most residence halls and student houses have kitchen facilities for those who prefer to cook their own meals. A great way to get to know your flat mates (and save money) is to share the cost of purchasing food and preparation of meals with them. Cooking can be inexpensive if you are careful and plan ahead; shop at farmers’ markets or chain supermarkets rather than small convenience stores for better deals. Take advantage of seasonal fruits and vegetables, as they are less expensive than those out of season.

- **Local transportation:** Students should be prepared to commute to classes, either on foot or via public transportation, as the university housing is often scattered. The cost of commuting is your responsibility. You could spend up to \$35 per week on transportation to classes, shopping and entertainment.
- **Personal expenses:** Personal expenses can range from \$10–40 per week on items other than food, entertainment, communication and commuting costs. These additional expenses may include toiletries, laundry, postage, school supplies, photocopying, etc.

Most major U.S. brands of toiletries are readily available in Australia, although students recommend stocking up on items such as contact solution, which can be quite expensive abroad. We recommend that you purchase **all** electronic items such as hair dryers, curling irons, CD players, etc., after your arrival in Australia because of the differences in voltage (220–240V). Dual voltage items (110–240V) are ideal if you can get them before you leave home.

- **Entertainment:** Students’ ideas of entertainment are understandably varied. Students estimate spending \$15–40 weekly on entertainment. Past students report the cost of alcohol as being much higher in Australia than in the United States and that they underestimated this expense in their budget planning.

To save money on entertainment in Australia, consider your university’s sponsored events as a source of low-cost activities, sports, films and dances. Also remember to carry your university student ID card with you for special rates on entrance fees to museums and historical sites, as well as entertainment discounts.

Throughout the summer, IFSA-Butler Australia staff members will organize events for IFSA-Butler students. These usually consist of a welcome tour and meal, a farewell debrief and, time permitting, another activity in your host city.

- **Gym membership:** Unlike most U.S. universities, gym/fitness center memberships are not included in Australian tuition fees. If you plan on using these facilities on campus, budget about \$50.
- **Internet:** Internet access is considerably more expensive in Australia than in the United States. Some Internet providers offer monthly plans up to \$50 per month, while other providers charge per megabyte downloaded. To

minimize costs, use the Internet only for research and communication. Downloading movies and music in Australia will quickly increase your Internet expenses. All universities have free internet access in the libraries and 24-hour computer labs available for academic needs.

Vacation Expenses

- **Travel:** Australian universities have student travel services available on campus, and some international offices organize regional trips. All major cities have budget travel services that can provide information and special offers. Also look in newspapers and on the Internet for travel deals.

Consider investing in a guidebook that will cover your particular travel style (*Let's Go, Fodor's, Rough Guide, Lonely Planet, etc.*). You can save on lodging costs by staying at hostels. While it is usually not necessary to join Hostelling International, members have priority if the hostel is full. For more information, visit www.yha.org.

- **Accommodation:** Your IFSA-Butler program fee pays for housing when classes are in session. You will need to budget for any accommodation prior to the program start date or after the program end date.
- **Meals:** While traveling you will probably consume most of your meals in restaurants, so consider the cost of restaurant meals and beverages when planning your budget.

Average Costs of Commonly Purchased Items in Australia

Now you're ready to begin your budget planning. The cost estimates in this guide are in **Australian dollars**. To calculate the value of the U.S. dollar to the Australian dollar, consult the business section of any major newspaper, news websites or currency websites such as www.oanda.com.

Grocery Items

| | |
|----------------|--------------|
| Milk | \$1.81/1L |
| Loaf of bread | \$3.87 |
| Apples | \$6.23/1.5kg |
| Sugar | \$1.70/1kg |
| Lettuce | \$2.99 |
| Yogurt | \$3.88/350 g |
| Orange juice | \$3.98/1 L |
| Cheese | \$4.09/250g |
| Orange | \$0.81 |
| Eggs (6) | \$2.86 |
| Potato chips | \$5.71/270 g |
| Potatoes | \$2.98/1kg |
| Soda (24 pack) | \$14.56 |
| Beef/steak | \$8.25/330 g |
| Coffee | \$6.99/500 g |
| Peanut butter | \$1.93/45g |
| Bananas | \$4/kg |
| Cereal | \$3.22/310 g |

Personal Items

| | |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| Contact lens solution | \$16.18/355 ml |
| Shampoo/conditioner | \$6.46/400 ml |
| Box of 20 tampons | \$5.38 |
| Toilet paper (4 pack) | \$4.63 |
| Laundry detergent | \$7.60/1.5 kg |
| Soap (4 pack) | AU\$2.99 |
| Deodorant | AU\$3.99 |
| Dishwashing liquid | AU\$2.99/1 L |
| Letter to the U.S. | AU\$0.94 |

Entertainment

| | |
|-----------------|---------|
| Cup of coffee | \$3.50 |
| Movie—adult | \$15.50 |
| Movie—student | \$12 |
| Beer (bottle) | \$6 |
| Wine (glass) | \$7 |
| Restaurant meal | \$10-30 |

For a more detailed Australian supermarket guide, visit www.woolworths.com.au.



Budget Worksheet

Australia Summer 2015

Study Abroad Program: _____

Current Exchange Rate: _____

Fixed expenses

| | | |
|---|-----------|-------------|
| Program fee (see www.ifsa-butler.org) | US\$_____ | |
| U.S. domestic and roundtrip transportation | US\$_____ | |
| Medical, travel and/or personal property insurance | US\$_____ | |
| Passport fee (first time or renewal) | US\$_____ | |
| Total fixed expenses | | US\$_____ A |

Variable expenses

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------|-----------|-------------|
| Visa fees | A\$_____ | US\$_____ | |
| Personal items (clothing, luggage) | A\$_____ | US\$_____ | |
| Orientation spending money | A\$_____ | US\$_____ | |
| Textbooks | A\$_____ | US\$_____ | |
| Emergency reserve fund | A\$_____ | US\$_____ | |
| Meals | A\$_____ | US\$_____ | |
| Local transportation | A\$_____ | US\$_____ | |
| Personal expenses | A\$_____ | US\$_____ | |
| Entertainment | A\$_____ | US\$_____ | |
| Total variable expenses | | | US\$_____ B |

Vacation expenses (Check with travel professionals and/or guidebooks)

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------|-----------|-------------|
| Travel costs (train, airfare, etc.) | A\$_____ | US\$_____ | |
| | A\$_____ | US\$_____ | |
| Accommodation | A\$_____ | US\$_____ | |
| | A\$_____ | US\$_____ | |
| Meals | A\$_____ | US\$_____ | |
| Personal, including entertainment | A\$_____ | US\$_____ | |
| Total vacation expenses | | | US\$_____ C |

Total estimated expenses (add lines A, B and C) US\$_____ D

List personal resources available, such as savings, family contribution, financial aid, summer earnings, etc.:

| | |
|--|---------|
| Total estimated resources | \$_____ |
| Less total estimated expenses (line D) | \$_____ |
| Equals your study abroad budget | \$_____ |

You may want to double this amount just to be on the safe side while you're abroad.