

Ops Down Under: Borders Opening Up

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Throughout the pandemic, Australia and New Zealand have both had some of the strictest entry rules for foreigners in the world. They have remained firmly in place since the doors first slammed shut early in 2020, and haven't budged since.

Until now...there is finally light at the end of the tunnel. There have been two big announcements this week from both countries that they intend to open up in the coming months.

If you're planning to head down under, here's a rundown of how the current entry rules work, and what is set to change in the first half of 2022.

Australia

What's been announced...

Australia is reopening its borders to vaccinated travellers on Feb 21, after almost two years of restrictions. Passengers will need to have a visa, a pre-arrival PCR test, and must also complete an [Australia Travel Declaration \(ATD\)](#) at least 72 hours before departure. Unvaccinated passengers will still need a valid travel exemption to enter.

Travellers to Australia will also need to comply with requirements in the state or territory of their arrival, which may include quarantine and post-arrival testing requirements. Quarantine requirements in Australia are determined by [State and Territory governments](#).

How things work right now

To enter Australia, all foreigners must currently apply for an exemption first. There is a long list of what qualifies but in almost all cases leisure travel is a no-go. The only exception to this rule is for citizens of New Zealand, Singapore, Japan, and South Korea.

To apply for an exemption, passengers have to use this online portal. It takes a least seven working days to process each one, sometimes longer, so it's important they apply early.

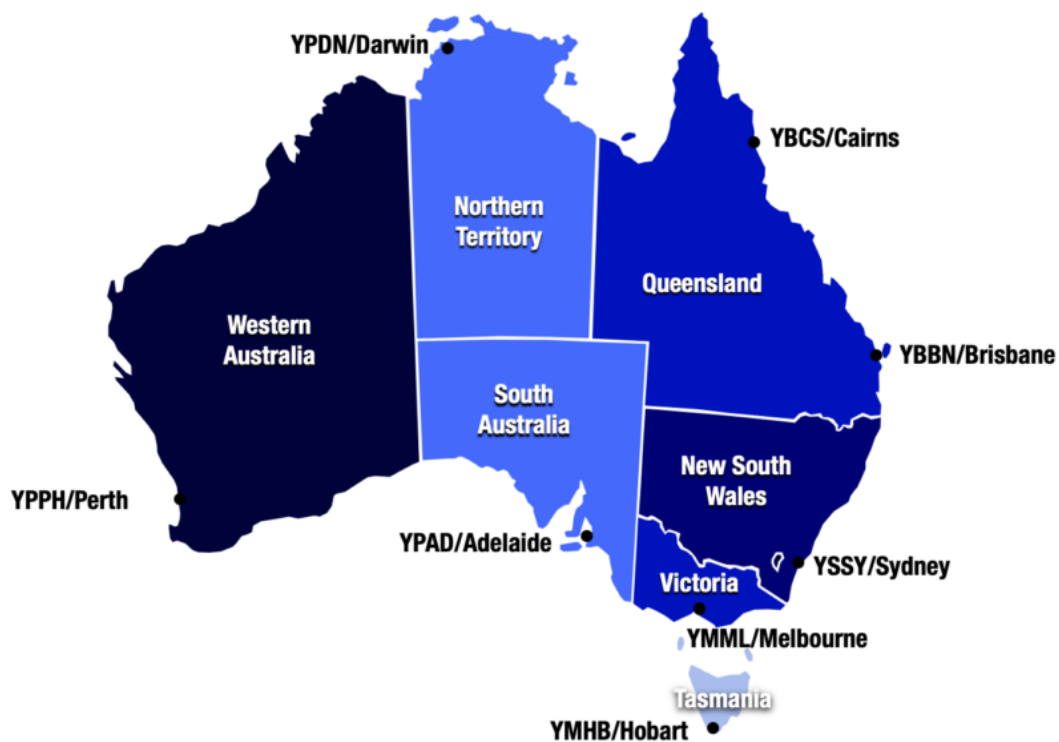
Testing and Quarantine

Pre-departure, all pax need to get a negative PCR or rapid antigen test that is **less than 72 hours** old.

After landing is where things can get a little tricky. Australia is made up of individual states and territories. Each one has their own subtle differences when it comes to pax testing and quarantine rules. So, what needs to be done next depends on where you're landing, and whether your passengers are vaccinated or not.

Rule hack: With the exception of Western Australia (YPPH/Perth), vaccinated passengers only need to self-isolate until they receive the results of a Covid test on arrival. Unvaccinated passengers have to apply for, and stay in managed hotel quarantine for 14 days. Passengers arriving in Perth still need to enter approved quarantine even if vaccinated for at least eight days, with a full two weeks required for unvaccinated pax.

For the official state rules of where you're headed, check out the attached links at the end of the article.



Individual territories and states publish their own rules - the good news is there are only subtle differences.

What about crew?



All crew are exempt from pre travel testing.

On arrival you will be health screened and given a Covid test. Fully vaccinated crew will only need to self-isolate until the result (approx. 24 hours) and then will be free to enjoy the layover.

Unfortunately unvaccinated crew will need to stay in their hotel until the flight out.

GA/BA Flight Approvals

If you're operating a charter flight, you'll need to apply for a bunch of approvals first (at least 72 hours in advance). You can find detailed information on that process here.

Air and Sea Approval Portal

International Flight Request

A passenger list and final seating plan will need to be provided to the ABF. Final passenger lists are required no later than 72 hours prior to departure and the final seating plan will need to be provided prior to flight arrival via email. Please note that submitting a request on this Portal does not automatically constitute approval for your flight.

Complete the attached passenger list template, or provide a passenger list file containing the details outlined [HERE](#) for uploading with your Flight Request.

Requester Details (Charter Operator)

<p>* Name of the Operator / Airline</p> <input style="width: 95%; height: 25px; border: 1px solid #ccc;" type="text"/>	<p>* Contact Name ?</p> <input style="width: 95%; height: 25px; border: 1px solid #ccc;" type="text"/>
<p>* Telephone</p> <input style="width: 95%; height: 25px; border: 1px solid #ccc;" type="text"/>	<p>* Email</p> <input style="width: 95%; height: 25px; border: 1px solid #ccc;" type="text"/>
<p>Mobile</p> <input style="width: 95%; height: 25px; border: 1px solid #ccc;" type="text"/>	<p>* Nationality</p> <input style="width: 95%; height: 25px; border: 1px solid #ccc;" type="text"/>
<p>* Address</p> <input style="width: 95%; height: 40px; border: 1px solid #ccc;" type="text"/>	

Alternate Contact ?

All non-scheduled flights to Australia have to fill in a request form.

New Zealand

What's been announced...

On Feb 3, the NZ Government announced they would be **getting rid of managed quarantine** for fully vaccinated travellers altogether. This will apply to citizens returning from Australia from the end of February, and from all other countries from the end of March. Unvaccinated travellers will still need to quarantine. It is unclear yet whether international crew will be allowed to enter the community under the same rules.

It was also announced that borders would be **progressively re-opened to foreigners** throughout the year. This will start for study and business visa holder from April, before all travellers (including tourists) will be allowed in by October.

How things work right now

The rules for foreigners are even tighter than Australia's. Aside from exemptions for permanent residents and relatives, foreigners can only enter the country if they hold a 'critical purpose' visa. The application for this can take up to two weeks.

Testing and Quarantine

Anyone travelling to New Zealand needs to get a PCR test that is less than 48 hours old at time of departure.

All passengers must then spend ten days in managed quarantine when they arrive. Reserving a spot is extremely difficult - you basically need to enter a lottery to reserve one via the MIQ website and then keep your fingers crossed.



Even if a passenger can get in, reserving a quarantine slot in NZ is extremely difficult. This is set to change.

What about crew?

Crew must be fully vaccinated to enter, and provide the results of a PCR test taken within seven days of their flight down. They'll then need to isolate in an approved hotel until their flight out. You can find the full details here.

GA/BA Flight Approvals

You'll need to contact the Ministry of Transport. You can find more info on that process [here](#).

Links to Official Rules

Australia

- Queensland (YBCS/Cairns, YBBN/Brisbane)
- New South Wales (YSSY/Sydney)
- Victoria (YMML/Melbourne)
- South Australia (YPAD/Adelaide)
- Tasmania (YMHB/Hobart)
- Western Australia (YPPH/Perth)
- Northern Territory (YPDN/Darwin)

New Zealand

See the official government website [here](#).