

Social Story

Visiting Australian Parliament House



Social Story

A social story is a guide that helps visitors plan their trip. This social story tells you what to expect when you visit Australian Parliament House.



About Australian Parliament House

Australian Parliament House is where laws are debated, changed and made for Australia. We are the home of Australia's democracy and everyone is welcome to visit.

Where is Australian Parliament House?

Parliament House is located on Parliament Drive in Canberra. You can find us on maps apps or on the internet by searching 'Australian Parliament House'.

Go to aph.gov.au/planning_a_visit for more information.



We are a proud member of the Hidden Disability Sunflower program. It enables people with a disability or condition that may not be immediately apparent to voluntarily share their needs for assistance, understanding or a helping hand.

Sensory experiences and challenges



As a working Parliament, Australian Parliament House can be a busy and noisy place to visit. Sensory experiences can depend on what is happening at the time of your visit.

Public areas may contain:

- division bells which can ring up to 4 minutes at a time
- audiovisual displays
- large groups of people and background noise.

You may like to bring noise-cancelling headphones, sunglasses and other support items. If you need help to find quiet spaces during your visit, Visitor Engagement staff can help you. In this guide we use symbols to show you which areas can be noisy, bright, dark or visual.



loud sounds



visual area



bright area



dark area

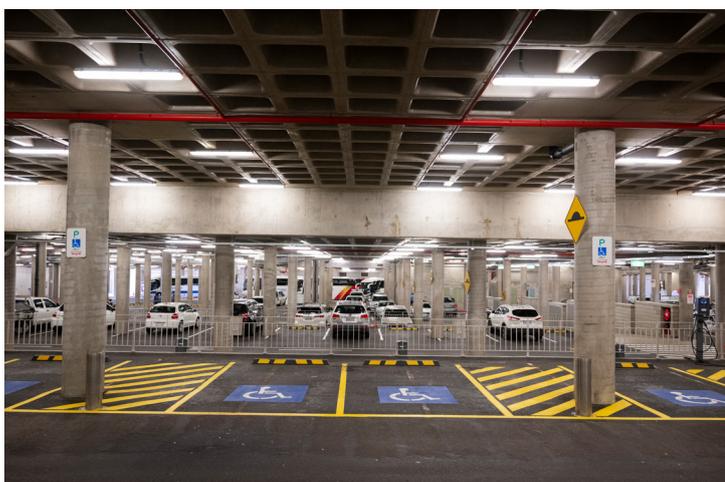
Arriving at Australian Parliament House



Arriving by car ☾

You can park in the public car park most days. You can get to the car park from Parliament Drive or Federation Mall. If you park for longer than an hour, you will need to pay for parking. There are 10 electric car charging stations available in the car park. Go to aph.gov.au/parking for more information including parking rates.

Walking from the car park, you can either go up the stairs or use the lift to get to the public entrance.



Accessible parking ☾

Accessible parking spaces are available towards the back of the car park near the lift. Visitors who have a disability parking permit can park in these spaces for free. When you exit, use the intercom at the boom gate to contact a staff member. Quote your disability parking permit number and they will let you out.



Arriving by bike ☾

Bike racks are in the public car park. You cannot lock bikes to any other items in the car park.

Arriving by bus or public transport

Bus stops on Federation Mall are about 200 metres away from our public entrance. Go to transport.act.gov.au for local bus timetables.

Separate taxi ranks and rideshare bays are located in the public car park.

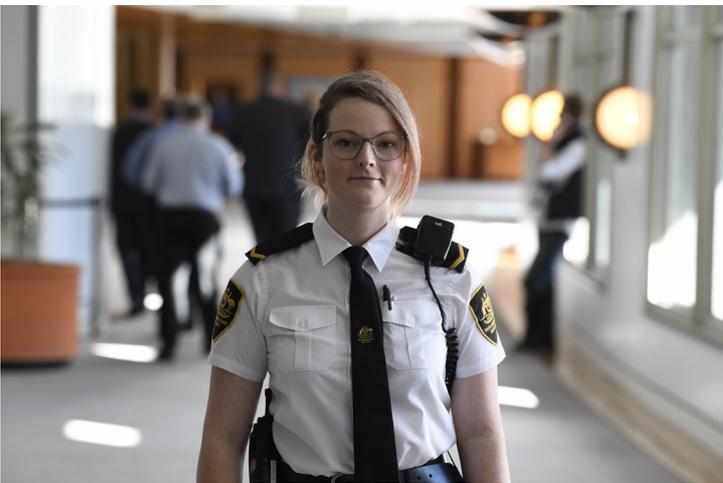
People at Australian Parliament House



Australian Federal Police

You will usually see Australian Federal Police out the front of the building, but they may also be inside. They wear blue uniforms with badges and patches. They can help if you:

- see anything out of the ordinary
- have any security concerns
- feel unsafe.



Parliamentary Security Service Officers

You will see Parliamentary Security Service Officers throughout the building. They wear uniforms with white shirts and dark patches. They can help you:

- with first aid
- if you have security concerns
- to enter and exit the building
- if you feel unsafe.



Visitor Engagement

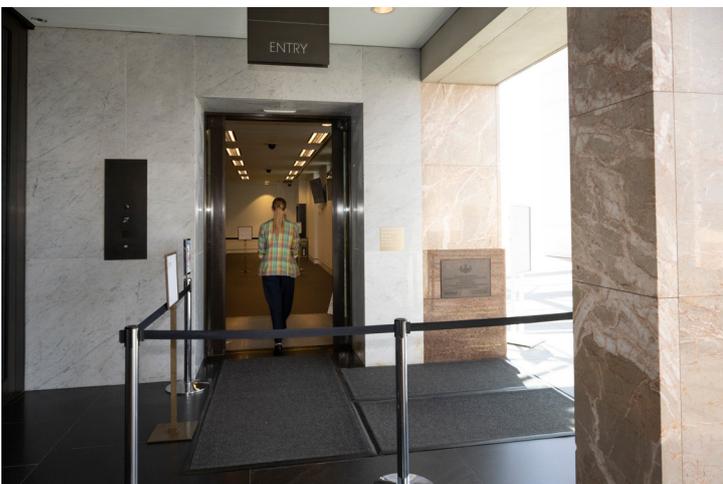
Visitor Engagement staff wear black uniforms and name badges. They can help you:

- with information about tours and the building
- borrow wheelchairs and strollers
- find a quiet space
- get a Hidden Disabilities Sunflower lanyard
- with passes for events and meetings
- with lost property.

Entering Australian Parliament House ☀



The public entrance looks like this. Sometimes Parliament House can be very busy, and you may need to wait in line to enter. When you plan your visit, please allow at least 15 minutes to enter.



Security screening 🗣️

Everyone entering Parliament House, and their belongings, must go through security screening. This helps us keep Parliament House safe for visitors and staff.

Security screening is similar to what occurs at an airport and usually includes passing through a metal detector. If you have a bag or any items with you, you will need to put them on a white tray to go through the x-ray. This includes phones, car keys, coins, jewellery, cameras and belts.

The metal detectors can make loud beeping noises. If this happens, the Parliamentary Service Security Officers will tell you what to do. They can also help you if you have any questions.

You are not allowed to take photos or videos of security staff or in security screening areas.

Please contact us if you have any accessibility needs or security screening concerns. Email visitorservices@aph.gov.au or call (02) 6277 3299 before your visit so we can help.

Marble Foyer 🗣️ ☀️

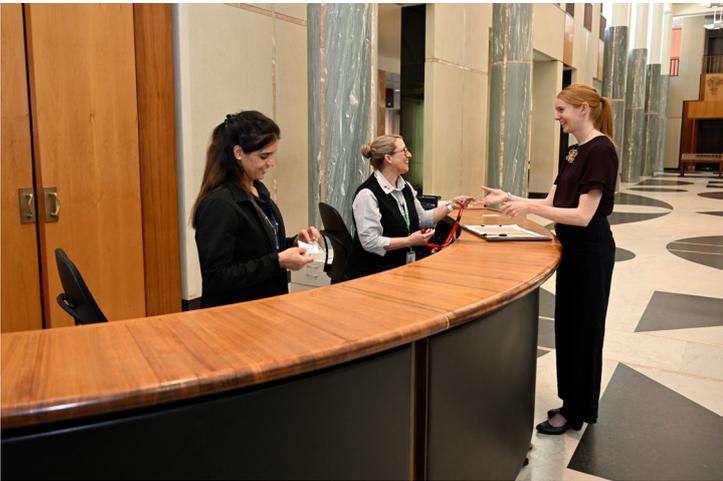


The Marble Foyer is the first room you will enter. This space can get very busy and loud. There will be Visitor Engagement team members in the foyer to help point you in the right direction.



Information Desk 🗣️ ☀️

The Information Desk is on the left side of the foyer as you enter. Here you can ask questions, book tours and borrow a wheelchair or stroller. You can also pick up a Children's Activity Trail booklet, which contains fun activities and things to see and do.



Pass Desk 🗣️ ☀️

The Pass Desk is on the right side of the foyer as you enter the building. If you are going to a meeting or into the private areas of the building, you need a visitor pass. Someone who works at Parliament House must sign you in at the Pass Desk. You will need to show your photo ID to our staff. It is also where you check in if you are attending an event at Parliament House.



Cloaking

You can ask staff at the Pass or Information Desk to store your bag or jacket during your visit. Our team may cloak your item in the Marble Foyer or in our Level 1 cloak room. Please follow the directions of our friendly staff.

Things to do and see

Chambers



You are welcome to visit the House of Representatives and the Senate Chambers. Both Chambers make and change laws for Australia.

When parliamentarians are not in the Chambers, you can take photos and videos in here. When parliamentarians are working in the Chambers, you cannot take photos or videos.

Sitting weeks

When Parliament is in session and debating in the Chambers, we call this a 'sitting day' or a 'sitting week'. During a sitting week you can visit the Chambers and see Australian democracy in action.

You will need to store all your items in our cloak room before visiting the Chambers. This includes sunglasses, phones, smart watches and bags. You can bring in medical items. You will go through a second security screening by walking through a scanner.

When you watch the parliamentary proceedings in the public viewing gallery you will need to sit quietly.

Question Time

Question Time usually happens at 2 pm every sitting day. It is a time in the Chambers when parliamentarians ask questions of government ministers. Question Time can be loud and include debates on a range of topics. Go to aph.gov.au/parliament-in-action for more information, including how to book a ticket.



Members' Hall

In Members' Hall you can see portraits, interesting items from the art collections and information about the work of the Parliament. You can access both Chambers and take the lift up to the roof from here.



Tours

You can take a guided tour about our art, architecture and Indigenous experiences of Australian democracy. Some tours cost money. You can leave a tour at any time.

We offer sensory-friendly tours on the first Sunday of every month. Go to aph.gov.au/sensory-friendly-tour for more information.

Sometimes tours book out, so we recommend booking a tour online before you visit. Go to aph.gov.au/tours to book.



Visit the roof

You can access the roof from a lift in Members' Hall on Level 1. The roof is open to the weather. There are paved areas and grass areas on the roof.



Watch parliamentary committees

Committees thoroughly examine current issues and legislation to report on their findings. Watch any public committee hearings that are underway while you're here.

Facilities



Toilets ☀️

There are male, female, all-gender and accessible toilets throughout the building.

Accessible adult change room facility ☀️

There is an accessible adult change facility that caters for users with high support needs on Level 1, next to the Post Office. It has an accessible toilet, adult change table and hoist.



Parents Rooms ☀️

There are Parents Rooms with baby change facilities on Level 1. They are next to Queen's Terrace Café and near the bathrooms outside the Great Hall Balcony.

Water bubblers

There are water bubblers near the toilets on Level 1.

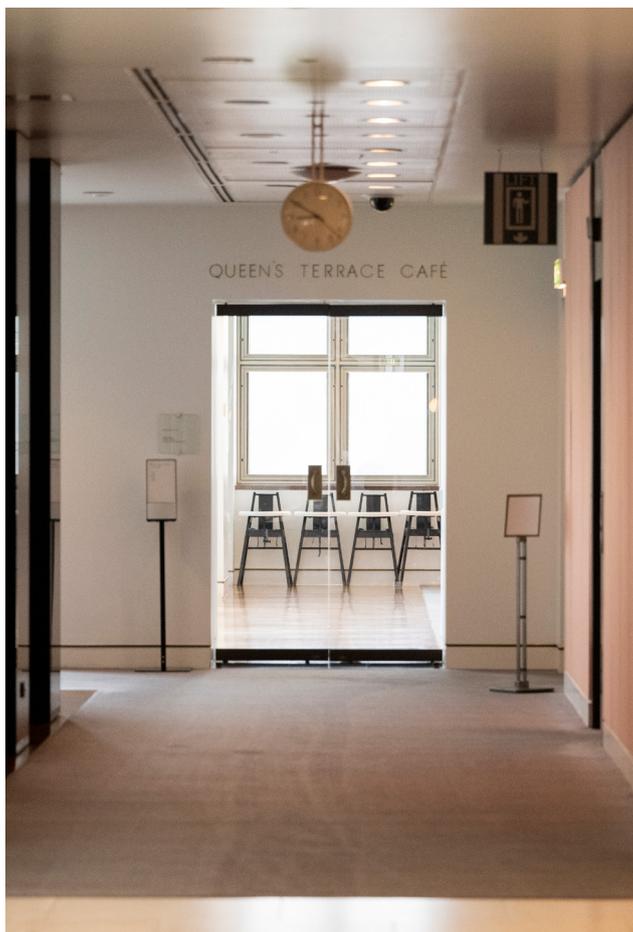


Quiet spaces

The Queen's Terrace Gallery, roof and exhibition spaces near the Theatre can be quieter spaces. You may like to use them for timeout or quiet reflection.

If you need help finding these locations, please ask a Visitor Engagement team member.

Dining and retail outlets



Queen's Terrace Café 🗣️ ☀️

You can buy a range of food and beverages from the Queen's Terrace Café. It has a range of indoor and outdoor seating options. You can also bring your own food and eat on the Queen's Terrace, roof or forecourt.

Go to aph.gov.au/Queens-Terrace-Cafe for more information.



The Parliament Shop ☀️

The Parliament Shop has a range of quality products you can buy that celebrate democracy and Parliament House.

Go to ParliamentShop.com.au for more information.



Leaving Australian Parliament House

To leave Parliament House, you can walk through or past the Parliament Shop which is near the entrance. You can get to the carpark using the lift or staircase outside the building. We look forward to seeing you again soon!

More information

Go to aph.gov.au/accessibility for more information about accessibility at Parliament House. You can also contact us so we can help make your visit easy and enjoyable.

Use our visitor map at aph.gov.au/Visitor-Map to help plan your visit and find your way around the building.

Contact us

Phone: (02) 6277 5399 (international (+61) 2 6277 5399)

Email: VisitorServices@aph.gov.au

Website: aph.gov.au/visit

Photo credits

Front cover: Pew Pew Studio

Page 1: AUSPIC, Department of Parliamentary Services

Page 2: Pew Pew Studio

Page 3: AUSPIC, Department of Parliamentary Services

Page 4: Australian Federal Police (image 1)

AUSPIC, Department of Parliamentary Services (images 2 and 3)

Pages 5, 6: AUSPIC, Department of Parliamentary Services

Page 7: Pew Pew Studio (images 1 and 2)

AUSPIC, Department of Parliamentary Services (image 3)

Page 8: Pew Pew Studio (image 1)

AUSPIC, Department of Parliamentary Services (image 2)

Artwork: Mandy Martin (1952-2021), *Red Ochre Cove*, 1987, Art/Craft Program, Parliament House Art Collections. Photo by AUSPIC, Department of Parliamentary Services (image 3)

Page 9: AUSPIC, Department of Parliamentary Services (images 1 and 2)

Pew Pew Studio (image 3)

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