

Facts and Figures



How old do I have to be to start working in Australia?

<https://www.nationalretail.org.au/engaging-junior-employees-what-you-need-to-know/#:~:text=The%20retail%20and%20fast%20food,under%20the%20age%20of%2018>

<https://www.oir.qld.gov.au/system/files/2023-02/child-employment-guide.pdf>

Generally, you are not permitted to be employed if you are under 13, unless it's volunteer work, or work in the entertainment industry. If you are 11 or older, you can do supervised delivery work of newspapers, advertising material or similar items

Youth Law Australia is the best source for this information.
<https://yla.org.au/qld/topics/employment/when-can-i-start-working/>

State or territory	Details about minimum age restrictions to start casual and part time work
ACT	Children and young people under the age of 15 may only be employed in light work, for example, work relating to sporting activities and babysitting. Young people aged 12-14 can work 6 hours a day and a maximum of 10 hours a week.
NSW	There are no minimum age restrictions in New South Wales. However, there are certain limits on the hours children can work until they turn 15. It is against the law for children under 15 to work more than 4 hours on a school day, and they should work no later than 9 pm if there is school the next day. A combination of school and work hours must not exceed 50 hours in a 7-day week.
NT	There is no minimum age for when employees can start working in the Northern Territory. However, until children turn 15, there are restrictions on the type of work they can do and the number of hours they can work. It is against the law for an employer or parent to allow someone under the age of 15 to work before 6 am or after 10 pm.
QLD	The minimum age for employment is 13. This is lowered to 11 where the child carries out supervised delivery work that involves delivering newspapers, advertising material or similar items between the hours of 6 am and 6 pm. If a young person is under 16, they are allowed to work up to 4 hours per day and a maximum of 12 hours for the school week. In the school holidays, a young person under 16 is allowed to work up to 8 hours per day but no more than 38 hours total for the week.
SA	There is no minimum working age in South Australia. However, it is against the law for an employer to employ young people in a kind of work that would interfere with their schoolwork.
TAS	There is no minimum age for when a person can start working in Tasmania. However, there are some restrictions on the type of work young people under 18 can do. Some workplaces in Tasmania will also have their own policies on how old the young person can be before they can start work.
VIC	There is no minimum age for paid work in entertainment, advertising or in family businesses. There is a minimum age of 11 years for children making deliveries. In other types of work, there is a minimum age of 13 years. Young people under 15 cannot work more than 3 hours per day or a maximum of 12 hours per week in a school term. During the school holidays they can work 6 hours a day and a maximum of 30 hours per week. Work hours can only be between sunrise and sunset.
WA	The minimum age is 13. There is no minimum age for entertainment, charities or in family businesses. Children aged 10 - 12 and accompanied by an adult are allowed to make deliveries. Children aged 10, 11 or 12, can work between the hours of 6 am and 7 pm with parental/adult supervision. Children aged 13 or 14 with written parental permission can work between 6 am and 10 pm.



What are my entitlements for pay, breaks, and other benefits?

Most Australian workers are covered by the Fair Work system. This includes the National Employment Standards (NES,) Modern Awards, minimum wages and protection from unfair dismissal.

Pay rates for young people vary based on their age, the type of job, and the industry's award or agreement. Generally, young people receive junior wages, which are lower than adult rates but increase as they get older. These wages are set under the relevant Modern Award.

A Modern Award is a document that sets out the minimum terms and conditions of employment for many different types of industries and occupations. These include:

- pay
- rosters
- breaks
- penalty rates
- overtime

You are entitled to **rest breaks** during your shifts. Typically:

- for shifts longer than 4 hours, you should get a 10-minute rest break.
- for shifts of 5 hours or more, you are entitled to a meal break of at least 30 minutes.

These break entitlements may vary slightly depending on the award or agreement for the industry.

Details of awards can be checked using PACT - the Fair Work Ombudsman Pay and Conditions Tool.

<https://calculate.fairwork.gov.au/>

<https://www.fwc.gov.au/what-national-system-employer>

<https://nrlegal.com.au/news/articles/engaging-junior-employees-what-you-need-to-know/>



Q & A

Q: Does my employer have to pay superannuation?

If you're under 18 and working over 30 hours a week or over 18 years old, the employer will be paying an extra amount (11.5% of ordinary time earnings) into your superannuation (super) fund. You can select the superannuation fund your employer uses or choose your own. The **superannuation standard choice** form advises the employer of the employee's choice of superannuation fund.

Q: Do I receive holiday pay and sick leave?

Casual workers typically do not receive paid holiday or sick leave, as their hourly rate includes a casual loading to account for this. However, if you are in a part-time or full-time role, you're entitled to paid annual and sick leave, similar to adult employees. Part time workers are entitled to paid leave relevant to the number of hours worked.

Casual employees are entitled to a loading (a higher pay rate) to make up for not having paid leave entitlements, and also a penalty rate when working outside normal hours.





Q: What are some of my basic workplace rights?

All Australian workers have rights at work. These include the right to:

- be paid correctly
- work under the correct conditions
- work in a safe workplace
- be free from unlawful discrimination
- be free from harassment
- be free from bullying - which includes:
 - physical abuse
 - verbal abuse
 - cyber abuse
 - stalking
 - teasing or playing practical jokes
 - pressuring someone to behave inappropriately
 - excluding someone from work-related events
 - unreasonable work demands

Q: What should I do if my workplace rights are violated?

In the first instance, you should talk to a trusted adult. If you feel confident, you can speak to your supervisor or employer.

For disputes with pay and entitlements, information and advice, contact the [Fair Work Ombudsman](#).

For disputes and issues with sexual harassment, discrimination and bullying, contact the [Fair Work Commission](#).

For concerns with workplace health and safety, contact [Safe Work Australia](#), or the state or territory workplace health and safety authority.

Depending on the issue, you can also contact your HR department, union (if you're a member) or police.

If you are experiencing **bullying** in the workplace, you can take three important steps.

1. **Report** the behaviour to the supervisor as soon as it happens.
2. **Document** the incident. Jot down a few notes, including details of the event, such as when it happened and the names of any potential witnesses.
3. **Seek a solution.** It's the employer's responsibility to address the issue. However, if you feel comfortable, you might want to approach the bully directly. In some cases, the bully may not be aware of the impact of their behaviour.

Q: What should I do if I'm having trouble with a co-worker, boss, or customer?

Here are some practical steps for resolving workplace relationship issues.

- **Stay calm and professional:** In any difficult situation, it's important to remain composed and polite.
- **Communicate openly.** If a co-worker is causing issues, have an honest but respectful conversation with them if you feel confident to do so.
- **Talk to a manager or supervisor.** You should speak to a supervisor or manager if the issue is with a colleague or customer and can't be resolved. Employers have a responsibility to maintain a safe and respectful workplace.
- **Seek Support.** If you're unable to resolve the issue you can reach out to a trusted adult, Fair Work Commission, your union or the police.

Q: How can I best prepare to get ready for work and start earning?

- Ask a trusted adult to help you with your job application, resume and interview techniques.
- Make sure you understand your workplace rights so that you know what's legal, fair and appropriate. Knowing your rights and responsibilities can help make your first job rewarding and positive.
- Go for balance. Make sure you're managing work, school, and downtime to avoid burnout.
- Focus on your personal qualities at work – punctuality, reliability, enthusiasm, being a team player – and give your employer confidence to roster you for regular shifts and provide opportunities to perform work at higher levels





The most popular Australian job search websites

SEEK	Australia's largest employment site, featuring over 90,000 jobs, job emails and career tools
LinkedIn	The main social media site for creating professional connections Your teen can set up a profile to promote their skills and search for opportunities that match their profile.
CareerOne	Publishes many job listings Australia wide and includes job alerts, resume tips, interview advice and training
Indeed	The world's most popular job search site and one of the most popular job search sites in Australia
Jora	Features thousands of career opportunities, sourced from multiple job sites around Australia
Toozly	A free job search website for people with disabilities It lists thousands of jobs from small to large organisations Australia-wide.
My Future	Publishes many job listings Australia wide and includes job alerts, resume tips, interview advice and training
Adzuna	Features thousands of career opportunities, sourced from multiple job sites around Australia
Workforce Australia	A place Australians can search and apply for jobs or find more information on their pathway to employment



Industry specific job search websites

Ethical Jobs	Useful for finding jobs with purpose in the not-for-profit, charity and community sector
Work From Home Jobs Australia	A dedicated platform specialising in connecting job seekers who value work-from-home opportunities
APS Jobs	A link to Australian Public Service jobs
Defence Jobs	Information on what life's like in the forces (army, navy, air force) and all the latest job information
ArtsHub	Australia's leading independent online resource dedicated to the world of the arts Access to all job listings is available only to members. Membership is free for Australian students.
GradConnection	Useful link for recent TAFE and university graduates
Kinder Careers	Information and job links for job seekers interested in pursuing opportunities within the Early Childhood Education industry
Health Care Australia	Jobs for nurses, aged care staff and medical specialists
Sports People	Australia's largest job board for sport, fitness and aquatic job opportunities

It's important to remember that finding work through job advertisements can be effective but may not include all businesses. A lot of organisations choose to post new job advertisements solely on their own website (i.e. Coles and Woolworths) so it's worthwhile to regularly check their job boards as well. Good luck!