

13 Australian Phrases from a foreigner's point of view

1. Fair dinkum!

Honest! Really!

2. Bullbag

Someone who's being loud, extremely exuberant to the (almost) point of being irritating. Sometimes someone who's a Joker. It's not a bad thing to call someone bullbag good naturedly and to their face but when someone says "John Doe is a bullbag" behind John Doe's back, it usually means John Doe is irritatingly loud.

3. Bogan

Redneck. One of the most offensive thing you can call a person. Call someone a bogan and war will erupt.

4. Pom

English people. They are a lot of stereotypes concerning this one. Radio DJs usually like to poke fun at Poms. Fortunately, Poms take it in good nature. You just can't stay angry at Aussies for long, most of the things they do are really in good nature and just for a laugh. They didn't get their "world most laid back people" title for nothing!

5. Arvo

A short form of the word afternoon. "I'm working this arvo." Means "I'm working this afternoon." My favourite short form! Arvo, arvo, arvo, arvo. I try to use it as much as possible cos I like the sound. So much so that I usually scheduled everything for the arvos. 😊 Or make things happen in the arvo so that I can talk about it and drop the word "arvo" in the middle of a yarn. Yes, I'm not so stable in the head. Arvo.

6. Cheers

I don't really know how to describe this. It's just used everywhere you feel appropriate. As a replacement for "Thank you", "goodbye" and as a replacement for "regards" or "yours sincerely" in letters and e-mail. It's just that convenient.

A: Here's your change.

B: Cheers!

A: See you tomorrow.

B: Right. Cheers!

7. Mate

Replacement for "man".

How are you doing, man? = How are you doing, mate?

Thanks, man = Cheers, mate.

Also a friendly and affectionate way of addressing the other person. I have never heard females using this though, and never had it directed towards female. It does make sense cos having a female going 'mate' isn't really feminine. I don't know. Maybe that's just me, mate.

8. No worries!

“It’s alright, no big deal.” “You’re welcome.”

A: Sorry about the other day...

B: Heeey, no worries mate!

A: Thanks for that.

B: No worries!

Another version of this is “no dramas!” Usually that’s when you want to tell the other person that you didn’t go through so much trouble for them.

A: Thanks for driving us all the way to the City.

B: No dramas!

9. Tradey

Tradesmen. The blue collar workers who usually manages to earn more in a day than a lawyer or a banker does. I think Australia is the only place where their tradesmen are held in high esteem.

10. Hey? / Haay?

Huh? What? It’s way more polite than “Huh?” and “What?” and less pompous than “I beg your pardon?” or “I’m sorry?” Unless you’re a real Pom, of course.

11. Pretty ordinary

When someone ask you how you are and you answer this way, this actually means you’re feeling terrible or having a terrible day. Pretty ordinary is NOT pretty ordinary!

12. Barbie

Barbeque. During the summer Aussies will do anything to have a barbeque. Celebrating the birth of new mosquitoes, celebrating you successfully balancing three beer bottles on your head, mourning your dead fish...you get the idea. Whatever excuse to have a barbeque will do. The chronic ones does not need an excuse at all. They just wake up one Sunday morning, decide to have a barbie and calls up everyone. This is where the men do the cooking for once and the ladies just sit around, making salad and gossip to high heavens.

13. Yarn

Conversation. “Oh, was just having a yarn with them blokes from work.” Means having conversations with...well, people from work.

Happy Australia Day!