

# AUSTRALIAN VOCABULARY AND SLANG



**Australia** – the name comes from Latin *australis* meaning *southern*

**The outback** - the vast, remote, arid area of Australia

**The bush** - rural, undeveloped land or country areas in Australia

**Billabong** - the Australian name given to the oxbow lakes (isolated ponds left behind after a river changes its course)

**Waltzing Matilda** - Australia's most widely known bush ballad. A folk song, the song has been referred to as "the unofficial national anthem of Australia"

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_2DSil5RriU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_2DSil5RriU)

**Swagmen** - an old Australian term describing an underclass of transient temporary workers, who travelled by foot from farm to farm carrying the traditional swag (bedroll).

**Bushrangers** - originally referred to runaway convicts in the early years of the British settlement of Australia who had the survival skills necessary to use the Australian bush as a refuge to hide from the authorities; robbers.

**Aborigines** – indigenous Australians whose ancestors were the first people to inhabit Australia over 45 000 years ago. The name comes from the Latin phrase *ab origine*, meaning *from the beginning*.

**The Dreamtime** - in Australian Aboriginal mythology, **Dreamtime** is a place beyond time and space in which the past, present, and future exist wholly as one.

**Oz** – a colloquial name for Australia, used since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century

**Aussie** – Australian slang for an Australian person and, less commonly, Australia.

**Down under** – a colloquial term referring to Australia

# SLANG



**Ankle-biter** — small child

**Bush telly** — gazing at the stars

**Chook** — chicken

**Cobber** — friend

**Ding bat** — fool

**G'day** — universal greeting, used anytime day or night, but never as a farewell. Pronounced "gud-eye", usually followed by "mate" (mite) or a typically strung-together "howyagoinallright" (= how are you today, feeling pretty good?)

**Lollies** — sweets, candies

**Oldies** — parents

**Scratchy** — instant lottery ticket

**Station** — large cattle or sheep property (i.e. a ranch)

**Stickybeak** — nosy person

**Tomato sauce** — ketchup

**Too right** — Definitely!

**True blue** — honest, straight

**Tucker** — food

**Useless as an ashtray on a motorbike** — completely useless

**Walkabout** — aboriginal term meaning "to go on a wander"