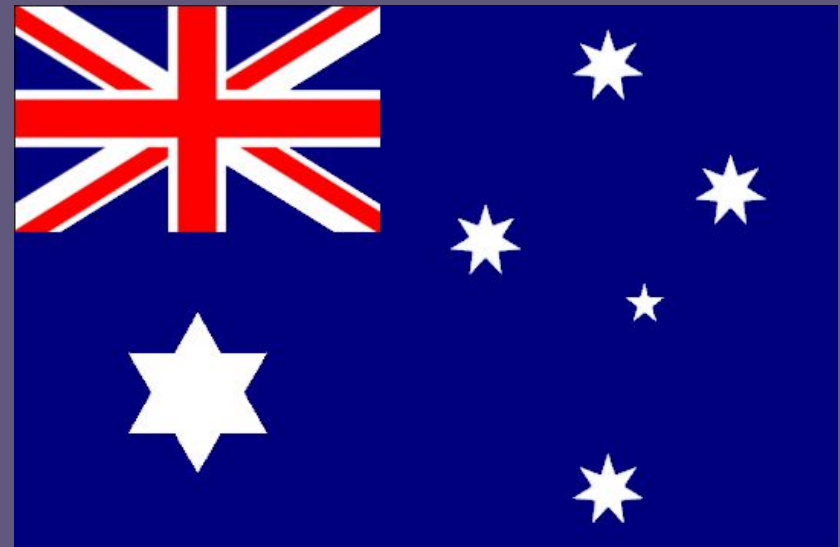
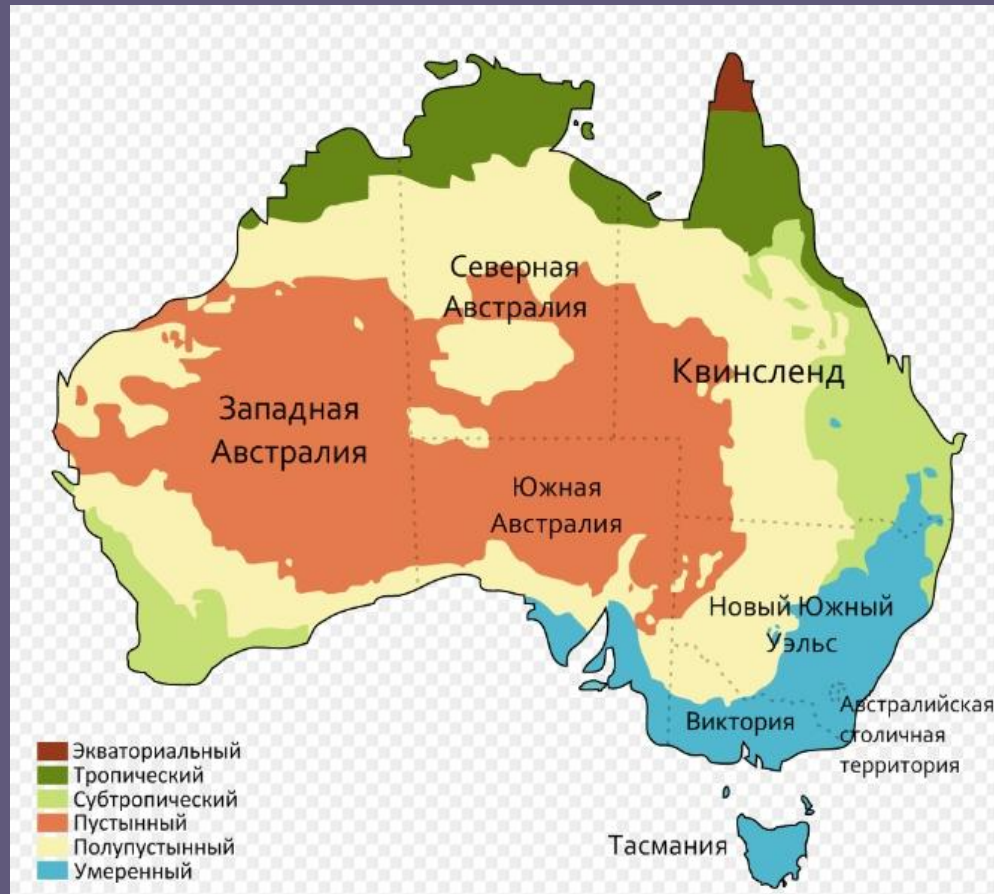


Australia is a constitutional monarchy with a federal division of powers. It uses a parliamentary system of government with Queen Elizabeth II at its apex as the Queen of Australia, a role that is distinct from her position as monarch of the other Commonwealth realms. The Queen resides in the United Kingdom, and she is represented by her viceroys in Australia (the Governor-General at the federal level and by the Governors at the state level), who by convention act on the advice of her ministers.





- Supreme executive authority is vested by the [Constitution of Australia](#) in the sovereign, but the power to exercise it is conferred by the Constitution specifically on the Governor-General. The most notable exercise to date of the Governor-General's [reserve powers](#) outside the Prime Minister's request was the dismissal of the Whitlam Government in the [constitutional crisis of 1975](#)

The federal government is separated into three branches:

- The legislature: the bicameral Parliament, defined in section 1 of the constitution as comprising the Queen (represented by the Governor-General), the Senate, and the House of Representatives;
- The executive: the Federal Executive Council, in practice the Governor-General as advised by the Prime Minister and Ministers of State;
- The judiciary: the High Court of Australia and other federal courts, whose judges are appointed by the Governor-General on advice of the Council.

In the Senate (the upper house), there are 76 senators: twelve each from the states and two each from the mainland territories (the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory)



The [House of Representatives](#) (the lower house) has 150 members elected from single-member electoral divisions, commonly known as "electorates" or "seats", allocated to states on the basis of population, with each original state guaranteed a minimum of five seats





Although Australia has no official language, English has always been entrenched as the de facto national language. Australian English is a major variety of the language with a distinctive accent and lexicon, and differs slightly from other varieties of English in grammar and spelling. General

Australian serves as the standard dialect.



Symbols of Australia





Not a symbol of Australia





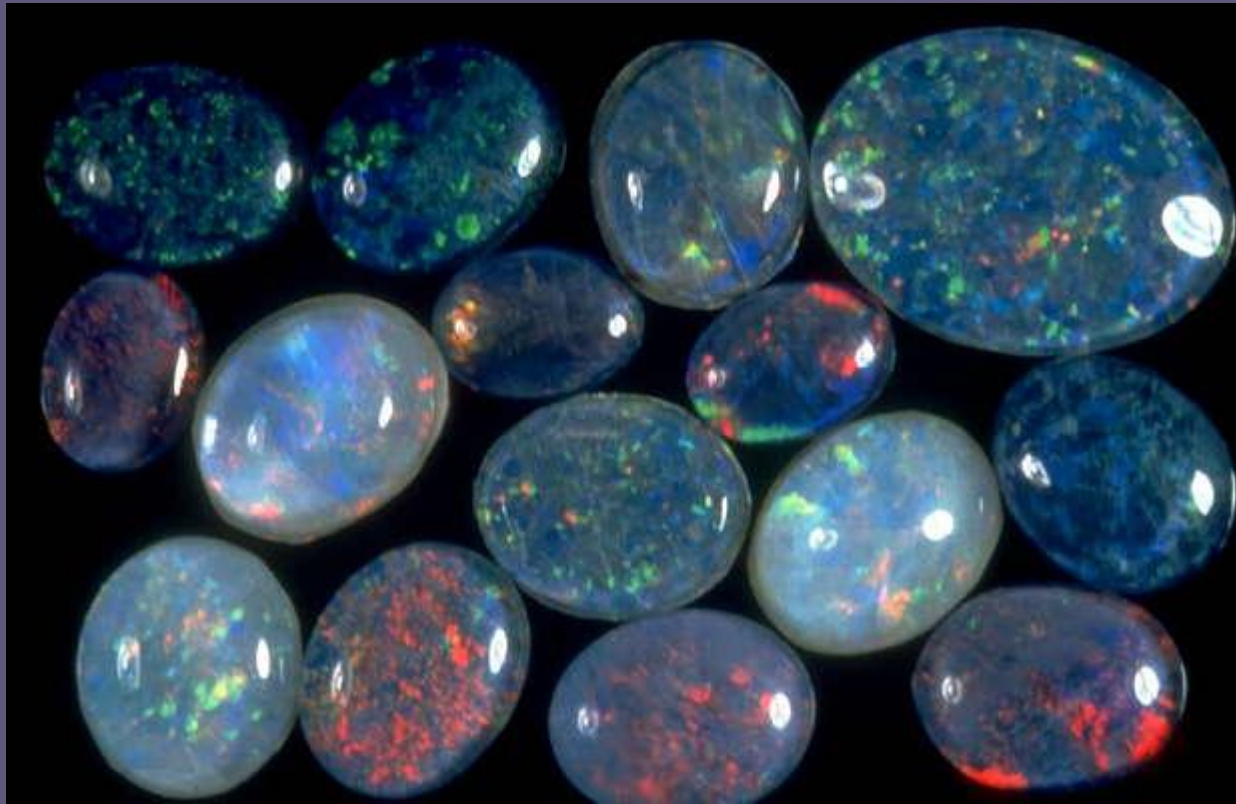
National Floral Emblem

Golden Wattle



National Gemstone

Opal



Australian Icons

Icons of Australian culture are almost as well known by Australians and visitors as unofficial symbols.

- Sydney Opera House



Uluru is one of Australia's most
recognisable natural icons



Akubra /ə'ku:brə/ is an [Australian](#) brand of [bush hat](#), whose wide-brimmed styles are a distinctive part of [Australian culture](#), especially in rural areas. The name is believed to be derived from an [Aboriginal](#) word for head covering. Akubra's best-known hats are made from rabbit fur felt with wide brims, and the term "Akubra" is sometimes used to refer to any hat of this kind. Many Akubras have [drawstrings](#) to help keep them on the wearer's head on windy days, as well as adding to the hat's appearance.

