

English

The Aussie Way

A Fun Guide to Australia's Colourful Phrases,
Words, and Expressions



Lynne Maree Walsh

English, The Aussie Way

A Fun Guide to Australia's Colourful Phrases,
Words, and Expressions

By
Lynne Maree Walsh



Strategic Book Publishing and Rights Co.

Copyright © 2015 Lynne Maree Walsh. All rights reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, taping, or by any information storage retrieval system, without the permission, in writing, of the publisher. For more information, send an email to support@sbpra.net, Attention: Subsidiary Rights.

Strategic Book Publishing and Rights Co., LLC
USA | Singapore
www.sbpra.com

For information about special discounts for bulk purchases, please contact Strategic Book Publishing and Rights Co., LLC. Special Sales, at bookorder@sbpra.net.

ISBN: 9781681815657

This book is dedicated to Sarah, Jeromé, Yoko,
Florian, Anna Maria, and Gregory.

The English language, as used in Australia today, is rich in clever and colourful descriptions. It has been influenced by words, sayings, and idioms from foreign shores, creating a unique language. Some elements of Aboriginal languages were also adopted, mainly for flora and fauna and place names, as well as some localised terms and slang. There are no regional dialects as such, only minor idiomatic and descriptive variations.

Aussie English is informal, with diminutives and nicknames used commonly to indicate familiarity. We have a collective fondness for either shortening or lengthening someone's name. There are no hard and fast rules as to whether a name is shortened or lengthened, but generally, if the name is long it's shortened and if the name is short it is lengthened. For example, the surname Jones would change to Jonesey, Smith to Smithy, Robert to Robbo, Jonathon to Jonno (almost never Jonny), and Michael to Mike or Mick. Full names are most often reserved for formal occasions only. Some examples of diminutives are: barbie, ambo, and cabbie.

Many quintessential Australian words and phrases are outdated and have disappeared from everyday use, while others are still commonplace in rural settings or specific regions. Others remain in use nationally and others are constantly emerging. For this book, I have chosen the most common colloquialisms used throughout Australia today.

The Aussie accent is consistent throughout the land, except for some minor regional variations in vowel sounds. It often relies on tone to convey different meanings. Our manner of speech is also informal, and could very well be termed lazy. It's our habit to combine two or three words to make one, for example: waddy—what do you, or dunno—(I) don't know. Visitors from foreign shores, even those with a good grasp of formal English, often find it difficult to understand the vernacular.

One does not have to look far to find information on Australian colloquialisms. In fact, there are many Internet sites and books dedicated entirely to that subject. There are also many formal books on the topic, which include documented origins of the entries, as well as exclusive language dictionaries devoted to formal English.

I would like to point out that this book is not a formal dictionary, nor does it contain a mere handful of Aussie expressions. It simply describes conversational English as spoken in Australia today.

Contained herein and listed alphabetically are standard English idioms, phrases, and phrasal verbs coloured with unique Aussie expressions, informal terms, and idiomatic single words. Each entry has one or more synonyms or idiomatic use of the word(s), and almost all entries have one or more example sentences. I have been very selective with derogatory and/or vulgar terms, with the exception of a few entries.

To break the monotony of listed words I have included snippets of information on places of interest, as well as some of Australia's unique flora and fauna, in the main body of text or at the end of many chapters. Also listed are capital cities and states, the floral emblems of each state, as well as iconic products, brands, foodstuff, habits, sporting terminology, and all things Australian.

For cross-referencing, all listed head words and phrases are in bold text.

A

ABC: Australian Broadcasting Corporation—Australia’s national television and radio broadcasting service

Aborigine: an indigenous person

(it’s) about time: 1) at last/finally ~ *It’s about time you cleaned your room!*

2) the right time/moment to do something ~ *It’s about time we leave.*

about time too: expressed when something will/has finally happened ~ *I hear they’re going to widen the road here. And about time too!* *also: and not before time

about to: on the verge of; intending to ~ *We’re about to leave.*

not about to: not intending or likely to ~ *I’m not about to tell everyone.*

above all: more so than anything else ~ *But above all, tell the truth.*

above and beyond: greater than the required amount/more than is required ~ 1a) *Firefighters worked above and beyond the call of duty.* 1b) *It sold for \$1 million above and beyond the expected selling price.*

(stay/keep) abreast of: 1) maintain knowledge of something ~ *She listens to the radio to stay abreast of the latest news.*

2) keep even with something ~ *He had to swim fast to stay abreast with the others.*

acacia/wattle: Commonly known in Australia as wattle, the genus *acacia* belongs to the family *mimosaceae*. It is a small tree or shrub

with yellow or white flowers. There are about 1,000 species of acacia found in Australia. The Golden Wattle is Australia's national floral emblem, and Wattle Day is celebrated on September 1 each year.

acreage: an area of land measured in acres

ACT: Australian Capital Territory—the capital territory of the Commonwealth of Australia. It is the smallest self-governing internal territory. It is enclosed within New South Wales.

act as if/like: behave in a specific way ~ *1a) Mary acted as if she was the one in charge. 1b) She was acting like an idiot.*

act the fool: act stupidly, foolishly; be disruptive ~ *He's always acting the fool in class.*

act for/on behalf of: represent someone ~ *A solicitor is acting on her behalf.*

act of God: an instance of uncontrollable natural forces in operation ~ *Some consider it an act of God.*

act on: take action accordingly ~ *I acted on your advice and rested for a few days.*

act up: misbehave ~ *The baby has been acting up all day!* *also: play up

balancing/juggling act: a situation in which someone is doing several different things at the same time ~ *Trying to coordinate everything most days is a balancing act.*

(get/be) in on the act: to want to participate in something current/popular in order to share the benefits ~ *The advertising campaign was so successful that everyone else wanted to get in on the act.*

in the act of: in the process of ~ *The thief was caught in the act of breaking into a car.* *also: caught in the act

get one's act into gear: get oneself organised ~ *If you don't get your act together and finish packing you're going to miss your flight.* *also: get one's act together: get it together

vanishing act: to suddenly disappear (especially to avoid doing something) ~ *He always does a vanishing act when it's time to clean up.*

ad/advert: advertisement

ad lib: speak publically without a prepared script ~ *I hadn't prepared a speech, so I had to ad lib.*

Adelaide: the capital city of South Australia

add fuel to the fire/flames: aggravate/worsen the situation ~ *You'll only be adding fuel to the fire if you publish this.*

add insult to injury: become more upset/embarrassed ~ *To add insult to injury, my friends laughed at me when I slipped in the mud!*

add up/add something up: 1) make sense; be plausible/reasonable ~ *His version of events just didn't add up.*

2) put two or more numbers together to reach an expected total ~ *Could you please add up these figures?*

3) amount of expense/size ~ *He wasn't earning much money and the bills just kept adding up.*

add together: 1) (when cooking) mix all the ingredients in a bowl ~ *The recipe says to add together the sugar, milk, and eggs.*

2) determine the sum of ~ *What's the total if you add the figures together?*

add up to: amount to/constitute ~ *It all adds up to a conspiracy to overthrow the government.*

admin: administration ~ *I work in admin.*

Aerogard: a nationally famous brand of outdoor insect repellent that is applied to the skin.

aggro: aggressive ~ *He sometimes gets a bit aggro if he's been on the booze.*

turn up the aggro: be more aggressive

aha: [spoken] expression of surprise/ discovery ~ *Aha! There it is!*

ahead of: in a superior/advanced position/place; early ~ *1a) We arrived ahead of the others. 1b) They arrived at their destination ahead of time.*

ahead of the pack/field: more successful/advanced than the competition ~ *The technology they use puts them way ahead of the field.*

(get the) go-ahead: receive approval/approval to do something ~ *The boss gave me the go-ahead to start the project.* *also: get the green light

air grievances: complain/make a public complaint ~ *The town meeting will give residents a chance to air their grievances.*

air out: 1) place something outside to freshen it ~ *I took the mats outside to air them out.*

2) allow fresh air into a room ~ *We opened all the windows so as to air out the house.*

airy-fairy: vague/unknowing ~ *She was a bit airy-fairy about tonight's plans.*

Akubra: Made from rabbit fur felt, the iconic, Akubra wide-brimmed hat is an important part of Australian culture in rural areas. It is the unofficial standard headwear used by horsemen, stockmen, farmers and graziers, and an important part of traditional outdoor clothing in the Australian bush.

Alice Springs: a major city in the Northern Territory in central Australia, often called the Alice.

alive and well/kicking: 1) still in existence/functioning ~ *Community spirit is alive and well in this town.*

2) alive and healthy ~ *I've been absent from the organization for a while, but I'm still alive and kicking!*

all about: concerning ~ *What was that all about?*

all along: from the beginning; the entire time ~ *I knew all along she was lying.*

all but: almost ~ *My memories of it are all but forgotten.*

all in all: generally ~ *All in all it was a successful campaign.*

all the more: even more; with even better reason for doing something ~ *I think my eyesight's getting worse. All the more reason to get my eyes checked.*

all of: used to emphasise the amount/extent/size of something ~ *1a) It took him all of two seconds to do. 1b) It's going to cost all of \$500 to repair it.*

all out: using one's own resources/strength ~ *The Lions went all out to win.*

all over: 1) everywhere ~ *Clothing was scattered all over the place.*

2) typical of a person mentioned ~ *I expect that what she'd do. That's Lilli all over.*

3) completely finished ~ *I'm glad it's all over.*

4) in reference to one's body ~ *I was shaking all over.*

all over somebody like a rash: touching and engaging in bodily contact with someone you like ~ *It was embarrassing. He was all over her like a rash.*

all round: in all respects ~ *It was a good day all round.*

all told/in all: altogether; the total number ~ *All told, about 200 people attended.*

all too often/easy/few: greatly; a case to the extreme ~ *Unfortunately it's something that happens all too often.*

... **and all:** including everything/everyone ~ *I've decided to cancel the picnic, with the bad weather and all.*

at all: to any extent; in any way; period ~ *I don't like it at all.*

not all there: [informal] lacking in intelligence ~ *I'm not sure that he's all there.*

for all . . . : in spite of; despite ~ *For all its faults, it's a nice place to live.*

of all something/someone: that something is surprising/unlikely ~ *I never expected to see Sam, of all people, there.*

something of all: the best/worst etc. of something ~ *That was the best of all holidays.*

along for the ride: accompany someone/be present somewhere for sheer pleasure/fun; for no particular reason ~ *My sister's the one performing. I'm just along for the ride.* *also: go/come along for the ride

along the way: 1) at some time during a process/procedure ~ *The tour offers a wonderful experience, with the promise of making many new friends along the way.*

2) at a time in the past ~ *We lost contact with each other somewhere along the way.*

along the lines of: similar in type/similar to ~ *I can't remember exactly what was said, but it was something along the lines of the companies merging.* *also: along those lines

along with: in addition to/together with/inclusive/also/as well as ~ *1a) Bring your sister along with you. 1b) She brought something to drink along with some snacks.*

all along: 1) the entire period of time ~ *I knew all along that you were hiding there.*

2) for the entire length/stretch of area ~ *Wildflowers grew all along the river bank.*

be along: will soon arrive/come ~ *1a) You go ahead; I'll be along soon. 1b) The bus should be along any minute now.*

get along: 1) have a good relationship with someone ~ *Sally and Linda get along well with each other.* *also: get on/get on with

2) leave/depart ~ *I'd better be getting along or I'll be late.* *also: get going; run along

3) live/manage one's life independently ~ *She's getting along just fine in her new surroundings.*

go along with: concur/agree with someone/something ~ *1a) I'll go along with what Peter said. 1b) His plan was a bit dubious, but we went along with it anyway.*

help along: assist someone to move/advance ~ *Linda helped her little sister along with her homework.*

hurry (someone) along: 1) walk/travel quickly ~ *We hurried along to get out of the rain.*

2) cause/make someone move faster ~ *Hurry them along, will you, or we'll be late!*

pass along: give/relay/send something to someone ~ *Could you please pass the message along to Greg?*

pull along: move (a heavy load) by pulling ~ *The suitcase had wheels so she was able to pull it along.*

move along: continue moving; move away ~ *1a) An officer was positioned to keep the crowd moving along. 1b) The traffic moved along a slow pace.*

run along: a spoken request to leave/go/depart ~ *Run along, little dog—this is not your home.*

saunter along: walk slowly/casually ~ *Tired and weary, we sauntered along homeward.*

scurry/scamper along: run nimbly/quickly along something ~ *The spider scurried along the branch.*

tag along after/behind/with someone: follow/go along with someone ~ 1a) *Do you mind if I tag along with you?* 1b) *The kids tagged along with us on the bushwalk.*

tear along: travel very quickly ~ *Cars regularly tear along this stretch of road.*

all but: nearly/almost ~ *I'll be home soon, I'm all but finished here at the office.*

all dressed up: be dressed in one's best clothes ~ *Little girls love to get all dressed up.*

all ears: be listening intently ~ *What have you got to tell me? I'm all ears.*

all for: in agreement ~ *I'm all for the proposed changes.*

all hands on deck: a spoken announcement for everybody to commence work/activity ~ *Due to the busy day ahead, the boss called for all hands on deck.*

all heart: generous/considerate/kindly (often said sarcastically about someone who displays very little kindness) ~ *Gee, thanks—you're all heart.*

all in a day's work: an ordinary/usual task/activity ~ 1a) *I don't really like doing it, but it's all in a day's work.* 1b) *Being lowered out of a helicopter is all in a day's work for a rescue officer.*

all in all: a spoken indicator that all aspects/everything has been considered (usually used at the beginning of a sentence) ~ 1a) *All in all it's a good proposal.* 1b) *All in all the show was a success!*

all in the head: imaginary ~ *His illness is all in the head.*

all over: 1) everywhere ~ *I've looked all over for it.*

2) finished (never to occur again) ~ *The marriage is all over.*

all over bar the shouting: that the outcome is certain ~ *The game's all over bar the shouting.*

all shook up: worried; emotionally upset ~ *The incident left her all shook up.*

all talk (and no action): talk/boast/brag about doing something but never actually do it ~ *He's all talk when it comes to actually doing something about the problem.*

all the best: [spoken] to wish someone a good future ~ *Goodbye, all the best!*

all the time: continuously; habitually; very often; repeatedly ~ *He whistles all the time.*

all the time in the world: having unlimited time ~ *Don't hurry—you've got all the time in the world to finish.*

all time: ever ~ *He's the greatest writer of all time.*

all told: with everything considered/included/counted ~ *All told it cost \$400.*

all up: in total ~ *1a) All up it cost me \$100. 1b) I worked for ten hours all up.*

all very well: acceptable/okay/good but not good enough ~ *1a) It's all very well for you to say that, but you don't know all the facts. 1b) It's all very well to have a gas heater, but you need an outlet to connect it to.*

all washed up: the end of a career ~ *His long career is all but washed up.*

all's/all is well: that the situation is okay; there are no problems ~ *We had a few problems at the start, but all's well now.*

at all: whatsoever/in the least/in any way ~ *I'm not at all interested!*

in all: considering everything; all being counted; altogether ~ *1a) In all, there are twenty applicants. 1b) I bought two hats in all.*

all-round/rounder: someone with many (varied) skills/talents ~ *He is a good all-round sportsman.*

be-all and end-all: the ultimate/most important/best of ~ *1a) He's so vain, he thinks he's the be-all and end-all. 1b) It was the be-all and end-all of concerts.*

almighty: very big/loud ~ *We heard this almighty crash!*

along the lines of: similar to/in type ~ *The lyrics were something along the lines of the poem we learned in class.* *also: along those lines

along the way: 1) over a distance from A to B ~ *I lost my umbrella somewhere along the way.*

2) during a period of time ~ *Apart from being a fine musician for twenty years, Janet has acquired many other skills along the way.*

along with: in addition to; together with ~ 1a) *Do you want to come along with us?* 1b) *You'll find it in the top drawer, along with pens and pencils.*

alright already: a spoken exclamation of impatience ~ *Alright already—I'm coming!*

ambo(s): ambulance officer(s)

ammo: ammunition

amounts for nothing: of something/someone to be worthless; of something done in vain ~ *So, are you saying all the work we've done amounts for nothing?* *also: counts for nothing

amount to: equal in total; meaning/value/effect ~ 1a) *Unfortunately all the donations didn't amount to much.* 1b) *She'll never amount to much if she continues to take drugs.*

amp: sound amplifier

anchors: the brakes on a vehicle *see also: hit the anchors

ancient history: outdated facts ~ *That secret is ancient history.*

angel: a kind-hearted, caring person ~ *Thanks for doing that—you're an angel.*

ankle-biters: very young children/babies

per annum: annually/by the year ~ *I make four payments per annum.*

another thing: something very different ~ *Playing recreational sport is one thing, but playing professionally is another thing altogether.* *see also: another cup of tea; something else

antsy: nervous/fidgety/restless ~ *I always get antsy before a job interview.*

(to have) ants in one's pants: be very excited/fidgety/ impatient
~ *The children were jumping around like they had ants in their pants.*

(the) ant's pants: the best/ultimate ~ *She thinks she is the ant's pants!* *also: bee's knees; cat's whiskers

any tick of the clock: very soon ~ *They'll be here any tick of the clock.*

any way: by whatever means/method ~ *You may complete the task any way you want.* *also: by any means

anybody's guess: something uncertain or unknown ~ *How it got here is anybody's guess.*

anyone who's anyone: important people ~ *Anyone who's anyone could be seen at the event.*

anything but: not at all; by no means ~ *The result's anything but good.*

anything goes: a situation where there are no rules/anything is acceptable ~ *In this sporting contest, almost anything goes.*

anything to do with: of having no association/connection ~ *1a) They didn't have anything to do with the project. 1b) I don't want anything to do with them.*

do anything/nothing for: be unaffected by something/someone ~ *1a) I'm afraid it does nothing for me. 1b) That outfit does nothing for her.*

for anything: never; under no circumstances ~ *I wouldn't change my situation for anything in the world.*

like anything: to a greater degree/very much ~ *I ran like anything to get there on time.*

ANZAC: 1) Australian and New Zealand Army Corps

2) Australian or New Zealand Army Corps soldier

ANZAC Day: A national day celebrated each year on April 25 to honour soldiers who fought for Australia in any conflict.

Anzac biscuit: Originally called soldiers biscuits, these oat cakes were created by the mothers, wives, and girlfriends of Australian soldiers. Concerned that their soldier sons and brothers were deprived of nutrients, they created a biscuit with as much nutritional value as possible. They used ingredients that did not

spoil so that they remained edible after the long sea voyages. The biscuits were packed in airtight tins to ensure they remained crisp. Anzac biscuits are still popular today, but the commercially made biscuits are not as tasty as ones made at home.

Apple Isle: Tasmania, Australia's island state and southernmost state.

apple of one's eye: something/someone held very dear ~ *His little daughter was the apple of his eye.*

she's apples/okay/right/sweet: [spoken] reply meaning everything's alright/okay ~ *Do you need some help? No thanks, she's apples.*

upset the apple cart: ruin/spoil someone's plans; throw proceedings into disarray ~ *He upset the apple cart by arguing with everyone.*

Buy the B&N e-Pub version at:-

<http://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/english-the-aussie-way-lynn-e-maree-walsh/1123191114?>

Buy the Kindle version at:-

<http://www.amazon.com/English-Aussie-Way-Australias-Expressions-ebook/dp/B01B745L7O/>