Visas for WWOOFing

Which Visa do I need for WWOOFing?

The Australian Department of Home Affairs has current information about visas, these are some visas that allow WWOOFing:

- Visitor Visa - Tourist Stream (subclass 600) (see note below)

- Electronic Travel Authority (subclass 601) (see note below)

- eVisitor (subclass 651)

- Working Holiday Visa (417)

- Working Holiday Visa (462)

- Student Visa

For all of the above visas, please see the Department of Home Affairs website for conditions. See the [Australian Department of Home Affairs Website](https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/) or if you need to talk to someone, by phone, Monday – Friday 8.30am – 4.30pm on 131 881

Choosing a Visa on the Home Affairs website


**Tourists:** Choose Visit and Tourism, then select volunteer work

**Working Holiday:** Choose Work, then select working holiday or seasonal work Volunteering is allowed on all Working Holiday visas
Visitor Visa (Tourist)

WWOOFers travelling on Tourist Visas should join WWOOF as part of their holiday, not the main reason for it. In most cases these WWOOFers want to be doing something useful, learning about organics and permaculture and getting to know some real Australians.

This is much better suited to the pace and lifestyle of non-commercial WWOOF Host properties, where WWOOFers are generally treated as part of the family. They still have all their meals and accommodation provided, but the hours are generally less formal and as the property is not generating an income the Hosts are unlikely to pay someone to help around the property.

There are many non-commercial and hobby farm WWOOF hosts in the program to choose from. The List search on the WWOOF website allows WWOOFers to easily search for hobby and suburban hosts.

On Visitor visas any work must be genuinely voluntary and must be work that would not otherwise be undertaken by an Australian resident. This principle applies for those intending to undertake WWOOFing with commercial operators (such as large organic beef farms).

If you are entering Australia on a Tourist visa it is essential that you have Tourist style accommodation booked for your first few days, and have plans for tourist activities, WWOOFing must not be the main reason for your visit to Australia. WWOOFers on Tourist visas who prearrange to stay on Commercial Farms can be refused entry to Australia as their visa conditions do not permit work. If you do prearrange any WWOOF Host visits, ensure they are Hobby Farms.

Home Affairs say this about Visitor Visas - Tourist stream:

This visa lets you:

- visit family or friends
- be here as a tourist, for a cruise or for any purpose except business or medical treatment

You can study or train for up to 3 months in total on this visa. But if your main reason for travelling to Australia is study, a student visa might be more appropriate.

You can’t work*.

*See screenshot next page for Home Affairs definition of “work”, volunteering is not considered work.

Home Affairs define Volunteer work as follows:

Volunteer work is work that:

- is unpaid (you can be provided with meals, accommodation or out-of-pocket living expenses)
- would not otherwise be done by an Australian for pay
- is short term
- is incidental to your visit to Australia
- is done for a not-for-profit organisation
- benefits the community
Volunteer work is permitted on Tourist stream visas:


The Visitor visa does not offer the wide scope of options that are available to those who are holders of Working Holiday or Work and Holiday visas which do permit work.

WWOOFing (Volunteering) IS allowed on ALL Working Holiday Visas

The Department of Home Affairs say: “In recognition of the many legitimate and worthwhile agencies that employ volunteer workers to deliver valuable community services, Working Holiday visa holders will still be able to perform volunteer work should they wish to do so. The work will simply not count towards eligibility for a second visa.”

For details see:

- Working Holiday Visa (417)
- Working Holiday Visa (462)
For more information on Student visas, see:

Student Visa


IMPORTANT NOTE: Home Affairs change the rules from time to time about what activities are allowed on these visas, it is important to confirm with Home Affairs that the type of visa you apply for does allow volunteering in exchange for food and accommodation. WWOOF does NOT have any influence over Home Affairs, and they do not advise WWOOF if they alter the Rules, the most current information is always on their website www.border.gov.au

You must arrange your entry visa to Australia before you join WWOOF. WWOOF Memberships will not be refunded if you cannot obtain an entry visa. WWOOF Pty Ltd and WWOOF Hosts cannot assist with travel costs or visa applications, so please do not ask.