



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ASAP Homestays



What is a homestay?

A Homestay is whereby a tourist or student lives within the home of a local resident in the country they are temporarily visiting.

Why do homestay?

Apart from being convenient and safe, a homestay offers complete immersion into the Australian way of life and is extremely rewarding. Guests have the opportunity to experience the Australian lifestyle first hand, practice English, try Australian food and make lifelong friends.

What is the difference between Single /Twin /Triple placement?

Single placement is for one person per room, twin share is 2 people sharing one room, with separate beds. Triple share is 3 people sharing one room, with separate beds. Sometimes families will provide several rooms so that students have their own space but this is not guaranteed. Prices are set accordingly.

Does single placement mean one student per house?

Unfortunately no, there is no guarantee with single placement. It means students have their own room but the family may have taken in students from other companies or directly. To have "no other international students" is available as a VIP homestay.

What's the advantage of sharing with another person?

Single placements may feel homesick or lonely. If English is their second language, they may lack the confidence to communicate or struggle to understand host family members. When students stay with a friend, they tend to encourage each other to speak more, are support for each other emotionally and as a result, often enjoy the experience more. It is also cheaper for students to stay in twin share.

Can students request single or double placement?

Yes, but we require advance bookings during peak season.

How much time does a student spend with the host family?

Most host families have work commitments from Monday to Friday but guests always will spend breakfast and evenings with their family. Students will attend a school or organised activities during the weekdays. Weekends are usually spent with the Host Family but students over the age of 18yrs are welcome to participate in other activities.

What do host families do on the weekend?

Every family is different. The outdoor lifestyle and social personalities common to most Australians result in families having BBQs at the beach, park or at home. Children may have sports, dancing or other activities they need to attend to on the weekends. Shopping is often a "to do" activity on the weekend. Some families may have the opportunity to take their guest sightseeing in the mountains or to the beaches.

Can students do their own washing?

Yes, guests can use the laundry during the homestay. Please ask the host family how to use the washing machine. Most families will offer to do it for the student.

NOTE: Families do not necessarily wash everyday.

Can students use the telephone in an emergency?

Yes. Students must ask the family before making a phone call. Host family telephones are not to be used to call friends or overseas for a chat.

Do all host families have internet?

No, not all families have this available. Please advise us at the time of booking if the Internet is specifically required for studies. If Internet is available, downloads must be kept to a minimum. Music and movies must not be downloaded without checking the usage allowance with the host family. We recommend students try to use the Internet at school as much as possible.

How do students get to school?

For university students or students staying for more than 4 weeks, most catch the bus, ride a bike or walk. Younger students are provided with transfers to / from school daily.

Do you recommend homestay from day one of arrival?

As students are often tired or extremely nervous on their first day, it is often worthwhile to allow them to stay in a hotel the first night. However, this really depends on the budget, length of time the group is staying in Australia and the age, capabilities of the students.

Do you have a company Homestay application form?

Yes, we have own application form and as it assists us in the process of matching effectively. We prefer agents/guests use our form only.

When is the application form due?

Depending on the season/group size, the application is due 4-8 weeks prior. This is advised at the time of booking.

Does the student choose their host family from a list of available families?

The matching is done by ASAP Homestay staff. Forms must be completed as accurately as possible to allow us to match the most appropriate family from the available database.

How are students matched with families?

The first consideration is if the student has any allergies and that they are matched with a compatible family considering their gender. Then requests are taken into consideration including compatibility with pets, smoking habits and dietary needs. Hobbies and interests are also taken into consideration.

When will the host family information be provided?

Information will be provided 2 weeks prior to arrival as long as the application was received by the due date on the booking request. If it is required earlier, applications must be completed sooner and this must be advised at the time of the booking.

Do families cancel after their profile is sent?

There are circumstances whereby a family might cancel due to unplanned work trips, illnesses or personal circumstances. We try to replace the family as soon as possible.

What is expected of a student during the homestay?

All students are provided with an orientation upon arrival. This has some cultural tips and ideas on how to manage your time living with your family away from home.

Who organises the orientation/Meet & Greet venue?

Unless otherwise advised, ASAP Homestays organise the meet and greet location to ensure smooth coordination.

What time do students meet Families on arrival day?

MON-FRI Arrivals: Meet & Greet is after 4:30pm
SAT-SUN Arrivals: Meet & Greet is anytime after 9:00am

What time is pick up & drop off each day?

Most schools require the students to be at school by 8am and then to be picked up anytime after 3.15pm. Our staff are required to be at the school from 7am to 6pm to ensure adequate adult supervision as families often work outside of school hours.

What types of host families are available?

A variety of family types are listed to host the students. These include: Couples (retired and working) / parents with children / single ladies / single mothers.

Is a single parent a suitable host family?

Yes, single mothers make great hosts and often younger girls feel more comfortable in an all girl home. Single fathers are not listed as hosts for under age students unless requested; then only males will be matched with single dads.

Will there be at least one child in each host family?

No. Retirees or single people make great host families because they have time. If students request children as the most important part of their homestay, we endeavour to meet their request.

Does a student have to share a bedroom with another overseas student?

Students would never share with another international student unless they have booked together as friends and have requested TWIN share.

Is it guaranteed that there will be no other overseas students in the home stay?

No, sometimes there will be other nationalities staying, particularly if the students are staying in single homestay. Other students make it a great opportunity for to practice English and make life-long friendships. We communicate with the family to ensure the other student is of the same gender.

Are there any occasions where the students share a bedroom with a host child or parent?

Students have their own room unless they are staying with their friend in twin share homestay. The only case where sharing with a host child may occur is in a program that is coordinated as a buddy program and families from within the school do not have enough separate rooms.

Is it guaranteed that there will be no opposite gender of the same generation in a host family of a visiting student?

ASAP is aware of the potential issues that may occur by putting students of the opposite gender in the same homestay. Students will NOT be placed in a homestay of the opposite gender and similar age group. However, they may be placed with a student of the opposite gender who is a few years younger. We are confident that no issue will occur and families are required to provide supervision at all times. We also know the children of our families and can judge their behaviour. All profiles are provided within enough time that if a student or mother of a student feels uncomfortable with the choice of family, they have the opportunity to discuss any concerns. The aim is for ALL students to have a good time and not be placed in any uncomfortable situations.

Will a student have to change families in a homestay?

This is at the request of the school, the student or the agent due to a student not being comfortable or happy in their current environment. Before this commences, the situation is assessed to be sure it is not because a student is being difficult. The only other time this may occur is if a host family has a family member that becomes sick or dies suddenly or another extreme/critical situation.

Can all host families provide appropriate food for students with allergies and special diets?

It does depend on the severity of the allergy. We always try to choose families that can provide the appropriate food. Some families might easily cater for a vegetarian student; other families may be more able to supply gluten free or peanut free meals etc. All requests are taken seriously into consideration. *(Our Managing Director has many allergies and understands the significance of ensuring the safety of the students).* Students with severe allergies are requested to bring Epi-pens with them and permission to be admitted to hospital immediately in the case of a reaction. For some dietary requirements, a higher fee is paid. I.e. Halal food

Will students be left alone during the weekend?

For long-term older students, yes, they are given independence and allowed to stay home. Under age students are monitored. They are allowed a reasonable amount of independence but must advise where they are at all times. In regards to under age students, families sign an agreement to not leave students alone.

What happens if a student becomes ill?

Firstly, all students must have traveller's insurance. If the student is part of a group, the Tour Escort will be contacted and arrangements will be made for the student to be transported to a 24 hour Medical Centre. This might be via the family if they are available or in a taxi. The tour escort will look after the student. If the illness is contagious or serious, the student must stay at the hotel with the tour escort or at the hospital by a Doctor's request. If a student is travelling as an individual, ASAP Homestays will provide assistance to make arrangements for medical treatment.

Is English the primary language spoken by the host family during a homestay?

Yes. This is also part of the agreement when families sign up to be a host family for ASAP Homestays. English must be spoken at home at all times.

Can I learn English at my homestay?

Some host families have teaching qualifications and are happy to provide a Teach English in the Homestay program for students. Please contact our office for available packages.

Can host families take students to and from school?

Yes. If this is required, the family will be remunerated accordingly. Families that are not required to provide transfers are paid less. In most cases, car pools are arranged as an economical and environmentally friendly option. Families are placed on a roster for pick up or drop off so that each family has to only do one trip per day rather than two.

Are there religious limitations in daily homestay life?

Some of our families are Christians and may go to church on a Sunday. As part of a cultural experience, we expect our students to participate in daily life with their family and therefore accompany the family to church. However, there is no requirement for a student to accept this religion and if it against their religion, they are exempt from this activity. Families are required to advise us of their religious beliefs when applying.

NOTE: We do not have any radical religions within our family database.

Is it possible to arrange a non-smoking homestay?

If a family does smoke, we ask them to do outside. Most of the families chosen to host younger students do not smoke. Families who smoke are matched with senior, long-term students as a lot of them do smoke and request smoking families.

Will there be multi-lingual staff to assist during the Homestay?

At present we have full-time Japanese speakers. Where possible, we try to have a person who speaks the student's native language available.

Do all students eat and sleep in the same home as the host family?

Some homes have a 'granny flat' and are particularly popular with older students. The students eat and live with the family and only sleep in the separate quarters.

Are clean homes guaranteed for a homestay?

All homestays are inspected and our staff have been trained in methods of checking the cleanliness of a home. Unfortunately, we cannot monitor houses all the time and families may clean before the inspection is conducted. On-going feedback from the students is encouraged to be sure the families are keeping up to our required standards.

How can students contact ASAP Homestay staff?

ASAP Homestays have two 24hr mobiles for emergencies and a third available for study tours. These numbers are provided during the orientation. Our office is open 9am – 5pm Monday to Friday (*except Public Holidays*).

Will any members of the host family be the same nationality as the student?

Students are not usually placed with a host family of the same nationality unless such placement is requested due to special needs eg. students' medical condition or age of student being very young and needing special attention.

Can students be picked up at the airport by host families?

Individual students and some university groups may be picked up from the airport by host families. Extra costs do apply. However, it is recommended that groups are picked up by a coach and provided with a thorough orientation and formal meet and greet with host families in a designated location. The airport has consistent interruptions and does not allow for privacy.

WHAT TO BRING

- Clothing to suit the Australian climate (*This varies depending on location, check a climate guide*)
<http://www.livingin-australia.com/climates-australia-cities/>
- It is important to bring good walking shoes and a hat
- Swimwear
- A jacket in case the weather does turn cool by night.
- Personal toiletry items (shampoo, toothpaste, etc)
- Sunscreen and insect repellent

NOTE: You do not need to bring any bedding or household items for your homestay.

- All linen is supplied
- If the package is a 2 meal per day package, guests may wish to bring some food for their snacks and lunches. (*Please keep this in the kitchen so as not to attract bugs to the bedroom*)

What is the process to become a host family?

1. All families complete an application form
2. Home inspection and interview with the family is conducted by the Homestay Coordinator
3. This report is assessed and filed at head office.
4. Blue Cards will then be arranged for all members of the family over 18 yrs old, regardless of the age group being hosted.
5. Host Families are required to provide references and undergo training following our company manual.
6. A formal agreement is signed

Families receive a Cultural Information Pack specific to each nationality that may be welcomed into their home.

Complaints

All feedback from students is recorded. Families with 2 complaints are removed from the database for a period of 6 months, depending on the severity. A further complaint will remove them from our list permanently.

NOTE: Serious complaints will result in cancellation from our database immediately and permanently.



STILL HAVE QUESTIONS?
Contact ASAP Homestay Headquarters anytime and our team of friendly staff will assist you.

ASAP Homestays
Direct Phone: +61 7 4057 4111
Fax: +61 7 4057 4333
E: info@edrec.com
www.asap-biz.com