



PODCAST

TRANSCRIPT

Episode 154:

Title: "Australia—The Land Down Under"

Duration: 36:31

How to use this transcript:

1. Print this transcript:

We try to reduce our paper consumption, but we really recommend that you print out this document.

2. Write on it and take notes:

Circle, highlight and note anything that you want. We have even provided space for you to do so!

3. Listen first **without** the transcript:

Don't worry about understanding every single word. Just focus on training your ears to the sound of English.

4. Listen again **with** the transcript:

Listen a second time with the transcript, pausing whenever you want to

00:00	<p>You are listening to the Déclic Anglais Podcast, THE podcast for intermediate, French-speaking learners of English. This podcast is like a steppingstone (<i>un tremplin</i>) to help you understand more advanced materials in English. There is a transcript (<i>une transcription</i>) available for this and every episode of this podcast. You can download the transcript for free from the link in the description of this episode. Or go to www.declicanglais.com/podcast.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
01:06	<p>Hello there, dear listeners! This is Tom, your teacher and guide to the English language. Thank you very much for joining me today for this, the first episode of 2026.</p> <p>Today, we're traveling to "the land down under" - Australia!</p> <p>This massive island continent is home to unique animals, fascinating history, and a culture all its own. Whether you're planning to visit Australia, or you're just curious about this incredible country, this episode will give you a great introduction to what makes Australia so special.</p> <p>So, let's begin our journey to Australia!</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>

02:16	<p>First, let's talk about where Australia is and what it looks like. Australia is both a country and a continent. It's located in the Southern Hemisphere, which means it's below the equator. This is why Australians sometimes call their country "the land down under."</p> <p><i>(Traduite littéralement en français, cette expression signifie « le pays de là-bas en-dessous »).</i></p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
02:57	<p>Now, dear listeners, Australia is a huge country – really HUGE. Let me give you an idea of how big it is. So, Metropolitan France is around five hundred and forty-four thousand (544,000) square kilometres (544,000 kilomètres carrés - à peu près). That sounds like a big country, doesn't it?</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
03:35	<p>Well, Australia is over seven and a half MILLION square kilometres.</p> <p>France: 544,000 square kilometres.</p> <p>Australia seven and a half million square kilometres.</p> <p>Yes... You can fit Metropolitan France into Australia 14 times. <i>(On pourrait faire tenir 14 fois la France en Australie).</i></p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>

04:18	<p>If you put the west coast of Australia in Portugal, the east coast of Australia would be in Turkey. If you put the south coast of Australia in Marseille, the north of Australia would be in northern Scandinavia. Australia is so big that it has three main time zones! (<i>L'Australie est si grande qu'elle compte trois fuseaux horaires principaux !</i>)</p> <p><i>Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
05:02	<p>But what is strange about Australia is that, even though is so big, the population of Australia is really not that impressive. In 2025, Metropolitan France had around sixty million inhabitants (<i>60,000,000</i>). By comparison, Australia has only around twenty-seven million inhabitants (<i>27,000,000</i>) – less than half of France. For such a big country, that's really not so many people. This means that Australia is one of the least densely populated countries in the world (<i>l'Australie est l'un des pays les moins densément peuplés au monde</i>).</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
06:16	<p>Most Australian's live along the coast, especially in the big cities like Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, and Perth. The centre of the Australian continent is called "the Outback," a vast expanse of land where few people live. Many people outside of Australia imagine the Outback as being dry, arid, like a desert. And while Australia does indeed have many deserts, some parts of the Outback actually have tropical climates, or are covered by large forests.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>

07:09	<p>What all Outback areas have in common is that they are sparsely populated (<i>ces régions sont peu peuplées</i>), and they are really considered wilderness.</p> <p><i>Le terme « wilderness » désigne toute région relativement préservée de l'influence humaine. « Wild » est l'adjectif (en français sauvage), et « wilderness » est le nom).</i></p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
07:48	<p>Now then, let's talk about the history of this fascinating country. For many people, Australian history begins in 1770 – when the British explorer Captain James Cook arrived at the east coast of Australia and claimed it for Great Britain. But Australia's history is much, MUCH older than that... In fact, Australia's human history is just as old as Europe's.</p> <p><i>(L'histoire humaine de l'Australie est aussi ancienne que celle de l'Europe).</i></p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
08:41	<p>The Indigenous Australians, also called Aborigines in English, arrived in Australia about fifty to sixty thousand years ago (<i>il y a environ 50 à 60,000 ans</i>). It's very difficult to imagine that kind of timescale, but it was still maybe thirty thousand years before the cave paintings at Lascaux, in the Dordogne. When the first Aborigines arrived in Australia, there were still ice caps over much of Europe (<i>il y avait encore des calottes glaciaires sur une grande partie de l'Europe</i>).</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>

09:45	<p>The Aboriginal Australians today include many groups of people living across the Australian continent. They speak hundreds of indigenous languages and have rich cultures and traditions.</p> <p>I will speak more about the Aboriginal Australians in future episodes, dear listeners. They have a truly fascinating way of living and seeing the world, and we could learn a lot from them.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
10:18	<p>For most of their history, the Aborigines had no concept of Australia as a country, as a nation-state.</p> <p><i>(Pendant la majeure partie de leur histoire, les Aborigènes n'avaient aucune conception de l'Australie en tant que pays, en tant qu'État-nation).</i></p> <p>That part of the continent's history is much more recent, beginning with the arrival of the Europeans.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
11:05	<p>The first known Europeans to see Australia were Dutch explorers (<i>des explorateurs néerlandais</i>), in 1606. The Dutch explored the north and west coasts of Australia, and for a long time Australia was known as "New Holland". But still, not much was known about this mysterious, unexplored continent.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>

11:48	<p>It wasn't until the eighteenth century that Europeans really took an interest in Australia. In 1770, a British explorer called James Cook arrived on the island. He claimed Australia for the British Empire (<i>le capitaine James Cook revendiqua l'Australie pour l'Empire britannique</i>), and from this point onwards, everything changed for Australia.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
12:28	<p>In 1788, Britain established its first colony in Australia at Sydney. But this wasn't a normal colony. Oh no, dear listeners, this was a penal colony (<i>une colonie pénitentiaire</i>). Britain decided to use Australia as a place to send its convicts – a “convict” is a criminal, a person who has been convicted of a crime. They called this punishment “transportation”.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
13:26	<p>Now, you might be thinking:</p> <p><i>Je ne serais pas contre être envoyé en Australie : beau temps, plages magnifiques... Ce serait mieux que d'être assis dans une prison sous la pluie en Grande-Bretagne !</i></p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>

13:40	<p>Well, think again, dear listeners. Transportation was not a holiday, it was actually a terrible punishment. When the first convicts arrived in Australia they found a wilderness (<i>une region très sauvage</i>). Life was incredibly difficult, and there was no possibility of escape. They had to work hard, building roads and buildings, cultivating the land. Between 1788 and 1868, about 160,000 convicts were transported to Australia.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
14:38	<p>Transportation was not permanent for everyone. After they had finished their punishment, some convicts could return to their homes in Britain and Ireland. But many people chose to stay in Australia and start new lives. Today, about 20% of all Australians can say that their ancestors were convicts. And the Australians are very proud (<i>ils sont très fiers</i>) of this heritage – it has become part of the national story.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
15:23	<p>Then in the 1850s, something exciting happened - gold was discovered in Australia! This started a gold rush (<i>cela a déclenché une ruée vers l'or</i>). Thousands of people from around the world came to Australia, hoping to find gold and become rich. The gold rushes transformed Australia, bringing wealth and many new settlers. The population grew rapidly, and cities expanded.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>

16:14	<p>Over the years, Australia slowly developed its own national identity. In 1901, the different Australian colonies joined together to form one nation - the Commonwealth of Australia. This was a huge moment for Australians and cemented the notion of "Australia" as a nation-state (<i>un État-nation</i>).</p> <p>The Commonwealth of Australia was not immediately independent; it was a self-governing dominion of the British Empire with a lot of autonomy.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
17:11	<p>Australian independence is a little difficult to explain, because it was very gradual, very progressive. It's difficult to point to one exact date where Australia became an independent country. But in 1945, Australia was actually a founding member of the United Nations (<i>l'Australie était l'un des membres fondateurs des Nations Unies</i>).</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
17:52	<p>To this day, Australia is still culturally connected to Great Britain. Indeed, dear listeners, just look at the Australian flag (<i>il suffit de regarder le drapeau australien</i>) – in the top left of the flag is the "Union Jack", the flag of the United Kingdom. The system of government in Australia is heavily influenced by the British Westminster system.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>

18:31	<p>And of course, Australia is also a constitutional monarchy (<i>l'Australie est également une monarchie constitutionnelle</i>).</p> <p>Who is the Head of State of Australia, dear listeners?</p> <p>(<i>Qui est le chef d'État de l'Australie ?</i>)</p> <p>Well, in 2026, it is King Charles III – that's Charles Windsor, the son of Queen Elizabeth II! He is the King of Australia AND the King of the United Kingdom.</p> <p>(<i>Ecrivez vos notes ici</i>).</p>
19:17	<p>The main language of Australia is English, but specifically Australian English. Australian English is really interesting. For me, as a native speaker of British English, I find that Australian English is a lot more like British English than American English.</p> <p>(<i>Personnellement, je trouve que l'anglais australien ressemble beaucoup plus à l'anglais britannique qu'à l'anglais américain</i>).</p> <p>(<i>Ecrivez vos notes ici</i>).</p>
19:50	<p>There are some differences in vocabulary, but nothing that causes any problems in comprehension. Over the years, I have met many Australians, some of them are my family, (<i>la plupart des Britanniques ont de la famille éloignée en Australie</i>) and we have never had problems understanding one another.</p> <p>(<i>Ecrivez vos notes ici</i>).</p>

20:15	<p>One thing that you, my dear listeners, might find unusual is the Australian accent. <i>(Les accents australiens semblent souvent un peu étranges aux francophones habitués à entendre des voix britanniques ou américaines)</i>. It's a very distinctive accent. But honestly, it's just a question of habit <i>(c'est une question d'habitude)</i>. The more you hear an Australian accent, the easier it becomes to understand.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
20:53	<p>If you would like to hear Australian accents, I really recommend the <i>Netflix</i> series "Fisk". It's a really funny series, with short 25-minute episodes.</p> <p>The name of the series again: "Fisk" <i>F-I-S-K</i>.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
21:16	<p>While Australian English is mostly the same as British or American English, there are some differences in vocabulary and expression. It's common to hear Australians use the greeting "G'day!" <i>(Il est courant d'entendre les Australiens utiliser la salutation « G'day ! »)</i>. Literally, "good day" <i>(bonjour)</i>.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>

21:48	<p>In British English, “good day” is considered VERY formal, even old-fashioned. However, it’s still commonly used in Australian English: “G’day!”</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
22:05	<p>The Australians have a reputation of being a very laid-back (very relaxed) people. Naturally, I can’t speak for all Australians here, but my personal experience of Australians does seem to confirm this. I also find Australians to be very humble, very modest. Personally, I have never met an Australian that I didn’t like!</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
22:38	<p>For the Australians who live near the ocean, beach culture is large part of Australian life. Surfing is almost like a religion in some coastal areas. Surf lifesaving clubs, where volunteers patrol beaches to keep swimmers safe, are important community organizations. Many Australian children grow up learning to swim and spending weekends at the beach.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>

23:14	<p>Australians also love barbecues, which they call "barbies" (<i>Non, je ne parle pas de la poupée « Barbie » pour enfants !</i>) A typical Australian social event might be a "barbie" at the beach or in someone's backyard, where friends gather to grill meat, eat, drink, and relax together.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
23:42	<p>And talking of food, dear listeners, what is Australian cuisine like? Is it all kangaroo kebabs and koala casseroles? Well, Australian cuisine has changed a lot, especially in recent decades. Traditional Australian food was quite simple - meat pies, sausages, and fish and chips were common. You could say that it looked very British! But modern Australia is very multicultural, and this is reflected in the food.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
24:27	<p>Australia has welcomed immigrants from all over the world, and today you can find excellent Chinese, Italian, Vietnamese, Greek, Indian, and Thai food in Australian cities. Australia has also developed a strong café culture, and Australian-style coffee is now famous worldwide.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>

24:59	<p>So, we have spoken about the geography, the politics, the history, the accents, and of course, the food! But who can speak about Australia and not mention the wildlife? Wildlife - that is, the native plants and animals of this island continent.</p> <p>One thing that makes Australia truly special is its wildlife. Because Australia has been isolated from other continents for millions of years, many animals evolved that exist nowhere else on Earth.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
25:49	<p>Let's start with marsupials. These are a special kind of mammal (<i>des mammifères</i>) that carry their babies in a pouch (<i>une poche ventrale</i>). Marsupials carry their babies in a pouch.</p> <p>The most famous marsupial is, of course, the kangaroo. Kangaroos are large animals that hop (<i>they jump</i>) on their strong back legs. A large adult kangaroo can jump over three meters high and cover nine meters in a single jump! NINE METRES!</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
26:50	<p>Now, in English, baby kangaroos are called "joeys" – a very cute name! No one is exactly sure where this name "joey" comes from, but it doesn't come from the name Joseph or Josephine! It's rumoured that the name "joey" comes from an Australian Aboriginal language.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>

27:20	<p>Joeys are absolutely TINY (really small) when they are born. They immediately climb up to their mothers' pouches where they live until they're big enough to survive outside.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
27:39	<p>Another beloved Australian animal is the koala. Often people say "koala bear" (<i>un ours koala</i>), but they're not bears at all - they're marsupials, just like kangaroos. Koalas spend most of their time sleeping in eucalyptus trees. They sleep about 18 to 22 hours a day! They eat eucalyptus leaves, which don't provide much energy, so they need to sleep a lot to conserve energy.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
28:23	<p>However, dear listeners, not all Australian animals are cute and friendly. Australia is home to some of the world's most dangerous creatures. There are venomous snakes (<i>des serpents venimeux</i>), dangerous spiders (<i>des araignées dangereuses</i>), and even deadly jellyfish (<i>des méduses mortelles</i>) in the ocean.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>

29:10	<p>As I mentioned earlier, I have distant family living in Australia. One of my cousins is a farmer in the countryside. He has told me that on his farm, he has lost many dogs because of venomous snakes.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
29:29	<p>But, for me, dear listeners, I'm not too worried about the snakes. In fact, I quite like snakes! My problem would be the spiders. I'm a little bit of an arachnophobe. My arachnophobia is not too bad – if I find a large spider in my bath, I still try to rescue the spider. I don't like to kill them, but I don't like to touch them, either. <i>(Si je trouve une grosse araignée dans ma baignoire, j'essaie quand même de la sauver. Je n'aime pas les tuer, mais je n'aime pas non plus les toucher).</i></p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
30:14	<p>But dear listeners, some Australian spiders are HUGE. The golden huntsman spider <i>(l'araignée chasseuse dorée)</i> is the second largest spider IN THE WORLD. Including the legs, these spiders can be around 15 cm wide <i>(en incluant les pattes, ces araignées peuvent mesurer environ 15 cm de large).</i></p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>

31:03	<p>Despite its terrifying appearance, huntsman spiders are not aggressive, and the venom is not toxic to humans. The biggest problem with huntsman spiders is that they have this bad habit of climbing into peoples' cars.</p> <p>(I don't know why, maybe they are car enthusiasts?)</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
31:35	<p>So, just imagine, dear listeners: You get in your car one morning, you are driving to work, and then you notice a little friend crawling up your leg (<i>puis tu remarques un petit pote qui grimpe le long de ta jambe</i>). A little friend with eight legs who is 15 cm wide!</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
32:05	<p>And so, every year, huntsman spiders cause people to crash their cars. It's a common occurrence. And we're not only talking about arachnophobes here, but it's also people who are not scared of spiders. It can be a shock to anyone to suddenly have such a big spider introduce itself: "Good morning, human! Lovely day for a drive, isn't it?"</p> <p><i>(**Scream and car crash sound effect**)</i></p> <p>Urgh! Not for me, dear listeners.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>

32:48	<p>Before we finish today's episode, I would like to talk about one absolutely AMAZING Australian animal: the lyrebird (also called a <i>menura</i>, ou en français l'<i>oiseau-lyre</i>).</p> <p>The lyrebird is a kind of almost-flightless bird (<i>c'est une espèce d'oiseau Presque incapable de voler</i>), - they live on the ground.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
33:29	<p>Lyrebirds are very shy, very timid, and not the most impressive bird to look at. But, dear listeners, lyrebirds are AMAZING singers. They are masters of imitation, copying everything that they hear around them. And I don't just mean that they copy other birds, dear listeners. Imagine that you are taking a walk through an Australian forest. Suddenly you start to hear a car alarm (<i>tout à coup, vous entendez une alarme de voiture</i>). You think to yourself: "Hmm, that's strange... There are no cars near here." That's because it's NOT a car alarm, but a lyrebird.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
34:33	<p>They can imitate car alarms, a phone ringing, a camera, even machines like chainsaws (<i>des tronçonneuses</i>)! If you don't believe me, I have included a link in the description of this episode. This link will take you to a video on YouTube from the BBC, where the famous nature presenter Sir David Attenborough investigates this fascinating bird. Watch the video, dear listeners, it's really amazing.</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>

35:17	<p>Well, I think it's time to end this episode, dear listeners. I realise it's getting a little bit long, and you are all busy people with places to go and people to see. But this episode is not the end of our exploration of Australia, dear listeners – oh no! In the next episode, we will explore the story of the "Ten Pound Poms".</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>
35:51	<p><i>Au milieu du XXe siècle, plus d'un million de Britanniques et d'Irlandais ont émigré en Australie dans le cadre d'un programme gouvernemental spécial. L'objectif : fournir de la main-d'œuvre à l'industrie australienne en plein essor. Et le prix du billet de bateau ? Seulement £10 Sterling !</i></p> <p>Have a nice day, everyone. I look forward to seeing you all in the next episode. Bye for now!</p> <p><i>(Ecrivez vos notes ici).</i></p>

How did it go?

Take a moment to revisit the notes that you took.

List here 3 words or expressions (minimum) that you would like to remember from this podcast. We recommend that you consult a free, online dictionary like

www.wordreference.com to ensure that you have the correct definition and context.

WORDS/EXPRESSIONS THAT I WANT TO REMEMBER:

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