



## Culture shock



It is natural to take some ways of doing things with you when you leave home and travel to your new country.



You will take your own:

- personality and identity – who you are



- cultural ways – how you live your life



When you arrive in a new country with different ways of doing things, you might feel:

- confused
- nervous
- irritable
- uncertain
- dependent on others



If this happens to you, you might have culture shock.

Culture shock is normal.



It happens to most people when they arrive in Australia, or any new country.



You are not alone.

It is a normal reaction to big changes in your life.

## 4 stages of culture shock

1

There are usually 4 stages of culture shock:

Honeymoon – everything is new and exciting.

2

Culture shock – everything is strange and confusing.

3

Adjustment – you are getting used to the new way.

4

Mastery – you are better at doing things the new way.



By knowing more about the stages you will be better able to handle the feelings and experiences you have.

# 1

## Honeymoon



When you arrive in Australia you have:

- high hopes
- big expectations



You see everything as exciting and interesting.

# 2

## Culture shock



You are busy with lots of:

- things you need to do
- problems you need to solve
  - finding a house to live in





- finding a job



- going to school to learn English



You might feel:

- disappointed



- frustrated



- embarrassed



- afraid



- angry



- guilty



- sad



You may also:

- miss your old life in your old home



- have trouble sleeping or get very tired



- lose your appetite and not want to eat



- feel like you do not care



## Adjustment



You have had more experiences.



Your English is getting better.



You start to feel more in control.



You might still be uncertain about some things.

It is hard to meet your expectations.



## **Mastery**



You have a routine now.



You are used to the way things are done in your new country.





This includes the:

- language



- habits



- customs



- food



- people

## Getting used to your new life



Everyone can be proud of their own culture and background.



You can also share your culture with Australians.

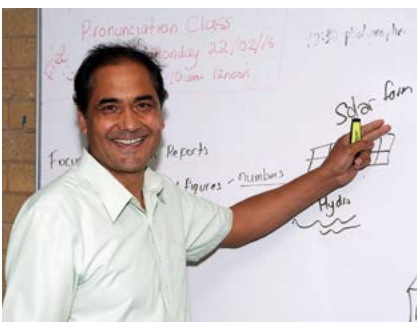


There are things you can do to get used to your new life.

## Watch, listen and keep an open mind



You might not be sure about the social rules in Australia.



People communicate in different ways:

- verbally – speaking and using words
- non-verbally – using body language and gestures



Try to listen carefully to what people say.



Look at body language – the way people use their:

- face
- eyes
- body
- hands



You can learn more about how people communicate.

## Ask questions



You might see people do things in Australia that seem strange or wrong to you.



The things you see are probably normal in Australia.

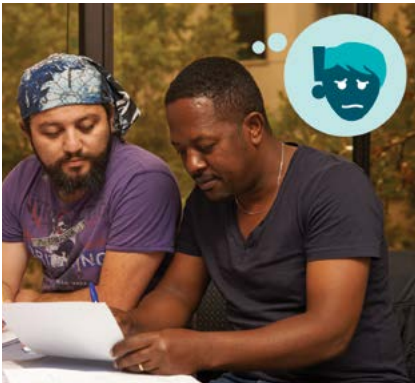


You might not understand something that is happening because you do not know enough about it.



Ask people you trust about things you do not understand.

## Keep your sense of humour



You will probably make mistakes while you get used to your new life and culture.



If you can laugh at your mistakes it will help you:

- learn
- adapt
- enjoy the overall experience

## Anxiety and frustration



Learning to get along in a new culture is not easy.

When you are mixing with people from other cultures it can be hard to communicate what you really mean.



If this happens, you might feel:

- anxious – worried about things going wrong
- frustrated – annoyed that you cannot change things



If you understand that these feelings are normal, you might be able to deal with them better.

## Get involved in your community



There is a lot of value in trying to:

- understand a new culture
- experience a new way of life



Try to:

- get out



- meet new people



- volunteer – do unpaid work that helps others



- take part in community activities and events



This will help you:

- learn about Australia



- share your culture with Australians

## Do things that give you hope for a better future



Try to see your early days in Australia as one stage of your life – the start of your hope for a better future.



Go to English classes.



They will:

- let you be part of your community



- help your self-esteem – how good you feel about the person you are

## **Do something special for yourself regularly**



Get some exercise:

- go for a walk or a run
- ride a bike



Meet with your friends.



Try a new hobby – something you like to do because you enjoy it – or start doing an old hobby again.



You could:

- plant a vegetable garden



- learn how to
  - play a musical instrument
  - paint a picture
  - play a sport

