

**SMSV presents**

**GUIDE TO SURVIVAL IN  
MELBOURNE**



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## Setting up a Bank Account

Commonwealth is the only bank that has a branch at the campus centre.  
Both Commonwealth and ANZ have ATMs available at the campus centre.

### How to get a bank account?

Go to the bank branch and tell them you would like to set up an account. Most of the year 2s have a Commonwealth Netbank Saver account, with about 5% interest. You set up the account, and the ATM card (called keycard in Melbourne) will be sent to your address in about a week.

### Notes:

- \* Ask them for the **debit/credit card** because you can do online transactions with it and use it to pay at shops, and use the same card to withdraw money from the ATM. It's way more convenient.
- \* It's possible to set up the bank account in Singapore – this can be done by calling the person-in-charge in Commonwealth. You will be able to transfer money into your account prior to going over. However, the account will only be officially open when you arrive in Melbourne and set it up personally. You will be able to draw money then.
- \* **Tax file number (TFN):** It is important to take note of this. The purpose of this is to prevent you from getting taxed in Australia. Basically, it saves you money.  
<https://iar.ato.gov.au/IARWeb/default.aspx?pid=4&sid=1&outcome=1> is where you can go to get the TFN. Scroll to the bottom of the page, click “next” and follow the instructions. After you've received your TFN, submit it to a bank attendant and the bank will take note of it.

## Mobile Phone

Unlike Singapore's mobile plans that offer e.g. 120 free outgoing mins and 500 free smses, Australia's mobile operators work differently. By paying a certain amount, say AUD\$29 per month, you are given \$150 in credit points, which you can use to call or sms. Each call or sms costs a specific amount of credits. Additionally, you get credit points that allow for free calls between mobile phones using the same operator. Different plans e.g. \$29 cap, \$49 cap, give you different amounts of credit, and possibly data plans as well.

After deciding on a plan, you should check on your usage throughout your month for at least the first few months to ensure that you are not using up your credits too quickly. This can easily be checked online.

List of phone operators include (may not be comprehensive):

- 3 mobile
- 'Yes' optus
- Telstra
- Vodafone
- Gotalk

Note:

\* It is recommended that your batch mates apply to the same operator to enjoy free calling rates to each other. E.g. You get 200 free mins for 3-to-3 calls under the \$29 cap plan. Also some mobile operators offer certain discounts on plans with referral by someone who is already a subscriber. So feel free to approach any seniors to help you with the referral.

### Best international calling rates:

Among all the mobile phone operators, gotalk offers the best rates for international calls. At only 5 cents per min, it will serve as a useful short term mobile line for you to stay in contact with your family and friends in Singapore.

Besides, it's a prepaid card with no contract. So you can simply finish up the credit when you decide to apply for other plans.

Note that during orientation, there will be a gotalk booth outside the campus centre. Over there, gotalk prepaid cards are being offered at half of the original price. So don't miss the chance to get such sim cards cheaply!

For more information on gotalk please go to:

<http://www.gotalkmobile.com.au/plansandrates/Pages/default.aspx>

In the long term, you might decide to get a fixed mobile line. There are a number of mobile shops in the campus centre itself where you can enquire on the plans that suits you.

IPhones and Blackberrys are also available for sale with their respective plans.

## Other Important Things To Do

### **Police Check:**

You need to submit your Police Check. Get the Police Check form online at <http://www.med.monash.edu.au/current/police-checks.html>, fill it in, and bring it to the post office for posting. Please note the identification documents you need to bring along for photocopying (stated on the form). Also note you will have to pay the post office \$15 for the police check form submission as well as a small amount for postage. You will have to do it again at the end of every year, in preparation for the next year. When you get the document certifying a successful Police Check you will need to carry it with you at all times.

### **Working with Children's Check:**

Get the form in hard copy from the post office. Get your picture taken at the post office because they know the regulations, which are pretty strict. Fill in the form and submit it. You will receive the card after successful application. The WWC card is to be carried with you at all times. You will only need to apply once.

### **OSHC card:**

Apply online for an OSHC card at [https://www.oshcworldcare.com.au/member\\_student/login.aspx](https://www.oshcworldcare.com.au/member_student/login.aspx) and it will be mailed to you. Your policy number should be your Monash student ID (check your OSHC documents received through the email). You will need to show this card when you see the doctor at the university health services (and other bulk billing<sup>1</sup> doctors). It allows the doctor to send the bill directly to OSHC without you having to pay for your consultation, when it falls under what is covered by the policy. Note that application for OSHC insurance coverage should already have been done in Singapore.

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<sup>1</sup> Bulk billing is when the doctor you visit sends the bill directly to the insurance company. Not all doctors are bulk billing. The university health service does bulk billing.

# Transport

Unlike Singapore, Melbourne's transport system works on the concept of 'Zones'. Areas closer to the city are considered Zone 1 while areas further away from the city, such as the suburb Clayton (and the Clayton Campus) are considered Zone 2.

We used to have to buy **Zone 1** and **Zone 2** cards to get around, you slot the card into a machine upon boarding buses and it comes back out with something printed on it. We had to buy many different cards for different purposes, such as if we were travelling from Zone 1 to Zone 2 you needed to use two different cards. Then there was a Weekend Saver card which made it cheaper to travel on weekends. There are about another five or ten different cards you could buy for different uses. But now, there is an easier solution to transport.

You can apply for a **Myki card** to travel around. It works like an ezlink card! You tap it on a card reader when you board and before alighting the bus, and it automatically calculates the fare.

Visit this website <http://www.myki.com.au/> to get an online account and apply for a card to be sent to your address. Alternatively, you may buy the card directly from Customer Service at major train stations such as Flinders Street and Melbourne Central.

Where we have buses, MRTs and LRTs (and taxis) in Singapore, Melbourne has **buses**, **trams** and **trains**. The Myki (or the old card system) works on all three.

When travelling around Melbourne, we will usually use a **journey planner**. Simply enter your desired starting address and destination, as well as the time you need to arrive or depart by, and the planner will show you a few options. The journey may include bus, train, tram or all three, including timings of those you need to catch, among other things.

Discover the joys of the Journey Planner at

[http://jp.metlinkmelbourne.com.au/metlink/XSLT\\_TRIP\\_REQUEST2?language=en](http://jp.metlinkmelbourne.com.au/metlink/XSLT_TRIP_REQUEST2?language=en)

The train stations most commonly used for transport are Syndal, Glen Waverley, Huntingdale and Clayton. These are the closest to the Monash Clayton Campus.

Bus and train timetables are also available at the website. Trains come quite frequently, so the bus timetables are more useful.

## More detailed information about transport costs:

Previously, we had to buy various cards for transport. Here are a few examples:

- 1) Two-hourly cards – all the buses, trains and trams you take within 2 hrs of you boarding your first vehicle are considered as 1 journey. The "expiry time" of the journey will be punched onto the card. Boarding transport after that time will cost you another journey.
- 2) Daily cards – you pay per day of usage. From morning till night, all the transport you will take will be counted as a day of journey.
- 3) Weekend saver – functions similarly to a full-day card, except that it's cheaper. Only used on weekends.

What the myki does is it calculates the "cheapest" fare for you. For example, if you tap your card and complete the journey within 2 hrs, you will be charged the 2-hrly card rate. If however you exceed and travel throughout the day, you will be charged the daily card rate, which is cheaper than many repeated 2 hr journeys. If you travel on a weekend, it will charge the weekend saver rate. And the different zones complicate issues further. Don't worry about it and just know that the myki is way more convenient!

## **Taxi**

Should there be a need for you to hire a taxi, you can call 13 CABS at 132227 or Silver Top Taxis at 131008. Also, you can use taxi fare estimator to calculate the cost of the ride.

## **Fares and surcharges**

Taxi meters are usually clearly visible, so you can keep check of your fare. Late night taxi trips must be paid for in advance. Between 10pm and 5am in Victoria, the driver will ask you for an up-front deposit, based on a table of point to point estimates. You can use the [fare estimator](#) to work out what your up-front costs are likely to be. Melbourne cabs attract additional charges like a late night surcharge from midnight to 5am, a fee for phone bookings, a fee for using the Citylink freeway and even a fee for taxis waiting at the airport rank.

(Adapted from <http://www.visitvictoria.com/displayobject.cfm/objectid.00049325-9BE5-1A5B-9B6580C476A90000/>)

## Accommodation

In halls, almost everything is provided for. This includes a heater, a laundry room with dryer, a kitchen, common fridge(s), and occasional free dinners among other things.

**Fan:** This is not provided. Many seniors bought fans (cheapest ones were \$10 each) in the first month there because summer is really hot. Quite worth it for five years' usage.

**Heater:** You will need to switch the heater on when the weather starts getting cold. Turn the red knob and leave it for a few hours, you will not feel the heat instantly. Some heaters don't heat the room very well, so a few seniors bought heaters themselves.

**Fridge:** Quite a few people have their own mini-fridge in their rooms for essentials like milk, eggs, meat, the occasional ice cream, etc. The common fridges are generally reliable except when you have floor mates who tend to take others' things without asking. It happens. Milk is probably the most common, it tends to disappear from the bottle mysteriously. People have had bread and eggs taken too, among other things. Use the common fridge knowing that it comes with some risk. It should be noted that some people have never had stuff stolen, and others have managed to live with losing some milk and a few eggs. Life goes on.

**Floormates/ Hallmates:** This is going to vary depending on which hall you live in and what type of person you are. The bottom line is to be friendly as far as you can, try and enjoy your hall life, you will definitely have lots of fun if you make friends with them. Plus, the locals are quite easy to talk to and get along with. Remember, always start with "How's it going?" or something like that. That said, don't go out of your way to try to fit in if you really feel awkward, or can't be bothered to.

**Kitchen:** This is probably going to end up pretty dirty, again depending on how lucky you are. Just try to be considerate when you are cooking, and clean up after yourself. Try not to contribute to the mess. Buy your own sponge and detergent in case you find none at the sink.

**Toilet:** The same toilets for both males and females. It's not that big a deal after all, we are all used to it.

## Supermarkets and Practical Shopping

There are a few large supermarkets in Australia, like how Singapore has Giant, Sheng Siong, NTUC Fairprice and Cold Storage.

The largest in Melbourne is **Coles**. You will see it everywhere. In some of the other states **Woolworths** or other supermarket chains may have more of a presence. The two chains are largely similar, both provide basically anything you might need from a supermarket. Other than Woolworths and Coles, a smaller chain found in Melbourne is **Aldi**, which generally sells fruits and vegetables more cheaply than the two larger chains. However, prices change weekly so be sure to compare prices first! Also Aldi does not provide free plastic bags so please bring your own bags! Recyclable bags are available on sale though.

On Saturdays, there is a free **shuttle bus** which ferries hall residents to a small nearby mall called **Brandon Park**. Coles and Aldi are both available there, and it is the preferred choice for many residents for grocery shopping. The first bus comes at 9.15am and the last bus back is at about 1.15pm. There are buses every 10-15 mins.

The other place that people often go to for groceries is **Clayton**. This is a small town centre about 20 mins away by bus. Apart from the standard Coles branch there, this place has a few other good shops to visit. It has many **butchers** which provide meat at much cheaper prices than at supermarkets, a good choice for cooking groups which buy large amounts of meat at a go. It has **Asian Grocers** which satisfy your cravings for home with kaya, sambal chilli, egg noodles, hello panda and much more Chinese/Asian products. Apart from grocery shopping, it has **OfficeWorks**, which is your one stop shop for anything to do with the office and work, from printers and scanners to files and simple stationery. It also has many small delightful **bakeries** and eateries such as **Ping's Dumplings** worth visitng.

Also worth mentioning is **Kmart**. This is a good place to shop for electronic equipment, kitchen equipment such as hot water kettles and rice cookers, basics like hangers and fans and even a desk lamp if you need one. This is also available at Aldi. **Big W** is another place good for electronics and equipment but this is not so widely found in the suburbs.

**Target** is another large store that can be found at many places, usually large malls like Chadstone (more about this later). It sells mainly clothes, but other things such as kitchen equipment, pillowcases, etc, are available.

## Places to shop, eat and walk

Last but not least, here are some suggestions if you are bored stiff and want to go out to talk a walk and see what's around!

### Pinewood

Being one of the most accessible places, Pinewood is just 30 mins walk away from halls. It is very convenient as you can cycle or walk there.

Available at Pinewood:

- Coles
- Fresh Bread / Bakery
- Ice cream! Cold Rock Creamery is a popular dessert destination
- Cinema. This is a good choice for a cheap movie. The seats are not impressive and it's a small cinema, but you don't have to travel any further!
- Other eateries like Subway

To get to Pinewood, walk down Blackburn Road in the direction away from campus centre. (Direction of traffic on the halls' side of the road) Just keep going straight till you hit Pinewood, you won't miss it. For those less inclined to walk or cycle, buses 703 and 737 will take you there in an instant.

### Glen Waverly

Glen Waverly is an Asian hub nearby that offers a one stop for grocery shopping, food, cinema, shopping and cafes. Just a 10 mins bus ride away from halls, it is a common and popular hangout. Think of it as something similar to AMK or Toa Payoh Hub, where there is a central mall as well as many shops and eateries around the area outside the mall.

Available in Glen Waverly:

- Coles
- Asian groceries
- Asian eateries (e.g. Grand Tofu, where they sell awesome yong tau foo)
- Cafes and other eateries

To get to Glen Waverly, take bus 737 from the bus stop just outside halls along Blackburn road (do not cross the road, direction: away from campus centre). Alight at Glen Waverley Railway Station.

### Clayton

Like Glen Waverly, Clayton has lots of Asian grocery shops and food stores. Also, many cheap grocery deals are available there. The butchers there offer the best prices for meat! Cinemas and malls are not available here, however.

To get to Clayton, take bus 703 from the bus stop along Blackburn road, near Rusdens. (direction: towards campus centre, cross the traffic light)

### Chadstone Shopping Centre

This is a huge shopping centre that has many branded stores. Sometimes, cheap deals are available during sale periods. Commonly known as "Chaddy", it is one of the common hang out places among locals and Asians alike.

To get to Chadstone Shopping Centre, take bus 742 from right outside halls along Normanby Road (no need to cross the road).

### **Melbourne City**

Here's the time for rest and relax! There are so many things in the city such as endless shopping, eating, watching shows and musicals, etc. Do check it out!

To get to the city:

There are many options. Best use the previously described Journey Planner to plan your journey! It generally involves taking a bus to a train station, and then taking the train to the city. There are many stops that you can choose to alight at depending on your specific destination, such as Flinders Street Station, Melbourne Central Station, Southern Cross station, and so on.