

The **OUTBACK** Way

TIPS, HINTS & INSIGHTS

The following are specific to the Outback Way.

Vehicles must be in sound mechanical condition. Know how to check your vehicle (daily) and make basic repairs and/or replacements (e.g. air / fuel / oil filters, fuses, hoses, belts). Knowing how to bush weld using two car batteries can be particularly helpful for travellers towing trailers or caravans.

Pack a good range of tools, spare parts (hoses, belts, filters, fuses, globes, sealing tape, patching compound – epoxy metal / filler), two spare tyres and a repair manual if unsure how to make repairs.

Avoid driving at dawn, dusk or night when stock and wildlife are active and road trains travel the road.

Take rubbish with you. Don't bury or burn rubbish. Don't use cleaning agents in waterways or waterholes. Dig your toilet as far away from camps and rest areas as possible. Deposit rubbish in bins.

Drink at least one litre of water per day, always wear a hat and sunscreen when outdoors, and preferably wear long sleeves and jeans to minimise exposure, insect bites and scrub scratches.

In the event of a vehicle breakdown always stay with your vehicle. A vehicle offers better shelter than desert scrub and it is always easier to find a car than a wandering person.

Not all tracks are open to public access – if unsure, don't proceed. Always respect the rights of Aboriginals, pastoralists and landholders. Leave gates, bores, windmills and tanks as you find them.

Carry plenty of water (minimum 2-3 litres/person/day) and fuel (carry 50% extra when travelling on sandy unsealed roads). Carry additional dried / canned / preserved food and water rations for 3-4 days as an emergency supply. Travel self-sufficient with the confidence of knowing you can survive a minimum 3-4 days if held up unexpectedly (e.g. due to flood, breakdown, sickness, road closure).

Unsealed roads can quickly become impassable after rain. Always check with local authorities on road closures and road conditions or you could become stranded unexpectedly.

Do an accredited first aid course and/or carry a first aid guide that accompanies a comprehensive first aid kit (suggested contents can be found [here](#)).

Driving on unsealed roads for extended periods can contribute to driver fatigue. Take regular breaks, swap drivers regularly or plan on travelling short distances each day. Never drive tired or fatigued.

Inform a family member or friend of your travel plans. Leave them a map, itinerary, contact details and vehicle / travel party details. Contact and update them regularly of your progress and travel plans. Let them know what to do and who to contact if and when you fail to make contact.

Don't travel aimlessly along unmarked tracks, avoid using outdated maps and avoid relying solely on a GPS to show your position. Install or carry a compass, log distances travelled so you can easily backtrack, mark your path at junctions (when venturing off a main track), recognise prominent features or landmarks as you travel.

Carry a HF radio or satellite phone. Maintain radio contact with base stations or colleagues at designated times. Phone family or friends regularly to update them of your travels.

Have a medical, dental and health check before leaving home. Carry repeat prescriptions if necessary. Carry contact details of after hours medical advice or first aid support. Aim to have at least one passenger as the designated 'medico' with first aid qualifications or knowledge of the first aid supplies.

Carry updated maps or preferably the Outback Way Atlas and Guidebook. There are very few road signs in the outback and that is why the Outback Way Atlas and Guidebook is so detailed!

Carry spare batteries for GPS / Camera's / torches. Carry a quality portable torch and a 12V fluorescent light. Moonless nights can be very dark!

Along rough, rocky or corrugated sections of the Outback Way try to maintain tyres at or near highway pressure so as to keep the tyre walls firm-hard and less susceptible to puncturing by rocks, sticks and sharp objects.

Avoid driving across open-country without the guidance of an established track. Hidden stumps, rocks and sharp objects could stake both tyres along one side of the vehicle. Only travel on defined tracks when going off road.

Tjukayirla and Warburton roadhouses have tyre leavers, bead breakers and compressed air for travellers to repair tyres. Replacement tyre tubes are usually stocked at Warakurna, Warburton and Docker River general stores (as well as Boulia, Winton and Alice Springs service centres).

Caravan and camp grounds at roadhouses long the Outback Way generally operate on self-generated power supplies that are switched off from 10pm to 5am. Travellers staying in campgrounds who require continuous night time power for camp freezers, medical devices or electrical appliances will need alternate power supplies (e.g. inverters, battery banks, jump starter packs, etc).

Warakurna / Giles operates on central standard time, which is 1.5 hours ahead of western standard time (e.g. 1.5 hours ahead of Perth time).