

How to use government websites



Australian government websites provide a wide range of information, from news and entertainment to community health warnings and service advice. Learn which of these may benefit you and how to set up your own myGov account, so you can access and manage your online government services with confidence.

How government websites can help you

Government websites are a valuable source of trustworthy information covering different topics relevant to Australians.

There are many websites available. Some offer access to essential services, such as aged care services, Medicare, and the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). Others cover news and current affairs, the latest health updates, weather reports and advice for travellers. There are also government websites that provide entertainment, allowing you to access radio and television shows or podcasts through a streaming service for free!

You can do your own research to find the websites which are most helpful and relevant for your needs.

For practical information

News – the ABC News website provides up-to-date news covering local, national and world stories. It informs, educates, and entertains, and aims to reflect the diversity of the Australian community. Visit [abc.net.au](https://www.abc.net.au)

Weather – the Bureau of Meteorology provides the community with the latest weather forecasts and warnings. Visit [bom.gov.au](https://www.bom.gov.au)

Health – the Department of Health shares public information about health advice, policies, and regulations. This includes COVID-19 alerts and advice about COVID-19 vaccination programs. Visit [health.gov.au](https://www.health.gov.au)

Travel – the Australian Government's 'Smart Traveller' website includes information about travel documentation, overseas regulations and how to stay safe when travelling. Visit [smarttraveller.gov.au](https://www.smarttraveller.gov.au)

For entertainment

You can choose a website based on your entertainment interests. Options include:

ABC Radio – select from a range of national and local networks and podcasts. Visit [abc.net.au](https://www.abc.net.au)

ABC iview – watch your favourite ABC TV shows and movies. Visit iview.abc.net.au

SBS on Demand – choose your favourite SBS TV shows and movies. Visit sbs.com.au

Be Connected – select from a range of resources designed to develop your digital skills, or play games in the games centre. Visit beconnected.esafety.gov.au

For government services

You can access key government services, including:

My Aged Care – helps you to find and access government funded aged care services. Visit myagedcare.gov.au

Healthdirect – provides free approved health information and advice. Visit healthdirect.gov.au

Services Australia – provides information about Australian Government payments and services. You need to use your own myGov account to access this information safely. servicesaustralia.gov.au



What is myGov?

myGov gives you access to a range of Australian government services online. You can access all your government service information using the one account. Once you create a myGov account, you only need one login to enter the site. No need to visit multiple sites and remember lots of passwords!

How to create a myGov account

To set up a myGov account you will need:

- an active email address, which is private to you
- a mobile phone with an active account and number
- access to the internet or a mobile data plan.

Follow these steps to create a myGov account:

1. Go to the myGov website and select 'Create a myGov account'.
2. Agree to the terms of use.
3. Enter your email address. This must be unique to you, not one you share with someone else.
4. Enter the code sent to your email address from myGov.
5. Enter your mobile phone number.

6. Create a password. Your password must have at least seven characters and include at least one number. For more information about creating strong passwords visit: beconnected.esafety.gov.au
7. Select or create your secret questions. Secret questions are questions that only you should be able to answer. You will be asked one of more of these questions if you try to access your myGov account and have forgotten your password, or do not have access to the code sent to your mobile phone. Answering these questions will not allow you to sign-in but it will give you access to set a new password or change your mobile phone number. You will then be able to access your account.
8. Confirm your username. myGov will provide you with a username to access your account. The username will be made up of letters and numbers. You will also be given the option to use your email address as your username.

TIP: If you have the option, it's best to sign-in to myGov on a computer. This keeps your mobile phone free to receive the security code.

Signing-in to myGov

Follow these steps to sign-in to myGov:

1. Go to the myGov website and select 'sign-in'.
2. Enter your myGov generated username or your email address.
3. Enter your password and click 'sign-in'.
4. myGov will text a security code to your phone. Carefully type this code in the 'enter code' box.

TIP: To keep your account secure, myGov sends a code via text message to your phone every time you log in. This is known as Two Factor Authentication (an additional way of confirming your identity). Once you have entered the code correctly on the myGov website, you will be able to access your personal information.



Linking services in myGov

To get the most benefit from your myGov account, you can create links within your account to the services you regularly use. Accessing all your services from the one place means all your information is stored together. You only need to log in to your myGov account to access them.

Here are some examples of services that can be linked to myGov:

Australian Tax Office (ATO) – enables you to do your tax online, process tax assessments and receive reminders for any payments or refunds due.

Medicare – allows you to make a claim or check previous claims.

My Aged Care – enables you to access your personalised client records, update the names of your client representatives and check who has access to view your records.

My Health Record – allows you to view pathology reports, receive correspondence from your doctor, and manage who has access to your medical and health records, including doctors.

Centrelink – gives you access to age pension entitlements and payments.

How to link a service

Follow these steps to link a service using your myGov account:

1. Sign-in to your myGov account.
2. Choose 'services' in the top menu. This will take you to the services page.
3. Select 'link new service'. Choose the services that you want to access from the list of options.
4. Agree to allow myGov to store your personal information – it is safe to do this here.
5. Follow the step-by-step instructions given for the service you are linking.
6. Use the linking code that myGov will send you to link to the service.

TIP: myGov may ask questions about your recent interactions with the service that you are linking. This could include information about your recent Medicare claims, for example. This is for your security and protects your personal information.



How to scan a QR code and use COVID-19 check-in apps

A QR (Quick Response) code is a black and white square 'barcode' with a matrix design. It is linked to digitised information which can be 'scanned' or 'read' using a smartphone.

One way that QR codes are used is to collect contact details when people arrive and leave venues in COVID-19 affected areas. They are often displayed at the entrance of venues like shops and restaurants. The success of contact tracing to help slow the spread of COVID-19 relies on the accuracy of this information.

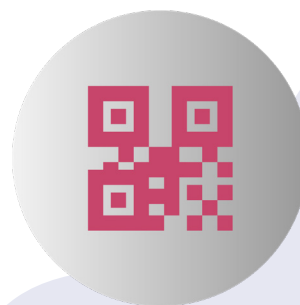
Each state and territory has its own QR code linked to a COVID-19 registration 'app', which is a computer program designed for use on a mobile device.

Scanning QR codes

Follow these steps to scan a QR code:

1. Locate the QR code at the venue when you arrive.
2. Open the camera on your phone and hold it close to the QR code. When the camera focuses on the code, a link will appear at the top of your screen. Tap on this link. You may be asked to download your state government's check-in app at this point.
3. Enter your contact details. (Once you have downloaded your state or territory's app and entered your details it will remember your information next time).
4. Select 'check-in to this location'.
5. When you leave the venue, remember to open the app again and checkout.

TIP: Unless you select 'check-in' your contact details will not be sent to the check-in service. You must select the option to check-in to complete the process.



How to keep your personal details safe

Create strong passwords. Strong passwords make it harder for other people to access your personal information. They should include a mix of upper and lower case letters, numerals and special characters. Avoid using one password across multiple sites and remember to change your passwords regularly. Your myGov password must have at least seven characters, including at least one number.

Remember your secret questions. Always answer your secret questions exactly as you did when you set up your account and use the same capital letters and spacing. If you answer your myGov secret questions incorrectly five times in a row you will be locked out of your account for two hours.

Don't share your information. myGov, or any government service such as the ATO, will never request personal or financial information over the phone. You will receive email or text notifications from

myGov whenever there are new messages in your inbox, however these messages will never include a link to log in to your myGov account. Always access your myGov account by logging in from the website.

Don't share your login details. Your myGov account stores your sensitive personal details and financial information. Keep your login details private.

Always sign-out of your account. This is especially important if you are accessing myGov from a public computer. When you sign-out of your account, you ensure that no-one else can look at your information.

For more information on this topic visit the Be Connected website at beconnected.esafety.gov.au/topic-library/introduction-to-mygov.

Take the time to discover Be Connected

Be Connected is a comprehensive website with free resources specifically designed to support older Australians to connect online safely and navigate the digital world confidently. The site is also useful for families and community organisations who want to help older community members access all the benefits of the internet.

beconnected.esafety.gov.au

