

Australian Citizenship: Application Guide for 2026

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Australian citizenship is the final step in many people's migration journey. It gives you the right to vote, access to an Australian passport, and the security of permanent belonging. This guide covers everything you need to know about applying for citizenship in 2026.

Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for Australian citizenship by conferral, you must:

- 1. Be a Permanent Resident** You must hold a permanent visa at the time of application and at the time of the decision.
- 2. Meet the Residence Requirement** You must have been lawfully present in Australia for at least **four years** before applying, including at least **12 months** as a permanent resident. You must not have been absent from Australia for more than **12 months in total** during the four-year period, including no more than **90 days** in the 12 months immediately before applying.
- 3. Be of Good Character** The Department will assess your character, including any criminal history.

4. Have a Basic Knowledge of English

5. Have an Adequate Knowledge of Australia This is assessed through the citizenship test.

6. Intend to Reside in Australia You must intend to live in Australia or maintain a close and continuing association with Australia.

The Citizenship Test

The citizenship test consists of **20 multiple-choice questions** drawn from the official resource book “Australian Citizenship: Our Common Bond.” You must score at least **75%** (15 out of 20 correct).

The test covers:

- Australia’s democratic beliefs, rights, and liberties
- Australian history
- Australian society and values
- Australian symbols and national anthem

Tip: Read the official resource book thoroughly. The questions are drawn directly from it.

Common Issues

Issue	Solution
Excessive absences from Australia	Apply for a discretionary exemption if absences were for compelling reasons
Criminal history	Seek legal advice — minor offences may not prevent citizenship
Failed citizenship test	You can resit the test — there is no limit on attempts
Application delays	Processing times vary; contact the Department if significantly delayed
Permanent visa expired	You must hold a valid permanent visa — renew if necessary

Processing Times

Current processing times for citizenship applications are approximately **12 to 18 months** from lodgement to ceremony. This can vary depending on the complexity of your case and the volume of applications.

How I Can Help

While many citizenship applications are straightforward, issues such as excessive absences, character concerns, or complex residence calculations can complicate matters. I can assess your eligibility, help you prepare your application, and advise on any potential issues.

Book a consultation today from \$97.

About the Author

Nilesh Nandan is the Head of Practice at MyVisa Lawyers Pty Ltd, a specialist immigration law firm with offices across Australia. With 33 years of legal experience and 27 years specialising in immigration law, Nilesh is admitted as a solicitor in New

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