

SECTION A

Introduction to Reading Tactual Maps

Map themes in Volume 2, *People and Industry*, of the Tactual Atlas include such topics as discovery, settlement, population, land use, agriculture, minerals, energy, industry and trade.

All maps are of Australia, except for some in Section C, 'People', where there are State maps showing cities and towns. For some topics bar graphs have been used, either alone or with maps.

To read each map effectively you need to understand some basic mapping concepts and cartographic conventions, and to adopt systematic reading strategies.

Briefly the concepts involve:

- map scale
- map direction
- map reference systems
- map symbols and legends
- simplification of map detail
- name placement on maps

These concepts and conventions are described with examples in the book *A Map User Guide to Reading Tactual and Low Vision Maps*. They are also summarised in the Introduction to Volume 1 of the Tactual Atlas.

In addition, the following points should be kept in mind:

- When reading each map, firstly scan the whole page, perhaps most effectively in vertical strips using both hands. This gives you a general idea of page layout, and the position of the map and its legend, etc.
Other methods of scanning may be preferred; but whatever method is used, an appreciation of the whole page is necessary before attempting to read map detail.
- Read the map commentary in conjunction with the map. The commentaries help make the maps meaningful and point out particular aspects of the data shown. They also provide a reading strategy for each map. In general, the maps cannot be read effectively without the commentaries.
- A clear mental picture of the outline of Australia and its States, and the locations of capital cities and major geographic features is essential for reading each map. This knowledge will enable you to recognise the location, extent and distribution of information shown on the maps. The first map and commentary, 'Australia: General Reference', will help you develop the necessary framework.

You will also find it helpful to use this map and the maps in Section C showing cities and towns in each State as references for locating features mentioned in other map commentaries.

Turn to the map 'Australia: General Reference' on page 9 and read it together with its text in the braille commentary book.

This map, with its accompanying text, has been included for two reasons. Firstly, it will familiarise you with the shape of Australia, and its States and Territories, and with the location of capital cities and other major features. Secondly, the map and text will provide practice in developing map reading skills.

The skills required for efficient map reading include:

- systematic scanning and perception of map data
- use of map scale
- use of map (compass) directions
- use of map reference systems
- symbol recognition and discrimination
- shape (outline) recognition and
- tracing line symbols.

Reading the map will introduce you to these skills.

Reading Strategy

Step 1: Carry out a preliminary scan of the entire map. You may do this in vertical strips using both hands, or in any way which gives you a clear picture of the whole map layout. Note the location of the legend in the upper left corner, the compass diagram in the lower left corner and the scale bar along the lower margin.

Step 2: Read the map title along the upper margin.

Step 3: Establish what features are represented in the legend located in the upper left.

Step 4: In the lower left, locate the diagram illustrating the 4 main points of the compass: north (N), south (S), east (E) and west (W). These points are subdivided to indicate north-east (NE), south-east (SE), north-west (NW) and south-west (SW). Familiarise yourself with them, as they are used in the text to guide you from one part of the map to another.

Step 5: Locate the scale bar along the bottom of the map. With this it is possible to measure distances between features and places on the map. The scale bar represents a total length of 2000 kilometres (km) and is divided by ticks into four equal intervals, each representing 500 km.

If you are unfamiliar with the concept of map scale, or have had no experience in using a scale bar, refer to the Map User Guide or Volume 1 of the Tactual Atlas for a full explanation.

To practise using the scale bar, try this exercise. Position a ruler with one end on the symbol for Adelaide and with its edge passing through the Canberra symbol. Place your finger on the ruler to coincide with the symbol for Canberra and transfer this length to the scale bar, with the end of the ruler at zero on the scale bar. The length on the scale bar from zero to your finger represents the ground distance in kilometres between the two cities. The distance is about 1000 km.

As a further exercise in using the scale bar, you may like to measure the distances between other places on the map.

Step 6: Trace the outline of Australia. If you are unsure of the directions given, refer to the compass diagram described in Step 4.

Beginning in the SE corner of the map, locate the island State of Tasmania (T) and trace its outline. From the NE tip of Tasmania move north and locate:

- (1) Flinders Island between Tasmania and the mainland and
- (2) Cape Howe on the mainland where the border between Victoria (V) and New South Wales (NSW) reaches the coast.

Proceed north along the east coast of the mainland and locate the following coastal features in order:

- (3) Port Jackson (Sydney Harbour),
- (4) North Stradbroke and Moreton islands, off the coast near Brisbane and
- (5) Fraser Island.

Following the coast in a NW direction until you reach Cape York (6), you will notice the Great Barrier Reef (gbr) running parallel to the coast. Cape York (6) is the most northerly point on the Australian mainland.

Then find:

- (7) Thursday Island just NW of Cape York.

From Cape York follow the coastline south, NW and then NE observing:

- (8) the Gulf of Carpentaria and
- (9) Gove Peninsula and, further to the west,
- (10) Cobourg Peninsula and
- (11) Melville and Bathurst islands, which are to the north of Darwin.

Then move SW around:

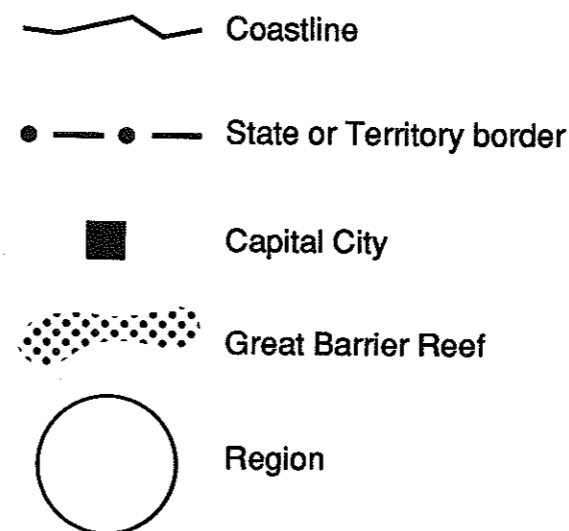
- (12) Joseph Bonaparte Gulf, past
- (13) Yampi Sound and
- (14) North West Cape.

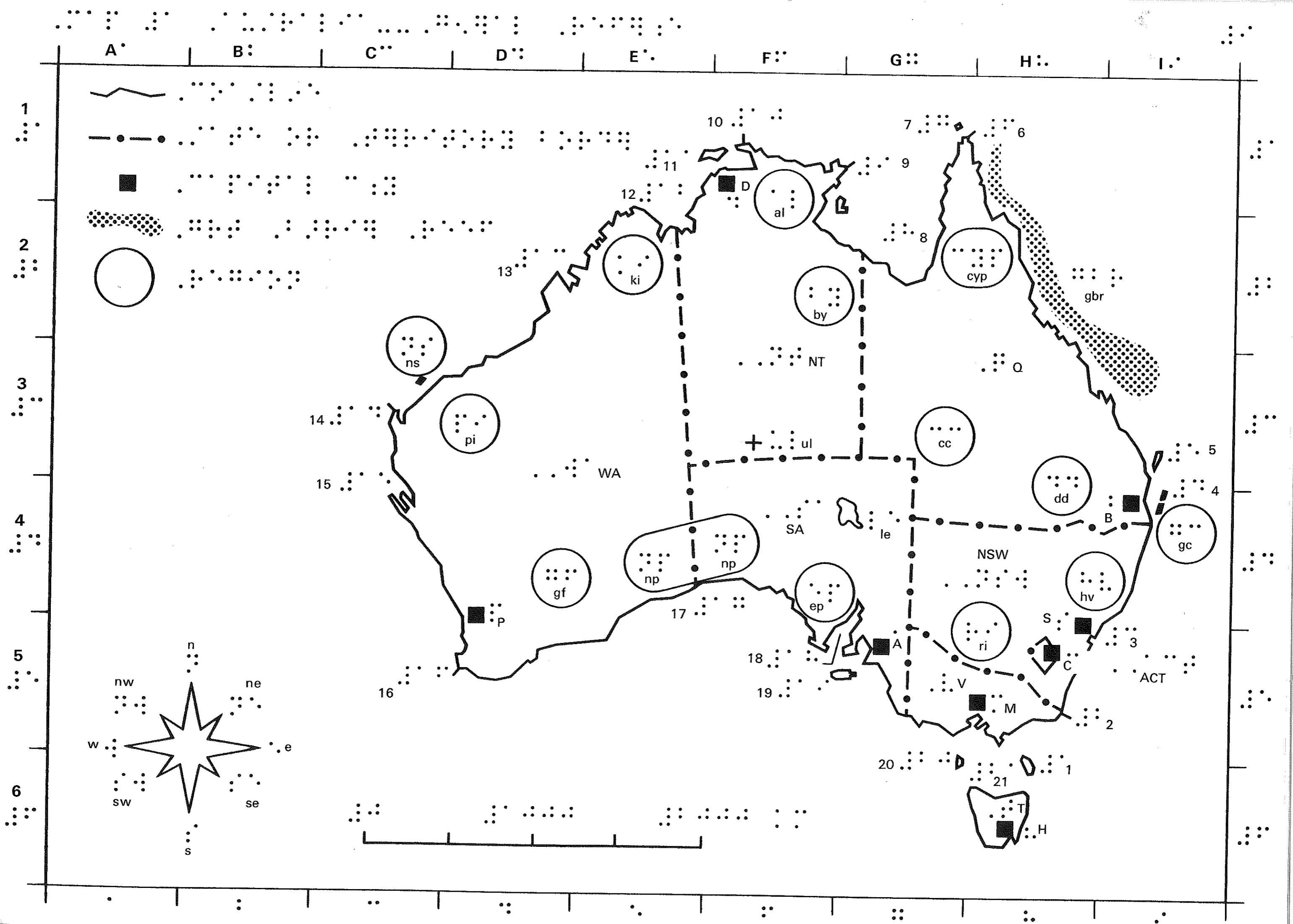
Further south locate:

- (15) Shark Bay and then
- (16) Cape Leeuwin, at the extreme SW corner of Western Australia.

From Cape Leeuwin the coastline turns NE along:

- (17) the Great Australian Bight, and then SE around
- (18) Spencer Gulf (a leadline from the number points to the Gulf), then SE past
- (19) Kangaroo Island and





(20) King Island in

(21) Bass Strait, between Tasmania and the mainland.

You should now have an idea of Australia's shape. In the next exercise you will trace the outlines of the States and Territories.

Step 7: Refer again to the legend and note the line symbol used for State borders.

Note that the States and Territories are referred to on the map by the following letters, which are generally located centrally within the State borders:

ACT Australian Capital Territory

NSW New South Wales

NT Northern Territory

Q Queensland

SA South Australia

T Tasmania

V Victoria

WA Western Australia

Step 8: Trace the outline of Tasmania.

Tasmania is the only island State in Australia. You have already traced Tasmania in the SE corner of the map. Trace it again to increase your familiarity with its shape.

Step 9: Trace the outline of Victoria.

On the mainland, again locate Cape Howe (2). This is the point where the Victorian-New South Wales border joins the coast. Trace this border, which for most of its length follows the Murray River, in a NW direction until it finishes at the South Australian border. From here follow the South Australian border south to the coast. Then follow the coast in a generally eastern direction past Port Phillip Bay (on which Melbourne is situated) and back to your starting point at Cape Howe (2).

Step 10: Trace the outline of New South Wales.

Also beginning at Cape Howe (2), follow the coast north, passing Port Jackson (3), to where it intersects the New South Wales-Queensland border in the vicinity of the Gold Coast (gc). Follow this border west (initially via coastal rivers and ranges, and inland rivers) to its intersection with the South Australian border. Then follow this border south to where the Victorian border joins it from the east. Now follow the Victorian border generally SE back to Cape Howe (2).

Step 11: Locate the Australian Capital Territory.

In the SE of New South Wales locate the small area bounded by the border symbol. This is the Australian Capital Territory. The border may be difficult to locate because of overlap with the square symbol representing Canberra. The letters **ACT**, denoting the Australian Capital Territory, have been placed just off the coast to the east.

Step 12: Trace the outline of Queensland.

Queensland is Australia's second largest State. Locate the junction of the Queensland-New South Wales border with the east coast, in the vicinity of the Gold Coast (gc). Follow the coastline north past North Stradbroke and Moreton islands (4), Fraser Island (5) and then continue NW to the tip of Cape York (6). Now follow the coastline south and then NW along the Gulf of Carpentaria (8) to where the Northern Territory border intersects the coast. Follow this border south to its intersection with the South Australian border. Trace the South Australian border east, then south to where the New South Wales border joins it from the east. Follow this border east, back to the coast where you started.

Step 13: Trace the outline of the Northern Territory.

Locate the Gulf of Carpentaria (8) and, on its southern shoreline, find the intersection of the Queensland border with the coast. From there trace the coast NW and then NE to Gove Peninsula (9), and west to Cobourg Peninsula (10). Now continue SW to where the Western Australian border meets the coast in Joseph Bonaparte Gulf (12). Follow this border south to where the South Australian border joins it from the east. Trace this border east to where the Queensland border joins it from the north. Turn north at this intersection and trace the Queensland border back to your starting point on the Gulf of Carpentaria.

Step 14: Trace the outline of Western Australia.

Western Australia is the largest of all the States. Beginning at Joseph Bonaparte Gulf (12) in the north, follow the coast in a SW direction to Shark Bay (15), and then SE to Cape Leeuwin (16). From here follow the coast around the Great Australian Bight to where the South Australian border joins it from the north. Follow this border north (past where the Northern Territory border joins it from the east) back to your starting point in Joseph Bonaparte Gulf (12).

Step 15: Trace the outline of South Australia.

Begin at the border between Western Australia and South Australia, on the coast of the Great Australian Bight (17), and follow the coast SE past Spencer Gulf (18) and Kangaroo Island (19) to where the Victorian border meets the coast. Follow this border north, noting the points where the New South Wales and the Queensland borders join from the east. Continue north to where the border turns west. Continue tracing this, noting where the Northern Territory border joins from the north. Continue west to the intersection with the border of Western Australia, then south to where you commenced on the Great Australian Bight.

Step 16: Locate the capital cities as follows:

Canberra (C): The national capital, in the Australian Capital Territory situated in SE New South Wales. Note that the C denoting Canberra has been placed to the east.

Brisbane (B): The capital of Queensland in the extreme SE of the State, on the Brisbane River opposite North Stradbroke Island (4).

Sydney (S): The State capital of New South Wales, on Port Jackson (3), about halfway along the coast between the Queensland and Victorian borders.

Melbourne (M): The State capital of Victoria, on Port Phillip Bay.

Hobart (H): The State capital of Tasmania, in the SE of the State on the Derwent River.

Adelaide (A): The State capital of South Australia, towards the SE corner of the State on Gulf St Vincent.

Perth (P): The State capital of Western Australia, in the SW corner of the State on the Swan River.

Darwin (D): The capital city of the Northern Territory on the NW coast, opposite Melville Island (11).

Step 17: Locate the regions and other features shown on the map. The regions, which usually extend over fairly large areas, are shown on the map by letters within circles. Other features such as Lake Eyre are shown by delineating the feature, or by a cross as with Uluru (Ayers Rock).

In Queensland locate:

dd Darling Downs, west of Brisbane, in the SE of the State.

cc The Channel Country, in the SW near the South Australian border.

cyp Cape York Peninsula, in the far north.

gc Gold Coast, on the coast south of Brisbane and straddling the Queensland-New South Wales border; note that the circle and letters are positioned just offshore.

In New South Wales locate:

hv Hunter Valley, north of Sydney.

ri Riverina area, in the SW, just north of the New South Wales-Victorian border.

In South Australia locate:

ep Eyre Peninsula, in the south between Spencer Gulf and the Great Australian Bight.

np Nullarbor Plain, in the SW, straddling the South Australian-Western Australian border.

le Lake Eyre (shape outlined), in the NE of the State.

In Western Australia locate:

kl Kimberley region, in the far north.

pi Pilbara region, in the central west.

ns North West Shelf, offshore NW of the Pilbara.

gf Goldfields, NE of Perth.

np Nullarbor Plain, in the SE straddling the Western Australian-South Australian border.

In the Northern Territory locate:

al Arnhem Land, in the north.

by Barkly Tableland, in the NE towards the Gulf of Carpentaria.

ul Uluru (Ayers Rock) marked by a cross, in the south close to the Northern Territory-South Australian border.

You should now be familiar with the shape of Australia and its States as well as the locations of other major features.

Abbreviations

Coastal Features

- 1 Flinders Island
- 2 Cape Howe
- 3 Port Jackson
- 4 North Stradbroke and Moreton islands
- 5 Fraser Island
- 6 Cape York
- 7 Thursday Island
- 8 Gulf of Carpentaria
- 9 Gove Peninsula
- 10 Cobourg Peninsula
- 11 Melville and Bathurst islands
- 12 Joseph Bonaparte Gulf
- 13 Yampi Sound
- 14 North West Cape
- 15 Shark Bay
- 16 Cape Leeuwin
- 17 Great Australian Bight
- 18 Spencer Gulf
- 19 Kangaroo Island
- 20 King Island
- 21 Bass Strait

States and Territories

- ACT** Australian Capital Territory
NSW New South Wales
NT Northern Territory
Q Queensland
SA South Australia
T Tasmania
V Victoria
WA Western Australia

Capital Cities

- A** Adelaide
B Brisbane
C Canberra
D Darwin
H Hobart
M Melbourne
P Perth
S Sydney

Other Geographic Features

- al** Arnhem Land
by Barkly Tableland
cc The Channel Country
cyp Cape York Peninsula

dd Darling Downs
ep Eyre Peninsula
gbr Great Barrier Reef
gc Gold Coast
gf Goldfields
hv Hunter Valley
ki Kimberley
le Lake Eyre
np Nullarbor Plain
ns North West Shelf
pl Pilbara
ri Riverina
ul Uluru (Ayers Rock)