SOFTWARE & TECH

How To Call Us From Australia

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Introduction: Making International Calls from Australia

Staying connected with friends, family, or colleagues overseas is a common need for Australians. Whether you are travelling abroad and need to reach a service back home, or you are calling a business based in another country, knowing the correct procedure for making an international call from Australia is essential. This comprehensive guide is designed to answer every question you might have about how to call us from Australia. We will walk you through the exact dialling steps, explain the different types of numbers, and share tips to save money and avoid frustrating mistakes. By the end of this article, you will be able to place a call confidently, no matter where in the world 'us' is located.

International calling can seem intimidating because of varying country codes, exit codes, and number formats. However, the process is straightforward once you understand the basic structure. In Australia, the international exit code is **0011**(or you can use the plus sign (+) on mobile phones). From there, you dial the country code for the destination, then the area code (if applicable), and finally the local phone number. This article will break down each step in detail, covering landlines, mobiles, and even internet-based calling options. We also provide advice on choosing the most cost-effective method, so you don't end up with a surprise bill. Let's dive into the best practices for calling us from Australia.

Understanding Australian International Dialling Codes

Before you can place a call, it is crucial to understand the two main components of an international call from Australia: the **exit code** and the **country code**. The exit code tells your Australian phone provider that you are making an international call, while the country code identifies the specific nation you are attempting to reach.

The Australian Exit Code (International Access Code)

Australia's standard international exit code is **0011**. This is the number you dial immediately after picking up the phone, before the country code. For example, if you are calling a number in the United States (country code 1), you would dial 0011 1 [area code] [local number].

On a mobile phone, you can also replace **0011** with the plus symbol (**+**). Simply press and hold the 0 key until a + appears. Then dial the country code and number. The plus sign works on both Android and iOS devices and is often more convenient when saving contacts. It is universally recognised and correctly routes your call regardless of which country you are calling from – a useful tip if you travel frequently.

Country Codes and Destination Numbers

Every country has a unique **country code**– for instance, the United Kingdom is 44, New Zealand is 64, and Japan is 81. After dialling the exit code (0011 or +), you enter the country code. The next step depends on whether you are calling a landline or a mobile number.

- Calling a landline: Most countries have an area or city code that you must include. However, you should drop the leading zero that is often used domestically. For example, if a UK landline number is displayed as 020 7946 0123 (where the 0 is the trunk prefix), you would dial 0011 44 20 7946 0123. The same rule applies to Australian calls abroad – omit the leading zero.

- Calling a mobile: Mobile numbers generally do not have area codes, but you still need to include the full number after the country code. In many countries, mobile numbers begin with a specific prefix (e.g., 04 in Australia). When dialling from overseas, you drop the initial 0. So an Australian mobile 0412 345 678 becomes +61 412 345 678.

Always double-check the number format provided by the person or business you are calling. Many companies now display their international contact number with the plus sign and country code, making it easy to dial directly from Australia.

Dialling a Landline Number from Australia

Calling a landline (fixed-line) number from Australia follows a predictable pattern. Let's illustrate with a practical example. Suppose you need to call a business in the United States with the number (212) 555-0198. The US country code is 1, and the area code is 212. Here is the step-by-step process:

1. Begin with the Australian exit code: 0011 (or + on a mobile).
2. Add the country code for the US: 1.
3. Dial the area code (without the parentheses): 212.
4. Finally, dial the local number: 555-0198.

So, your full dialling sequence is: **0011 1 212 555 0198** (or **+1 212 555 0198**).

Key reminder: **Do not dial the trunk prefix zero**that is sometimes used inside the destination country. For example, if you were calling a number in Germany that shows 030 1234567, the 030 includes the trunk prefix 0. For international calls, you omit that 0 and dial 0011 49 30 1234567 (49 is Germany's country code). The same rule applies to almost every nation, including the United Kingdom, France, and Japan.

Calling Australian Numbers from Overseas – A Reverse View

While this article focuses on calling us from Australia, it is helpful to understand how Australian numbers are formatted externally. If you are calling an Australian landline from overseas, the format is: +61 [area code without the leading 0] [local number]. For instance, Sydney's landline area code is 02. From abroad, you dial +61 2 XXXX XXXX. Mobile numbers drop the leading 04: +61 4XX XXX XXX. This knowledge can help you confirm that you are dialling the correct sequence when calling an Australian number from outside the country.

Dialling a Mobile Number from Australia

Calling a mobile phone from Australia is almost the same as calling a landline, but mobile numbers often have no area code – just the country code and the subscriber number. However, you still need to remove the leading zero that mobile numbers typically start with in their home country.

For example, a UK mobile number might be displayed as 07700 900123. To call it from Australia, dial 0011 44 7700 900123 (or +44 7700 900123). Notice that the leading 0 of 07700 is dropped. The same applies to Australian mobile numbers being called from overseas: +61 4XX XXX XXX.

One important nuance: some destination countries have different number lengths for mobile vs landline. Always use the complete number as provided. If you are unsure whether a number is landline or mobile, simply follow the same exit code + country code + number sequence, dropping any leading zeros. The call will route correctly regardless of the line type.

Using VoIP and Internet Calling Services

Traditional landline calls can be expensive, especially if you call frequently. That's where **VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol)**services come in. Many Australians now use apps like Skype, WhatsApp, Zoom, or FaceTime to call overseas numbers, often at little or no cost. These services use your internet connection rather than the phone network, bypassing high international call rates.

How to dial using VoIP apps

When using a VoIP app from Australia to call a regular phone number (not another app user), you generally need a prepaid credit or subscription. The dialling format is similar to traditional calls: you enter the country code, area code (if needed), and number, without the leading zero. However, the app usually provides a drop-down menu or a plus button to select the country code automatically. For example, to call a US landline on Skype, you would select United States (+1) and then dial the area code and number directly.

Some free apps (like WhatsApp or FaceTime) only allow calling other users of the same app – you cannot dial standard phone numbers without a paid feature. For calling any phone number, services like SkypeOut, Google Voice (available to US residents only), or local Australian VoIP providers (e.g., MyNetFone, PennyTel) are excellent options. They can significantly reduce costs, especially with subscriptions that include unlimited calls to certain countries.

Advantages of VoIP for international calls

- Cost: Often much cheaper than traditional landline or mobile international rates.
- Flexibility: Call from your computer, tablet, or smartphone.
- Additional features: Call recording, video, and instant messaging.

However, note that call quality depends on your internet stability. A slow or unstable connection can cause delays, echoes, or dropped calls. For important conversations, a traditional line or a cellular call might be more reliable.

Tips for Cheap International Calls from Australia

Whether you are calling family in the Philippines, a business partner in Germany, or a customer service line in the US, keeping costs low is a priority. Here are several practical strategies to reduce your international calling expenses from Australia.

1. Use call-back services or calling cards

Some providers offer call-back services: you dial a local Australian number, and the system calls the international number on your behalf, connecting you. This can be cheaper than direct dialling. Prepaid international calling cards are also available, but beware of connection fees and per-minute rates. Always read the fine print.

2. Choose a mobile plan with free international calls

Many Australian mobile carriers (Telstra, Optus, Vodafone, and smaller MVNOs like Boost or Lycamobile) offer plans that include unlimited or discounted calls to certain countries. For instance, you might get unlimited standard calls to the US, UK, Canada, and New Zealand. Check your provider's "international call packs" or "global roaming" add-ons. Remember that these offers usually apply only to calls made from Australia to those specific countries, not the reverse.

3. Use Wi-Fi calling and apps

As mentioned, VoIP apps are a cheap alternative. WhatsApp, FaceTime, and Skype allow free calls between app users. For calling landlines abroad, consider buying a Skype subscription or using a dedicated VoIP service with low per-minute rates.

4. Dial at off-peak times

Some traditional carriers charge different rates depending on the time of day. Peak hours (usually business hours in Australia) are more expensive, while evenings and weekends may be cheaper. Check your provider's rate schedule.

5. Avoid roaming charges when you are overseas

If you are travelling and need to call us from Australia, be cautious: if you use your Australian mobile while roaming internationally, you will pay high roaming rates for calls back to Australia. Instead, use a local SIM card or a VoIP app over Wi-Fi to make the call. Alternatively, enable Wi-Fi calling on your Australian phone, which routes calls over the internet at no extra cost (subject to your plan).

Common Mistakes and How to Avoid Them

Even experienced callers sometimes slip up. Here are typical errors made when dialling from Australia, and how to avoid them.

- Forgetting the exit code: Dialling 61 (Australia's country code) instead of 0011. This commonly happens if you try to call an Australian number from inside Australia but omit the 0 – but for international calls, you need the exit code first. Solution: Always start with 0011 or +.

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