



## Guide for New Members



### **Welcome to the home of tips, tricks and chat for Australian frequent flyers!**

The Australian Frequent Flyer (AFF) is Australia's largest online travel community. Our website contains tons of useful information and resources to help you improve your travel experience and travel for less!

We are thrilled that you've decided to join our community. Whether you're a regular business traveller, a leisure flyer, or just have an interest in travel, loyalty programs and getting a great deal, this website is for you.

To help you get started and give you a taste of what our community is about, we've prepared this short guide. It will introduce you to some of the most popular tricks of the trade, show you where to get started and outline the many benefits and services available to you as a valued AFF member.

## Learn the tricks of the trade

To start with, let's look at a few of the best tips and tricks discussed on AFF.

### Get the most out of frequent flyer programs - earn more points

Frequent flyer points offer countless opportunities to travel interstate, overseas or even around the world for (almost) free!

You can of course earn points by flying, but this is not the only way. Most frequent flyer programs have a wide range of partners on the ground. For example, you can earn Qantas Points shopping at Woolworths. There are also many credit cards out there that allow you to earn frequent flyer points on everyday transactions.

But it gets better... you could earn tens of thousands of frequent flyer points just by signing up for a credit card with a good sign-up bonus! Banks run regular promotions offering up to 150,000 bonus points (or occasionally even more!) just for signing up for a new credit card.

See our regularly-updated guides for [this month's best Qantas card offers](#) and [this month's best Virgin Australia card offers](#).

You can also [purchase large chunks of frequent flyer points](#) – often with large bonuses – from airlines like Air Canada, Alaska Airlines, United and British Airways. These points can then be used to fly in premium cabins – and you'll pay significantly less than full price overall.

It's free to join most frequent flyer and loyalty programs. Qantas Frequent Flyer is one of the few outliers to charge a joining fee, but if you're not already a member, you can [use these tips to easily avoid paying the Qantas Frequent Flyer membership fee](#).

### Get the most out of frequent flyer programs - redeeming points

Our forums also contain a lot of information on the best ways to use your points. As a general rule, redeeming for flights in premium cabins - Business or First Class - is the [best value use of points](#). But redeeming for any flight or upgrade is almost always better value than spending points on things like gift vouchers or toasters.

One of the best value ways to spend Qantas Points is the [Oneworld Classic Flight Reward](#). This ticket allows you to travel around the world on oneworld airlines (e.g. Qantas, Cathay Pacific, British Airways, Japan Airlines, etc.) with up to 5 stopovers! This is particularly excellent value in Business Class.

When redeeming points, beware of the [fuel and carrier surcharges](#) that some airlines add to the cost of your reward booking. Also note that reward seat availability is limited. In general, you'll get the best access to reward seats either by booking when they're released around 11- 12 months in advance, or close to the departure date.

## Gain elite airline status

You can improve your flying experience greatly by earning airline status. For example, Virgin Australia's Velocity program offers Silver, Gold and Platinum status, with more benefits as you climb up the ranks.

Our forum is packed with useful information to help you accelerate your status tier with Qantas, Virgin Australia and other airlines. See our guides for [earning Qantas status](#) and [earning Virgin Australia status](#).

If you already hold status with one airline, you may even be eligible for a free status match or status challenge with another airline (like the [Qantas 90-day status challenge](#)).

## Save money on your next flight

Our community is always chasing the best deals, and this includes cheap flights. Our members regularly post information about [extraordinary deals on flights](#).

There are a few tricks you can use to save money on flights. For example, savvy Virgin Australia flyers use [discount codes to save money on Virgin flights](#). Another useful trick is [Jetstar's Price Beat Guarantee](#). Jetstar will beat any similarly-timed competitor's flight (including sale fares) by 10%, plus waive the credit card fee on Price Beat bookings.

If you're looking for a [great Business Class airfare deal to Europe](#), a tip often used by our members is to book flights originating in Asia or Europe (rather than Australia). Flights are typically much more expensive when booked from Australia.

This is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the information available on our website! We publish many of the best tips and tricks in our newsletter, in our Frequent Flyer Training courses and in our webinars.

## Keep up to date

### The Frequent Flyer Gazette

The Frequent Flyer Gazette is our free twice-weekly newsletter. The Gazette reveals the Australian travel news, deals, tips and key issues affecting frequent flyers that are being discussed on our forums. If you haven't already, [subscribe here](#) to keep up-to-date with the latest information and deals.

### Facebook

You can also [follow Australian Frequent Flyer on Facebook](#).

### Frequent Flyer Training courses

If you're new to the world of frequent flyer points – or looking for expert advice to advance your knowledge – be sure to check out our [Frequent Flyer Training courses](#).

Our Training courses are packed full of useful tips, tricks and strategies to help you travel better, for less. They are easy to understand, summarising the best tips from thousands of AFF forum threads in one place.

All AFF members can [access the first two training courses for free](#) ("Introduction to Frequent Flyer Programs" and "Credit Cards & Airport Lounges"). The remaining courses are available to AFF Platinum members.

### AFF Webinars

We also host [AFF webinars](#) each year covering a wide range of topics of interest to frequent flyers, points collectors and anyone looking to get more out of their travel. These interactive webinars are great for keeping up with the latest developments in frequent flyer and loyalty programs.

AFF Platinum members can attend all webinars live, while AFF Gold & Platinum members can view webinar replays.

## Participate on our forums

All AFF members are encouraged to participate on our [community forums](#). All contributions are welcome.

There are numerous advantages to posting on our forums. Firstly, you will get helpful responses from like-minded and knowledgeable travellers. Secondly, our forum is frequented by various airline and company representatives. Plus, other members will be able to learn and benefit from your posts and from any advice given!

We recommend, if you haven't already done so, to [update your member profile](#) so that other members can see where you are from. This will help other members to offer you advice that is relevant to your personal situation.

There's no such thing as a stupid question on AFF! If you would like to ask a question, the first thing to do would be to find the appropriate forum. For example, questions relating to Qantas belong in the [Qantas Frequent Flyer forum](#), and so on. Topics that don't belong in a specific forum can be discussed in the [Open discussion](#) forum. Please don't post the same question in multiple threads – once is enough.

Our [Qantas Newbie Questions](#) and [Virgin Australia Newbie Questions](#) threads are a good place to start if you have a simple query about either of our major local airlines.

## Popular AFF forums

Our discussion boards contain many different forums on a wide range of travel-related topics. A small selection of the most popular forums include:

- [New Member Introductions](#) – This is a great place to make our first post and introduce yourself to the AFF community.
- [Qantas Frequent Flyer](#) – Here members can discuss anything to do with Qantas Frequent Flyer program. For example, find out how to maximise your Qantas Points or earn Qantas status.
- [Virgin Australia Velocity](#) – Here members can discuss anything to do with Virgin Australia and Velocity Frequent Flyer. For example, find out how to save money on your next Virgin flight or how to use your points to fly on Velocity partner airlines.
- [Free to a good home](#) – From time to time, members will offer free lounge passes, vouchers or other useful items for free. (Please note: selling or attempting to procure lounge passes is against the AFF [Terms of Service](#).)
- [Trip Reports and Reviews](#) – Learn about other members' exciting travel experiences by perusing our Trip Reports. The trip reports on our site are written by members and make for some very interesting reading. They also often contain some great destination-specific and general travel tips. All Trip

Reports are welcome, and you are most welcome to share your own travel experiences with us.

- [Current Credit Card Promotions](#) – Discuss current credit card deals, such as cards offering sign-up bonus points or waived annual fees.
- [General Wine Discussion](#) – For lovers of great red and white wines.

## Selected threads for new members

We also have put together a list of selected threads of particular interest to new members. [See the list here](#).

## AFF Abbreviations

It's true that we do tend to use a lot of abbreviations on the forums. This is not intended to make it difficult to understand, it's simply quicker to post and read.

As a starting point, you may find it helpful to know that "Y" refers to Economy Class and "J" means Business Class.

We realise that these abbreviations can be a bit confusing for a new member so to help you get started, see our [glossary of common acronyms used on the forum](#).

## Attend a social event and engage with the community

Don't forget that our community is made up of real people! While we all love browsing the online forums, there is no substitute for actually meeting our friendly members in person. Some of the best tips are shared over a coffee, beer or wine! So, why not participate in one of our many events?

In addition to regular dinners and events across Australia and around the world, AFF has a community weekend get-together in a different Australian city each year.

Find out what's coming up on our [Meetings and Social Events forum](#).

We also have a [Lounge Meetups forum](#). On this forum our members can post details about their flights in order to meet up with other members who happen to be at the airport at the same time. Using this forum, members are free to offer their free lounge guest spots and also able to request lounge access at specific times and places, should another member happen to be around.

## Benefit from AFF services

### Upgrade your membership for more benefits

Basic AFF membership is 100% free. Basic members are able to fully participate on our forums and have free access to most of the services featured in this Guide.

All members have the option to [upgrade](#) their membership and become an AFF Supporter. Upgrading is entirely optional, but it does offer some significant benefits. As well as an enhanced browsing experience on our forums, AFF Gold membership benefits include:

- 20% discount off Qantas Club membership
- Access our library of past webinars
- Discounts with Frequent Flyer Concierge, LoungePair and pay.com.au

In addition, AFF Platinum members can:

- Attend all our webinars live (including the ability to ask the host questions)
- Access all our Frequent Flyer Training courses

By upgrading, you'll also be supporting a home-grown Aussie website and helping us to continue providing you with valuable resources!

[Learn more about the different AFF membership levels.](#)

## Frequent Flyer Concierge

Our [Frequent Flyer Concierge service](#) can help you to find reward flights using your frequent flyer points.

### So, what are you waiting for?

We are sure you will find the information on our site useful. It's not uncommon for new members, after joining AFF, to tell us that they've started travelling more often, in greater comfort and for less money!

For more information about any of the benefits available to you, or further help with navigating the forum, visit our [AFF Member Lounge](#).

We hope that you make the most out of our forums and your AFF membership.

[Start exploring our site now!](#) 😊