

# Cheat Sheet- The story of Australia's capital

The story of Australia's capital city is an interesting one, and it involves a historical and political process that took place during the early years of the nation. Australia's capital city is Canberra, not Sydney, which is often a common misconception among people both within and outside Australia.

Before the establishment of Canberra as the capital, there was a heated debate among the Australian colonies over which city should be the nation's capital. At the time, Australia was not yet a federation; it was a collection of separate colonies under British rule, each with its own capital city. Sydney was the largest and oldest city in Australia, and it was the capital of New South Wales, which was the most populous and influential colony.

However, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, there was a need to create a new, independent federal capital for the newly formed Commonwealth of Australia. The Constitution of Australia, drafted in the 1890s, stated that the new capital should be in a neutral location, not within 100 miles (about 160 kilometers) of Sydney. This clause was included to ensure that neither Sydney nor Melbourne, the two largest and most competitive cities at the time, would gain an advantage over the other.

To resolve the capital city issue, a series of compromises were made. First, Melbourne was chosen as the temporary capital in 1901. Then, a competition was held to design and choose the site for the new capital city. American architects Walter Burley Griffin and Marion Mahony Griffin won the competition with their plan for the city of Canberra, which was located approximately 190 miles (about 300 kilometers) southwest of Sydney.

Canberra's location was selected for several reasons. Firstly, it was in a more central and neutral position, as it was not heavily influenced by either Sydney or Melbourne. Secondly, the site offered better opportunities for urban planning and development, as it was situated in a relatively flat and spacious area compared to the crowded, hilly terrain of Sydney.

In 1913, the Federal Capital Territory, which includes the area where Canberra is located, was officially established. Construction began, and in 1927, Canberra officially became the capital city of Australia, replacing Melbourne.

Despite the official designation of Canberra as the capital, people sometimes mistakenly associate Sydney with this role due to several factors. Sydney's historical significance, larger population, and international recognition have contributed to this misconception. Additionally, Sydney is one of the most well-known and visited cities in Australia, making it a more prominent destination for tourists and travelers, which might reinforce the perception that it is the capital.

In conclusion, while Sydney is not Australia's capital city, its prominence and historical significance sometimes lead to the misconception that it holds this position. However, the actual capital of Australia is the planned city of Canberra, specifically chosen for its central and neutral location to serve as the seat of the nation's government.