Whale Watching Quick Guide — Australia

A one-page planning guide with packing checklist, best seasons, top spots and photography tips.

Best Time & Top Spots

Humpback whales: May–November (northbound May–July, southbound with calves Aug–Nov)
Southern right whales: June–August
Whale sharks (Ningaloo): March–July
Top spots: Gold Coast, Hervey Bay, Sydney, Albany (WA), Ningaloo Reef, Bruny Island (TAS)

Packing Checklist

- [ ] Layered clothing (windproof jacket)
- [ ] Wide-brim hat & sunglasses
- [ ] SPF 30+ sunscreen (reef-safe recommended)
- [ ] Camera with telephoto lens (200mm+ recommended)
- [ ] Binoculars (7x or 8x)
- [ ] Refillable water bottle
- [ ] Motion sickness tablets (if needed)
- [ ] Waterproof phone case & dry bag
- [ ] Closed-toe, non-slip shoes
- [ ] Light snacks (check operator rules)

Quick Photography Tips

• Use a fast shutter speed (1/1000s) to freeze breaches.
• Set continuous autofocus and burst mode for action shots.
• Stabilize with elbows on rail or use a monopod for telephoto lenses.
• Shoot against the light early/late for silhouettes; side-light for detail.

Responsible Viewing

• Keep respectful distances; do not attempt to touch or chase whales.
• Avoid using drones near whales unless authorised for research.
• Report entangled animals to local authorities immediately.

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Visit: https://www.cooeetours.com.au/tours/whale-watching-gold-coast.html

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Top Whale Watching Map & Notes

This page provides quick notes on timing and local tips for each major region:
- Gold Coast: early mornings, calm seas; family-friendly departures.
- Hervey Bay: long interaction times; ideal for close approaches under permit.
- Sydney: city backdrop; short transit from harbour to sighting areas.
- Ningaloo: regulated swim experiences; book well in advance.
- Western Australia (Albany/Bremer Bay): rugged coastlines; southern right whales in winter.