

## An Australian guide to staying in the shade

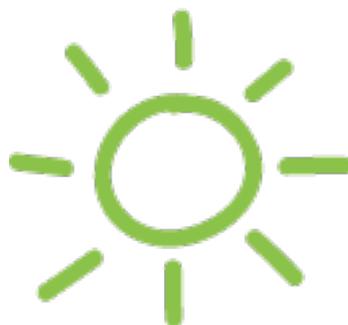


With summer fast approaching it's important that Australians find ways to seek shade during the hours of the day where we're exposed to the most UV.

Excessive UV exposure poses several risks to the skin – from early signs of ageing, to skin cancer.

But staying out of the sun for a lot of the day is difficult. Busy lives can't be dictated by the sun! So below we look at different kinds of areas where staying in the shade is a challenge – and how you can work around it!

### **Working outdoors**



If you work outdoors, it's simply necessary to have shade around the workplace. Are you working in the same location every day? Then it would be a good idea to arrange some sort of structure that will supply shade during the late morning and the whole afternoon. Even basic tent structure could be all you need to protect yourself from powerful UV rays.

If you work at different locations everyday, then make sure you at least bring an umbrella to shade yourself during lunch breaks. And don't forget to wear a hat and long sleeved shirts and trousers!

### **Sitting (or working) in the garden**



The garden is a lovely place to sit, work or play. During spring and summer it's an ideal place for people to eat al fresco in the sun. However it's important to look for ways to create shade.

It all starts with the garden itself. By putting plants or trees in the garden that will act as a natural shade-maker, there will be good areas where garden will be protected from UV. Here's a tip from a professional gardener: avoid buying fast growing trees as they will also be really sensitive and branches will fall – something you don't want around kids. Also their roots will grow shallow, damaging the rest of the garden.

Also, it's good to have a large umbrella or a shade structure above the veranda, that will protect you and your family when sitting in the garden.

### **On the playground**



Local playgrounds can be a risky place for children to be. And not just in terms of poorly-maintained play equipment. In the past we used to spend hours playing in the playgrounds with no sun protection – but these days, there's no excuse for children to get burnt.

So if your local playground has no shade structure what can you do? Write a request to your local council to take action on creating shade for the kids. Make sure they take plenty of breaks from the sun, and bring an umbrella for them to rest under.

### **School & work**



The daily activities of you and your children all involve some degree of UV exposure, whether it be travelling in your car or playing in the school playground.

For companies it is not mandatory to create shade for employees that work inside, but it is something you could talk to your boss or HR

manager about. Especially if you enjoy breaks together outside, the build up of daily exposure to UV could mean an increased risk of sun damage in your later years.

For schools, it's more common to have shaded areas on the playground for. If your kid's school doesn't have this in place – make sure to talk to them about it. Keeping kids away from UV exposure is really important, as it will lower their risk of developing skin cancer later in life. In fact, U.S. researchers found that getting so sunburnt that blisters develop just five times before the age of 20 increases a person's risk of [melanoma](#) by 80 per cent!

### **The beach.. of course!**



Last but not least. The beach!

You probably have a local beach that's a beloved hangout in summertime for you, your friends and family. .... But the beach is one of the most risky places to be overexposed to damaging UV rays, This is due to the direct sunlight, lack of natural shade, and the water mirroring the sunlight. So it's important to take some preventative steps to make sure you can safely enjoy a sunny day at the beach.

When it comes to kids, they love playing in the sand. Make sure they are protected by a simple solution like a beach tent. For example, use [this one](#) from the Cancer Council, which is UPF50+ .These are quite light to pack and pop open just by throwing them in the air. The tents make a great cubby for the kids, and a temporary changing room for you too!

On top of that, it's all about sunscreen. Formulations are improving every year and if that old bottle you've been using sparingly over the past years

is a little stale, it's time to update – overall it's recommended to get a fresh bottle every year. Make sure you get a broad spectrum sunscreen that is SPF 30+ or above. And it's important to reapply whenever you've been in the surf or after heavy activity.

Of course getting some sun is very healthy. Sunlight is full of Vitamin D, which makes us happy. So make sure you enjoy the sun safely this year!

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**This guide has been produced by SkinVision, Australia's leading app for early melanoma skin cancer detection.**

**It is available for both iPhone and Android on: <https://skinvision.com/#download>**