

The Australian Gold Rush — Knowledge Organiser

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Key facts

- Gold was discovered in New South Wales and Victoria in 1851.
- Hundreds of thousands of people rushed to the goldfields hoping to strike it rich.
- People came from Britain, Europe, China and beyond, making the colonies far more diverse.
- Australia's population more than doubled in ten years.

Key vocabulary

- Prospector / digger — a person searching for gold.
- Nugget — a lump of natural gold.
- Licence — a permit diggers had to buy to mine, which many felt was unfair.
- Immigration — people moving to a country to live.

The Eureka Stockade (1854)

Angry about expensive licences and harsh treatment, diggers at Ballarat built a wooden barricade called the Eureka Stockade and rebelled. Soldiers crushed it within minutes, and many diggers died. But it led to fairer rules and is often seen as an early step towards democracy in Australia.

Lasting effects

The gold rush built new towns, railways and wealth, brought people from around the world, and changed Australia forever — though it also pushed First Nations peoples off more of their land.