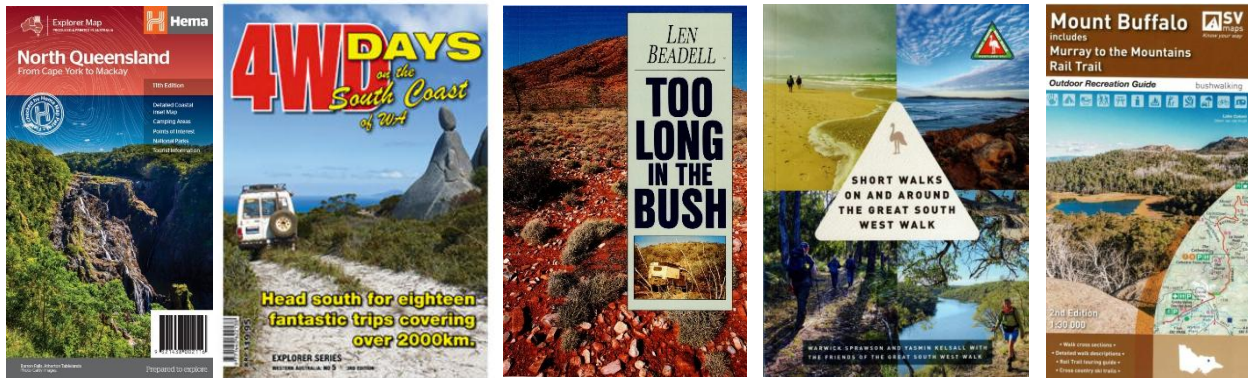




The Meridian Line - Sunday 04.01.2026

“ Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow.” – Albert Einstein



Focus on Five

North Queensland From Cape York to Mackay - – from \$15.95

Explore North Queensland with this detailed map, perfect for discovering the many destinations between Mackay and Cape York. Presented at a touring scale of 1:750,000, it features terrain shading and touring symbols to provide a clear, informative overview of the region. The map includes detailed insets for Mackay and the Whitsundays, as well as the entire coastal strip between Townsville and Cooktown. It also highlights camping areas, points of interest, national parks, popular tourist destinations, and information centres, making it an essential companion for any journey through North Queensland.

<https://meridianmaps.com.au/product/north-queensland/>

4WD Days on the South Coast of WA – \$19.95

Explore the wild, stunning south coast of Western Australia with 18 unforgettable 4WD trips covering more than 2,000 km. From rugged cliffs and pristine beaches to hidden rivers and forest tracks, each adventure showcases the region's diverse landscapes. Packed with GPS coordinates

and all the essential track and location details, *4WD Days on the South Coast* is the perfect glove-box companion to help you make the most of every stop, whether you're chasing coastal views, secret swimming spots, or off-road thrills.

<https://meridianmaps.com.au/product/4wd-south-coast-wa/>

***Too Long in the Bush* - \$24.95**

This is the story of how, between 1956 and 1958, Len Beadell and his team built the first road to cross Central Australia from east to west—a remarkable 1,400-kilometre journey from the Alice Springs road to Carnegie Homestead, 650 kilometres north of Kalgoorlie. Along the way, Len surveyed and constructed the Giles Meteorological Station and aerodrome, before skirting the edge of the infamous Gibson Desert. His cheerful, humorous nature shines through the story, making this incredible journey a delight for any armchair traveller. First published in 1965, this was Len Beadell's debut book, chronicling his work building roads across Australia's vast interior as part of the initial surveys for the Woomera Rocket Range. Readers can follow his journey with the Westprint Outback Map – The Gunbarrel Highway.

<https://meridianmaps.com.au/product/gunbarrel-highway/>. Len Beadell, often called the last of Australia's true explorers, was born on a farm in West Pennant Hills, NSW, in 1923. Over his career as a surveyor and road builder, he worked across the outback—from Arnhem Land to the Gibson Desert. In recognition of his achievements, he was awarded the British Empire Medal in 1958, made a Fellow of the Institute of Engineering and Mining Surveyors in 1987, and received the Medal of the Order of Australia the following year.

<https://meridianmaps.com.au/product/too-long-in-the-bush/>

or get the Too Long in the Bush/Gunbarrel Hwy Map Pack –

<https://meridianmaps.com.au/product/too-long-gunbarrel-map-pack/>

Short Walks On And Around The Great South West Walk - \$14.95

Explore the best of the 251 km Great South West Walk with this comprehensive guide, featuring 31 individual walks that range from a quick 20-minute stroll to a full day of adventure. Whether you're looking for a leisurely wander or a more challenging trek, this guide has something for walkers of all ages and abilities. Each walk comes with detailed maps and track notes, helping you navigate the trail with ease while taking in the stunning scenery along the way. From rugged coastline and pristine beaches to lush forests and winding rivers, the Great South West Walk showcases the natural beauty of southwest Victoria like no other trail. Designed to be used alongside the Great South West Walk Map Guide,

<https://meridianmaps.com.au/product/great-south-west-walk-map-guide/>, this book makes planning your adventures simple, whether you're

looking to explore a short section or tackle the entire trail over several days. It's the perfect companion for families, solo walkers, and groups who want to experience the variety, wildlife, and breathtaking landscapes that make the Great South West Walk such a unique and memorable journey.

<https://meridianmaps.com.au/product/short-walks-great-south-west-walk/>

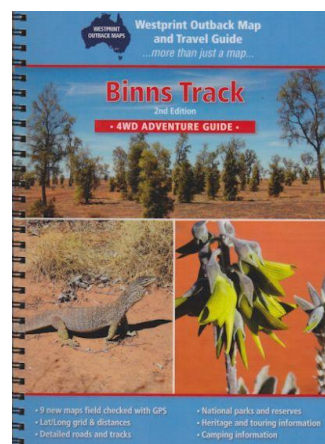
Mount Buffalo includes Murray to the Mountains Rail Trail – from \$19.95

The Mount Buffalo Recreation Guide from Spatial Vision offers detailed maps and comprehensive information for walking and touring throughout the National Park and its surrounding areas. This guide complements the previously released Bogong Alpine Area and Buller-Howitt recreation guides. Developed in consultation with Parks Victoria, it features touring insights from Glenn van der Knijff, a well-known adventure author. The guide includes a full-colour topographic map at a 1:30,000 scale, a map of the Murray to the Mountains Rail Trail, and comprehensive walk descriptions with ratings. It also provides walk cross-sections, waypoints for campsites and huts, as well as descriptions for overnight hikes, making it an essential companion for exploring Mount Buffalo.

<https://meridianmaps.com.au/product/mount-buffalo-map/>

Meridian Musings

Recently we were contacted by Caravan World for permission to use a copy of the original map used to create Binns Track. Of course we obliged! What a difference between the original map produce and the current Binns Track produced by Westprint.



<https://meridianmaps.com.au/product/binns-track/>

Happy New Year and welcome to 2026!

Writing 2026 in this edition of *The Meridian Line* feels a little surreal. It's something we say every year, but it really does feel like 2025 has flown by.

A new year is a great chance to pause and look back on what we've achieved. Over the past year, we've grown our book collection to include an even wider range of titles, adding new areas such as cookbooks, children's books, biographies, and journeys and destinations, alongside more walking books, plenty for 4WD, caravanning and camping enthusiasts, and an expanded selection of atlases.

In 2025, Westprint Maps produced a new and updated edition of the **Googs Track Map** and the **Oodnadatta Track Map**.

Meridian Maps updated the **Hattah Kulkyne Map Guide** and the **Wombat State Forest 4WD Touring Map**.

The start of 2026 promises to be busy, with updated editions of Meridian Maps **Dandenong Ranges & Lysterfield Hills Map Guide** and **The Grampians (Gariwerd) Touring Map** already in the works.

We visited six different 4WD clubs, where Simon presented a range of talks tailored to each club's interests, alongside an instant pop-up shop featuring our most popular titles.

And last, but by no means least, we attended three fantastic shows: the Victorian 4WD Show at Lardner, the Outdoor Living & Caravan Expo in Mornington, and the Geelong Caravanning & Adventure Leisurefest.

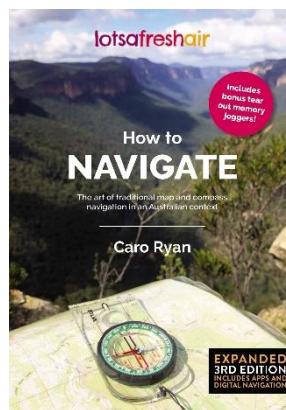
Looking ahead, 2026 is already shaping up to be just as exciting. We're locked in for the 2026 Vic 4WD Show in Lardner this February, as well as the Geelong Outdoor Living & Caravan Expo in January.

What's New to the Website

***How to Navigate* - \$39.95**

How to Navigate – 3rd Edition takes a straight-talking, modern approach to map reading and compass navigation, with clear and practical explanations of how to truly navigate in the Aussie bush through awareness and observation of the world around us. Spanning 117 pages, it brings together photographs, diagrams, stories and step-by-step guidance, all told from the perspective of a passionate bushwalker with hands-on search and rescue experience. While GPS devices and navigation apps have grown in popularity in recent years, the importance of traditional navigation skills hasn't changed. Knowing how to read a map, use a compass, interpret the landscape and match map to ground — walking with the land rather than against it — helps build

confidence, deepen understanding and strengthen our connection to the environment. Suitable for everyone from novice navigators just getting started to experienced bushies looking to refresh their skills, the third edition (2025) has been fully revised and expanded. It includes a new chapter on digital navigation and apps, sections on using the sun and stars, night navigation, and insights into First Nations approaches to navigation, along with new maps, illustrations, photographs, explainers, tips and memory joggers. More than 13 additional pages have been added to this edition, and QR codes throughout the book link to further explanations and video content for those wanting to explore the topics in greater depth.



<https://meridianmaps.com.au/product/how-to-navigate/>

Simon's Monthly Spotlight!

Summer's here, which for me means long, hot days, time off with the family, and evenings spent eating fish and chips by the beach. It also got me thinking about some of the more unique and memorable places we've loved swimming while on holiday. From Ellery Creek Big Hole in the West MacDonnell Ranges (NT) and the Ovens River in Bright (VIC), to Wangi Falls in Litchfield National Park (NT) and Lake McKenzie on K'gari (QLD), each one holds special memories.

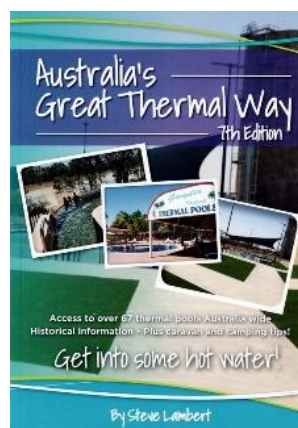
With that in mind, I thought I'd share three books that highlight some of Australia's best waterholes and thermal pools—great inspiration for your next adventure, wherever you're heading.

Australia's Great Thermal Way by Steve Lambert

This is the perfect book for inspiring you to find great places to swim. The guide brings together more than 67 hot springs, bore baths and natural thermal pools from right across Australia, making it easy to plan trips around some truly memorable swimming spots.

From the peaceful Hastings Caves and Thermal Springs in Tasmania to the warm waters of Innot Hot Springs in Far North Queensland, the coverage is broad and inspiring. Whether you're heading west to places like Perth, Monkey Mia or El Questro, or exploring closer to home at Moree, Lightning Ridge, Boomi or the Peninsula Hot Springs on the Mornington Peninsula, there's plenty here to get you dreaming.

The book also shares the history behind Australia's thermal springs, adding extra depth and interest to each location. With an easy to use layout and colour-coded sections, it's a relaxed and practical companion for anyone planning their next Australian adventure—or simply chasing the perfect summer soak.



<https://meridianmaps.com.au/product/great-thermal-way/>

RRP \$34.95 – January Special \$31.45

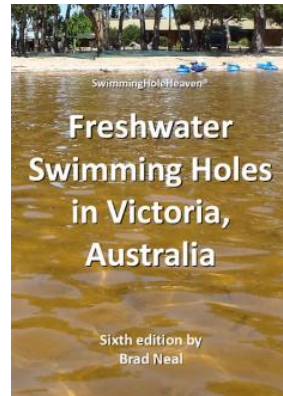
Use Code SMS0126 to take advantage of this special price.

Or paired with Meridian Map's **Australia Map** as part of a map pack.

<https://meridianmaps.com.au/product/aust-thermal-book-map-pack/>

Freshwater Swimming Holes in Victoria By Brad Neal

We kicked off our family swim adventures with the Ovens River at Bright and the Mitchell River in Gippsland, both of which are mentioned in this guide. It's the go to resource for discovering swimming spots in Victoria, with every one of the 50 featured sites personally tested by the author, Brad Neal, with a dip in the water. The book gives clear directions, along with vivid photos showcasing the best waterholes, lakes, rivers, and waterfalls for a swim across the state. All of this comes from over 15 years of careful research, making it a trusted companion for anyone chasing Victoria's top swimming spots.



<https://meridianmaps.com.au/product/swimming-holes/>

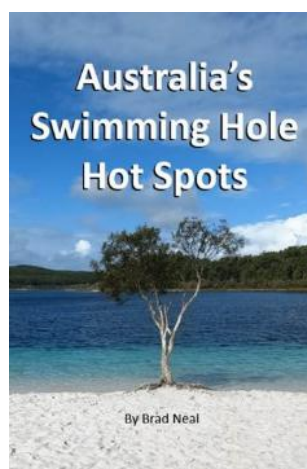
RRP \$25.00 – January Special \$22.50

Use Code SMS0126 to take advantage of this special price.

Australia's Swimming Hole Hot Spots by Brad Neal

I really enjoyed this book by Brad Neal. After swimming in hundreds of rivers, lakes, springs, waterfalls, and ocean pools around Australia, Brad noticed that some areas have amazing clusters of swimming spots. He calls these places "hot spots," and they're perfect for swimming holidays where you can stay a few days and enjoy a different natural swim every day.

The book features 52 beautiful swims across 9 hot spots in 5 states and territories. Each location is shown with stunning photos taken both above and below the water. I appreciated that it included a chart of best swimming times for each hotspot, as well some information about why this hot spot is special. It's a great book to bring along on your travels or to use when planning your next Australian adventure.



<https://meridianmaps.com.au/product/australia-swimming-holes/>

RRP \$26.00 – January Special \$23.40

Use Code SMS0126 to take advantage of this special price.

Seasonal Updates

Please be aware that road and Park closures are constantly changing and it is always best to check for changes before you set out.

For more regular updates on closures, please check our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/MeridianWestprintMaps> as we try to include warnings and advice as we become aware of them.

The latest Desert Parks Bulletin has been uploaded to our website. For this and other Desert Pass updates, please go to <https://meridianmaps.com.au/deserts-pass-update/>

The Department of Infrastructure and transport in South Australia have a website that details their outback unsealed roads grading program which advises on the repairing and reconstruction of unsealed roads in the Outback that are affected by traffic and weather events. To access this information, please visit their website:

<https://www.dit.sa.gov.au/infrastructure/projects/statewide-road-improvement-and-renewal-works/outback-unsealed-roads-grading-program>.

Kati Thanda-Lake Eyre National Park - Closed 1st December 2025 – 15th March 2026.

Innaminka Regional Reserve and Malkumba-Coongie Lakes National Park closed due to flooding.

Witjira National Park – Open to 4WD

Dalhousie Campground – Open to 4WD

Three O'Clock Creek Campground – Open to 4WD

Dalhousie Campground to Purni Bore – Closed 1 December 2025 – 15 March 2026

The Dalhousie airstrip - Closed

Bloods Creek Ruin to Federal Waterhole Track: Open to 4WD

Binns Track: Open to 4WD

Public Access Route Number 8 Pedirka Open to 4WD

Munga-Thirri – Simpson Desert National Park – Closed 1st December 2025 – 15th March 2026.

At the time of writing, a number of roads had been closed due to the Boddington Bushfire. Please check for the latest information at www.emergency.wa.gov.au before travelling in the area.

Meridian Line: however, this may have been some time before the actual event. Please make your own enquiries before travelling to an event.

What's On

10 January – Pambula Show in Pambula NSW. From horses in the ring and woodchop action, to proud Pavilion exhibits, market stalls, live entertainment and hands-on fun for kids — this is a show where everyone will find something.

<https://www.pambulashow.com/>

10 January - Kite Flying Festival in Castle Hill, NSW. An unforgettable day of colour, culture, food, music and hands on kite flying experience.

<https://www.facebook.com/www.kiteflyingfestival.com.au/videos/1367540874225558/>

16 – 18 January – Outdoor Living & Caravan Expo in Geelong. The show is the perfect place to find everything you need for your next outdoor adventure.

<https://www.outdoorlivingcaravanexpo.com.au/geelong/>

16 -18 January - Tunarama Festival in South Australia. A vibrant three-day festival held on the Port Lincoln foreshore, celebrating the region's seafood, culture, and community.

<https://www.tunaramafestival.com.au/>

17 – 18 January – Orford Vintage Rally in Victoria. This year will feature a tractor pull, stationary engines, vintage cars, trucks and motorbikes, a shearing display and competition, a Ute muster, a live band, and collectible and hobby displays.

<https://thefold.com.au/vic/warrnambool-region/event/community-events/orford-vintage-rally/>

23 – 24 January – Kiama Show in NSW. The Kiama Show is celebrating 178 years! The Show includes traditional agricultural events, featuring displays of cattle, and horses, showjumping, wood chopping and a pet show. There is an array of over 2000 pavilion exhibits and a variety of food vendors provided on-site. To conclude the Kiama Show, a fireworks display will ignite the sky.

<https://www.kiamashow.com.au/home>

25 January – Goatfest in Longford, Tasmania. An annual festival celebrating everything goat, with activities and attractions for all ages and interest levels. From goat-themed art and craft competitions, stalls selling goat milk soaps and mohair hats and scarves through to educational talks and of course lots of goats to admire and pat.

<https://northernmidlands.tas.gov.au/events/goatfest-2026-longford>

26 January - Australia Day in the Big Shed 2026 in Rockhampton, Queensland. An awesome day filled with music, games, food, and true-blue Aussie spirit, all under the Big Shed.

<https://www.rockhamptonregion.qld.gov.au/CommunityEvents/Events-Activities/Australia-Day-in-the-Big-Shed-2026>

Do you have a story?

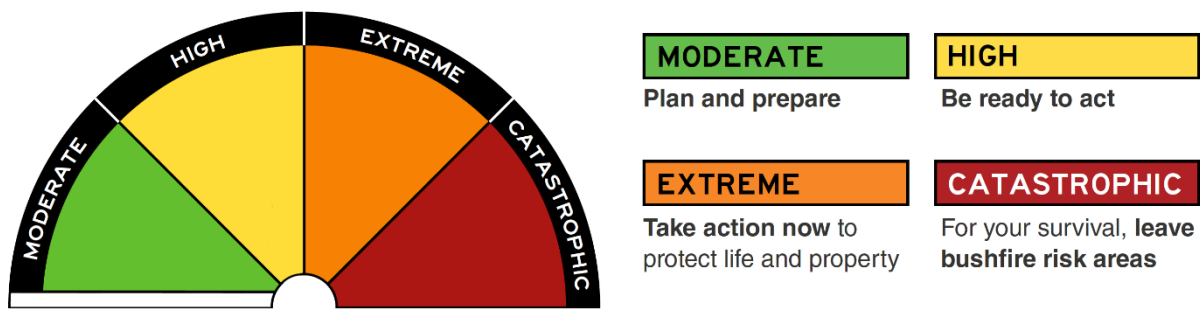
Given the Australian summer and the bushfire season that comes with it, I thought it would be timely to revisit this story.

If you've got a trip or tips to share, we'd love to hear from you - rochelle@meridianmaps.com.au.

Fire Danger Rating Vs Total Fire Ban Vs Fire Danger Period

When driving through rural areas, it's common to see fire danger rating signs. But what exactly do these signs mean, and why should we pay attention to them?

Fire Danger Ratings (FDR) refer to the risk of a fire occurring and its potential to spread based on various factors like weather conditions, vegetation, and other environmental conditions. From September 1, 2022, Australia introduced a simplified, action-oriented Fire Danger Rating (FDR) system to help people respond more effectively to bushfire risks. The system uses four easy to recognize levels, each accompanied by clear advice. These levels range from *Low-Moderate* to *Catastrophic*, with higher ratings indicating greater fire risk.



Fire Danger Rating Levels:

- **Moderate:** Low likelihood of fire spread; most fires can be controlled. Stay informed and up to date with information and be prepared to act if a fire occurs.
- **High:** Fires can spread quickly; precautions should be taken. Be alert as there is a heightened risk of fires in the area.
- **Extreme:** Fires could be uncontrollable and dangerous. These conditions pose a significant risk. Review your bushfire plan and ensure your property is fire-ready. If a fire starts, take immediate action. If you are not fully prepared, evacuate to a safer location well before the fire reaches your area. Reconsider travel through bushfire-prone areas.
- **Catastrophic:** The most dangerous fire conditions. Fires have the potential to be large, fast-moving, and uncontrollable. Evacuations may be required immediately. If a fire takes hold, lives are at significant risk.

Additionally, a **white bar** under *Moderate* indicates **No Rating** for days when no immediate action is required. This doesn't mean fires can't occur, but it indicates that any fires that do start are unlikely to spread in a way that threatens community safety.

What is a Fire Danger Period?

A **Fire Danger Period** refers to a designated timeframe when fire risks are elevated due to factors like dry weather conditions, increased temperatures, and strong winds. During this period, fires are more likely to start and spread. The period is declared by state or local fire authorities to raise awareness and help the public prepare for the heightened risk of bushfires.



Key Points About a Fire Danger Period:

- **When It Occurs:** Fire danger periods typically occur in the warmer months—mainly summer and autumn—when conditions are dry and windy. The start and end dates vary by region, depending on local climate and weather patterns.
- **Purpose:** The primary purpose of declaring a fire danger period is to reduce bushfire risks by advising the public and imposing restrictions on fire-related activities.
- **Restrictions:** During a fire danger period, certain activities (like lighting fires, burning off, or using equipment that may cause sparks) may be prohibited to prevent accidental fires. These restrictions can become stricter during a **Total Fire Ban** when the fire danger rating is particularly high.

What is a Total Fire Ban



A **fire danger period** and a **total fire ban (TFB)** are not the same thing.

A **Fire Danger Period** is an extended period, often lasting several months, during which fire risks are elevated. It is declared based on seasonal weather conditions and will vary across different regions.

Total Fire Ban (TFB) is declared when there is an extreme risk of fires spreading rapidly, or when widespread fires are already burning, and firefighting resources are stretched thin. A TFB is typically issued on days with predicted extreme fire weather or when ongoing fires threaten lives and property.

Occasionally, a Total Fire Ban may be declared outside of the standard fire danger period, especially when conditions like high temperatures and strong winds are expected, such as ahead of a storm front. On days when a Total Fire Ban is declared, it is **illegal to light an open-air fire** or engage in any activity that could potentially start a fire. Prohibited activities include using equipment that generates sparks (like lawnmowers or barbeques). For a full list of prohibited activities, visit your state or territory's official website.

Victoria - <https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/warnings-restrictions/fire-danger-period-restrictions>

NSW - <https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/news-and-media/media-releases/more-of-nsw-enters-bush-fire-danger-period-as-conditions-heat-up>

SA - <https://www.cfs.sa.gov.au/warnings-restrictions/restrictions/fire-danger-season-dates-permits/>

WA - <https://maps.slip.wa.gov.au/landgate/bushfireprone/>

QLD - <https://www.qld.gov.au/emergency/dealing-disasters/disaster-types/bushfires/bushfire-aware/when-is-fire-season-in-queensland>

NT - <https://secure.nt.gov.au/prepare-for-an-emergency/fires/bushfires/fire-danger-periods#fire-danger-period>

ACT - <https://esa.act.gov.au/be-emergency-ready/bushfires>

Meridian Mirth

To share your jokes, please send them to rochelle@meridianmaps.com.au.
Many thanks to Paul and Rob for their contributions!

I got fired from my job
because I kept asking my
customers whether they
would prefer "Smoking" or
"Non-smoking".
-
Apparently the correct terms
are "Cremation" and "Burial".



Two engineers are sitting at a bar, trying to figure out just how smart they are. The first engineer says he's very smart, because he learned calculus at age 13. The second engineer is unimpressed. "Pshaw, *anyone* could learn calculus, it's so simple!"

The first engineers respond, "Oh yeah? If it's so simple, you should be able to teach it to our waitress!" He motions over to their ditsy waitress who has been serving them drinks that night.

"No problem! I have to go to the bathroom, but when I come back I'll show you how easy it is!"

He goes to the bathroom, but secretly finds the waitress and says, "Hey, I have kind of a strange request to ask of you. When you come to our table next, I'm going to tell you a bunch of stuff. It's all going to be gobbledegook, but at the end of it I'm going to ask you a question. I want you to reply 'three x squared.'"

The waitress slowly repeats the answer: "Three.... x... squared...?"

"Perfect!" says the engineer. He continues "and then, I'm going to tell you some more gobbledegook. I want you to listen patiently, and then I'll ask you another question. I want you to reply 'one third x cubed'."

The waitress slowly repeats the answer: "One... third... x... cubed?"

"Perfect! Get these two questions right, and I'll give you an extra \$50 tip!"

"Wow, sounds great!" the waitress responded.

The second engineer comes back from the bathroom and summons the waitress over. He goes into a whole spiel about how he'd like to give her a crash course in calculus. First he gives an overview of differential calculus at lightning speed, from the basic theory of limits all the way up to the definition of the derivative. "Got all that?" The waitress nods her head tentatively.

"Okay, just to test your understanding, what's the derivative of x^3 ?"

The waitress responds, "Three... x... squared."

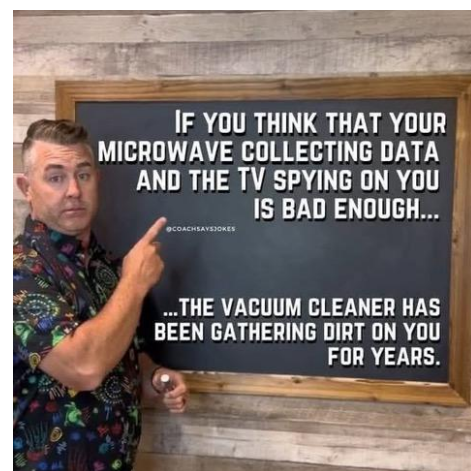
The first engineer is utterly amazed that she got the answer correct. The second engineer says, "Okay, let's move on to integral calculus." Again, he lectures at lightning speed for a few minutes and hits all the highlights of integration.

"Got all that?" he asks.

"I... I think so...", the waitress responds.

"Okay, if you understand that, you can tell me the integral of x with respect to x , right?"

The waitress replies, "Sure. It's... one... third... x ... cubed. Plus," she says with a wink, "an arbitrary constant of integration."



A woman goes into a bank in London and asks to borrow £5000. The teller says that she will have to speak to the manager. She waits to see him and while she is waiting, the manager is checking her account.

When the woman is shown into his office, the manager says, "I hear that you want to borrow £5000 but you do not have an account with us. I will need some collateral and I would like to know what the money is for."

The woman says, "The money is for a holiday and I have collateral here," and she hands over the registration document for a brand new Rolls-Royce valued

at £500,000. She tells him the vehicle is parked outside, and the manager sends two security staff to check out the car and to secure it if everything is in order. They come back and say that everything is in order, and the manager hands over the £5000 loan.

The following week, the manager is at a dinner with other bank managers and he tells them how a woman had left £500,000 collateral on a £5000 loan and everybody is laughing about it. However the manager is still curious about what is going on and does some further checks. To his surprise, he finds out that she is a millionairess in her own right.

Two weeks later the woman returns from holiday and comes to see the manager so that she can pay of the loan. She is told that it will cost £5000, which she borrowed, plus £50 interest. This she pays but the manager then says "I have found out that you are a millionairess in your own right yet you borrowed £5000 for a holiday. Why?".

The blonde says "Where else in London could I park my car securely for £50 for two weeks??"



The Fine Print

At The Meridian Line

Wherever possible we try to acknowledge the source of all information contained in this newsletter. We offer no guarantees for accuracy, but we do our best.

Get the Word Out

Feel free to forward this newsletter to any family or friends who you feel might enjoy a good read. If they would like to receive this newsletter on a regular basis they can register at: <https://meridianmaps.com.au/newsletter/>

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