



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

**U3A Emerald Inc.**

**2026 Courses**

**ENROLMENT COMMENCES**

**10:00am, MONDAY 8<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER, 2025**



*Image Courtesy of Chris Matterson Photography*

## **Our Home**

***Unless otherwise stated, the majority of our courses are held at:***  
**The Hills Hub**  
**400A Belgrave-Gembrook Road,**  
**Emerald, Vic 3782**

## U3A Emerald Inc. Contact Details

PO Box 396  
Emerald  
Victoria 3782

Web: <https://u3aemerald.org.au/>

<b>Emerald U3A Phone:</b>	<b>0490-805-743</b>
<b>Emergency Use Only Hub Phone</b>	<b>(03) 5943-4100</b>
<b>President</b>	<a href="mailto:patbuoncristiani@gmail.com">patbuoncristiani@gmail.com</a>
<b>General Email Contact:</b>	<a href="mailto:emeraldu3a@gmail.com">emeraldu3a@gmail.com</a>
<b>Courses Email Contact:</b>	<a href="mailto:tanyacooke14@gmail.com">tanyacooke14@gmail.com</a>
<b>Membership and Timetable Contact</b>	<a href="mailto:bhbrucer@sti.net">bhbrucer@sti.net</a>
<b>Volunteer Email Contact:</b>	<a href="mailto:pruelicht@gmail.com">pruelicht@gmail.com</a>

### A Note on Health and Safety

If or when necessary, all courses and activities will comply with DHHS or other current activity-specific guidelines to maximise COVID-19 (or other disease) safety and ensure the lowest risk to our members.

Please note that in such circumstances, some classes may have restricted numbers attending due to social distancing requirements, and that some courses may have activity-specific plans in place due to the circumstances surrounding their operation. Tutors will advise participants accordingly.

### A Note on Courses in “Hybrid Mode”

Courses marked as operating in 'hybrid' mode will have participants in classes at the Hills Hub as well as being live streamed *via* Zoom.

### Important Information for all Members

Our U3A Emerald policy requires members to regularly check their email as a fundamental requirement of their membership. Specifically, U3A Emerald relies on email as the main method of communication between tutors and their class members, when not in class. This may take the form of simple courtesy reminders, follow-ups and relevant information concerning the courses members are enrolled in. However, there are some situations where email communication is of fundamental importance to the smooth functioning of an upcoming class or specific activity. In such cases it is essential that you show courtesy and respect to your tutors and fellow class members with a timely response. Please also note some courses do have as an enrolment requirement that participants agree to check and respond by email, as outlined in this Course Handbook and available online on our website.

Where, for any reason, this is not possible or may prove difficult, please discuss the matter with your tutor, or contact the Course Coordinator, Tanya Cooke. We really appreciate your ongoing support with this!

**New or revised courses for 2026 are highlighted in yellow**

## 2026 Holiday Dates

The tables below show dates for potentially excluded (i.e., holiday) dates for our classes in 2026. Note that some of our courses operate on both Public or School Holidays – details are provided for each individual class in this Handbook, and all members should check the relevant dates carefully.

<b>Public Holidays</b>	<b>Dates for 2026</b>
New Year's Day	1 January
Australia Day	26 January
Labour Day	9 March
Easter Break	3 - 6 April
ANZAC Day	25 April
King's Birthday	8 June
Friday before the AFL Grand Final	25 September
Melbourne Cup	3 November
Christmas Day	25 December
Boxing Day	26 December

## 2026 Victorian School Holiday Dates

<b>Term Holiday</b>	<b>Dates for 2026</b>
Term 1	03/04/2026 – 19/04/2026
Term 2	27/06/2026 – 12/07/2026
Term 3	19/09/2026 – 04/10/2026
Term 4	19/12/2026 – 27/01/2027

# Table of Contents

<b>Crafts.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Discussion and research.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Drama, reading and writing.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Exercise and fitness.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Explore your creativity.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Games and hobbies .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Learn a new language.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Music.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Science and the environment.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Social and leisure activities.....</b>	<b>23</b>

## Crafts

### 26CRA001 Hills Hub Craft Makers

This is a vibrant and creative group with the aim of encouraging all participants to share their creations/skills. We have quilters, knitters, crocheters and embroiderers who all enjoy the social and fun atmosphere.

This course operates during School Holidays, but not on Public Holidays.

**Location:** Hills Hub T 1 & 2 - Training Rooms 1 and 2

**Dates:** 11 Feb 2026 - 25 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 2nd, 4th week of month on Wednesday 10:00 AM - 12:30 PM

**Leader:** Suzanne Farr

---

### 26CRA002 Mindful Slow Stitching

Mindful slow stitching is a practice which allows you to slow down and be mindful in the creative process. Slow stitching does not require precision, great skill or planning. Rather it is intuitive and present focused. Each session you will learn a new stitch or practice to add to your creation. Your slow stitched piece will be used to create a beautiful journal cover in the final week. Materials and tools will be provided including plant dyed pieces if you prefer. Every session includes an oracle card reading, a sacred story to infuse into your work, and enough crafting time to chat and share ideas. Cost for this course to cover material and equipment is \$10, payable in cash at the session.

**Location:** Hills Hub T 1 & 2 - Training Rooms 1 and 2

**Dates:** 3 Mar 2026 - 17 Mar 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 1st, 3rd week of month on Tuesday 10:00 AM - 12:30 PM

**Leader:** Noeline Hosie

---

### 26CRA003 Needlework

If it requires a needle (knitting or sewing type) this is your group! Knitting, Cross Stitch, Tapestry, Embroidery and Crochet are all embraced. This is an informal group where you can work on your own projects. Dig out any unfinished projects that have been in a cupboard for years & bring them along. You don't have to be an expert. Beginners welcome.

This course operates during School Holidays, but not on Public Holidays.

**Location:** Hills Hub MP 1 - Multipurpose Room 1

**Dates:** 2 Feb 2026 - 2 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 1st week of month on Monday 9:30 AM - 12 noon

**Leader:** Pepe Pugh

---

## **26CRA004 Working with Wood**

You can take part in all of the following: 1. Make a toolbox for yourself. 2. Repair an item of furniture. 3. Design and make a bookshelf or any item of furniture. There are plenty of resources available to try your hand. 4. Learn how to use power tools and hand tools safely for any other woodwork in the home. 5. Maintenance of hand tools & learn to keep them sharp & working.

This course operates during School Holidays, but not on Public Holidays.

**Location:** Community Workshop - Hills Hub Workshop

**Dates:** 2 Feb 2026 - 16 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 1st, 3rd week of month on Monday 1:30 PM - 4:30 PM

**Leaders:** Pepe Pugh, Blythe Osborne

---

## Discussion and Research

### **26DIS001 Australian and World History**

The program will include significant events in world history, indigenous history, topical issues in Australian history and topics and input from participants.

This course operates on both School and Public Holidays.

**Location:** Hills Hub T 1 & 2 - Training Rooms 1 and 2

**Dates:** 9 Feb 2026 - 14 Dec 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 2nd, 4th week of month on **Monday 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM**

**Leader:** Dick Bartley

---

### **26DIS002 Current Affairs**

This class is not only about discussing current events but also to do some research into a topic. The intention is for the class to develop a list of topics that they would like to examine. Each participant to undertake some background reading and during class participation present and discuss the facts. Given we will from time to time discuss issues that people feel strongly about, the objective is to present various arguments which participants can consider. Hopefully, we can all learn more and become better informed about a current issue. We also hope to utilise various media options (radio interviews, TV, iView, YouTube) as a basis for input on various topics.

This course operates on both School and Public Holidays.

**Location:** Hills Hub T 1 & 2 - Training Rooms 1 and 2

**Dates:** 2 Feb 2026 - 07 Dec 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 1st, 3rd week of month on Monday 10:30 AM - 12:30 PM

**Leader:** Dick Bartley

---

### **26DIS003 Genealogy**

Genealogy, with an emphasis on DNA as well. Learn how to find your ancestors in a myriad of records, including on-line versions. Establish a system for Record Keeping and a Family Tree. Learn the history of your family, their places of birth, and the journeys they undertook to arrive in Australia. A Laptop computer is necessary, notebook and pens. This is a very friendly, helpful group with a range of experience.

This course operates during School but not Public Holidays.

**Location:** Hills Hub T 1 & 2 - Training Rooms 1 and 2

**Dates:** 3 Feb 2026 - 17 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 1st, 3rd week of month on Tuesday 1:00 PM - 3:30 PM

**Leaders:** Hilary Thomas, Anne Deschepper

---

## **26DIS004 First Nations**

This course explores the rich and complex history of Australia's First Nations peoples, tracing their continuous cultural presence over more than 65,000 years through to the arrival of Captain James Cook and the subsequent and lasting impacts of colonisation.

Participants will examine significant historical and contemporary developments, including the Uluru Statement from the Heart, and explore how the principles of Voice, Truth-telling, Treaty, and Makarrata can help build understanding and shape a pathway toward reconciliation and a strong alliance grounded in shared respect and responsibility.

The program features thought-provoking video content, showcasing the Indigenous voice, including First Australians directed by Rachel Perkins, that encourage reflection, learning and open conversation about the issues facing First Nations people. The resilience, contributions and achievements of First Nations peoples will be celebrated.

This course does not operate on School or Public Holidays.

**Location:** Hills Hub MP 3 - Multipurpose Room 3

**Dates:** 3 Feb 2026 - 24 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Weekly on Tuesday 1:30 PM - 3:30 PM

**Leader:** Heather Sherwell

---

## **26DIS005 Philosophy**

This course explores a wide range of questions in Philosophy. Some questions go back centuries and examine claims about morality, free will and good government. Other questions are contemporary – emerging from recent developments in art, science, and evolving social norms. Contemporary and Classical philosophers alike investigate issues that inform and impact our daily lives. All are influential, some are controversial. This course does not require prior Philosophical study and welcomes discussion and exchange of opinion.

This course does not operate during School or Public Holidays.

**Location:** Hills Hub T 1 & 2 - Training Rooms 1 and 2

**Dates:** 10 Feb 2026 - 24 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 2nd, 4th week of month on Tuesday 10:00 AM - 12 noon

**Leaders:** Eddie Vaughan, Martin Buoncristiani, Nora Sumberg

---

## Drama, Reading and Writing

### 26LIT001 Wattle Book Group

If you enjoy reading, extending your genres and lots of highly interesting discussion, then you will enjoy this group. Each month we receive a book from the library's extensive set of book group titles. We also share our favourite books as well as any podcasts or other aspects of interest around books. Many books, if you wish, can also come in ebooks/audiobooks. Morning tea is also enjoyed during the session. Come and join us!

This course operates during School Holidays, but not on Public Holidays.

**Location:** Meeting Room - Hills Hub Upstairs Meeting Room

**Dates:** 10 Feb 2026 - 10 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 2nd week of month on Tuesday 10:00 AM - 12 noon

**Leader:** Tanya Cooke

---

### 26LIT002 Eucalypt Book Group

If you enjoy reading, extending your genres and lots of highly interesting discussion, then you will enjoy this group. Each month we receive a book from the library's extensive set of book group titles. We also share our favourite books as well as any podcasts or other aspects of interest around books. Many books, if you wish, can also come in ebooks/audiobooks. Afternoon tea is also enjoyed during the session. Come and join us!

This course operates during School Holidays, but not on Public Holidays.

**Location:** Meeting Room - Hills Hub Upstairs Meeting Room

**Dates:** 10 Feb 2026 - 10 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 2nd week of month on Tuesday 1:30 PM - 3:30 PM

**Leader:** Tanya Cooke

---

### 26LIT003 Banksia Book Group

If you enjoy reading, extending your genres and lots of highly interesting discussion, then you will enjoy this group. Each month we receive a book from the library's extensive set of book group titles. We also share our favourite books as well as any podcasts or other aspects of interest around books. Many books, if you wish, can also come in ebooks/audiobooks. Morning tea is also enjoyed during the session. Come and join us!

This course operates during School Holidays, but not on Public Holidays.

**Location:** Meeting Room - Hills Hub Upstairs Meeting Room

**Dates:** 25 Feb 2026 - 25 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 4th week of month on Wednesday 10:00 AM - 12 noon

**Leader:** Tanya Cooke

---

## 26LIT004 Creative Writing

Each session starts with participants sharing any piece of creative writing that they have found to be of particular interest. This is followed by a writing activity which many members take in turns to prepare and present. These activities are often very humorous, and certainly stimulate our creativity. Our pieces from this are read aloud to the group. We then take it in turns to read our optional homework pieces aloud to the group. The topic for the homework would have been set at the previous session, so we will have had two, or sometimes three, weeks to come up with something. It is amazing what a variety of pieces are produced from this same common starting point. There are short stories, poetry, plays, songs and other types of writing. We often also read and hear other non-homework pieces that members have written. It is optional to ask for feedback, constructive criticism and suggestions to improve your piece and your overall writing. Assistance will be given with punctuation, grammar, spelling, typing, printing and photocopying, if requested. The focus is on creativity and writing for pleasure. It is not a course "teaching" you how to write. Members all greatly enjoy each other's company and writing. It is a very supportive and friendly group. You are welcome to attend a session as a trial to see if you would like to enrol. There are several binders of our pieces from 2014 onwards which you are welcome to borrow if you would like to read some of our work.

This course operates during both School and Public Holidays.

**Location:** Meeting Room - Hills Hub Upstairs Meeting Room

**Dates:** 6 Feb 2026 - 20 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 1st, 3rd week of month on Friday 12:30 PM - 3:00 PM

**Leaders:** Trevor Budge, Gillian Sealby

---

## Exercise and Fitness

### 26EXE001 Bushwalking (Mondays)

The bushwalking group will meet in various starting locations, as advised by the tutor, every Monday at 9.00. Walks will generally be somewhere in the areas of Lysterfield, Mt Dandenong and Gembrook, Berwick, and Pakenham. Expect to walk about 6-8 km each week. Each walk takes from 90 to 120 minutes. There will be some rough and steep tracks. Reasonable fitness required. The leader will carry a basic first aid kit. There are no walks in school holidays, days of Total Fire Ban and very rainy days. Participants need to be fit and are expected to bring a drink, wear good walking shoes, appropriate clothes and a hat. Walks will be cancelled on days of Total Fire Ban or other extreme weather conditions. Please ensure that your emergency contact details are included on the reverse of your U3A name badge. Importantly, please note that participants CANNOT enrol in both Bushwalking classes.

This course does not operate during School or Public Holidays.

**Location:** Various - See Tutor for Details

**Dates:** 2 Feb 2026 - 30 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Weekly on Monday 9:00 AM - 12 noon

**Leader:** Dorothy Radings

---

### 26EXE002 Bushwalking (Wednesdays)

The bushwalking group will meet in various starting locations, as advised by the tutor, every Wednesday at 9.00. Walks will generally be somewhere in the areas of Lysterfield, Mt Dandenong and Gembrook, Berwick, and Pakenham. Expect to walk about 6-8 km each week. Each walk takes from 90 to 120 Minutes. There will be some rough and steep tracks. Reasonable fitness required. The leader will carry a basic first aid kit. There are no walks in school holidays, days of Total Fire Ban and very rainy days. Participants need to be fit and are expected to bring a drink, wear good walking shoes, appropriate clothes and a hat. Walks will be cancelled on days of Total Fire Ban or other extreme weather conditions. Please ensure that your emergency contact details are included on the reverse of your U3A name badge. Current members of the class will have priority until 11th Dec 2020, after which enrolments will be taken in time order. Importantly, please note that participants CANNOT enrol in both Bushwalking classes.

This course does not operate during School or Public Holidays.

**Location:** Various - See Tutor for Details

**Dates:** 4 Feb 2026 - 25 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Weekly on Wednesday 9:00 AM - 12 noon

**Leader:** Dorothy Radings

---

## 26EXE003 Lawn Bowls

Would you like to play Lawn Bowls? Our course is open to both beginners and experienced players, and is being held at the Cockatoo and District Bowls Club (2 McBride St, Cockatoo) on a weekly basis, every Monday afternoon. All equipment will be provided, and if you are a learner, there will be experienced bowlers there to help you! So come along and give it a try - fun and exercise for everyone!

This course operates during both School and Public Holidays.

**Location:** Cockatoo Lawn Bowls - Cockatoo & District Bowls Club 2 McBride Street, Cockatoo 3781

**Dates:** 2 Feb 2026 - 30 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Weekly on Monday 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM

**Leader:** Robert Whimpey

---

## 26EXE004 Pickleball

Pickleball is a fun paddle sport which you can learn in minutes and play for a lifetime. There is a net, paddles and a lightweight ball and you can play singles or doubles. Pickleball is lower impact than tennis and has features of table tennis and badminton. Young or older or in-between, you'll enjoy this game which can be competitive or just fun and social. Pickleball will keep you active without being too energetic. If you want to get involved in a fun, social and active game, Pickleball is for you!

This course operates during both School and Public Holidays.

**Location:** Cockatoo Stadium - Cockatoo Indoor Sports Complex YMCA, Mountain Road Reserve, Cockatoo 3781

**Dates:** 3 Feb 2026 - 24 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Weekly on Tuesday 1:30 PM - 3:30 PM

**Leader:** Robert Whimpey

---

## 26EXE005 Table Tennis

We're an enthusiastic group of table tennis players who believe in fitness, fun, and a good laugh! Whether you're a seasoned player or just starting out, our sessions are all about enjoying the game while getting a great workout. You don't need to be an Olympic champion to join us — everyone is welcome, and we love to keep the atmosphere light and friendly. We meet every week, holidays or not to ensure the fun never stops! Come swing by, play hard and laugh even harder! Please note: Classes are held twice weekly on every Tuesday (9:30am-12:00 Noon) & Friday (9:30am-12:00 Noon), and participants may join in both Table Tennis classes.

This course operates during both School and Public Holidays.

**Location:** Hills Hub MP 1, 2 & 3 - Multipurpose Rooms 1, 2 and 3

**Dates:** 6 Jan 2026 - 18 Dec 2026

**Schedule:** Weekly on Tuesdays and Fridays; 9:30 AM - 12 noon

**Leaders:** Ray Schmidt, Norma Pugh

---

## **26EXE007 Yoga**

Rooted in the rich traditions of India, yoga is a holistic practice that harmonises the body and mind through movement, breath control, and meditation. Our group invites you to experience the physical and spiritual benefits of yoga in a welcoming community. Whether you're new to yoga or have an established practice, our sessions are designed to help you improve your health, boost your happiness, and find balance. Together, we'll create a peaceful space for personal growth and connection. Our sessions continue through public and school holidays, so you can maintain your practice without interruption. Come join us and discover the power of yoga in a serene and supportive setting.

This course operates during both School and Public Holidays.

**Location:** Hills Hub MP 2 & 3 - Multipurpose Rooms 2 and 3

**Dates:** 8 Jan 2026 - 24 Dec 2026

**Schedule:** Weekly on Thursday 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM

**Leaders:** Ray Schmidt, Jutta Snyder

---

## Explore Your Creativity

### **26ART001 Art: Open-Medium**

Join and explore with us, Art: Open-Medium such as Water-Colour, Oil, Acrylics and Pastels to list a few. Hands on with special emphasis on developing one's own style. Show and tell at the beginning of each class to openly critique each other's work and constructively comment and debate the merits of each work.

This course does not operate during School or Public Holidays.

**Location:** Hills Hub MP 1 - Multipurpose Room 1

**Dates:** 13 Feb 2026 - 27 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 2nd, 4th week of month on Friday 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM

**Leader:** Iain Johnson

---

### **26ART002 Botanical Art**

This is a class where people interested in art, plants, and botany can learn to draw and paint plants in watercolour with botanical accuracy. Those taking part may be complete beginners or have some drawing or painting experience.

Current members of the class will have priority until 12th Dec 2025, after which enrolments will be taken in time order.

This course does not operate during School or Public Holidays.

**Location:** Hills Hub MP 1 - Multipurpose Room 1

**Dates:** 4 Feb 2026 - 18 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 1st, 3rd week of month on Wednesday 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

**Leader:** Kay Craig

---

### **26ART003 Calligraphy**

This course offers differing requirements of a calligrapher. The first is tuition in different scripts using a broad-nibbed dip pen and using this beautiful lettering to enhance small projects. The second, for those competent in the above, will offer the use of scripts, that have been learned, to complete a range of projects self-selected by the group and presented, in conjunction with the tutor, by various members within that group.

Current members of the class will have priority until 12th December 2025, after which enrolments will be taken in time order. This course operates during School but not on Public Holidays. Note that there will be no new student enrolments in this course after Term 1.

**Location:** Hills Hub MP 1 - Multipurpose Room 1

**Dates:** 25 Feb 2026 - 25 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 4th week of month on Wednesday 1:30 PM - 3:30 PM

**Leader:** Nola Bianco

---

## **26ART004 The Opium Wars - History, Art and Archaeology**

The Opium Wars -1839 to 1842, 1856-1860. We will explore the rich quality of Chinese artworks. Porcelain and archaeological artifacts as well as looking at western art as well as photography related to this period and the events that shaped them.

This class operates during School Holidays, but not on Public Holidays.

**Location:** Hills Hub T 1 & 2 - Training Rooms 1 and 2

**Dates:** 12 Feb 2026 - 28 May 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 2nd, 4th week of month on Thursday 10:00 AM - 12 noon

**Leader:** Anne Richardson

---

## **26ART005 Photography**

This course is an opportunity for like-minded photographers, both budding and more accomplished, to come together to:

- \* share work,
- \* learn new skills,
- \* go on shooting outings
- \* visit galleries,
- \* hear interesting presentations,
- \* be challenged with set tasks,
- \* have opportunities to exhibit work,
- ...and generally have fun and enjoy the camaraderie.

This course does not operate during School or Public Holidays.

**Location:** Hills Hub MP 2 - Multipurpose Room 2

**Dates:** 11 Feb 2026 - 25 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 2nd, 4th week of month on Wednesday 10:00 AM - 12 noon

**Leader:** Paul Bianco

---

## **26ART006 Reflections on Rock/Pop**

Join us as we continue our journey investigating popular and rock music genres. We will also explore genres such as blues, folk, jazz, rhythm and blues, and country and western. The course will look at important milestones, including significant musicians, performers, song writers, record companies and producers, technological innovation, and social context. This course is a continuation of the previous year's course, but new participants can easily join in. The course does not require any special musical theory knowledge. Instead, it does require an enthusiasm and willingness to engage in diverse musical styles and genres.

This course does not operate during School or Public Holidays.

**Location:** Hills Hub MP 3 - Multipurpose Room 3

**Dates:** 18 Feb 2026 - 18 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 3rd week of month on Wednesday 1:00 PM - 3:30 PM

**Leader:** Jon Snyder

---

## **26ART007 Seven Centuries of Music**

This course explores the development of Western music from the Late Middle Ages to the start of the Twentieth Century. It samples music from the Medieval, Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, and Romantic periods and discusses how the social histories of those times influenced the music. The tutor has not studied music formally, but has long been interested in the types of music featured in this course.

A minimum of eight (8) participants is required for this course to run. This course does not operate during School or Public Holidays.

**Location:** Hills Hub T1 - Training Room 1

**Dates:** 4 Feb 2026 - 1 Apr 2026

**Schedule:** Weekly on Wednesday 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

**Leader:** Eddie Vaughan

---

## **26ART008 Encounter and Connection Through the Arts and Nature**

Exploring together – live music and sound, creative expression, and healing energies - to connect with what resonates within.

This course does not operate during School or Public Holidays.

**Location:** Hills Hub Foyer - Downstairs Meeting Space 400A Belgrave-Gembrook Rd, Emerald 3782

**Dates:** 20 Feb 2026 - 27 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 1st week of the month on Friday 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

**Leader:** Mary Knights-Rutten

---

## Games and Hobbies

### 26GAM001 Bridge

Enjoy great social and mental stimulation by playing Bridge in a friendly environment! Both beginners and experts are welcome. If appropriate, lessons will be held separate from play sessions. Our emphasis is on enjoyment rather than intense competition, so come along and join us!

This course operates during both School and Public Holidays.

**Location:** Hills Hub T2 - Training Room 2

**Dates:** 4 Feb 2026 - 25 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Weekly on Wednesday 1:30 PM - 4:30 PM

**Leader:** John Ritchie

---

### 26GAM002 Scrabble 1

Scrabble is a word game which can be fun, challenging, and competitive. It can help mental stimulation, spelling and vocabulary and sometimes we learn something new. New players, beginners or experts, male or female are most welcome!

This course operates during School Holidays, but not on Public Holidays.

**Location:** Hills Hub T2 - Training Room 2

**Dates:** 10 Feb 2026 - 10 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 2nd week of month on Tuesday 1:30 PM - 4:00 PM

**Leader:** Norma Pugh

---

### 26GAM002 Scrabble 2

Scrabble is a word game which does wonders for your spelling and vocabulary. You don't have to be an expert. Beginners are very welcome!

This course operates during School Holidays, but not on Public Holidays.

**Location:** Hills Hub T2 - Training Room 2

**Dates:** 24 Feb 2026 - 24 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 4th week of month on Tuesday 1:30 PM - 4:00 PM

**Leader:** Kath Yates

---

## Learn a New Language

### **26LAN001 German (Beginners and Intermediate)**

Make your next European trip so much more enjoyable! Learn basic German conversation in a friendly, supportive and relaxed atmosphere! As a component of the course, you will also discover aspects of German culture and history. Whether you are completely new to German, the first language of over a hundred million Europeans, or have some previous knowledge, you will feel 'Willkommen' (welcome) in this class! Current members of the class will have priority until 10th Dec 2024, after which enrolments will be taken in time order.

This course does not operate during School or Public Holidays.

**Location:** Hills Hub T 1 & 2 - Training Rooms 1 and 2

**Dates:** 3 Feb 2026 - 24 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Weekly on Tuesday 5:00 PM - 6:00 PM

**Leaders:** John Maguire, Marilyn Huber, Miriam Davies

---

### **26LAN002 Italian (Beginners)**

Learn Italian in a relaxed and friendly environment. No prior knowledge or experience required. The course includes Italian cultural activities such as movies and songs, a visit and lunch in Lygon Street and Christmas lunch at the Tutor's home.

This course does not operate during School or Public Holidays.

**Location:** Hills Hub T2 - Training Room 2

**Dates:** 6 Feb 2026 - 20 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 1st, 3rd week of month on Friday 10:00 AM - 12 noon

**Leader:** Dolores Bellemo

---

### **26LAN003 Italian (Intermediate 1)**

Some knowledge of Italian and a love of Italian culture are assumed in this class which aims to reinforce Italian grammar, reading, and conversation. The course includes Italian cultural activities such as movies and songs, a visit and lunch in Lygon Street, and Christmas lunch at the tutor's home.

This course does not operate during School or Public Holidays.

**Location:** Hills Hub T2 - Training Room 2

**Dates:** 13 Feb 2026 - 27 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 2nd, 4th week of month on Friday 10:00 AM - 12 noon

**Leader:** Dolores Bellemo

---

## **26LAN004 Italian (Intermediate 2)**

This course will reinforce what's already been learnt plus new grammar which as yet has not been taught.

This course does not operate during School or Public Holidays.

**Location:** Hills Hub T1 - Training Room 1

**Dates:** 6 Feb 2026 - 20 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 1st, 3rd week of month on Friday 10:00 AM - 12 noon

**Leader:** Aldo Bellemo

---

## **26LAN005 Italian Conversation (Advanced Students)**

This Class is mainly a conversation class. Emphasis will be placed on Italian Culture, Art, Architecture and Italian life in general.

This course does not operate during School or Public Holidays.

**Location:** Hills Hub T1 - Training Room 1

**Dates:** 13 Feb 2026 - 27 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 2nd, 4th week of month on Friday 10:00 AM - 12 noon

**Leader:** Aldo Bellemo

---

## **26LAN006 French Conversation**

Course participants need to have a basic level of French. The class will have discussions around a range of topics - books, films, family and world happenings.

This course does not operate during School or Public Holidays.

**Location:** Hills Hub T 1 & 2 - Training Rooms 1 and 2

**Dates:** 3 Feb 2026 - 17 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 1st, 3rd week of month on Tuesday 10:00 AM - 12 noon

**Leader:** Margaret Goldberg

---

## 26LAN007 Japanese Self-Learning Group

A course for '2024 Japanese for Beginners' members wishing to continue their journey into the Japanese language and culture, as well as new members committed to Japanese learning. This is a self-learning and study group where members work to enhance their Japanese skills beyond their existing capability in a supportive environment. Active member participation is expected. Set weekly activities combined with a variety of learning tools will engage all participants in their Japanese journey and immerse us further into the world of the Japanese language and culture. Lessons are divided into four parts:

1. Either speaking to each other, or sentence construction.
2. Audio sessions *via* Borrow Box, Audible, etc.
3. A Japanese movie or video (part of).
4. Self-study and interaction between students.

This course operates during both School and Public Holidays (except over the Christmas period).

**Location:** Hills Hub T 1 & 2 - Training Rooms 1 and 2

**Dates:** 13 Feb 2026 - 27 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Weekly on Friday 1:30 PM - 3:30 PM

**Leader:** Mary Oke

---

## Music

### 26MUS001 Musicians Sharing Group

Do you delight in making music by playing a musical instrument? This weekly gathering aims to give musicians a chance to perform for and with each other in a friendly and non-judgemental environment. Both individual and small group performances are encouraged, as well as participation in the whole group music. Whether you have recently started playing for the first time or are picking up an instrument after a long break this may be what you have been looking for. Anne Elizabeth, the second tutor for the group, arranges music for the specific mix of instruments present and leads the group playing. We encourage all instrumentalists to join us.

This course operates during school terms only and generally not on public holidays unless otherwise decided at the time.

**Location:** Evergreens Senior Citizens Centre 8 Church St, Emerald 3782

**Dates:** 3 Feb 2026 - 24 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Weekly on Tuesday 10:30 AM - 12:30 PM

**Leaders:** Gaye Dunstan, Anne Elizabeth

---

### 26MUS002 Music Jamming

This activity is an opportunity to give like-minded members an opportunity to get together, jam and have fun. It is to be an informal gathering around the grand piano at the Hub, with a few guitars, a ukulele or two and who knows, sharing songs selected by the members of the group. The group will meet from 2pm to approximately 4pm on the 2nd Thursday each month.

This course does not operate during School or Public Holidays.

**Location:** Hills Hub Foyer - Downstairs Meeting Space

**Dates:** 12 Feb 2026 - 12 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 2nd week of month on Thursday 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

**Leader:** Paul Bianco

---

### 26MUS003 Over The Hills Singers

Two hours of fun, social contact and well-being through singing. Our program incorporates preparation for singing - relaxation, breathing and vocal exercises - canons, rounds, songs in unison and harmony of various genres - traditional, folk, musicals, spirituals, modern. There are no auditions, and the ability to read music is not a prerequisite. Please note that Covid-Safe plans have been developed specifically for courses involving singers and musicians, and all participants must abide by these requirements.

This course does not operate during School or Public Holidays.

**Location:** Hills Hub MP 1 & 2 - Multipurpose Rooms 1 and 2

**Dates:** 4 Feb 2026 - 02 Dec 2026

**Schedule:** Weekly on Wednesday 3:30 PM - 5:30 PM

**Leaders:** Rosamund Winter, Graham Dunstan

---

## Science and the Environment

### 26ENV001 Evolving Marvels of the Universe

The full title of this course is 'Evolving Marvels of the Universe: Keeping up with Physics, Astronomy and Cosmology'. We frequently hear of marvellous discoveries in science reported in the news. Mysteries of dark matter, entangled particles, black holes colliding and astounding images from the depths of space. This new series follows from the tutorial 'Cosmological and Astronomical Ideas' I gave for several years. It plans to explain these emerging wonders so that everyone can appreciate them.

This course operates during School Holidays, but not on Public Holidays. Note that this course begins in March.

**Location:** Hills Hub T 1 & 2 - Training Rooms 1 and 2

**Dates:** 9 Mar 2026 - 9 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 2nd week of month on Monday 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

**Leader:** Martin Buoncristiani

---

### 26ENV002 Spotlight on the Environment

Each month, we will examine current 'hot topics' in environmental science - from climate change to pollution. We will look back at the history of the subject (and how that has influenced our current opinions) and forward to our future prospects. As usual, we'll also have some fun along the way. This course will be operated in 'hybrid' mode, with live classes at the Hills Hub also streamed via Zoom.

This course operates during School Holidays, but not on Public Holidays.

**Location:** Hills Hub MP 1 - Multipurpose Room 1

**Dates:** 19 Feb 2026 - 19 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 3rd week of month on Thursday 1:30 PM - 3:30 PM

**Leader:** Bruce Richardson

---

## Social and Leisure Activities

### 26SOC001 Cinema Classics

Cinema Classics is a group that meets monthly to view movies of interest – “classics” in one sense or another - from Australia and around the world. The programme consists of a first half featuring a selection of short films (including animation, drama, comedy, music and documentary). Suggestions for films from the group members are more than welcome. We rate each film, and during 2025 the average rating by group members for movies shown was over 4.5 stars out 5, with a number receiving close to a 5-star rating.

This course operates during both School and Public Holidays.

**Location:** Gemco - Gem Theatre 19 Kilvington Drive, Emerald 3782

**Dates:** 23 Feb 2026 - 23 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 4th week of month on Monday 1:00 PM - 4:30 PM

**Leader:** Bruce Richardson

---

### 26SOC002 Coffee Club

The Hills are full of interesting cafes and coffee shops. Let's sample them together. This is a good opportunity to meet and get to know other U3A members. Bring your 'bucket list' of interesting cafes to our first meeting. We will work out the rest of our programme from all of the suggestions on that day.

This course operates during School Holidays, but not on Public Holidays.

**Location:** Various - See Tutor for Details

**Dates:** 19 Feb 2026 - 19 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 3rd week of month on Thursday 10:00 AM - 12 noon

**Leaders:** Maureen Trotter, Victoria Withers

---

### 26SOC003 Exploring Victoria 1

Join our very friendly, collaborative group as we explore some of the many interesting museums, galleries, streetscapes, historic buildings and parks and gardens in and around Melbourne and its surrounds. We have the option of carpooling, from Pepe's land on the Beaconsfield/Emerald Road or driving to Belgrave station to use public transport. Our first outing together is over lunch to brainstorm some ideas for the year ahead. Each member of the group is asked to research and plan an outing of their choice, either on their own or paired with someone else. You will be given a template of what is needed. Once you have planned out the activity, you send me the details by email and I will send it out to our group through the Emerald U3A website. Wherever we go, the winning formula is coffee upon arrival and lunch after the activity, before returning home. Participants cannot enrol in both Exploring Victoria 1 and 2.

This course operates during School and Public Holidays.

**Location:** Various - See Tutor for Details

**Dates:** 5 Feb 2026 - 5 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 1st week of month on Thursday 9:00 AM - 4:30 PM

**Leaders:** Sandy Meyers, Marilyn Shanners

---

## 26SOC004 Exploring Victoria 2

Join our friendly group as we explore some of the many interesting museums, galleries, streetscapes, historic buildings and parks and gardens in and around Melbourne and its surrounds. We have the option of carpooling, from Pepi's Land carpark on the Beaconsfield-Emerald Road or driving to Belgrave or Berwick Stations to use public transport. Members of the group are asked to brainstorm some ideas for the year ahead, and (if they are willing) to research and plan an outing of their choice, either on their own or paired with someone else. We will collate these ideas and plan a schedule for the year at a get-together in late January. Wherever we go during the year, the winning formula is coffee upon arrival and lunch after the activity, before returning home. Participants cannot enrol in both Exploring Victoria 1 and 2.

This course operates during School but not on Public Holidays.

**Location:** Various - See Tutor for Details

**Dates:** 5 Feb 2026 - 5 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 1st week of month on Thursday 9:00 AM - 4:30 PM

**Leaders:** Anne Carter, Jill Davis

---

## 26SOC005 Gardening Group 1

We explore public and private gardens and have guest speakers come to The Hub.

This course operates during School Holidays, but not on Public Holidays.

**Location:** Various - See Tutor for Details

**Dates:** 16 Feb 2026 - 16 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 3rd week of month on Monday 12:30 PM - 3:30 PM

**Leaders:** Pam Toone, Elizabeth Baxter

---

## 26SOC006 Gardening Group 2

Open to all who are interested in gardens/gardening. We visit gardens both private and public, discuss garden problems and invite guest speakers. With a shared interest, we find we enjoy each other's company very much. Participants cannot enrol in both Gardening 1 and 2.

This course operates during School Holidays, but not on Public Holidays.

**Location:** Various - See Tutor for Details

**Dates:** 16 Feb 2026 - 16 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 3rd week of month on Monday 12:30 PM - 3:30 PM

**Leaders:** Margaret Edwards, Lynne Moller

---

## 26SOC007 Singles Social Group

For those seeking connection and good company, this is a perfect chance to meet others and enjoy shared moments. Whether it's over a meal, a conversation, or attending interesting events like plays, cinema, exhibitions, or concerts together, this group provides a warm and inviting space to build meaningful connections. The best part? The members shape the activities, ensuring that each gathering feels fresh and exciting. Plus, the program continues through public and school holidays, so there's always an opportunity to discover new friendships. Join us in a supportive and engaging atmosphere!

This course operates on both School and Public Holidays.

**Location:** Hills Hub T 1 & 2 - Training Rooms 1 and 2

**Dates:** 07 Jan 2026 - 23 Dec 2026

**Schedule:** Weekly on Wednesday 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

**Leader:** Ray Schmidt

---

## 26SOC008 Wine Appreciation

Wine Appreciation: a course for people who enjoy wine and want to know more about it – how grapes are grown, how wine it is made, how to taste wine, how to enjoy wine. Our classes include a tutorial and a tasting. The tutorial covers technical aspects of viticulture, oenology and the sensory evaluation of wine. The tastings are of wines selected around a theme, e.g. a particular grape variety, or wines from a particular geographic region. We also make visits to local wineries and places of interest to wine lovers.

This course operates during both School and Public Holidays.

**Location:** Hills Hub T 1 & 2 - Training Rooms 1 and 2

**Dates:** 6 Feb 2026 - 20 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly 1st, 3rd week of month on Friday 4:30 PM - 7:30 PM

**Leaders:** Russell Soderlund, John Wall

---

## 26SOC008 Wine Tourism

This course will focus on specific wine regions both local and international their specialties history and “Enotourismo”, more so than technical aspects of wine . Of course we will sample some wines and have an evaluation process. Tastings will be limited to a maximum of 4 x 50ml keeping well within guidelines for safe driving. Participants need to bring their own glasses: 5 suggested (1 for water or rejects) The cost per session will be in the range of \$5 to \$15 per person to allow for significant variation in the wine price by region or category. The price of each session will be available to members beforehand, and as the course develops members will be able to contribute to the discussion of ideas for upcoming region selection. There will be opportunity but not obligation for members to select wines and present. Cheers to broadening horizons!

This course operates on both School and Public Holidays.

**Location:** Hills Hub T 1 & 2 - Training Rooms 1 and 2

**Dates:** 30 Jan 2026 - 27 Nov 2026

**Schedule:** Monthly last week of month on Friday 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

**Leader:** Russell Marnock

---