

2024 Media Kit

Australian Idol



Monday January 29



Australian Idol



This is where stars are made: welcome to **Australian Idol!**

Twenty-one years after Guy Sebastian pipped Shannon Noll to become Australia's first Idol, the international star-making sensation returns to Seven and 7plus for a second big season on Monday, 29 January.

Radio king Kyle Sandilands and **TV WEEK Logie Award** winner and acclaimed singer Amy Shark will be joined by a new judge: **Australian Idol** OG and pop legend Marcia Hines. The trio will traverse the country to find the next Guy, Casey or Royston.

Set to be the toughest season yet, with only room for the best of the best, the judges are looking for the complete package: a singer with the sound and style to woo the nation.

Excited to be unearthing Australia's next singing superstar, Marcia is looking for a strong, pure and melodic voice "that makes the hairs on your body stand up," regardless of the genre.

The celebrated singer is also looking forward to rejoining Kyle and Amy on the judges' desk following her guest judging role on the series last year.

"I consider Kyle a good friend and Amy is one-in-a-million and a real

individual, without trying to be. Also, Kyle's a Gemini, Amy's a Taurus, and I'm the Cancerian in the mix and those three star signs get along very nicely."

Returning to the Idol judges' desk for his sixth season, Kyle admits there's no definitive formula for the ultimate performer, but they have a presence and energy that's hard to ignore.

"The ultimate performer is someone that you admire for their talent," he says. "And they've got a little swagger or a pizzazz about them that just makes them stand out from the crowd."

Amy added: "I'm usually blown away if someone can potentially showcase their personality, voice, style and direction in the space of 10 minutes and leave me wanting more. If I want to learn more about you, I'm interested."

During their audition, contestants will be on the hunt to score a Golden Ticket to progress to the next round, but with just 30 Golden Tickets across the whole auditions, only the most talented performers will claim their coveted spot in the Top 30.

The Top 30 artists must survive a gruelling week of challenges set by the judges to secure a place in the Top 21. The Top 21 will transform and

perform again as the judges continue to narrow the field to the competition's Top 12 artists who will feature in the live performance round of the competition, with Australian audiences voting to decide who will be crowned the next **Australian Idol**.

The winner will receive a recording contract with industry giant Sony Music Entertainment Australia and \$100,000 in prize money.

A global success since 2001, the Idol franchise has launched the celebrated careers of Aussie hitmakers including Guy Sebastian, Jessica Mauboy, Matt Corby, Ricki-Lee, Anthony Callea, Stan Walker, Casey Donovan and Courtney Act.


International music icons Kelly Clarkson, Carrie Underwood, Jennifer Hudson and Adam Lambert also launched their brilliant careers on the Idol stage.


Australian Idol is hosted by multi-platinum-selling, ARIA Award-nominated singer-songwriter Ricki-Lee – who was discovered on Australian Idol in 2004 – and internationally renowned entertainment presenter and former E! host Scott Tweedie.


Australian Idol is produced for the Seven Network by Eureka Productions.


Australian Idol, premieres Monday, 29 January on Channel 7 and 7plus.

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#AustralianIdol



Kyle Sandilands Judge

@kyleandjackieo



Kyle Sandilands is one of Australia's most high-profile and recognisable broadcasters. With extensive experience as a personality across both radio and TV, Kyle has perfected what has become his unique trademark irreverence.

Since 2000, Kyle has hosted the nationally syndicated *Kyle & Jackie O Show*, winning a record-breaking 52 Australian Commercial Radio Awards.

Kyle was a judge on **Australian Idol** from 2004 to 2009, **The X-Factor Australia** from 2010 to 2011, and **Australia's Got Talent** from 2010 to 2013.

Kyle also runs his own production and investment company, King Kyle, which has interests across music, television, radio, retail and tech.

Australian Idol is searching for the ultimate performer, the 'total package'. What does that look like for you?

The ultimate performer is someone that you admire for their talent, and they've got a little swagger or pizzazz about them that makes them stand out from the crowd. But an ultimate performer can come in any shape; we don't really know exactly what we're looking for until it presents itself.

There are many genres and singing styles. What type of voice are you looking for?

I come from the pop world of commercial, hit music radio. I'd love to be able to play whoever wins on our show. A lot of the voices we put through this year are very unique and they're all quite deserving to win. There's not one up there that I think is a dud.

How do you know when you have spotted a superstar?

You know you've spotted a superstar when you stop thinking about judging and you're amazed at what you're seeing. You realise: "Oh, I'm supposed to be judging this person" but you're so taken by the way they've executed their craft that you actually do forget for a second that you are getting paid to judge these people. That, to me, is a walk-up star.

Marcia Hines returns to the judging panel full-time this year. What makes the chemistry special with your fellow judges?

Well, Marcia is the original Idol alumni, so it's just great to have her in the chair. She's so warm with the artists and she comes from a wealth of knowledge and experience, like decade after decade. Marcia's been in this industry since she was 16, so she knows what she's talking about.

What would you say if your son Otto wanted to audition for Idol when he was older?

I'd tell him no. "Don't do it!" How would you judge your own child? You'd have blinders on, and I'd have to recuse myself from the panel.

How do you balance honesty and empathy in feedback to emerging artists?

It's not really a thought. You just give what you feel at the time. You can see six or seven people in a row and have a completely different experience with those people. Your mood changes, your joy changes, your frustration changes. So, I try and give them in a nutshell "This is how I feel about what I've just seen," and that could be anything. It's up to them.

If we were to look under the judging panel desk, what would we find?

Ooh. On Marcia and Amy's side, there are electrical heaters, hot water bottles, lollies and drinks. My side is the same, but I don't have any heaters, more of an air conditioning duct for me, but there are a lot of snacks to keep us sugared up during filming!

Marcia Hines Judge

Instagram icon @themarciahines



Marcia Hines is an Australian musical treasure with a career spanning five decades. She has released 22 albums, sold 2.6 million copies and garnered countless chart-topping singles and multi-platinum records globally.

A popular judge on the original **Australian Idol** panel from 2003 to 2009, Marcia was inducted into the ARIA Hall of Fame in 2007. She received the Order of Australia Medal in 2009 for her services to the Australian entertainment industry as a performer, judge and mentor and to the community through various charitable organisations.

In 2023, Marcia released *Still Shining – The 50th Anniversary Collection*, a 22-song celebration of her amazing journey since arriving in Australia for the musical *Hair*, followed by *The Gospel According to Marcia*, an album of gospel songs that Marcia grew up singing in the churches of Boston. In January 2024, Marcia will return to the theatre in the role of Teen Angel in *Grease*.

Australian Idol is searching for the ultimate performer, the 'total package'. What does that look like for you?

It's an artist with a certain kind of drive. That's what makes an ultimate performer.

There are many genres and singing styles. What type of voice are you looking for?

I'm looking for a strong, pure, melodic voice, regardless of what genre it is.

How do you know when you have spotted a superstar?

Like most things, when you're moved by something, the hairs on your body stand up.

The music industry has evolved so much since the inception of Australian Idol. Based on your experience, what are your tips for new artists navigating the industry?

It's a totally different world to the one I once knew, but in so many ways it's also the same because, like most musicians and singers, we are expressing ourselves. That, to me, is what music is. My tip would be to try and keep it as real as you possibly can.

What's your one piece of advice to artists before auditioning for Australian Idol?

My one piece of advice is to be prepared. If need be, be able to do whatever it is you're performing backwards!

What is the most exciting part about returning to the Australian Idol judges' panel for you?

First of all, let me say I'm stoked that I've been asked to come back as one of the judges, although to be honest, it has been and still is very confronting because, as a performer, I'm just doing what the contestants want to do (sing).

What makes the chemistry special with your fellow judges, Kyle and Amy?

I consider Kyle a good friend and Amy is one-in-a-million and a real individual without trying to be. Also, Kyle's a Gemini, Amy's a Taurus, and I'm the Cancerian in the mix and those three star signs get along very nicely.

What is your all-time favourite memory as a judge on Australian Idol?

The first season tops them all because I heard Guy Sebastian sing and I knew I was hearing an astounding voice. As each year progressed, we continued to uncover some amazing voices and I know 2024 will bring plenty of surprises.

How do you balance honesty and empathy in feedback to emerging artists?

Those two attributes were shown to me as I was coming up in the industry and the least I can do is give some back.

Australian Idol brings live TV back to Australia. What do you like most about live TV?

I like it because it's a good time to sit around with a friend or the family and watch some great TV.

What is the one thing you can't head to set without?

My special pens.

Describe this season of Australian Idol in three words.

I'm back, hooray!

Amy Shark Judge

@amyspark



After bursting onto the global music scene in 2016, Amy Shark's six-time platinum single *Adore* put her on the map as one of Australia's most formidable songwriters. This was followed by APRA Song of the Year-winning, seven-time platinum and #1 Australian Airplay Chart hit, *I Said Hi*, and 2019 three-time platinum single *Mess Her Up*. Shark's debut #1 ARIA album and platinum-certified *Love Monster* was recognised in 2018 with four ARIA Awards (Album of the Year, Best Female Artist, Best Pop Release, Best Producer [Dann Hume]) and was nominated for another five. *Love Monster* went on to become the highest-selling album by an Australian artist in 2018. In 2020, Amy released her ARIA Award-winning, two-time platinum-accredited single, *Everybody Rise*, which is nearing 50 million streams globally and spent 12 weeks in the Top 10 Australian airplay chart. Amy's latest album, *Cry Forever*, was her second #1 ARIA debut, holding the top spot for two weeks consecutively. Shark teamed up with blink-182's Travis Barker on gold-accredited single *C'Mon* and global superstar Ed Sheeran to co-write the two-time platinum single *Love Songs Ain't for Us* featuring Grammy® award-winning artist Keith Urban. In 2022, Amy released the platinum-accredited hit *Sway My Way* with R3HAB and turbo-pop single *Only Wanna Be with You*. In 2023, she teamed up with Sam Fischer for the release of *High on You*, joined the judging lineup for **Australian Idol** and graced the cover of Rolling Stone Australia. Amy released *Can I Shower at Yours* in 2023 as well as her version of the Kylie classic *Can't Get You Out of My Head* for Mushroom's 50th Anniversary. She also took home her very first **TV WEEK Logie Award** receiving the Graham Kennedy Award for Most Popular New Talent for her role on **Australian Idol**. Today, Amy has amassed close to one billion combined global streams.

Australian Idol is searching for the ultimate performer, the 'total package'.

What does that look like for you?
They need to walk into the room with some kind of aura, not too much ego, but not too shy, either. They need to be able to hold a conversation and captivate the room and that's before any talent is showcased. I'm open to all genres. I love hearing every kind of voice as long as it's in tune and true to them as the artist.

There are many genres and singing styles. What type of voice are you looking for?

Hard to say. But I'm usually blown away if someone can potentially showcase their personality, voice, style and direction in the space of 10 minutes and leave me wanting more. If I want to learn more about you, I'm interested.

You travelled to Perth to uncover some undiscovered talent. What was that like?

I was so happy I got to travel to

Perth. I love it there, it's a beautiful part of Australia. It's also home to so many incredible singers and musicians like Troye Sivan, Tame Impala etc. I don't want to give too much away but I was very happy with the two diamonds in the rough I uncovered during my time there. Both have completely different sounds and styles.

How do you know when you have spotted a superstar?

I just feel it in my heart and gut. They aren't always the strongest vocalists, but there's just something that draws you in.

The music industry has evolved so much since the inception of Australian Idol. Based on your experience, what are your tips for new artists navigating the industry?

You can't be lazy. You must work harder than anyone else. You need to know who you are and not expect a record label to tell you who you are. You need to have a vision for everything – songs, music videos, live show production. You MUST promote your music: you are not Nirvana, and no one ever will be again, unfortunately.

What's your one piece of advice to artists before auditioning for Australian Idol?

Know what you are signing up for, grow a thick skin and bring your A-game.

How do you balance honesty and empathy in feedback to emerging artists?

I'm an empath by nature, so I'm usually able to find the right way to let someone down while reassuring them the dream is not over. It's not easy – it's a tough balance – but that's my job.

What makes the chemistry special with your fellow judges?

We all just keep it real. Kyle has no filter and is part of the biggest radio show in Australia. Marcia has over 50 years of experience in the game and is the OG judge. I take the job very seriously and we all genuinely want to find great talent that excites us every day.

If we look under the Australian Idol judges' desk, what would we find?

I don't think you want to know!

Australian Idol brings live TV back to Australia.

What do you like most about live TV?

The adrenaline!

What is the one thing you can't head to set without?

A flat white, a Diet Coke and a good attitude.

Describe this season of Australian Idol in three words.

Buckle up, baby!



Ricki-Lee Host

@therickilee



Ricki-Lee is a multi-platinum-selling, ARIA-nominated singer-songwriter, television host and radio broadcaster. Since she was discovered on **Australian Idol** in 2004, she has become a household name and is one of Australia's most loved pop stars.

With a string of hits to her name, the powerhouse vocalist from the Gold Coast has sold over one million records globally and had almost 100 million streams of her music, with four #1 hits on the ARIA Dance Chart and UK Club Chart, 15 ARIA Top 20 singles, three ARIA Top 10 albums and a Top 10 single on Japan's Billboard Hot 100 Chart.

Ricki-Lee has received four double platinum, five platinum and six gold certifications, as well as a nomination for ARIA Song of The Year for double platinum hit *Do It Like That. On My Own* – the first single from her highly anticipated fifth studio album due for release in March 2024 – hit #1 on the iTunes and independent label singles charts and the haunting new single *Ghost* topped the iTunes chart within the first hour of release.

This year marks 20 years since your appearance on Australian Idol. How do you feel about this special full-circle moment?

It's so surreal! **Australian Idol** has been such a huge part of my life; being able to be a part of it in a different way now and ushering in a new generation of talent is really special. Once I walked in that door for my audition 20 years ago, my life was never the same. **Idol** gave me that all-important foot in the door and was the launchpad for my career. I have been able to do everything I ever dreamed of as a kid because I walked in that door and auditioned for **Australian Idol**.

How would you describe the talent uncovered by Australian Idol this year?

Honestly, I was blown away at auditions. I can't tell you how many times I had to pick my jaw up off the floor – and how many times Amy, Marcia and I would find each other in the hallways or each other's dressing rooms and just rave about people's auditions! There are always great singers, but this year we have real artists and they are all so different. Australia is going to be amazed.

You're backstage with nervous contestants before they perform. What advice do you give them before they step on stage?

I always try and remind them of why they are here: because they believe they are good enough. And they are. They just have to go out on stage and do what they do best. I always tell them to take a big deep breath and leave it all on the stage; don't leave anything in the tank.

What do you like most about working with your Australian Idol co-host, Scott Tweedie?

Scott is the sweetest and is everyone's biggest cheerleader! He's a wonderful person to be around. He has amazing energy and is so positive and happy all the time. He's one of those people that always sees the glass half full. We have so much fun together.

Australian Idol brings live TV back to Australia. What do you like most about live TV?

There's a certain electricity in the air when you are live. It's the same feeling I get before going out on stage in front of a huge crowd to perform. It's electric and unpredictable. Anything can happen. If you make a mistake, you have to laugh it off and keep going!

What song or type of music gets you up before you step out to host?

I have a hype playlist that I play in my dressing room for that last hour while I'm getting ready featuring Beyonce, Eminem, Michael Jackson, Queen, Tag Team, Backstreet Boys and Spice Girls, just to name a few!

What music is currently on high rotation on your playlists?

I'm the self-proclaimed playlist queen. I have all different types, but my Cardio playlist is legendary. It's remixes of pop songs we all know and love and is amazing for a workout. I also have a Break Up Anthems playlist filled with bangers you can scream to in the car and a Feel Good playlist which is fun to put on when you've got friends over for drinks. Other than that, I am currently still obsessed with Beyonce's *Renaissance* album.

Describe this season of Australian Idol in three words.

Mind-blowing, diverse and better than ever!

How do you wind down after a show?

Heels off, dress off, lashes off, hair extensions out, a champagne in hand and then a hot shower.

Scott Tweedie Host

@stweedie



Returning to Australia after hosting *E! News* in New York City, Scott Tweedie is a unique entertainer, successfully merging the irreverence and buzz of digital with classic television broadcaster skills. Launching his career as host of ABC's cult hit *Prank Patrol* in 2009, Scott's cheeky style saw him become an instant household name with every Australian under 20, with the show airing for five years worldwide.

Network Ten recruited Scott to host Saturday morning music show *The Loop*, and he became an all-rounder for the network, starring as host of *Dancing with the Stars*, roving reporter for *Studio 10* and host of *Saturday Schoolies: the companion show for I'm A Celebrity... Get Me out of Here!* In 2019, Scott was invited to the United States by NBC Universal to host new *E! Entertainment* programs and interviewed icons including Jerry Seinfeld, Dolly Parton and Harry Styles.

How would you describe the talent uncovered by Australian Idol this year?

All these Aussie gems must have been watching our return season last year going: "That could be me," because we've had some powerhouse voices show up and really shake things up. **Australian Idol 2024** is about finding the complete package. The judges are looking for a star who can not only sell a hit single but also work a room and red carpet.

You're backstage with nervous contestants before they perform.

What advice do you give them before they step on stage?

I tell them to slow down their breathing, shut their eyes and really soak up what's about to happen. They have surely visualised and dreamt of this day so many times before, so now I remind them that they are meant to be in this moment and to go out there and enjoy every single minute of it.

What do you like most about working with your Australian Idol co-host Ricki-Lee?

I could not wait to get back on set to film this new season of *Idol* with Ricki-Lee. She is the real deal. We try to set the tone of the show with the contestants and crew, making it a fun experience so that the singers feel on top of the world and ready to smash it.

Australian Idol brings live TV back to Australia.

What do you like most about live TV?

The energy (and the madness) of live TV is what I treasure most. It's hard to describe to friends and family what it's like once that red light on the camera goes on and we know whatever is happening in that actual moment on the *Idol* stage will be broadcast across the country.

Australian Idol live shows have incredible energy. What song or type of music gets you up before you step out to host?

There is a version of *Rhythm (Of The Night)* remixed by Yotto. It is a huge song with a massive build-up (1.30 mark, to be specific). I love to have that or a similar song blasting in my dressing room before we walk on stage to remind myself that I have the best job in the world.

What music is currently on high rotation on your playlists?

I listen to all sorts of music and pride myself on making the greatest playlist for friends and my followers to listen to. Right now, Fred Again is getting a lot of love alongside a Scottish producer called Barry Can't Swim, and Kevin Parker from Tame Impala produced Dua Lipa's new track *Houdini*, which bangs.

Describe this season of Australian Idol in three words.

Singing. Style. Star-power.

If you could pick one artist or band to travel on the Australian Idol bus with, who would it be?

I think I'd choose the boys from Pnau because they are super producers and have an amazing ear for new talent. They could sample verses from the *Idol* contestants and turn them into huge tracks.

What's your go-to karaoke song?

I avoid karaoke at all costs, but if I get dragged in, I'll look for a song that has maximum crowd participation to work the room (and drown out my vocals). *Freed from Desire* by Gala goes off!

How do you wind down after a show?

I don't wind down; I throw small parties in my dressing room to celebrate the show and invite Ricki-Lee and her team, along with anyone walking past from the crew to join in.



Australian Idol Winners

2003 Winner: **Guy Sebastian**

Runner Up: **Shannon Noll**

2004 Winner: **Casey Donovan**

Runner Up: **Anthony Callea**

2005 Winner: **Kate DeAraugo**

Runner Up: **Emily Williams**

2006 Winner: **Damien Leith**

Runner Up: **Jessica Mauboy**

2007 Winner: **Natalie Gauci**

Runner Up: **Matt Corby**

2008 Winner: **Wes Carr**

Runner Up: **Luke Dickens**

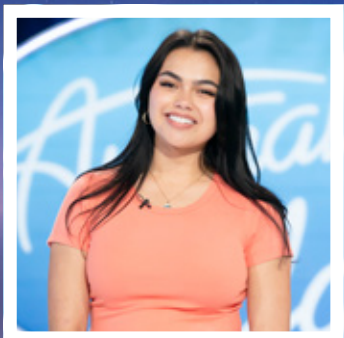
2009 Winner: **Stan Walker**

Runner Up: **Hayley Warner**

2023 Winner: **Royston Sagigi-Baira**

Runner Up: **Phoebe Stewart**

Contestant Snapshot



Amy Reeves

24, Broome, WA
Skincare boutique worker with a special connection to **Australian Idol**.



Bethany Byrne

28, Mooroolbark, VIC
Single mum ready to prove she can balance a singing career and motherhood.



Billy Menhennet

20, Ballarat, VIC
Farmer with singing in his soul.



Chenai Boucher

26, Seaford, VIC
Personal trainer/business development manager returning to **Australian Idol** for redemption.



Cynthia Negash

19, Kurunjang, VIC
Retail worker with a soul-pop sound with a newfound courage to chase her musical dreams.



Denvah Baker-Moller

23, Rockhampton, QLD
Quirky country girl ready for greener pastures.



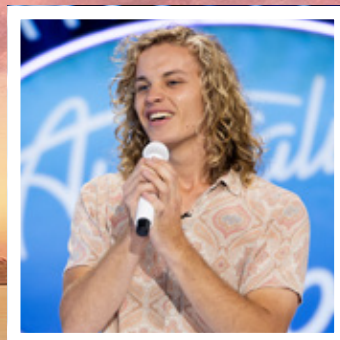
Drea Onamade

26, Perth, WA
Singer/songwriter, choir director and paralegal set to raise the bar on **Australian Idol**.



Dylan Wright

30, Bangalow, NSW
Northern Rivers painter/decorator and dad.



Eli Parr

20, Loganholme, QLD
Carpenter auditioning with his brothers and cousin.



Gab Hester

18, Rye, VIC
High school student ready to overcome challenges to build a full-time music career.

Contestant Snapshot



Hayley Mengel

22, Perth, WA
Salon shop worker and huge Amy Shark fan out to meet her own Idol.



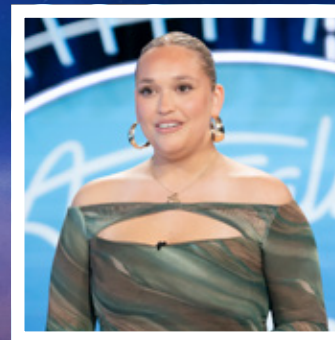
Imogen Spendlove

23, Melbourne, VIC
Factory worker ready for her big break.



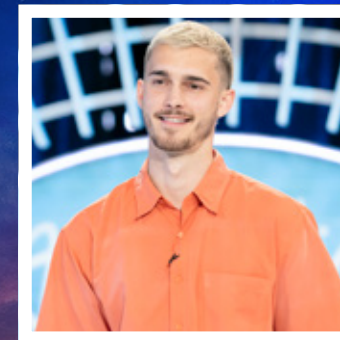
Isaac McCallum

23, Ulladulla, NSW
Supermarket worker ready to show Australia his talent.



Ivana Ilic

20, Mill Park, VIC
Proud Serbian community singer who works at a burger shop.



Jackson Smith

25, Werribee, VIC
Labourer putting it all on the line.



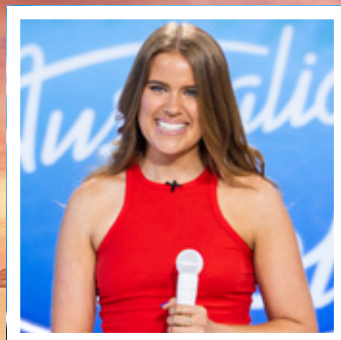
Jake Carlson

20, Mernda, VIC
Music therapist inspired by his autistic brother.



Jesse Lazaroo

18, Perth, WA
Busker with his sights set on the title.



Jess Chalmers

24, Melbourne, VIC
Backing vocalist ready to step into the spotlight.



Jet Cameron

16, Fig Tree Pocket, QLD
High school singer ready to launch his career.



Jade Bligh

26, Thursday Island, QLD
Proud indigenous woman and primary school teacher.

Contestant Snapshot



Jonathan Wells

28, Melbourne, VIC
Singer and dancer with a rich musical heritage.



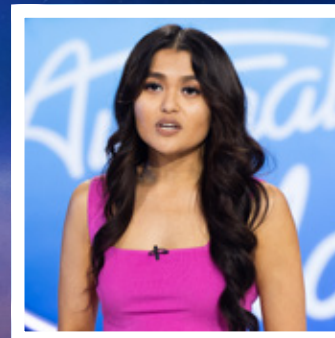
Kiani Smith

17, Bribie Island, QLD
Performer wanting to take her music mainstream.



Kobe White

24, Keysborough, VIC
Food truck attendant serenading customers between burger flips.



Kym Miaco

28, Lightsview, SA
Hip hop dancer ready to transition to full-time music career.



Luke Lightenberg

30, Tuncurry, NSW
High school music teacher.



Natasha Rose

19, Moreton Bay, QLD
Pub trivia host ready to host her Idol dreams.



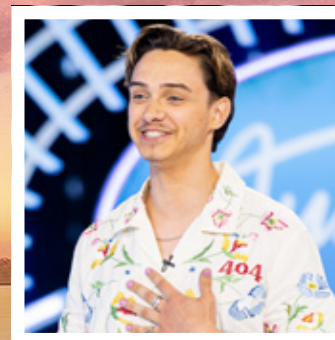
Olivia Britton

22, Wodonga, VIC
Disability support worker putting her own twist on the rock genre.



Riley Lattuga

16, Campbelltown, NSW
High school student who hopes to be Australia's own Justin Bieber.



Ripley Welsh

19, Brisbane, QLD
Full-time musician ready to take his career to the next level.



Sam Snape

30, Boggabri, NSW
Country music loving farmer and devoted dad.

Contestant Snapshot



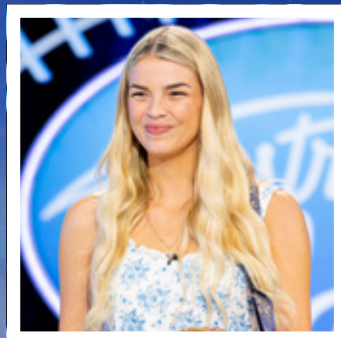
Saoirse Harding

19, Gold Coast, QLD
Social media marketer with music in her blood.



Shaylee Gear

18, Gold Coast, QLD
Singing, dancing, acting triple-threat.



Tayla Adams

24, Bribie Island, QLD
Country singer from Bribie Island who studied speech pathology.



TJ Zimba

24, Karratha, WA
Hip hop artist who writes, records and produces his own beats.



Trent Richardson

22, Emu Park, QLD
Raised on a camel farm and has never sung in public before.



Tyler Hammill

21, Sunshine Coast, QLD
Surf lifesaver ready to ride the Idol wave.



Prayer Corby

23, Humpty Doo, NT
Full-time singer with her best mate, dad, by her side.