Welcome
St Vincent’s information for patients
Welcome to St Vincent’s Hospital

Thank you for choosing St Vincent’s Hospital.

For 120 years, St Vincent’s has been providing the highest standards of care, driven by our concern for others, especially those in need.

It is our pleasure to care for you.

This booklet includes important information about St Vincent’s and the services we provide.

It contains information on what to expect during your stay, how to find your way around and some of the services that may be helpful to you. There is also a series of important tips for managing your own health and information on your rights as a patient, including your right to privacy.

We encourage you to be actively involved with your own healthcare and to let our staff know if you need more information about any aspect of your care. We are here to help.

Your safety, comfort and wellbeing are important to us, so please tell us if there is anything we can do to improve your experience.

On behalf of all of our staff, I welcome you to St Vincent’s.

Sincerely,

Prof Patricia O’Rourke
Chief Executive Officer
Do you need an interpreter?

St Vincent’s services a diverse community, with almost half of our patients born in a country other than Australia.

We provide a free, confidential interpreting service. If you require an interpreter, please ask your doctor or nurse to organise one for you.
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How to get to St Vincent’s

St Vincent’s main hospital is located in Fitzroy. We also have two other major campuses, St George’s Health Service and Caritas Christi Hospice, which are both located in Kew.

St Vincent’s Hospital, Fitzroy

St Vincent’s Fitzroy campus is bordered by Victoria Parade, Nicholson Street, Fitzroy Street and Gertrude Street.

A map of the campus can be found on page 20.

Parking

The St Vincent’s multi-storey car park is located behind St Vincent’s & Mercy Private Hospital, accessed via Fitzroy Street off Victoria Parade.

Operating hours are 6.30am to 10.45pm (Mon to Sun)
Tel: (03) 9288 4799.

Meter parking spaces are also available in the streets near the hospital. Council parking officers are vigilant in the area, so please note the parking restrictions.
Public transport

The Fitzroy campus is less than a ten minute walk from Parliament Station. Trams and buses also travel frequently along Victoria Parade, Nicholson Street and Brunswick Street.

St Vincent’s Plaza is a tram Superstop located outside the hospital on Victoria Parade. Please visit ptv.vic.gov.au for more details.

Taxis

Taxi phones (free call) are located in the foyers of the Emergency Department, St Vincent’s Clinics, and the Bolte Wing on Nicholson Street (see map on page 20).
How to get to St Vincent’s (cont.)

St George’s Health Service, Kew

St George’s Health Service provides rehabilitation and aged care services and is located at 283 Cotham Rd Kew. Paid parking is available on site, accessible via Normanby Rd. Some on-street parking may be available in the surrounding streets. Please be mindful of any parking restrictions that apply.

Public transport

St George’s Health Service is accessible by both tram and bus. Please visit ptv.vic.gov.au for more details.

Caritas Christi Hospice, Kew

Caritas Christi Hospice is located at 104 Studley Park Rd, opposite Campion Retreat Centre.

Public transport

A number of trams and buses travel to or near Caritas Christi Hospice. Please visit ptv.vic.gov.au for more details.
Services for patients and families

Cafés and shops

There are a number of cafés on site at the Fitzroy campus, as well as a pharmacy, Commonwealth Bank branch and ATM, lotto/news agent, florist and travel agent. See the map for details (page 20). A café is located on site at St George’s Health Service.

Indigenous Australians

St Vincent’s recognises Indigenous Australians as the traditional custodians of our lands, and we seek to create a safe and welcoming hospital environment for Aboriginal patients and their families.

St Vincent’s employs dedicated Aboriginal Liaison Officers who can be contacted on (03) 9288 3436.

Deaf and hard of hearing

St Vincent’s is a deaf and hard of hearing friendly health service across all sites. Please ask a staff member to contact Speech Pathology for more information.

Alcohol and smoking

St Vincent’s is a smoke free environment at all sites – please help us to keep it this way by smoking off campus and well away from entrances.

Please do not bring alcohol onto hospital grounds or at any St Vincent’s location.

Art at St Vincent’s

St Vincent’s Art Gallery is located on the ground floor of the Daly Wing and is free for all patients and their families. In addition to the Gallery, there are more than 1,000 works on public display around the various St Vincent’s sites.
Attending one of our specialist clinics

Your GP may refer you to see a specialist doctor or health professional at St Vincent’s Clinics.

The majority of St Vincent’s Clinics are located on the Ground Floor of the Daly Wing, 35 Victoria Parade, Fitzroy (see map on page 20). There are also a number of specialist clinics offered at St George’s Health Service.

You will receive a letter along with your appointment date and time. You will also receive an SMS reminder a few days prior to your appointment if you provide your mobile number. Please bring this letter along with your:

- Medicare card
- medication that you are currently taking
- relevant test results or x-rays
- contact details of your GP
How long will my appointment take?

Some patient appointments may take longer than others; this can lead to longer waits in clinics so please bring items you may need such as food or medication. You may also choose to bring something to read to pass the time. We recommend you arrange childcare or time off work to avoid anxiety in case you are delayed.

Tests

As a patient at our Clinics, you may need tests (such as a blood or urine test) or to visit medical imaging for an x-ray, CT scan, ultrasound or MRI. These can be done on site at St Vincent’s.

Clinic opening times

St Vincent’s Clinics are open during business hours Monday to Friday.

No weekend appointments are available.
Coming to hospital

‘It is very important that you contact St Vincent’s to confirm your booking. Due to the heavy demand for hospital treatment, if you do not confirm the date we may have to cancel your admission.’

Admission

Unless you are admitted via the Emergency Department, you will receive a phone call or letter to let you know when we expect you to come to hospital.

It is very important that you contact St Vincent’s to confirm your booking. Due to the heavy demand for hospital treatment, if you do not confirm the date we may have to cancel your admission.

Pre-admission

You may be asked to attend a pre-admission clinic prior to your surgery. You will be notified by letter detailing your appointment details and where you need to go.

Surgery

If you are having surgery, it is most likely that you will be asked to come to hospital on the day of your surgery. In the past, surgery patients were admitted the day before but this would only happen now if your care team judged it medically necessary.

The day before your surgery you will receive a phone call from the hospital telling you what time to arrive and where to come. We will also give you any further instructions.
What should I bring to hospital?

Please bring the following important items with your admission details. You can use this checklist to help you:

- Medicare card
- Pension card
- Health fund membership details
- Health Care Card, if you are eligible for healthcare assistance
- If you are eligible for WorkCover or you are being admitted to hospital following a road accident, we require your claim number and insurance details
- Veterans’ Card, if applicable
- Current x-rays

During your stay in hospital you will need:

- Pyjamas or night gown
- Dressing gown
- Non-slip, supportive slippers or shoes
- Toiletries (including tissues)
- Any medication that you are taking (please give this to your nurse upon admission)
- Comfortable clothes
- Money for television and telephone

You may also like to bring items to pass the time such as books, magazines or craftwork.
Coming to hospital (cont.)

Where should I go when I arrive?

Medical and surgical patients:
- pedestrians enter at 55 Victoria Parade and cross the central courtyard to the Main Hospital. (see map on page 20)
- the Main Hospital entrance is to the left as you approach both the underground and multi-storey carparks from Fitzroy Street
- take the lift to the floor of your particular Care Centre or the Day Procedures Centre. If you are unsure about which floor you need to go to, please ask at the main reception located in the ground floor foyer
- you will be greeted at the Care Centre or the Day Procedures Centre reception desk where our friendly staff will help you to get settled

How long will I stay in hospital?

The number of days you spend in hospital depends on many factors including your age, general health and the reason for your admission. Please ask your doctor or nurse for an expected discharge date so that you can arrange transport home.

Room types

St Vincent’s has a range of room sizes. Single rooms are mainly used for the very sickest patients, so it would be unusual for you to have a room to yourself. Most rooms are two-bed or four-bed wards. Due to high occupancy at the hospital, it may be necessary for you to stay in a mixed-sex ward. We ask that you understand this necessity.
MediHotel

The St Vincent’s on campus MediHotel provides comfortable accommodation to medically suitable guests before or after treatments, procedures and investigations in hospital.

Unlike a regular hospital ward, the MediHotel only accepts patients with low nursing needs that are able to look after themselves (e.g. showering and dressing). MediHotel patients also take responsibility for their own medication and health issues and there is a nurse on duty at all times.

Staff will talk to you about the MediHotel, if they think it might be necessary for you. A referral needs to be made by a St Vincent’s doctor or liaison nurse.

Your personal items

To prevent loss of belongings it’s a good idea to only bring essential items that you need for your stay. We suggest that you clearly label your belongings with your full name.

If you are admitted via the Emergency Department, we advise that you arrange to have valuables taken home. Please ask your nurse to secure them in a safe until you can make arrangements.

If you wear dentures, please ask one of the nursing team to supply you with a labelled denture cup for storage. We recommend that you do not wrap dentures in tissue or place them under a pillow, as your dentures may get lost or damaged.
Information for visitors

Patient enquiries

Please call the Patient Enquiries Desk on (03) 9288 4360 for details about a patient’s condition or to confirm the hospital’s visiting hours.

Visiting hours – medical and surgical patients

Visitors are welcome at St Vincent’s between the hours of 8am and 8pm, seven days per week (including public holidays).

Visiting hours – Mental Health Service

2pm to 4pm and 6pm to 8pm, seven days per week (including public holidays)

Contact: (03) 9288 4141
‘If your friend or relative is in intensive care, our staff will work closely with you to make visiting arrangements that take into account the needs of your loved one.’

Special circumstances – Intensive Care Unit

The Intensive Care Unit is a highly specialised area. Visitors are limited to next of kin with only two people able to visit a patient at the same time.

If your friend or relative is in intensive care, our staff will work closely with you to make visiting arrangements that take into account the needs of your loved one.

For the health of the patients please do not bring flowers into the unit and mobile phones must be switched off.

More information about intensive care is available from the unit. The Intensive Care Unit can be contacted on (03) 9288 4485.
Going home

Discharge 10am

Discharge time is 10am each day.

Arrangements for your safe and timely discharge will commence when you first have contact with the hospital and will continue until you leave. It is most important to let staff know of any factors that will affect your plans.

Do you have a GP?

A General Practitioner (GP) is your family doctor and is your main point of contact when you have been discharged home. If you do not have a GP please ask your care team to assist you in finding one before you are discharged home. Your care team can provide you with a list of GPs close to your home and you can register as a new patient by telephone and make an appointment.

Your GP will receive information about your hospital stay which will assist them to provide you with care, prescriptions for medication and links to other health services to help your recovery process. Having a GP may also save you unnecessary visits to the hospital emergency room.
Medication

If you require medication when you go home, a limited amount of medication will be supplied from the St Vincent’s pharmacy. Please note, you will be charged for this medication. Please contact your GP if you require further supplies.

Medical aids and appliances

A member of your care team will make arrangements for the provision of any medical aids or appliances that you need. Staff will let you know if there are any additional costs for this equipment.

St Vincent’s at Home

St Vincent’s at Home provides nursing care to patients in their own homes. If appropriate for your care, our professional, experienced nurses will visit your home to help with your recovery process.

‘Your GP will receive information about your hospital stay which will assist them to provide you with care, prescriptions for medication and links to other health services to help your recovery process.’

Need extra help?

There are a number of support services available to help you recuperate such as Home Care Services or Delivered Meals and Food Services (sometimes known as meals on wheels). Please ask your care team for more information.
Special circumstances

No Medicare card

St Vincent’s Hospital Melbourne is a public healthcare facility. All patients who use this facility must present a valid Medicare card in order to receive services free of charge.

You may be classed as a Medicare Ineligible Patient if you are an overseas visitor who does not have asylum seeker or refugee status, or if you are from a country that Australia does not have a Reciprocal Health Care Agreement with.

As a Medicare Ineligible Patient, you will be required to pay costs incurred for all medical treatment received. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have adequate finances to cover the cost of your healthcare. Health or travel insurance cover may enable you to claim reimbursement. Patients who do not have a valid Medicare card or are not eligible for Medicare benefits will need to organise payment with our Overseas and Compensable Patient Accounts Department in advance of elective procedures, or prior to discharge in emergency situations.

Transport Accident Commission (TAC)

If your hospital attendance is related to a transport accident you are entitled to lodge a claim with the TAC. Please visit www.tac.vic.gov.au for more information.
‘St Vincent’s Hospital Melbourne is a public healthcare facility. All patients who use this facility must present a valid Medicare card in order to receive services free of charge.’

**WorkSafe Victoria**

If your hospital attendance is related to a workplace accident or injury you are entitled to lodge a claim through WorkSafe Victoria. You will need to provide your claim number and employer details to hospital staff in order for all associated accounts to be forwarded for payment. Please visit www.worksafe.vic.gov.au for more information.

For further information on any of the above please contact:

Overseas and Compensable Patient Accounts Officer
Telephone: (03) 9288 2893
Email: patient.accounts@svhm.org.au.

**Department of Veteran Affairs**

Veteran Affairs card holders can be eligible for entitlements in treatment and care for certain conditions at the expense of the Department of Veteran Affairs. Patients should present their Veteran Affairs card whenever visiting St Vincent’s Hospital Melbourne. For assistance to confirm your status or entitlements please contact our Patient Accounts Manager or visit www.dva.gov.au.

For further information please contact:

The Patient Accounts Manager
Telephone: (03) 9288 3360
Email: patient.accounts@svhm.org.au.
Be involved with your own healthcare

Correct identification is crucial

- ensuring your identification is correct is key to every aspect of the care we provide to you at St Vincent’s
- it is important your wrist band is worn at all times and has your correct name and birth date on it
- it is a legal requirement for us to get you to confirm these details before every test or dose of medication to ensure we provide you with the best possible care

Please tell us about your health

- let staff know if you do not feel well, think there has been a worrying change in your condition, or you think part of your care has been missed
- feel free to ask as many questions as you need to

Know who is caring for you

- all hospital staff should be wearing an identification badge. If you don’t know who someone is, please ask

Medication

- we need to know what medicines you take at home – this includes tablets, herbs, vitamins and any others from a chemist or supermarket
- let us know if you have any allergies to medication or foods
- don’t be afraid to ask what medicine you are receiving and why
Falls are the leading cause of hospital injury

- make sure you can reach your call bell and ring for help when needed
- turn the light on so you can see clearly
- don’t walk in socks – always wear supportive, flat, non-slip shoes
- if you use glasses or hearing aids, a walking frame or stick, bring them to hospital with you
- make sure your bed is low enough if you need to get out and never climb over bed rails

Keeping you infection free

- germs that cause infection are often spread on our hands so use hand rub or wash hands with soap and water before eating and after coughing, sneezing or going to the toilet
- visitors should wash hands or use hand rub when arriving and before leaving hospital
- do not touch bandages, dressings or drips. If the IV lines, tubes or drains inserted into your body become red, swollen or painful report it to your nurse or doctor
- don’t be afraid to ask a healthcare worker if they have cleaned their hands
- make sure staff clean their hands before touching your wound or intravenous drip
- please tell sick family and friends not to visit until they are well
Be involved with your own healthcare (cont.)

Stop pressure injuries

Pressure injuries or bedsores form when you spend extended periods of time sitting or lying in the same position. They involve an area of skin but can also affect muscle and bone too. To help avoid pressure injuries:

- keep moving – change your sitting or lying position often
- keep weight off bony parts like your heels or tail bone
- keep your skin dry and avoid lying on an injury if you already have one

‘Pressure injuries or bedsores form when you spend extended periods of time sitting or lying in the same position.’
How to give feedback or make a complaint

If you would like to give feedback or have a concern, we encourage you to speak directly to a staff member at the time. That way, we can resolve your issue as quickly as possible.

You are most welcome to ask to speak to the person in charge and if you feel the matter has not been resolved, you can contact the Patient Representative Officer on (03) 9288 3108 Monday to Friday between 8am and 4pm.

The St Vincent’s Patient Representative Officers are available to hear your feedback or resolve any issues and concerns about the care you (or your friend/relative) have experienced at St Vincent’s.
Your rights and responsibilities

The hospital has a responsibility to:

– provide you with care in accordance with our values of compassion, justice, integrity, and excellence
– give you a clear explanation of your condition, problem or disease
– inform you about treatment options and choices
– enable you to participate fully in decisions made about your treatment and care
– provide you with access to the services of a professional interpreter or Aboriginal Hospital Liaison Officer, if relevant
– obtain your informed consent before any treatment begins (except in emergencies)

– ensure confidentiality about your care in hospital unless the law requires such information be given to some person or authority
– respond as promptly as possible to any need or concern you may have
Each patient or his/her representative has a responsibility to:

- provide information relating to your health including past illnesses, stays in hospital and medications
- cooperate with hospital personnel and ask questions if directions and procedures are not understood
- confirm your identification details before every test and medication
- tell us if you require the service of an interpreter or Aboriginal Hospital Liaison Officer
- follow the prescribed treatment or inform us if you choose not to

- be considerate of other patients in limiting noise and the number of visitors
- keep appointments or advise staff if an appointment needs to be changed
- let hospital staff know if your health changes while you are in our care
- treat staff with appropriate courtesy and respect at all times

In some areas of St Vincent’s, such as the Mental Health Service, patients have additional rights and responsibilities. Staff in these areas will provide you with this information.
How can I help support St Vincent’s?

Making a donation

St Vincent’s is very grateful for the generous support of our donors. Donations help St Vincent’s to purchase the very latest medical and surgical equipment, commence innovative building projects and support medical research. Our donors help St Vincent’s to provide the best possible patient care now and in the future.

Donations over $2 are tax deductible and can be made by contacting the St Vincent’s Foundation on (03) 9288 3365, by mail to the St Vincent’s Foundation, Locked Bag 41, Fitzroy VIC 3065 or online at www.stvfoundation.org.au

You will also find donation envelopes at each Care Centre reception desk.

You may like to consider a bequest to St Vincent’s in your Will. This is a generous way to help us provide high quality care into the future.

Your support is greatly appreciated by the staff and patients of St Vincent’s. For further information about helping St Vincent’s, please contact the Foundation on (03) 9288 3365.
Using your health insurance

If you have private health insurance, you can choose to be admitted to St Vincent’s as a private inpatient*. There will be no out of pocket cost to you**, but it can make a big difference to the hospital. Using your private health insurance helps generate much needed funds for the hospital, enabling us to make continuous improvements in patient care and offer the best possible services to our community. If you would like more information about using your insurance please feel free to discuss with the hospital admissions staff or ask for our brochure.

For further information please contact:
Private Patient Liaison Officer
Telephone: (03) 9288 2721
Email: patient.accounts@svhm.org.au

* this does not apply to non inpatient visits, overseas visitors, TAC or WorkSafe claims or Department of Veteran Affairs entitled patients.

** all patients, both public and private pay for discharge medications
A–Z of useful information and services

Aboriginal Hospital Liaison Officers

St Vincent’s provides Aboriginal Hospital Liaison Officers available Monday to Friday. Please ask a staff member to call the Liaison Officers if you are an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and would like contact during your stay.

Accommodation for relatives

St Vincent’s has an Accommodation Liaison Officer to assist rural, regional and interstate patients and their families with accommodation. The Accommodation Liaison Officer can provide information about local accommodation and possible government rebates.

If you require assistance to find somewhere to stay while attending St Vincent’s please contact our Accommodation Liaison Officer on (03) 9288 2268.

Allergies

Please tell your nurse if you have any allergies to such things as specific foods, medications, latex, tapes or dressings. We will provide you with a red wrist band to alert staff.

Cafés and restaurants

There are various places to buy meals and snacks within the campus (see map on page 20).

Electrical appliances

For your safety, the hospital’s electrician must test any personal electrical appliances before they can be used within St Vincent’s. Personal electrical appliances include hair-dryers, radios and chargers. Please tell the Care Centre staff about any appliances you have brought with you.
Laundry

Please make your own arrangements to have your clothes laundered. If no one is able to do your washing, please mention this to a staff member.

Mail

Mail to patients is delivered every working day and should be addressed to:

Patient’s name
Floor level (if known),
Main Hospital
St Vincent’s
PO Box 2900
Fitzroy VIC 3065

Please address mail for Rehabilitation patients to:

Patient’s name
Rehabilitation Care Centre
3rd floor, Bolte Wing
St Vincent’s
PO Box 2900
Fitzroy VIC 3065
Meals

Breakfast is normally served between 7am and 8am, lunch between 11.30am and 12.30pm and dinner between 5pm and 6pm.

Meals are prepared fresh each day. Our menu has been analysed for its nutritional content by the St Vincent’s Food Service Dietician, and has been designed according to the ‘Nutrition Standards for Menu Items in Victorian Hospitals and Residential Aged Care Facilities’ as published by the Department of Human Services Victoria.

For your convenience, tea and coffee making facilities are available in every Care Centre. A staff member will tell you where the kitchen is located.

St Vincent’s cannot accept responsibility for food that is prepared outside the hospital and is brought in for patients by relatives and other visitors.

Patients, relatives and visitors are welcome to use storage and reheating facilities in the kitchens on each floor. Perishable food brought into the hospital must be consumed immediately or it will be discarded. For more information, please ask for a copy of the brochure titled ‘Can I bring food for patients?’. 
Medical records

Your medical record remains the property of the hospital. However, in accordance with Freedom of Information legislation, you can have access to your record by asking the medical staff who are looking after you. They will organise a time to sit down and read through the information with you.

Alternatively, you can ask for assistance from the Patient Representative Officer on (03) 9288 3108.

Copies of the information contained in your medical record can be obtained by applying through the Freedom of Information Officer who is located in Health Information Services. An administration and copying fee is charged. You can apply by ringing (03) 9288 2775 and asking for the Freedom of Information Officer.

Mobile phones

You may use your mobile phone within the hospital (except within the Intensive Care Unit). Please respect your fellow patients, keep calls short and try to speak quietly.

To prevent interference with medical equipment please keep mobile phones switched off while you are inside the Intensive Care Unit.

Newspapers and magazines

A newspaper trolley visits Care Centres each day. Newspapers and a range of magazines are available. There is also a newsagency on site (see map on page 20).
Pastoral Care

The St Vincent’s Pastoral Care team provides emotional and spiritual support to patients and their families.

While at St Vincent’s you are invited to use our Pastoral Care service by calling (03) 9288 3716 or by asking a staff member to arrange a visit. The Pastoral Care Team is available Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm.

Chaplains from many denominations visit the hospital regularly. Sacramental Ministry is available on request.

‘Chaplains from many denominations visit the hospital regularly. Sacramental Ministry is available on request.’
Religious services and chapel

The St Vincent’s Chapel, located in the Healy Wing, provides a quiet place for reflection for all. Catholic services are held every day either in the St Vincent’s Chapel or at St Vincent’s & Mercy Private Hospital. Please ask a pastoral care staff member for details.

A Quiet Room is located on the ground floor of the hospital, just off the main foyer. Everyone is welcome to use this facility.

Research at St Vincent’s

The employees at St Vincent’s are often involved in research studies which evaluate new treatments, or look at ways to improve existing treatments and care.

During your stay you may be approached to join a research study. If so, a full explanation will be given to you so you can decide whether or not you wish to participate. Your support for research at St Vincent’s is appreciated.

Students

St Vincent’s is a university teaching hospital for clinical students training in medicine and other healthcare disciplines. We appreciate your cooperation in allowing students to see you as part of their clinical training program. You are, of course, entitled to decline to participate. Your support of our hospital trainees is greatly appreciated.
A–Z of useful information and services (cont.)

Telephones and television

St Vincent’s telephone and television system, VinTel, operates on a pre-paid system. You can choose to have a direct dial-in telephone number so that your family and friends can ring you directly. You may also choose to access free-to-air TV stations and a selection of pay TV stations. Information to help you set up your telephone and television account is available when you are admitted to the hospital. St Vincent’s encourages your family or visitors to help you with this.
Volunteers

St Vincent’s has a number of volunteers who support staff, patients and family members. Volunteers undertake a range of tasks throughout the hospital and wear an identification badge and St Vincent’s volunteers’ vest.

‘Angels’ are specially trained volunteers who provide companionship to patients identified as being at risk of falling. Angels assist with supervision by sitting with patients and reducing anxiety through distraction and diversion. ‘Angels’ have also been trained by Speech Pathology and are able to assist identified patients with their meals.

Your say

As part of St Vincent’s quality improvement process you may be contacted by phone or mail when you return home. Satisfaction surveys help us to find out what we are doing well and how we can improve.
Mission

Our health service is based on and driven by our quest for:

Compassion
Justice
Integrity
Excellence

St Vincent’s

41 Victoria Parade Fitzroy VIC 3065
PO Box 2900 Fitzroy VIC 3065
Tel: (03) 9288 2211
www.svhm.org.au

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