

Discover your *edge*

Thursday, 4 June 2015

Doggone it: pet ownership in Australia

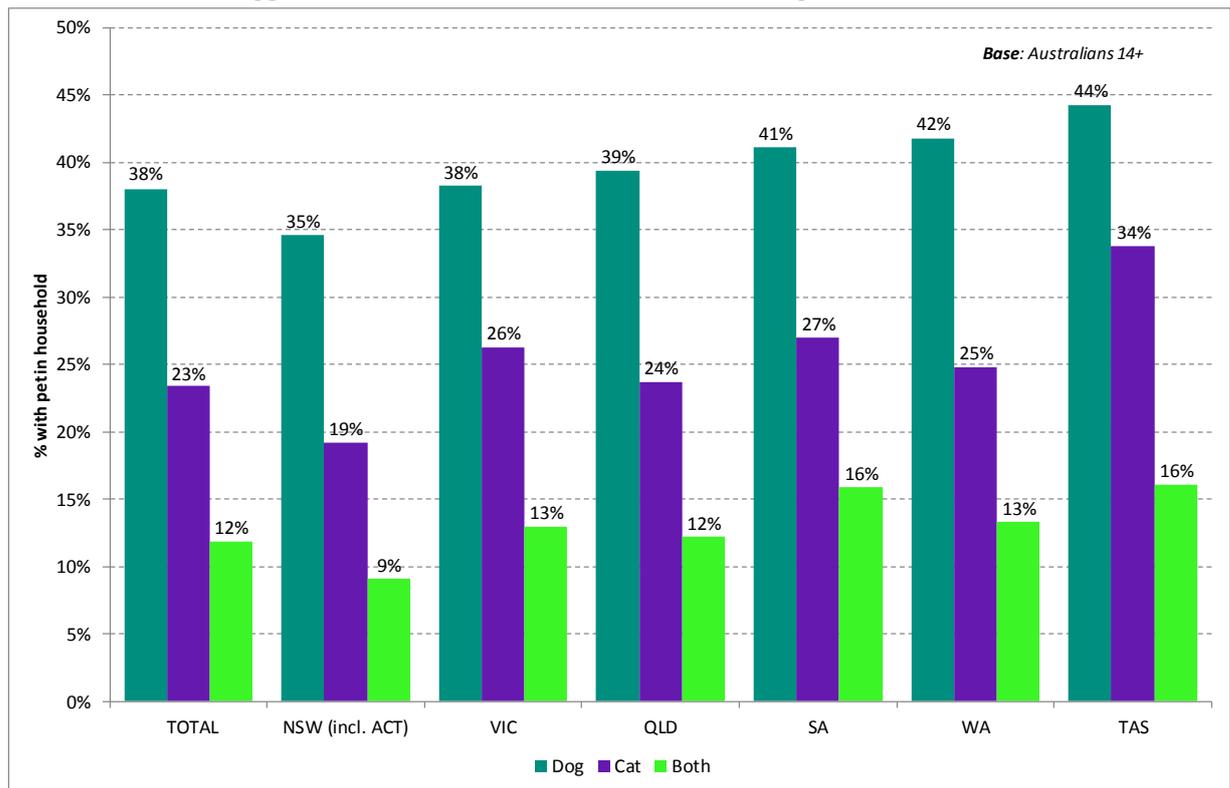
If there was ever any doubt about how much Australians love their four-legged friends, this statistic should set it straight: a higher proportion of us live in households with a dog and/or cat than with a child. That's right: 50% of Aussies live in a household with at least one cat or/and dog in it, whereas 35% share their household with at least one child aged under 16.

Dogs are more popular than cats: 38% of the population lives in a household with a canine companion, compared with 23% who cohabit with a feline friend. Folks in households with at least one cat and one dog account for 12% of the population.

Tasmania is the state with the highest incidence of pet-ownership, with 44% of its residents living with at least one dog, 34% living with at least one cat, and 16% living with at least one of each. New South Wales (including ACT) lags behind the rest of the country for cats (19%), dogs (35%) and both (9%).

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

State of the four-legged nation: where Australia's cats and dogs live



Source: Roy Morgan Single Source (Australia), January–December 2014 (n=15,944).

The cost of pet care

While 20% Australian dog-owners and 14% of cat owners pay for pet-care services in an average four weeks, this can vary noticeably between states (particularly when it comes to

dogs). For example, while 22% of dog-owners in Queensland pay for pet-care services in an average four weeks, only 16% of Tasmanian dog-owners do the same.

Although NSW has the lowest rate of cat ownership in Australia, the residents who do own cats (16%) are slightly more likely than those in other states (all 14%) to shell out for pet-care services.

But the cost of caring for our furry family members doesn't stop there. On top of pet-care services and food (of course), 11% respectively of dog- and cat-owners buy pet supplies* in any given four weeks. The average amount spent in this period is \$90 for dogs and \$87 for cats, but this too appears to depend on state of residence.

Paying an average of \$118 for dogs and \$131 for cats in an average four weeks, South Aussie pet owners pay the most for pet supplies. In contrast, Tasmanian pet owners pay an average of \$70 for dogs and \$56 for cats, the lowest in the country.

Norman Morris, Industry Communications Director, Roy Morgan Research, says:

“Ownership of cats and dogs has remained relatively stable in Australia over the last five years, with dogs the perennial favourite. Although the affection and companionship they give us is priceless, our pets do come at a cost: not only is there food to buy, but other pet supplies such as kitty litter, toys, food bowls, collars, leads and so on; as well as pet services such as veterinary treatment, dog-walking, pet-grooming and so on.

“Considering how high maintenance dogs are compared with their more independent feline counterparts, it is not surprising to learn that dog-owners are more likely than cat-owners to pay for pet-care services in any given four-week period. In general, dog owners also pay more than cat owners for pet supplies.

“Intriguingly, Tasmanians are more likely to live in households with dogs and/or cats, yet pay less for pet supplies than pet owners in any other state.

“Pet-care service providers and pet supply brands need to understand not only how dog- and cat-owners differ, but how the market for their products varies around the country.”

* NB: Pet supplies do not include food

For comments or more information about Roy Morgan Research's data on pet owners around Australia, please contact:

Vaishali Nagaratnam

Office: +61 (3) 9224 5309

Vaishali.Nagaratnam@roymorgan.com

Related research findings

View our range of [pet food profiles](#), including [Cat Food Buyers](#) and [Dog Food Buyers](#).

Compiled with data from Roy Morgan's Single Source survey (the largest of its kind in the world, with 50,000 respondents p.a), these ready-made profiles provide a broad understanding of the target audience, in terms of demographics, attitudes, activities and media usage in Australia.

About Roy Morgan Research

Roy Morgan Research is the largest independent Australian research company, with offices in each state of Australia, as well as in Indonesia, the United States and the United Kingdom. A full service research organisation specialising in omnibus and syndicated data, Roy Morgan Research has over 70 years' experience in collecting objective, independent information on consumers.

Margin of Error

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. Margin of error gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the actual estimate. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

Sample Size	Percentage Estimate			
	40%-60%	25% or 75%	10% or 90%	5% or 95%
5,000	±1.4	±1.2	±0.8	±0.6
7,500	±1.1	±1.0	±0.7	±0.5
10,000	±1.0	±0.9	±0.6	±0.4
20,000	±0.7	±0.6	±0.4	±0.3
50,000	±0.4	±0.4	±0.3	±0.2