

Discover your edge

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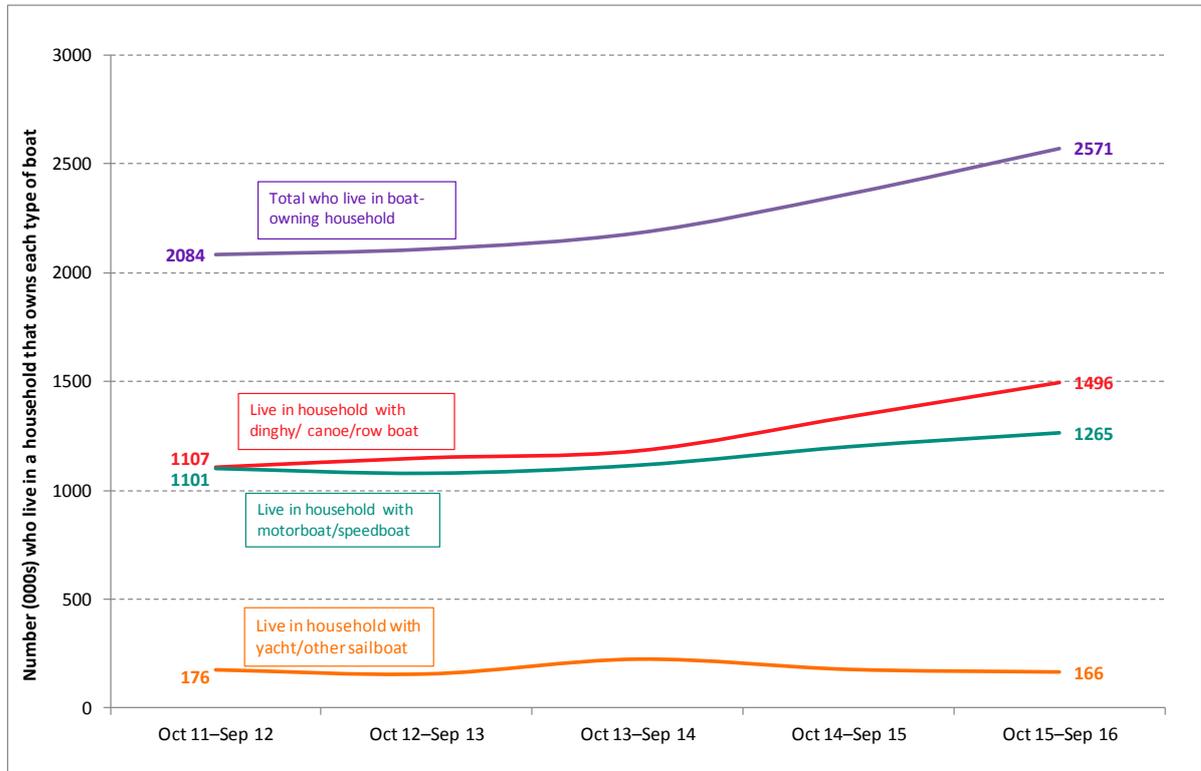
High tide: boat ownership on the rise in Australia

With shark sightings a daily occurrence at beaches around the country lately, is swimming in the ocean such a good idea? Perhaps, rather than venturing in to the water, a safer option might be to stay on its surface? Certainly, the latest findings from Roy Morgan Research reveal that boat ownership in Australia has risen by nearly half a million people since 2012.

In 2012, almost 2.1 million Australians aged 14+ (11.1% of the population) reported living in a household with some kind of boat: either a motor/speed boat, a dinghy/canoe/rowboat or a yacht/sailboat. Fast forward to 2016, and that figure is close to 2.6 million (13.0%).

Ownership of dinghy/canoe/row boats has seen the most substantial growth, with 1.5 million people (7.6%) now living in a household that has one (up from 1.1 million/5.9% in 2012). Almost 1.3 million people (6.4%) live in a household with a motor/speed boat (up from 1.1 million/5.9%) in 2012, and 166,000 people (0.8%) have a yacht or other sailboat in their household—down from 176,000.

Boat ownership in Australia



Source: Roy Morgan Single Source (Aust), October 2011-September 2016, n=86,871. Base: Australians 14+

Of course, there is substantial crossover. Some 270,000 Aussies live in households where there is both a motor/speed boat and a dinghy/canoe/row boat; while 67,000 yacht/sail-boat owners also have a dinghy/canoe/row boat in their household.

Though it's easy to imagine boat owners being wealthier members of the population, cruising tropical climes on superyachts a la James Packer, Roy Morgan data shows that this is not the case. In fact, middle-class Australians belonging to socio-economic quintile* C (15.5%) are more likely than those from the wealthy AB quintile (13.5%) to live in households with a boat.

Not only do people belonging to the C quintile account for a greater proportion (23.7%) of Australia's total dinghy/canoe/row-boat owners than those belonging to the AB quintile (22.6%), but this pattern is also evident among motor/speed-boat owners (24.3% of whom are from the C quintile vs 17.9% from the AB quintile) and yacht/sail-boat owners (31.3% from quintile C vs 26.1% from AB).

However, towards the lower end of the socio-economic spectrum (E and FG quintiles), boat ownership becomes far less widespread.

** NB: A note on socio-economic quintiles: Roy Morgan Single Source collects thousands of data points from each survey respondent, allowing us to segment the Australian population in many ways. Socio-economic quintiles segment the population based on education, income and occupation, with AB being the top-scoring quintile and FG being the lowest.*

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

"Australia's abundant coastline and waterways mean that aquatic activities are always going to be popular, and boating is no exception. Given that the Western Australian coast is the longest of all the states, it's no surprise that 18.9% of WA residents live in a household with at least one boat: the highest rate in the country. Queensland residents are also well above average for boat ownership (15.6%), followed by Tasmanians (14.8%)."

"While it may seem initially surprising that boat ownership is more widespread in middle-class than wealthy households, it makes sense when we consider that dinghies, row boats and canoes comprise the most popular category of boat– all relatively affordable. Mind you, as mentioned above, yacht ownership is also elevated among the C quintile, having surpassed the AB quintile in the last couple of years."

"Rising boat ownership represents a myriad of opportunities for retailers, and not simply for those that sell boats. For example, in any given three-month period, Aussie boat owners are almost three times as likely as the national average to go fishing, over three times as likely to go water-skiing, and markedly more likely to partake in other aquatic pursuits such as scuba diving and snorkelling, water-skiing and surfing."

"Retailers of equipment or sportswear associated with any of these activities would benefit from tailoring their marketing campaigns to appeal to this audience. With its powerful demographic and psychographic profiling capabilities, Roy Morgan's extensive consumer data can help them hit the bull's eye first time by ensuring they have a thorough understanding of this particular market."

For comments or more information about Roy Morgan Research's data on recreational household items and leisure activities, please contact:

Roy Morgan Research -- Enquiries

Office: +61 (3) 9224 5309

askroymorgan.@roymorgan.com

Related research findings

View our profiles of [People in a household that owns a motor boat/speed boat](#), [People in a Household that owns a yacht/other sailboat](#), and [People in a household that owns a row boat/dinghy/canoe](#).

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