



2024 Car Care & Costs Report

Unpacking intergenerational
behaviours of Aussie car owners

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Exploring the great generational debate: car care

Generational differences are always a source of much discussion in Australia – especially when it comes to topics like housing, income and levels of education. These are some of the main ways we differentiate between changes in societal norms.¹

As of 2021, Millennials (21.5%) and Boomers (21.5%) made up the largest generational cohorts in Australia, followed by Gen X (19.3%) and Gen Z (18.2%).¹ However, some generations tend to be more vocal than others and when it comes to attitudes and behaviours on the road, including car care, there are some surprising discrepancies.

During May 2024, we surveyed more than 2,000 Australians aged 18+ across the country. In doing so, we've uncovered differences in car spending, maintenance habits and attitudes towards insurance coverage and providers, to provide an insight into what matters most to each of the various generations.

Generation breakdown (as of 2024)		
	Birth year	Age (in years)
Pre-Boomers/Boomers	1901-1966	58+
Gen X	1967-1981	42-57
Millennials	1982-1996	28-42
Gen Z	1997-2011	13-27

¹ Statista, *Distribution of Australian population in Australia as of 2021, by generation*



Understanding intergenerational behaviours of Australian drivers

The following personas outline the differences in generations when it comes to driving behaviour, vehicle ownership, spending habits and insurance attitudes.

Generation profiling

Pre-Boomers/Boomers

The research uncovered Pre-Boomers/Boomers are typically more conservative and price-conscious than other generations. Their money is predominantly put towards household items and food such as groceries, with 49% ranking this as the most important expense in their weekly budget.

While more than half of Aussie Pre-Boomers/Boomers say they've spent more on car expenses in the past 12 months, their spending behaviour has not changed due to cost-of-living pressures. This cohort is also more likely to have comprehensive car insurance (89% in fact). Loyalty is a priority for the cohort, with 76% saying they're satisfied with their current insurance provider.

When it comes to car servicing, 56% of Pre-Boomers/Boomers are more likely to only service their car once per year, with 60% stating they don't drive frequently enough to warrant getting their car serviced more frequently.

They're also very vigilant with their car maintenance; only 20% of this cohort are currently putting off some sort of maintenance task – the main ones being oil change (35%), tyre replacement (34%) and car cleaning (36%). Cost is a big factor for the majority of Pre-Boomers/Boomers when it comes to car maintenance and care, with 80% stating this is the reason why they're putting off some sort of maintenance task.



Generation profiling

Gen X

Gen X tend to be very strict with their spending and make decisions about their car based on the financial impact.

The research indicates Gen X prioritise their monthly income spend on mortgage and household utilities, with 75% saying this is the most important factor in their budget, followed by 19% ranking groceries as the most important factor.

Like the Pre-Boomers/Boomers cohort, Gen X are well covered when it comes to insurance, with nearly 78% of Gen X Aussies having comprehensive car insurance stating that 'price, value and range of coverage' are the most important factors when considering a provider.

Additionally, 88% have not changed their insurance coverage in the past 12 months.

More than half of Gen X Aussies (51%) are most likely to service their car annually and unlike Pre-Boomers/Boomers, their main reason for not servicing more frequently is strongly cost-related, with 70% stating it's too expensive.

Similarly, while Gen X are vigilant with their car maintenance, only 36% are putting off some sort of car upkeep task – the main reason for doing so is, again, cost-related (84%).



Generation profiling



Millennials

One of the biggest cohorts in Australia, Millennials are also one of the main funders of the economy,² and are expected to make up 75% of the Australian workforce by 2025.³

According to the research, Millennials have a high interest in owning brand new cars (64%). Over half of these Aussies drive every day and are much more willing to put money towards regular car servicing – in fact, 40% service their car every six months. Despite a big emphasis on car maintenance, compared to other generations, this cohort has the highest number of Aussies putting off some sort of car maintenance task (47%), primarily due to cost (71%).

Millennials have also changed their spending behaviour because of cost-of-living pressures. In fact, Millennials have stated that compared to a year

ago, 56% have been forced to spend more money on groceries due to increased costs, and 47% have spent more on car expenses. Luxuries such as entertainment (dining out, travel, shopping etc.) have been curbed compared to a year ago, with 63% of the generation being forced to cut spending in these areas due to cost-of-living pressures.

When it comes to insurance behaviour, Millennials tend to favour comprehensive car insurance (73%) with 23% opting to increase insurance cover in the past 12 months due to the need for more specific benefits in their cover (41%) or to add a family member to their policy (27%). Overall, this cohort is one of the most satisfied generations alongside Pre-Boomers/Boomers with their car insurance provider (64%).

² *Millennials overtake Boomers to be Australia's largest generation, 2022*

³ *Australian Careers Service, Millennials in the workplace, 2019*

Generation profiling

Gen Z

Gen Z – the generation almost completely guided by the internet and social media platforms – can be considered the most ‘vocal generation’ and have strong opinions when it comes to culture, spending and even car care.

A generation expected to be the most impacted by cost-of-living pressures, the research revealed surprising behaviours when it comes to spending and car ownership – in fact, more than half (54%) of this cohort purchased their car brand new.

This generation is also much more likely to invest in their cars and are very diligent when it comes to car care. A staggering 48% say they service their car every six months and only 43% are putting off a car service, predominantly due to cost (59%) and time (20%). Concerningly, the maintenance tasks Gen Zs tend to put off include tyre replacement (31%),

replacing headlights (22%) and fixing a cracked windshield (20%).

Nonetheless, when it comes to insurance, more than half of these young Aussies are likely to choose comprehensive car insurance (59%), and interestingly say they value roadside assistance and ease of claiming (19%) over price.

When it comes to other spending behaviour and budgeting in an average month, like other generations, mortgage, rent and home utilities are top priorities (49%). Surprisingly, Gen Zs also put a high emphasis on savings and investments, with respondents on average putting 16% of their monthly income towards this – double compared to other generations. This can be attributed to the fact that many Gen Z Aussies are likely still living at home, don’t have children to care for and have disposable income to put towards savings and investments.



How generations compare: the data

Vehicle ownership

Over half of Australian households (53%) have at least one registered car, with petrol being the most popular choice, especially amongst Pre-Boomers/Boomers (84%). In most cases, petrol cars can be more cost-effective and cheaper to service than diesels,⁴ however, only 48% of Aussies say they drive every day, with Gen Z and Millennials (58%) leading the way as the most frequent drivers, most likely for work.

Based on the data, it's clear Aussies are quick to switch or buy new cars, with only 25% of the population holding onto their car for longer than five years, particularly Pre-Boomers/Boomers (25%).

⁴ *DRIVE, Dear Drive... Am I better off buying a petrol or diesel car?, 2022*

Vehicle ownership

How many registered cars do you currently have in the household?

	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Pre-Boomers/Boomers	NET
1	44%	52%	51%	60%	53%
2	32%	40%	38%	32%	36%
3	17%	7%	8%	6%	8%
4	4%	1%	2%	1%	2%
5	3%	0%	1%	0%	1%

Thinking of the car you mainly drive, what fuel type does it run on?

	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Pre-Boomers/Boomers	NET
Petrol	75%	81%	82%	84%	81%
Diesel	14%	11%	14%	13%	13%
Hybrid (petrol and electric)	8%	7%	3%	3%	5%
Full electric	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Other	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Vehicle ownership cont.

Thinking of the car you mainly drive, how long have you had this car?

	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Pre-Boomers/Boomers	NET
Less than 1 year	11%	9%	9%	7%	9%
Between 1-2 years	36%	24%	15%	8%	18%
Between 2-5 years	40%	38%	33%	28%	34%
Between 5-10 years	12%	21%	28%	31%	25%
Longer than 10 years	1%	7%	15%	26%	14%

How often do you drive?

	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Pre-Boomers/Boomers	NET
Every day	58%	58%	53%	31%	48%
Multiple times a week	36%	39%	37%	58%	44%
Once a week	5%	2%	7%	8%	6%
Once a fortnight	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Once a month	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%
Less than once a month	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%

How generations compare: the data

Spending habits

Monthly spending habits are consistent across generations. All cohorts, except for Pre-Boomers/Boomers, say they prioritise mortgage, rent and home utilities when splitting income with other expenses.

Gen Z (15%) and Millennials (13%) tend to rank savings and investments higher than the other generations as they prepare for their futures, while car expenses (16%) and groceries (29%) are favoured more by Pre-Boomers/Boomers.

Spending habits

In an average month, how do you split your income amongst the categories below?

	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Pre-Boomers/Boomers
Mortgage/rent/home utilities	27%	33%	33%	21%
Groceries	18%	19%	22%	29%
Savings/investments	15%	13%	11%	11%
Entertainment (i.e. dining out, travel, streaming services, hobbies)	11%	9%	8%	8%
Retail (i.e. clothing, shoes)	9%	8%	6%	6%
Car expenses (i.e. insurance, fuel, car payments)	15%	12%	12%	16%
Other	5%	6%	8%	9%

Based on each generation's current budget, the below is ranked as the top priority.

	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Pre-Boomers/Boomers
Mortgage/rent/home utilities	49%	67%	75%	40%
Groceries	13%	12%	19%	49%
Savings/investments	16%	9%	3%	5%
Entertainment (i.e. dining out, travel, streaming services, hobbies)	6%	3%	1%	1%
Retail (i.e. clothing, shoes)	5%	2%	0%	0%
Car expenses (i.e. insurance, fuel, car payments)	11%	6%	2%	5%

How generations compare: the data

Car care and maintenance behaviours

While most manufacturers recommend booking in a service every six months or 10,000km (whichever comes first),⁵ only 38% of Aussies do so. Gen Z Aussies are the most diligent with this (48%), followed by Millennials (40%) since these two generations are the most frequent drivers. According to 53% of Aussies, cost is the biggest barrier for car servicing, followed by 36% who state they don't drive frequently enough to require regular servicing.

The data also shows Aussies are vigilant with their car maintenance, with only 35% putting off some sort of maintenance task, largely due to cost given current cost-of-living pressures, according to 73% of respondents. Gen Z (43%) and Millennials (47%) are the most likely to put off maintenance compared to 20% of Pre-Boomers/Boomers.

⁵ Canstar, *How often should you service your car?, 2024*

Car care and maintenance behaviours

How regularly do you service your car?					
	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Pre-Boomers/Boomers	NET
More than once every 6 months	11%	11%	5%	5%	8%
Once every 6 months	48%	40%	37%	33%	38%
Once a year	32%	43%	51%	56%	47%
Once every 2 years	7%	5%	4%	4%	5%
Once every 2-3 years	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Once every 4-5 years	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%
Less than once every 5 years	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%

Car care and maintenance behaviours cont.

Why do you not service your car more often?					
	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Pre-Boomers/Boomers	NET
I don't believe it needs to be serviced more frequently	24%	20%	6%	26%	19%
It's too expensive to service more frequently	52%	49%	70%	42%	53%
I'm too lazy to have it serviced more frequently	35%	20%	3%	0%	13%
I don't drive enough to need more frequent servicing	17%	29%	33%	60%	36%
Other	0%	6%	3%	10%	5%

Are you currently putting off some sort of car maintenance?					
	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Pre-Boomers/Boomers	NET
Yes	43%	47%	36%	20%	35%
No	57%	53%	64%	80%	65%

Car care and maintenance behaviours cont.

Which of the following maintenance tasks are you currently putting off?					
	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Pre-Boomers/Boomers	NET
Oil change	26%	29%	36%	35%	31%
Tyre replacement	31%	36%	34%	34%	34%
'Check engine' light	18%	13%	11%	9%	13%
Cracked windshield	20%	11%	6%	8%	11%
Cracked window (not windshield)	8%	6%	8%	6%	7%
Vehicle recall	10%	10%	2%	2%	6%
Replacing headlights	22%	14%	9%	2%	12%
Car cleaning	41%	39%	30%	36%	37%
Strange engine noise	15%	13%	11%	7%	12%

Car care and maintenance behaviours cont.

Why are you putting off these car maintenance tasks?					
	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Pre-Boomers/Boomers	NET
Cost	59%	71%	84%	80%	73%
Don't have time	20%	16%	7%	8%	13%
Too lazy	15%	8%	3%	4%	8%
Waiting for my next car service	29%	25%	14%	18%	22%
This is not a priority to me	17%	11%	15%	15%	14%
Does not affect the drivability of my car	24%	18%	13%	26%	20%

How generations compare: the data

Insurance attitudes

The data reveals Australians have a general lack of knowledge of Compulsory Third Party (CTP) insurance, with only 33% stating they are covered, when in fact to register a car in Australia, CTP insurance is compulsory to obtain.⁶ While CTP requirements and processes differ in each state and territory, all Aussies who own a registered vehicle should be covered with CTP.

77% of Aussies have comprehensive car insurance cover, primarily dominated by Pre-Boomers/Boomers (almost 90%), followed by Millennials (73%) and Gen Z (59%).

Car insurance cover has stayed the same for most Aussies in the past 12 months (78%), however 13% have increased their cover as they needed to access more specific benefits (39%) or to add more family members to their cover (26%). This was particularly the case for Gen Z and Millennials. For the small number of Aussies who decreased their car insurance cover in the past 12 months (8%), 55% of these say it was to cut down on costs, with almost 70% of Pre-Boomers/Boomers leading this decision.

Overall, 68% of Aussies are satisfied with their current car insurance provider, with 46% stating that they would not change their provider in the next 12 months, predominantly lead by Pre-Boomers/Boomers (61%). When choosing an insurance provider, Aussies favour price (45%) and value (20%), with 48% of Millennials and Gen X leading the way in choosing providers based on price point.

⁶ Youi Insurance, *What Is CTP Insurance and Do You Actually Need It? 2023*

Insurance attitudes

Which of the below types of car insurance cover do you currently have?					
	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Pre-Boomers/Boomers	NET
Compulsory Third Party	34%	35%	30%	32%	33%
Third party property damage	24%	16%	10%	5%	12%
Third party fire and theft	17%	13%	8%	5%	10%
Comprehensive	59%	73%	78%	89%	77%
I don't know	6%	1%	1%	0%	2%
I don't have insurance	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%

Have you changed your level of car insurance cover in the last 12 months?					
	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Pre-Boomers/Boomers	NET
Yes, I have increased my level of cover	28%	23%	6%	4%	13%
Yes, I have decreased my level of cover	16%	7%	7%	7%	8%
No, I have not made any changes to my level of cover	56%	70%	88%	90%	78%

Insurance attitudes cont.

What made you increase your level of car insurance cover?					
	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Pre-Boomers/Boomers	NET
I needed more specific benefits in my cover	39%	41%	33%	38%	39%
I needed to add more family members onto the insurance policy	27%	27%	18%	19%	26%
I recently purchased a more expensive car	30%	23%	30%	38%	28%
I modified or upgraded parts of my car	29%	18%	15%	4%	20%
I started using my car for work purposes	33%	42%	22%	4%	33%
I've moved further away from my work/study	23%	19%	11%	0%	18%

Insurance attitudes cont.

What made you decrease your level of car insurance cover?					
	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Pre-Boomers/Boomers	NET
I needed to cut down on expenses	50%	56%	45%	67%	55%
Current cover not worth the cost	17%	28%	29%	40%	28%
Premiums were too high	31%	41%	45%	64%	45%
I downgraded cars	9%	15%	6%	2%	8%
I needed to remove family members from the insurance policy	21%	15%	0%	4%	11%
I moved closer to my work/study	17%	13%	16%	4%	12%
I no longer drive as frequently	26%	5%	10%	36%	21%
I've started using public transport instead of driving	19%	5%	16%	9%	12%

Insurance attitudes cont.

How satisfied are you with your current car insurance provider?					
	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Pre-Boomers/Boomers	NET
Extremely dissatisfied	4%	2%	1%	1%	2%
Dissatisfied	5%	2%	3%	2%	3%
Neutral	28%	31%	31%	21%	27%
Satisfied	46%	48%	47%	53%	49%
Extremely satisfied	18%	16%	17%	23%	19%
TOTAL DISSATISFIED	9%	4%	4%	3%	5%
TOTAL SATISFIED	64%	64%	64%	76%	68%

Insurance attitudes cont.

How likely are you to change car insurance providers in the next 12 months?					
	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Pre-Boomers/Boomers	NET
Extremely likely	12%	9%	5%	2%	6%
Likely	27%	25%	14%	7%	17%
Neither likely nor unlikely	28%	32%	33%	30%	31%
Unlikely	22%	21%	25%	34%	27%
Extremely unlikely	11%	13%	22%	27%	20%
TOTAL LIKELY	39%	34%	19%	9%	23%
TOTAL UNLIKELY	33%	34%	47%	61%	47%

Insurance attitudes cont.

What are the top 3 things currently most important to you when choosing a car insurance provider?
The below options were ranked highest in priority.

	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Pre-Boomers/Boomers	NET
Price	37%	48%	48%	45%	45%
Value	19%	15%	23%	21%	20%
Customer service	7%	8%	4%	6%	6%
Range of benefits and cover	8%	11%	12%	19%	13%
Ease of claims	9%	7%	6%	5%	6%
Roadside assistance	10%	6%	5%	4%	6%
App/online useability	7%	3%	1%	0%	2%
Optional extras to choose from	3%	3%	1%	0%	2%

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