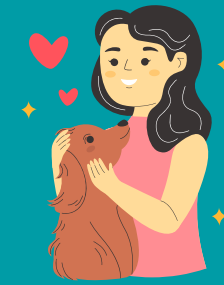


PET CENSUS 2023

Findings from the pet census will be used to inform education, policy, and program initiatives regarding pet ownership across Victoria.



98% of pet owners said pets had a positive impact on their lives

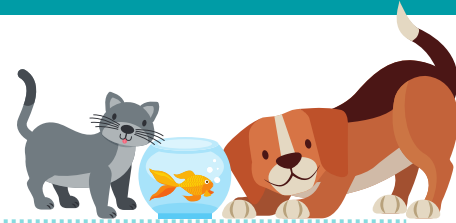


58%

of Victorian adults own a pet

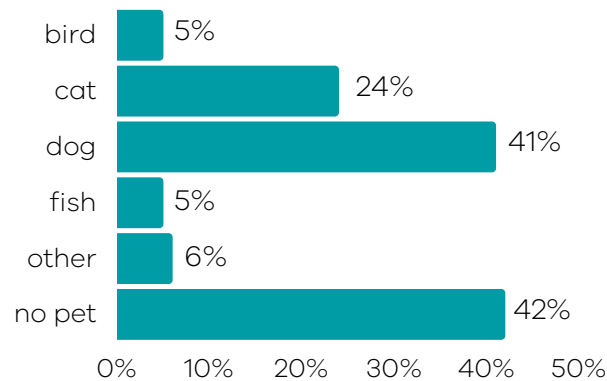
1.4 million

approximate no. of Victorian households with a pet



Which pet?

Percentage of Victorian adults by pet type.



42 percent had just one type of pet, 12 percent had two types and 4 percent had three or more types

Fish were the most likely pet to not have a name (66%)



Rates of pet ownership were highest among people who:

- are under 55 years old
- live in a house
- are in non-metropolitan Victoria
- have children under 18 years old
- have a household income of over \$120,000 per annum
- speak English at home.



Source

Breeders were the most common source of acquisition among dog owners (51%), but less common for other pet types.

Fewer dogs were obtained from a rehoming organisation (17%) or from an animal shelter (6%).

The main reason dog owners chose to go to a breeder was because they wanted a specific breed (62%).

Cat owners were more likely to get their cats from a rehoming organisation (28%) or animal shelter (22%).

The main reason cat owners chose cats from a rehoming organisation or shelter was to help save the animal.

Around half (53%) of pet owners obtained their most recent pet in the past three years.

The distribution of results suggests that pet acquisition increased over the COVID-19 pandemic, with elevated numbers from 2020 to 2022.

The most common reason cited by pet owners for getting a pet was to provide companionship (64%).

Cat containment

Most cat owners (88%) kept their cats contained to their property:

- for their cat's own safety (81%)
- to avoid cat straying or getting lost (63%)
- to avoid damage/nuisance to native wildlife (58%).

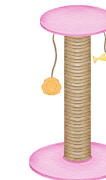
Victorians spent \$6.6 billion on their pets in the year leading up to the survey

\$1.8 billion, Veterinary services & medicines

\$449 million Pet insurance



\$382 million Enrichment



\$299 million Grooming



\$610 million All other pet services

\$3.1 billion, Pet food



\$6.6 billion

Participants

The Pet Census was conducted online from 3 July to 30 July 2023. It comprised:

- a panel survey which was representative of the Victorian general community
- an open survey available to any Victorian aged 18+.

The panel survey received 5,069 responses, and the open link survey received 32,391 responses.

Around one in six respondents (16%) had surrendered or rehomed a pet at some time in their lives. Among those, majority (61%) said they had surrendered a dog, while more than one third (36%) had surrendered a cat. The most common reason for surrendering pets was due to aggressive or reactive behaviours (23%).

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Disclaimer

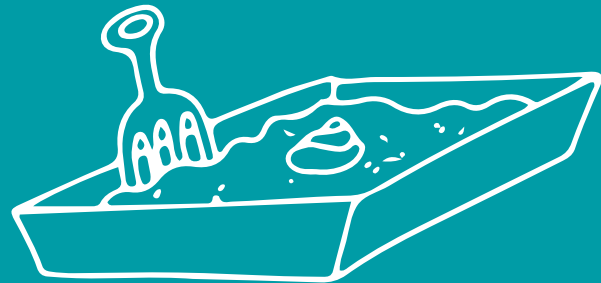
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ACCESSIBILITY

To receive this document in an alternative format, phone the Customer Service Centre on 136 186, email pet.welfare@agriculture.vic.gov.au, or contact National Relay Service on 133 677.



The scoop on the Pet Census



EXERCISE

- Majority of dog owners (68%) walked their dog at least once a day.
- Most dog owners allowed their dog off leash (71%).
- Popular off leash areas were: designated off leash areas (55%), parks (36%) and beaches (31%).

SERVICES

Most popular services used in the past year by pet owners.



	Dog	Cat	Bird	Reptile/ amphibian	Small mammal	Large mammal
Veterinary	92%	78%	23%	19%	69%	65%
Grooming	53%	12%	7%	3%	19%	57%
Pet sitting	16%	13%	8%	5%	10%	9%
Boarding	17%	16%	2%	1%	10%	2%
Pet transport	2%	2%	<1%	<1%	<1%	15%
Pet insurance	29%	12%	1%	2%	2%	6%
Training	20%	-	-	-	-	-
Dog walking	5%	-	-	-	-	-

Dog obedience

Most dog owners (80%) had trained their dog(s) at some point. Among those who used dog training services (59%), the main reasons were for obedience (70%), puppy school (64%) and socialisation (56%).



Cat compliance

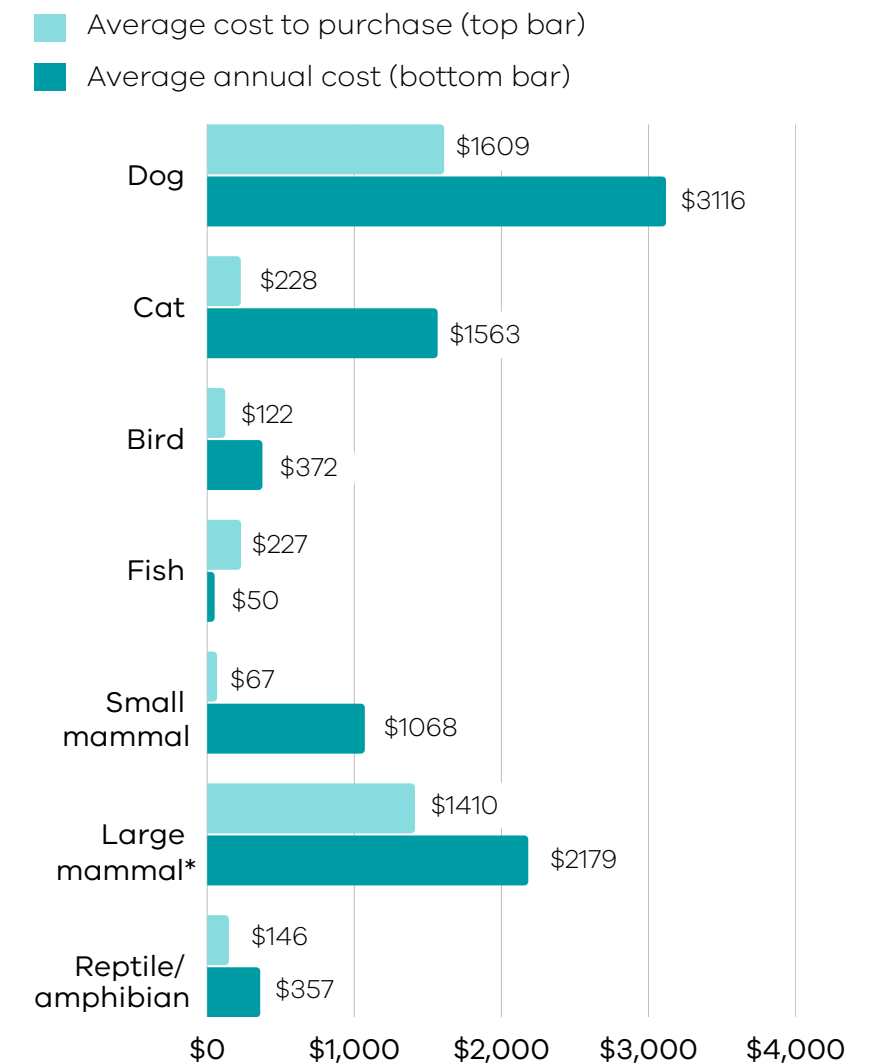
91% of cat owners rated meeting legal responsibilities as important, compared to 77% of dog owners.

10 percent of Victorian adults planned to get a pet in the next 12 months.



HOW MUCH?

The average cost to purchase a pet and ongoing annual costs varied by pet type:



*The total average cost for horses was particularly high at \$3,085 per year, while other medium or large mammals cost an average of \$648 annually.