



TRANSPORT AFFORDABILITY INDEX

MARCH QUARTER 2024



Australian
Automobile
Association

Released May 2024

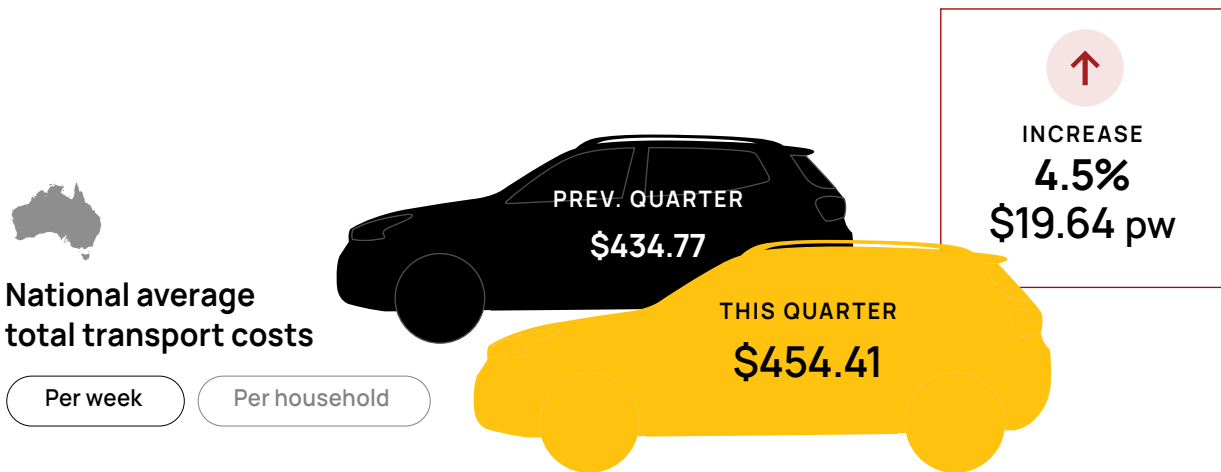




The Australian Automobile Association (AAA) Transport Affordability Index is based on modeling commissioned by the AAA and developed by SGS Economics and Planning.

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Transport cost inflation continues to hurt households



Transport costs are continuing to rise at a higher rate than general inflation, stressing household budgets across Australia.

The latest AAA Transport Affordability Index shows that in the March 2024 quarter, the typical Australian household's transport costs rose by 4.5 per cent (3.9 per cent for the typical capital city household and 5.3 per cent for the typical regional household).

This was almost four times the Consumer Price Index (CPI) rise of 1.0 per cent quarter-on-quarter.

In the March 2023 quarter, the typical capital city household spent 16.4 per cent of its income on transport, but a year later this had risen to 17.3 per cent. Over the same period, the typical regional benchmark centre household's transport expenditure rose from 15.1 per cent of its income to 16.3 per cent.

Over the 12-month period, the CPI rose 3.6 per cent, but typical Australian household transport costs rose by 10.0 per cent (9.3 per cent for the typical capital city household and 11.0 per cent for the typical regional household).

This rise in transport costs was largely driven by more new car buyers choosing bigger, more expensive vehicles being in 2023.

Transport is a significant and unavoidable expense for households and is one of the key drivers of inflation.

The continuing decline of transport affordability is a heavy burden at a time when Australians are feeling cost-of-living pressures across the board.

Governments at all levels must consider these cost pressures when formulating policy.



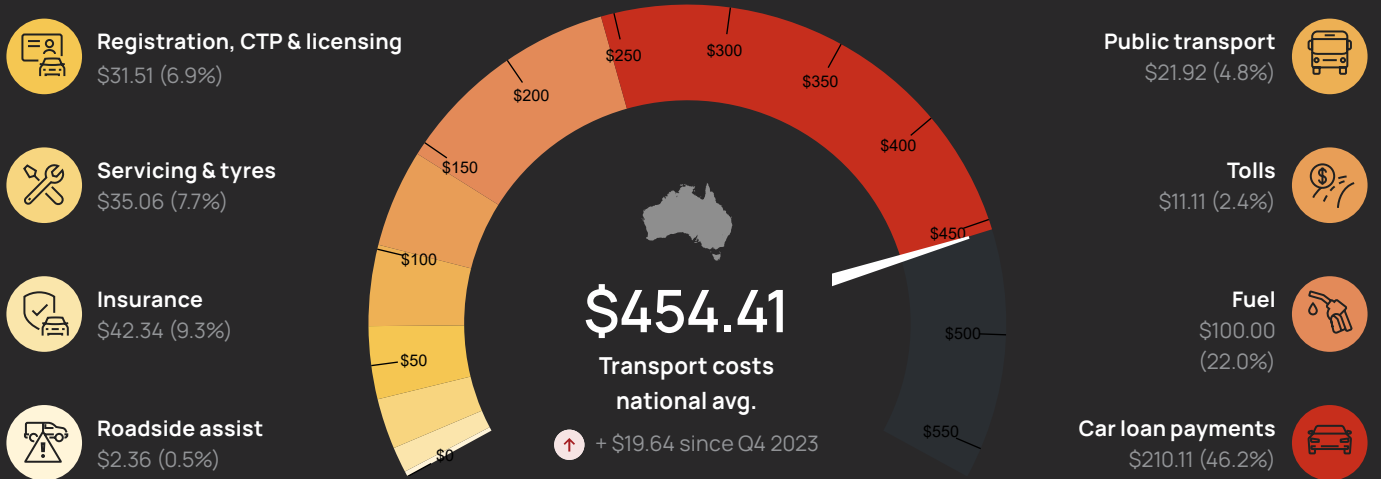
Michael Bradley
Managing Director
Australian Automobile Association

March Quarter 2024

Total transport costs

Per week

Per household



Capital cities

Regional

Total costs

| AVERAGE | HIGHEST | LOWEST |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| <p>\$487.72</p> <p>↑ +\$18.46 since Q4 2023</p> | <p>Melbourne</p> <p>↑ +\$29.02</p> | <p>Hobart</p> <p>↑ +\$18.61</p> |

Total costs

| AVERAGE | HIGHEST | LOWEST |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| <p>\$416.33</p> <p>↑ +\$20.98 since Q4 2023</p> | <p>Geelong</p> <p>↑ +\$22.59</p> | <p>Wagga Wagga</p> <p>↑ +\$23.10</p> |

Affordability (% of income)

| | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <p>17.3%</p> <p>↑ +0.3% since Q4 2023</p> | <p>Hobart</p> <p>↑ +0.4%</p> | <p>Canberra</p> <p>↑ +0.4%</p> |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|

Affordability (% of income)

| | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <p>16.3%</p> <p>↑ +0.5% since Q4 2023</p> | <p>Launceston</p> <p>↑ +0.3%</p> | <p>Wagga Wagga</p> <p>↑ +0.4%</p> |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|

Total transport costs

Per year

Per household

VIEW COSTS PER WEEK (PAGE 6) →



Capital cities

Capital average



\$25,362

↑ \$960 since Q4 2023

In the March quarter, the typical Australian capital city household's annualised cost of transport rose by \$960 to \$25,362. This was a 3.9 per cent jump – almost four times the quarter's 1.0 per cent CPI rise.

Car loan repayments increased by an annualised average of \$1,037 across the capitals. Annualised comprehensive car

insurance also rose by an average \$199 to reach \$2,418.

Brisbane and Melbourne had the biggest transport costs rises – up \$1,536 and \$1,509 per year, respectively. Sydney was the only benchmark location where transport costs fell. Its new \$60 weekly toll cap more than offset price rises in other areas.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Melbourne \$29,286 ↑ + \$1,509 since Q4 2023</p> | <p>Brisbane \$28,890 ↑ + \$1,536 since Q4 2023</p> | <p>Sydney \$27,132 ↓ - \$813 since Q4 2023</p> | <p>Canberra \$24,788 ↑ + \$1,295 since Q4 2023</p> |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| <p>Perth \$23,995 ↑ + \$1,216 since Q4 2023</p> | <p>Adelaide \$23,278 ↑ + \$1,119 since Q4 2023</p> | <p>Darwin \$23,266 ↑ + \$849 since Q4 2023</p> | <p>Hobart \$22,257 ↑ + \$968 since Q4 2023</p> |

Average taxes



Fuel excise

\$1,304

↑ + \$21 since Q4 2023

+



Registration, CTP and licensing

\$1,670

↑ + \$20 since Q4 2023

=

Household total

\$2,974

↑ + \$41 since Q4 2023

Total transport costs

Per year

Per household

VIEW COSTS PER WEEK (PAGE 7) →



Regional

Regional average











\$21,649

↑ + \$1,091 since Q4 2023

The national benchmark regional household's annualised transport costs rose \$1,091 from the previous quarter – up 5.3 per cent – to reach \$21,649. This was higher than the typical capital city household's costs rise and more than five times the 1.0 per cent CPI increase.

As in the capitals, the largest component of cost rises came from higher car loan repayments and comprehensive insurance premiums – annualised rises of \$1,032 and \$162, respectively.

Townsville and Wagga Wagga had the largest regional benchmark cost increases – respective annualised cost rises of \$1,248 and \$1,201 from the previous quarter.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <p>Geelong \$23,085</p> <p>↑ + \$1,174 since Q4 2023</p> |  <p>Alice Springs \$23,026</p> <p>↑ + \$944 since Q4 2023</p> |  <p>Bunbury \$22,788</p> <p>↑ + \$1,107 since Q4 2023</p> |  <p>Mount Gambier \$21,063</p> <p>↑ + \$1,115 since Q4 2023</p> |
| 5 | 6 | 7 |  <p>Explore the interactive data</p> <p>DATA.AAA.ASN.AU</p> |
|  <p>Launceston \$20,940</p> <p>↑ + \$846 since Q4 2023</p> |  <p>Townsville \$20,661</p> <p>↑ + \$1,248 since Q4 2023</p> |  <p>Wagga Wagga \$19,981</p> <p>↑ + \$1,201 since Q4 2023</p> | |

Average taxes



Fuel Excise

\$1,368

↑ + \$22 since Q4 2023

+



Registration, CTP and Licensing

\$1,603

↑ + \$34 since Q4 2023

=

Household total

\$2,971

↑ + \$56 since Q4 2023

Total transport costs

Per week

Per household



Capital cities

Capital average



\$487.72









↑ + \$18.46 since Q4 2023

In the March quarter, Sydney moved from having the highest capital city transport costs to being third-most expensive. Melbourne became the capital with the highest transport costs and Brisbane had the second-highest.

Hobart remained the capital with the lowest total transport costs.

Adelaide and Darwin swapped rankings – Darwin became the second-cheapest capital city overall and Adelaide the third-cheapest overall.

The typical Melbourne household spent \$135.17 more on transport each week than its Hobart counterpart.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <p>Melbourne \$563.19</p> <p>↑ + \$29.02 since Q4 2023</p> |  <p>Brisbane \$555.57</p> <p>↑ + \$29.53 since Q4 2023</p> |  <p>Sydney \$521.77</p> <p>↓ - \$15.64 since Q4 2023</p> |  <p>Canberra \$476.69</p> <p>↑ + \$24.90 since Q4 2023</p> |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
|  <p>Perth \$461.45</p> <p>↑ + \$23.39 since Q4 2023</p> |  <p>Adelaide \$447.65</p> <p>↑ + \$21.52 since Q4 2023</p> |  <p>Darwin \$447.43</p> <p>↑ + \$16.34 since Q4 2023</p> |  <p>Hobart \$428.02</p> <p>↑ + \$18.61 since Q4 2023</p> |

Total transport costs

Per week

Per household



Regional

Regional average



\$416.33









↑ + \$20.98 since Q4 2023

Typical household transport costs rose in each of the Index's benchmark regional centres. But nationally averaged regional benchmark costs were \$71.39 a week lower than average capital city household costs.

Geelong became the most expensive regional centre, overtaking Alice Springs, which became the second-most expensive. Mount Gambier and

Launceston swapped fourth and fifth place rankings as Mount Gambier became more expensive. All other rankings were unchanged.

Wagga Wagga remained the cheapest benchmark location. The typical Geelong household spent \$59.70 more on transport in a week than its Wagga Wagga counterpart.

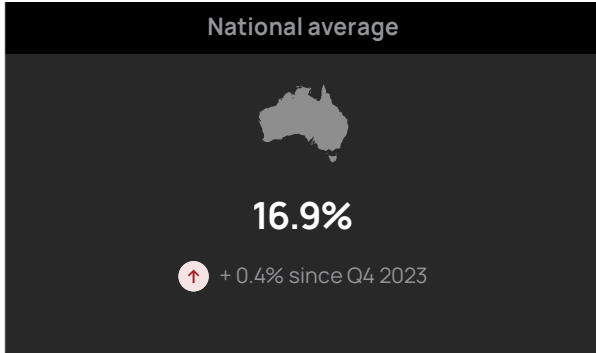
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <p>Geelong \$443.95</p> <p>↑ + \$22.59 since Q4 2023</p> |  <p>Alice Springs \$442.81</p> <p>↑ + \$18.15 since Q4 2023</p> |  <p>Bunbury \$438.23</p> <p>↑ + \$21.28 since Q4 2023</p> |  <p>Mount Gambier \$405.05</p> <p>↑ + \$21.44 since Q4 2023</p> |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | |
|  <p>Launceston \$402.70</p> <p>↑ + \$16.28 since Q4 2023</p> |  <p>Townsville \$397.32</p> <p>↑ + \$24.00 since Q4 2023</p> |  <p>Wagga Wagga \$384.25</p> <p>↑ + \$23.10 since Q4 2023</p> |  <p>Explore the interactive data</p> <p>DATA.AAA.ASN.AU</p> |

Transport affordability

Costs as a percentage of income

Per week

Per household



The costs-to-income ratio determines local purchasing power – or affordability.

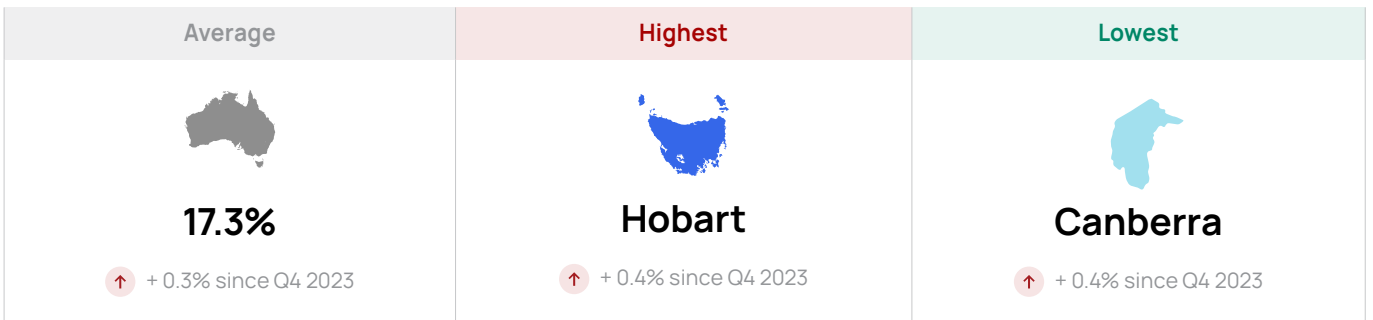
In the March quarter, Hobart had the lowest capital city total transport costs, while Melbourne had the highest. But when measuring costs as a share of income, Hobart was the capital with the least affordable transport. Its households spent 19.7 per cent of income on transport.

Canberra remained the most-affordable capital (its households spent 15.2 per cent of income on transport).



Capital cities

Sydney moved from the fourth-most affordable to second-most affordable capital city for transport (spending 15.7 per cent of income, down from 16.6 per cent of income the previous quarter).



Rank

| | | June Qtr 2023 | Sept Qtr 2023 | Dec Qtr 2023 | March Qtr 2024 |
|---|--------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|
| 1 | Hobart | 18.5% | 19.3% | 19.3% | 19.7% |
| 2 | Brisbane | 18.2% | 18.6% | 18.7% | 19.5% |
| 3 | Melbourne | 17.6% | 17.7% | 17.9% | 18.5% |
| 4 | Darwin | 16.5% | 17.1% | 17.4% | 17.7% |
| 5 | Adelaide | 15.5% | 16.1% | 16.0% | 16.3% |
| 6 | Perth | 14.6% | 15.1% | 15.1% | 15.9% |
| 7 | Sydney | 16.0% | 16.5% | 16.6% | 15.7% |
| 8 | Canberra | 14.6% | 14.6% | 14.8% | 15.2% |
| | Capital avg. | 16.4% | 16.9% | 17.0% | 17.3% |

Transport affordability

Costs as a percentage of income

Per week

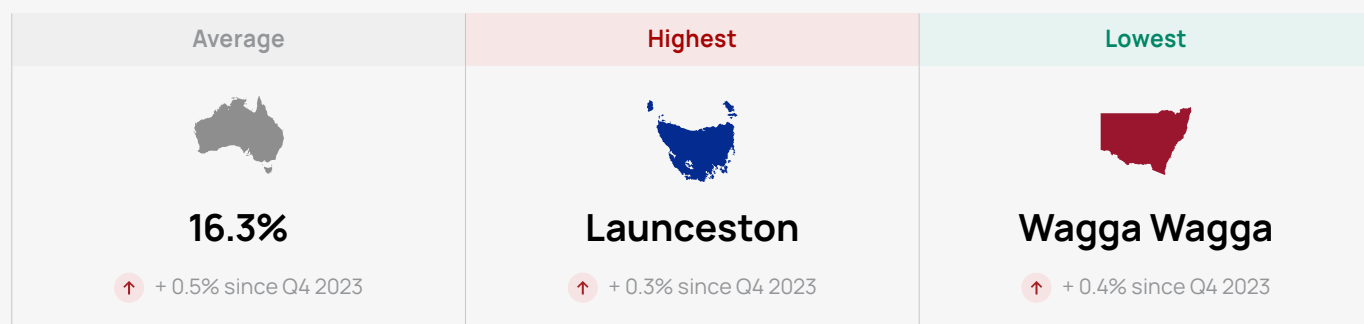
Per household

In the March quarter, transport costs consumed 16.9 per cent of the typical Australian household's income, up from 16.4 per cent in the previous quarter. Transport consumed 17.3 per cent of a typical capital city household's income (up from 17.0 per cent) and 16.3 per cent of a typical regional household's income (up from 15.8 per cent).

In this period, regional benchmark location households earned, on average, \$196 a week less than their state capital counterparts. This gap was largest in NSW and South Australia. Typical Wagga Wagga and Mount Gambier households earned, respectively, \$291 and \$290 less a week than their Sydney and Adelaide counterparts.



Regional



Rank

| | | June Qtr 2023 | Sept Qtr 2023 | Dec Qtr 2023 | March Qtr 2024 |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|
| 1 | Launceston | 19.0% | 19.9% | 20.1% | 20.4% |
| 2 | Alice Springs | 17.3% | 17.9% | 18.2% | 18.7% |
| 3 | Mount Gambier | 15.7% | 16.3% | 16.1% | 16.5% |
| 4 | Bunbury | 15.0% | 15.4% | 15.5% | 16.3% |
| 5 | Geelong | 14.4% | 14.5% | 14.7% | 15.2% |
| 6 | Townsville | 13.4% | 13.7% | 13.8% | 14.5% |
| 7 | Wagga Wagga | 11.8% | 12.1% | 12.3% | 12.7% |
| | Regional avg. | 15.2% | 15.7% | 15.8% | 16.3% |



Explore the interactive data

DATA.AAA.ASN.AU →

Transport costs by category

Per week

Per household

In the March quarter, typical household transport costs rose across Australia. This increase was driven by changes in the following cost categories:









- < **Car loan payments:** upfront costs for purchasing new vehicles increased in all jurisdictions and larger more expensive vehicles were among the top sellers in 2023.
- < **Registration, CTP and licensing:** costs rose in NSW and Western Australia.
- < **Comprehensive insurance:** premiums increased considerably in all states and territories, except Tasmania.
- < **Car maintenance:** costs increased in all benchmark locations.

Decreases in transport costs were seen in:

- < **Fuel expenditure:** prices fell across all locations.
- < **Toll roads:** in Sydney, toll charges for individual trips rose with scheduled indexation, but the state government also introduced a \$60 a week toll cap, which substantially reduced the typical household's toll costs and its total annualised household transport costs. Melbourne toll costs rose with scheduled quarterly indexation. Brisbane charges stayed steady.



Capital cities

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <p>Car loan payments \$210.17</p> <p>↑ + \$19.94 since Q4 2023</p> |  <p>Fuel \$98.64</p> <p>↓ - \$1.61 since Q4 2023</p> |  <p>Tolls \$55.53</p> <p>↓ - \$13.06 since Q4 2023</p> |  <p>Insurance \$46.51</p> <p>↑ + \$3.84 since Q4 2023</p> |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
|  <p>Public transport \$41.10</p> <p>↑ + \$0.38 since Q4 2023</p> |  <p>Servicing & Tyres \$36.00</p> <p>↑ + \$0.43 since Q4 2023</p> |  <p>Registration, CTP & licensing \$32.12</p> <p>↑ + \$0.38 since Q4 2023</p> |  <p>Roadside assist \$2.36</p> <p>— Steady since Q4 2023</p> |

Transport costs by category

Per week

Per household







Ranking of typical city and regional families' expenses remained unchanged over the March 2024 quarter.

Car loan payments remained the largest expense in the representative families' transport budgets, and roadside assistance was still the smallest expense.

The Index assumes a jurisdiction's capital city and regional households have the same roadside assistance and new car purchasing and financing costs. As metropolitan and regional households drive similar cars, the Index applies the same fuel efficiency and fuel mix assumptions.



Regional

| 1 | 2 | 3 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <p>Car loan payments \$210.03 ↑ + \$19.84 since Q4 2023</p> |  <p>Fuel \$101.56 ↓ - \$2.99 since Q4 2023</p> |  <p>Insurance \$37.59 ↑ + \$3.11 since Q4 2023</p> |
| 4 | 5 | 6 |
|  <p>Servicing & Tyres \$33.98 ↑ + \$0.36 since Q4 2023</p> |  <p>Registration, CTP & licensing \$30.82 ↑ + \$0.64 since Q4 2023</p> |  <p>Roadside assist \$2.35 — Steady since Q4 2023</p> |



Explore the interactive data

DATA.AAA.ASN.AU →

Transport costs by category

Per week

Per household



Car loan payments

Typical upfront costs of purchasing a new car rose by \$4,412.

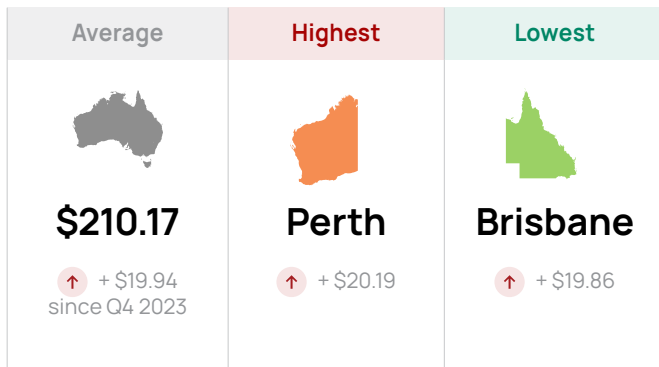
This was due to price rises for many models, as well as consumers choosing to buy more large, costlier vehicles in 2023 than in 2022.

As a result, typical Australian car loan payments rose by \$19.94 per week, or \$1,037 a year when annualised.

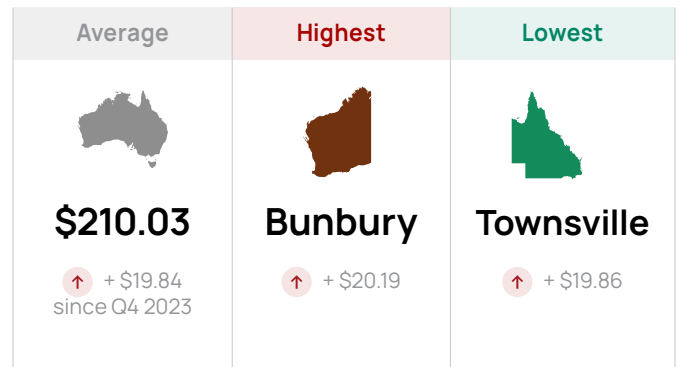
Regional households incurred the same costs in this category as their capital city counterparts – the Index assumes a state's regional centres and its capital city have the same interest rates and new car purchase costs.



Capital cities



Regional



Rank

| | | | | |
|---|---|---------------------|----------|------------------|
| 1 | | Perth | \$212.88 | + \$20.19 |
| 2 | | Sydney | \$211.28 | + \$20.18 |
| 3 | ↑ | Canberra | \$211.14 | + \$20.57 |
| 4 | ↓ | Melbourne | \$211.07 | + \$20.44 |
| 5 | | Adelaide | \$208.84 | + \$19.23 |
| 6 | | Darwin | \$208.75 | + \$19.43 |
| 6 | ↑ | Hobart | \$208.75 | + \$19.61 |
| 8 | | Brisbane | \$208.67 | + \$19.86 |
| | | Capital avg. | \$210.17 | + \$19.94 |

Rank

| | | | | |
|---|---|----------------------|----------|------------------|
| 1 | | Bunbury | \$212.88 | + \$20.19 |
| 2 | | Wagga Wagga | \$211.28 | + \$20.18 |
| 3 | | Geelong | \$211.07 | + \$20.44 |
| 4 | | Mount Gambier | \$208.84 | + \$19.23 |
| 5 | ↑ | Launceston | \$208.75 | + \$19.61 |
| 5 | | Alice Springs | \$208.75 | + \$19.43 |
| 7 | | Townsville | \$208.67 | + \$19.86 |
| | | Regional avg. | \$210.03 | + \$19.84 |

Transport costs by category

Per week

Per household



Vehicle registration, CTP and driver's licence

Registration, compulsory third-party insurance (CTP), and licensing costs rose slightly in NSW and substantially in Western Australia. The Perth and Bunbury household's \$159 annual cost increase was driven by the interaction between Western Australia's weight-based registration cost structure and sale of more large, heavy vehicles in 2023 than in 2022.

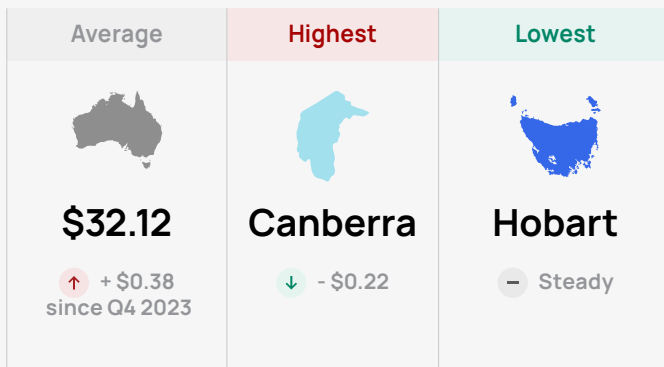
ACT registration, CTP and licensing costs fell slightly by \$12 a year. No other jurisdictions changed these charges in the March quarter.

Canberra and Hobart remained the most and least expensive capitals for registration, CTP and licensing. In the March quarter, the typical Canberra household spent an annualised \$913 more in this category than its Hobart counterpart.

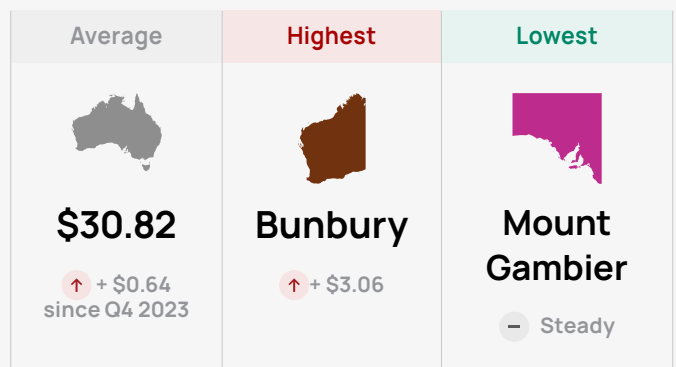
Bunbury and Mount Gambier remained the most and least expensive benchmark regional centres in this category. Their typical households' costs differed by an annualised \$812.



Capital cities



Regional



Rank

| | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|---------|----------|
| 1 |  | Canberra | \$41.60 | - \$0.22 |
| 2 |  | Perth | \$38.71 | + \$3.06 |
| 3 |  | Melbourne | \$34.58 | - |
| 4 |  | Darwin | \$32.70 | - |
| 5 |  | Brisbane | \$32.03 | - |
| 6 |  | Adelaide | \$27.57 | - |
| 7 |  | Sydney | \$25.70 | + \$0.21 |
| 8 |  | Hobart | \$24.04 | - |
| |  | Capital avg. | \$32.12 | + \$0.38 |

Rank

| | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|---------|----------|
| 1 |  | Bunbury | \$38.71 | + \$3.06 |
| 2 | ↑  | Wagga Wagga | \$32.76 | + \$1.44 |
| 3 | ↓  | Alice Springs | \$32.70 | - |
| 4 | ↓  | Geelong | \$32.42 | - |
| 5 | ↓  | Townsville | \$32.03 | - |
| 6 |  | Launceston | \$24.04 | - |
| 7 |  | Mount Gambier | \$23.09 | - |
| |  | Regional avg. | \$30.82 | + \$0.64 |



Explore the interactive data

DATA.AAA.ASN.AU →

Transport costs by category

Per week

Per household



Comprehensive car insurance

Comprehensive insurance costs rose considerably in all locations, except for Hobart (no rise) and Launceston (a negligible rise). The national capital city average rose by \$199 a year and the national benchmark regional centre average rose by an annualised \$162.

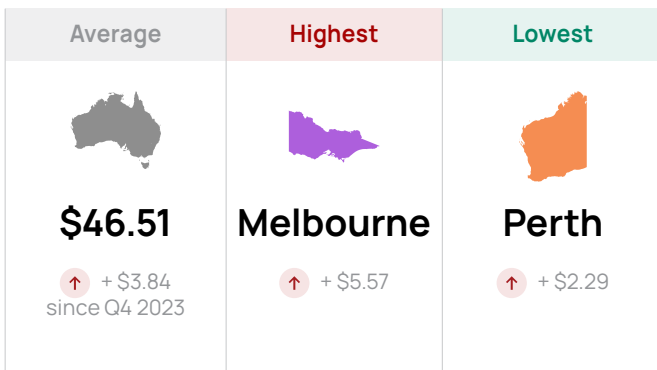
Queensland had the biggest rises (Brisbane up by \$510 a year, and Townsville up by \$323 a year).

Melbourne and Perth remained the capitals with the most and least expensive insurance, respectively. In the March quarter, the typical Perth household spent an annualised \$1,821 less on car insurance than its Melbourne counterpart.

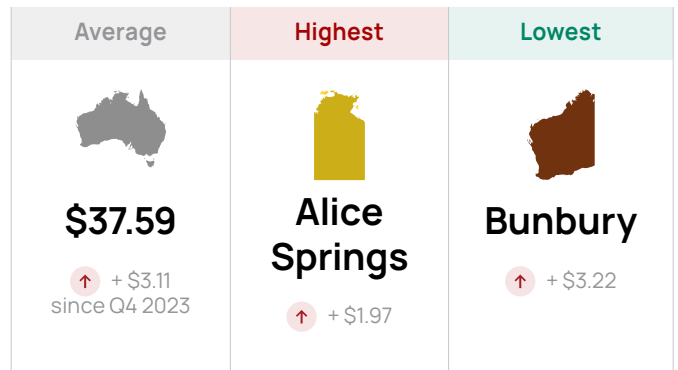
Victoria had the biggest difference between a typical capital city household and its benchmark regional counterpart – \$1,223 a year.



Capital cities











Regional



Rank

| | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|---------|----------------|
| 1 |  | Melbourne | \$64.87 | +\$5.57 |
| 2 |  | Brisbane | \$60.14 | +\$9.81 |
| 3 |  | Darwin | \$51.11 | +\$1.04 |
| 4 |  | Sydney | \$50.60 | +\$4.04 |
| 5 |  | Canberra | \$42.87 | +\$4.03 |
| 6 |  | Adelaide | \$40.37 | +\$3.89 |
| 7 |  | Hobart | \$32.26 | - |
| 8 |  | Perth | \$29.84 | +\$2.29 |
| |  | Capital avg. | \$46.51 | +\$3.84 |

Rank

| | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|---------|----------------|
| 1 |  | Alice Springs | \$50.16 | +\$1.97 |
| 2 |  | Townsville | \$47.71 | +\$6.21 |
| 3 |  | Geelong | \$41.35 | +\$3.56 |
| 4 |  | Wagga Wagga | \$36.99 | +\$3.39 |
| 5 |  | Mount Gambier | \$34.23 | +\$3.38 |
| 6 |  | Launceston | \$27.15 | +\$0.02 |
| 7 |  | Bunbury | \$25.52 | +\$3.22 |
| |  | Regional avg. | \$37.59 | +\$3.11 |

Transport costs by category

Per week

Per household



Servicing and tyres




Servicing and tyre costs increased in all benchmark locations.

Canberra and Adelaide remained the capitals with the highest and lowest servicing and tyre costs. In the March quarter, a typical Canberra household paid \$17.69 a week (or \$920 annualised) more for servicing and tyres than its Adelaide counterpart.

Bunbury replaced Alice Springs as the benchmark regional location with the highest household costs in this category. Launceston remained the cheapest benchmark regional centre for servicing and tyres. In the March quarter, the typical Bunbury household's costs in this category were \$12.31 a week (or \$640 annually) higher than its Launceston counterpart's.






Capital cities

| Average | Highest | Lowest |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  \$36.00 ↑ +\$0.43 since Q4 2023 |  Canberra ↑ +\$0.90 |  Adelaide ↑ +\$0.35 |



Regional

| Average | Highest | Lowest |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  \$33.98 ↑ +\$0.36 since Q4 2023 |  Bunbury ↑ +\$0.59 |  Launceston ↑ +\$0.23 |

Rank

| | | | | |
|---|---|--------------|---------|---------|
| 1 | | Canberra | \$47.25 | +\$0.90 |
| 2 | | Perth | \$37.27 | +\$0.56 |
| 3 | | Melbourne | \$37.08 | +\$0.51 |
| 4 | ↑ | Sydney | \$36.30 | +\$0.49 |
| 5 | ↓ | Darwin | \$36.29 | +\$0.26 |
| 6 | | Hobart | \$34.26 | +\$0.25 |
| 7 | | Brisbane | \$30.00 | +\$0.16 |
| 8 | | Adelaide | \$29.56 | +\$0.35 |
| | | Capital avg. | \$36.00 | +\$0.43 |

Rank

| | | | | |
|---|---|---------------|---------|---------|
| 1 | ↑ | Bunbury | \$40.16 | +\$0.59 |
| 2 | ↓ | Alice Springs | \$39.97 | +\$0.27 |
| 3 | | Geelong | \$35.55 | +\$0.49 |
| 4 | | Wagga Wagga | \$34.10 | +\$0.46 |
| 5 | | Townsville | \$30.56 | +\$0.16 |
| 6 | | Mount Gambier | \$29.68 | +\$0.36 |
| 7 | | Launceston | \$27.85 | +\$0.23 |
| | | Regional avg. | \$33.98 | +\$0.36 |



Explore the interactive data

DATA.AAA.ASN.AU →

Transport costs by category

Per week

Per household



Fuel




The average capital city regular unleaded petrol retail price fell by 1.8 cents a litre, and the average diesel retail price fell by 12 cents a litre. But Sydney's average petrol price rose 0.2 cents a litre, Brisbane's by 1.3 cents a litre and Canberra's by 0.8 cents a litre.

The typical Geelong household still spent more on fuel than its other regional counterparts as its residents tend to drive longer distances than other regional Australians. Wagga Wagga still had the lowest fuel expenditure as its residents typically drive less than the regional average.

In benchmark regional centres, petrol prices dropped by an average of 4.4 cents per litre and diesel by 13.2 cents per litre. Alice Springs remained the regional centre with the most expensive fuel.






Capital cities

| Average | Highest | Lowest |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  |  |
| \$98.64 | Brisbane | Perth |
| ↓ - \$1.61 since Q4 2023 | ↓ - \$0.30 | ↓ - \$2.71 |



Regional

| Average | Highest | Lowest |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  |  |
| \$101.56 | Geelong | Wagga Wagga |
| ↓ - \$2.99 since Q4 2023 | ↓ - \$1.90 | ↓ - \$2.37 |

Rank

| | | | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|----------|----------|
| 1 | ↑ |  | Brisbane | \$101.63 | - \$0.30 |
| 1 | |  | Canberra | \$101.63 | - \$0.38 |
| 3 | |  | Sydney | \$100.83 | - \$0.78 |
| 4 | ↑ |  | Melbourne | \$99.31 | - \$1.10 |
| 5 | ↑ |  | Hobart | \$98.17 | - \$1.25 |
| 6 | ↑ |  | Adelaide | \$96.52 | - \$1.95 |
| 7 | ↓ |  | Darwin | \$96.46 | - \$4.39 |
| 8 | |  | Perth | \$94.56 | - \$2.71 |
| | |  | Capital avg. | \$98.64 | - \$1.61 |

Rank

| | | | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|----------|----------|
| 1 | ↑ |  | Geelong | \$121.08 | - \$1.90 |
| 2 | ↓ |  | Bunbury | \$118.67 | - \$5.78 |
| 3 | |  | Launceston | \$112.37 | - \$3.58 |
| 4 | |  | Alice Springs | \$109.11 | - \$3.52 |
| 5 | |  | Mount Gambier | \$106.92 | - \$1.53 |
| 6 | |  | Townsville | \$76.12 | - \$2.23 |
| 7 | |  | Wagga Wagga | \$66.64 | - \$2.37 |
| | |  | Regional avg. | \$101.56 | - \$2.99 |

Transport costs by category

Per week

Per household



Public transport

In the March quarter, Melbourne's annualised public transport costs increased by \$156, and the city had Australia's second-most expensive public transport costs. (It was previously second-equal with Sydney).

Brisbane and Darwin remained the capitals with the highest and lowest public transport costs, respectively. The typical Darwin household spent an annualised \$2,063 per year (or \$39.67 per week) less on public transport than its Brisbane counterpart.



Toll roads

Only Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane use toll roads. Sydney and Melbourne toll costs rose with scheduled quarterly indexation, whereas Brisbane was unchanged as it indexes annually.

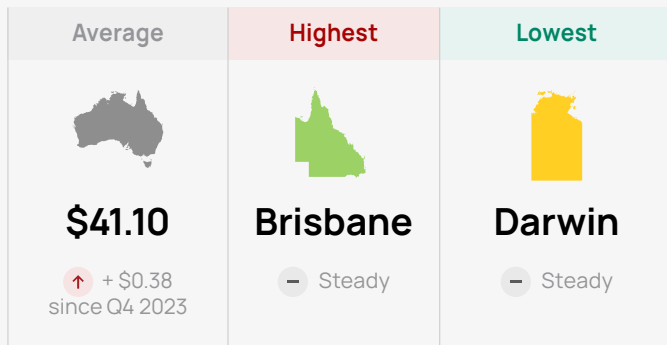
The typical Melbourne household's annualised toll costs rose by \$32.

While Sydney's toll charges for individual trips rose with scheduled indexation, the state government also introduced a \$60 a week toll cap, which reduced the typical household's annualised toll costs by \$2,069.

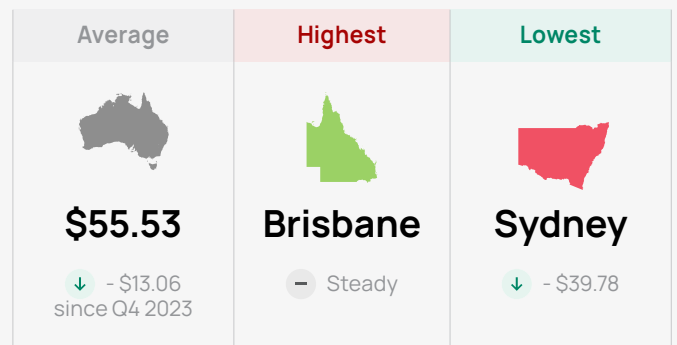
In the March quarter, the typical Sydney household spent \$16.62 per week (or \$864 per year) less on tolls than its Brisbane counterpart.



Capital cities



Capital cities



Rank

| | | | | |
|---|--|---------------------|---------|---------|
| 1 | | Brisbane | \$59.67 | - |
| 2 | | Melbourne | \$53.00 | +\$3.00 |
| 3 | | Sydney | \$50.00 | - |
| 4 | | Perth | \$45.90 | - |
| 5 | | Adelaide | \$42.50 | - |
| 6 | | Canberra | \$29.72 | - |
| 7 | | Hobart | \$28.00 | - |
| 8 | | Darwin | \$20.00 | - |
| | | Capital avg. | \$41.10 | +\$0.38 |

Rank

| | | | | |
|---|--|------------------|---------|----------|
| 1 | | Brisbane | \$61.20 | - |
| 2 | | Melbourne | \$60.80 | +\$0.60 |
| 3 | | Sydney | \$44.58 | -\$39.78 |
| | | Avg. | \$55.53 | -\$13.06 |



Explore the interactive data

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Transport costs by category

Per week

Per household



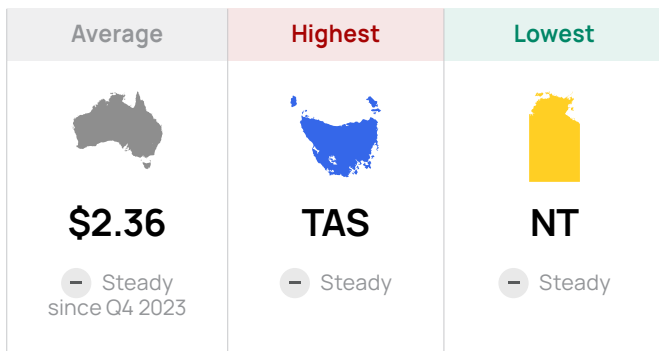
Roadside assistance

Costs in this category did not change in the March quarter.

Tasmania had the highest ongoing roadside assistance costs at \$2.54 a week or \$132 a year, while the Northern Territory had the lowest at \$2.12 a week or \$110 a year.

Roadside assistance costs are based on motoring clubs' basic or standard packages, but services included in these packages vary from club to club.

The Index assumes that the regional households face the same costs as their capital city counterparts because roadside assistance providers offer standard statewide pricing.



Rank

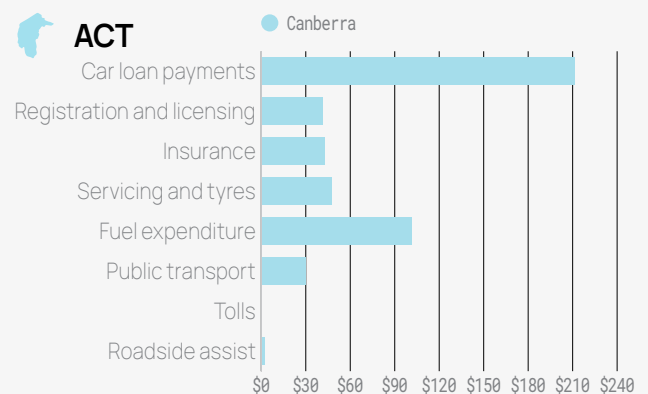
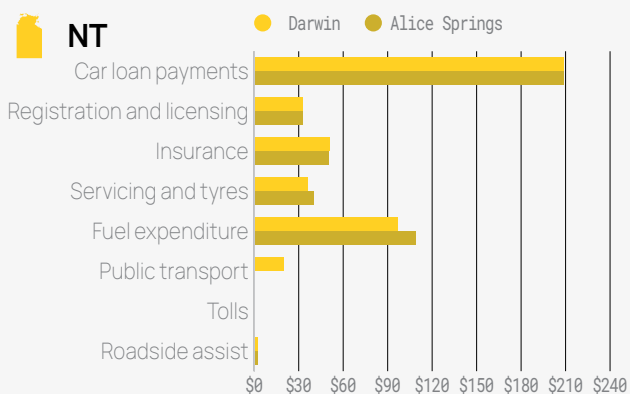
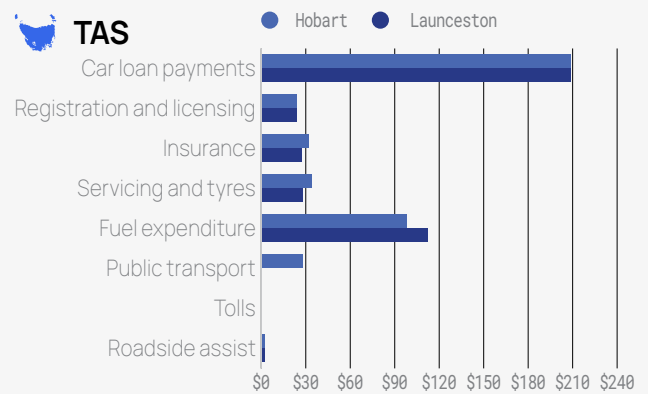
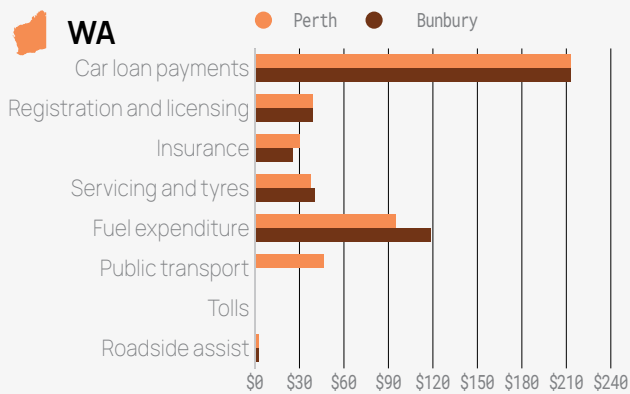
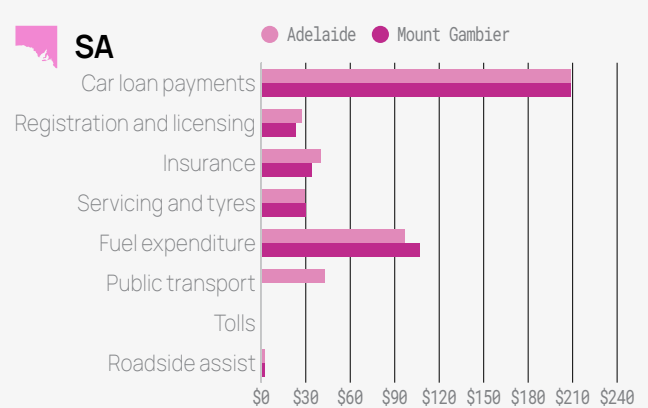
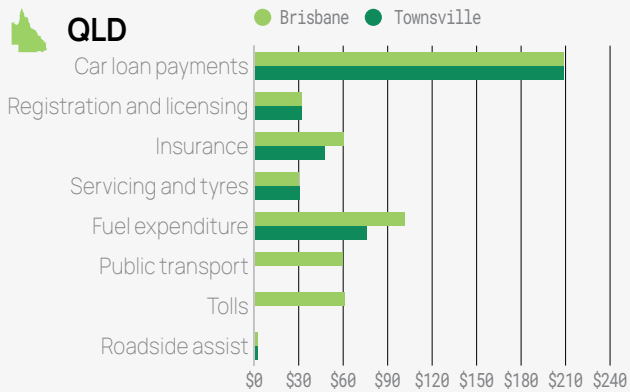
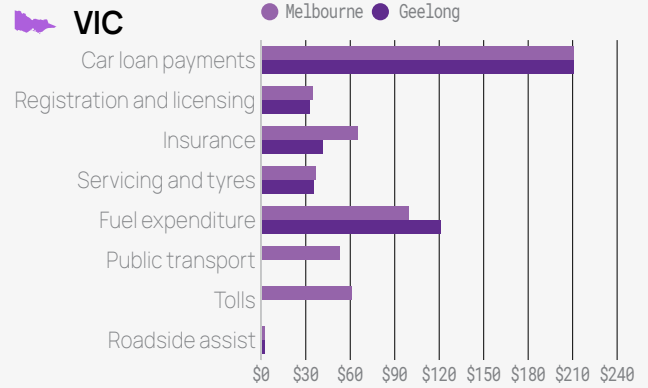
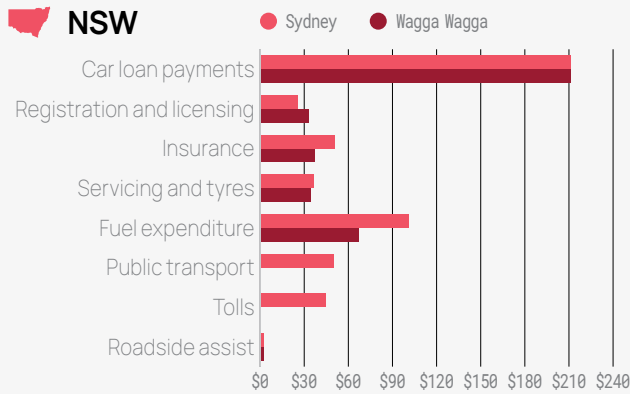
| | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|---|
| 1 |  TAS | \$2.54 | - |
| 2 |  NSW | \$2.48 | - |
| 2 |  ACT | \$2.48 | - |
| 2 |  VIC | \$2.48 | - |
| 5 |  WA | \$2.29 | - |
| 5 |  SA | \$2.29 | - |
| 7 |  QLD | \$2.23 | - |
| 8 |  NT | \$2.12 | - |
| |  Avg. | \$2.36 | - |

State by state overview

Capital city vs regional centre comparison

Per week

Per household





Sydney

Sydney was the only benchmark location where transport costs fell. It fell \$813 in overall annualised costs. It moved from being the most expensive capital for transport to the third-most expensive capital.

The new \$60 weekly toll cap, created a \$2,069 drop in the typical household's annual toll costs, offsetting large increases in car loan repayments (up \$1,050) and comprehensive insurance (up \$210).

Sydney's typical household spent 15.7 per cent of its income on transport, down from 16.6 per cent in Q4 2023. Previously fourth-most affordable capital for transport, Sydney became second-most affordable.

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| cost rank 3 / 8 Third-most expensive | affordability rank 7 / 8 Second-most affordable* |
| Total weekly transport costs \$521.77 ↓ - \$15.64 since Q4 2023 | % of income 15.7% ↓ - 1.0% since Q4 2023 |

*by local purchasing power

Wagga Wagga

Wagga Wagga remained the benchmark regional centre with the lowest total transport costs (at \$19,981 a year) and the highest local income-to-cost ratio (affordability). Its annual transport costs rose by \$1,201, driven by significant increases in car loan repayments (in line with Sydney) and comprehensive insurance (up \$176).

In the March quarter, Wagga Wagga's fuel expenditure dropped by \$124, annualised. Its typical household spent 12.7 per cent of its income on transport – the smallest share among all the benchmark locations.

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| cost rank 7 / 7 Least expensive | affordability rank 7 / 7 Most affordable* |
| Total weekly transport costs \$384.25 ↑ + \$23.10 since Q4 2023 | % of income 12.7% ↑ + 0.4% since Q4 2023 |

*by local purchasing power

Changes in weekly transport costs

↑ Increased

- Car loan payments +\$20.18
- Insurance +\$4.04
- Servicing & tyres +\$0.49
- Rego, CTP & licensing +\$0.21

– Unchanged

- Public transport
- Roadside assistance

↓ Decreased

- Tolls -\$39.78
- Fuel expenditure -\$0.78

↑ Increased

- Car loan payments +\$20.18
- Insurance + \$3.39
- Rego, CTP & licensing + \$1.44
- Servicing & tyres +\$0.46

– Unchanged

- Roadside assistance

↓ Decreased

- Fuel expenditure -\$2.37



Melbourne

In the March quarter, the typical Melbourne household's annualised transport costs rose to \$29,286 – up \$1,509 per annum from the December quarter – making it the most expensive city for transport.

This was driven by significant increases in car loan repayments (up by \$1,063) and public transport (up \$156).

Comprehensive insurance costs also rose (up \$289), and Melbourne remained the capital with the highest costs in this category. It was the only capital city where public transport expenditure increased, making it the second most expensive capital city.

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| cost rank 1 / 8 Most expensive | affordability rank 3 / 8 Third-least affordable* |
| Total weekly transport costs \$563.19 ↑ + \$29.02 since Q4 2023 | % of income 18.5% ↑ + 0.6% since Q4 2023 |

*by local purchasing power

Geelong

Geelong overtook Alice Springs to become the regional centre with the highest transport costs.

Its annualised household transport costs rose to \$23,085, up \$1,174 from the previous quarter.

This was driven by significant increases in car loan repayments (up by \$1,063, in line with Melbourne) and comprehensive insurance (up \$185).

The Geelong household spent 15.2 per cent of its income on transport, up from 14.7 per cent the previous quarter.

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| cost rank 1 / 7 Most expensive | affordability rank 5 / 7 Third-most affordable* |
| Total weekly transport costs \$443.95 ↑ + \$22.59 since Q4 2023 | % of income 15.2% ↑ + 0.5% since Q4 2023 |

*by local purchasing power

Changes in weekly transport costs

- ↑ Increased**
 - Car loan payments +\$20.44
 - Insurance +\$5.57
 - Public transport +\$3.00
 - Tolls +\$0.60
 - Servicing & tyres +\$0.51
- Unchanged**
 - Rego, CTP & licensing
- ↓ Decreased**
 - Fuel expenditure -\$1.10

- ↑ Increased**
 - Car loan payments +\$20.44
 - Insurance + \$3.56
 - Servicing & tyres +\$0.49
- Unchanged**
 - Rego, CTP & licensing
 - Roadside assistance
- ↓ Decreased**
 - Fuel expenditure -\$1.90



QLD transport costs

Per household

Brisbane

In the March quarter, the Brisbane typical household's annualised transport costs rose by \$1,536 – the largest increase among all benchmarked locations – reaching \$28,890.

This was driven by increases in car loan repayments (up \$1,033) and comprehensive insurance (up \$510).

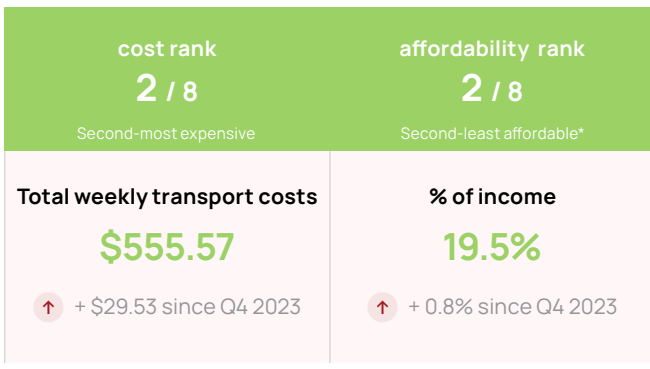
Sydney's large drop in toll road expenditure, meant Brisbane had Australia's highest March quarter household toll road costs, and it became the capital with the second-highest transport costs.

Brisbane also still had Australia's most expensive public transport.

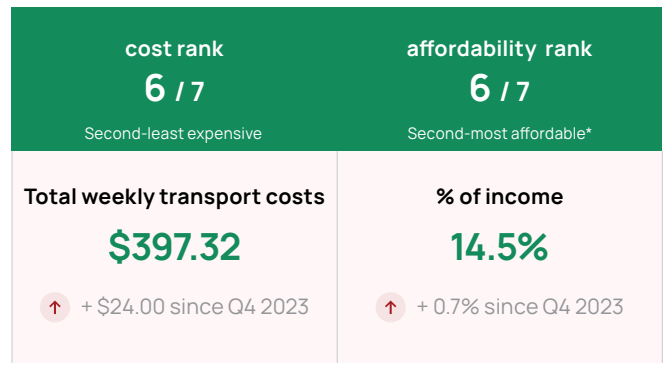
Townsville

In the March quarter, the typical Townsville household's annualised transport costs rose by \$1,248 (the largest increase among benchmark regional centres) to reach \$20,661. This was driven by increases in car loan repayments (up \$1,033, in line with Brisbane) and comprehensive insurance (up \$323).

The city's typical household's annualised fuel expenditure fell by \$116. Townsville remained the benchmark regional centre with the second-least expensive total transport costs, and the second-best local income-to-costs ratio.

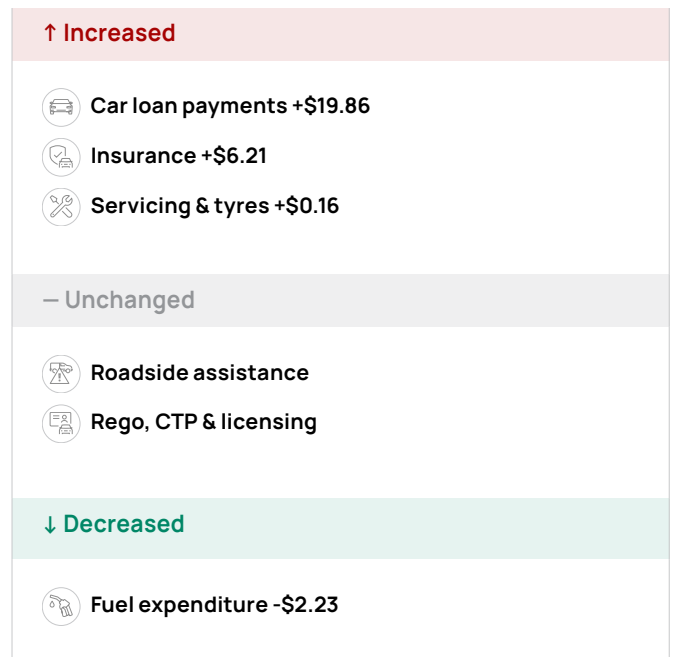
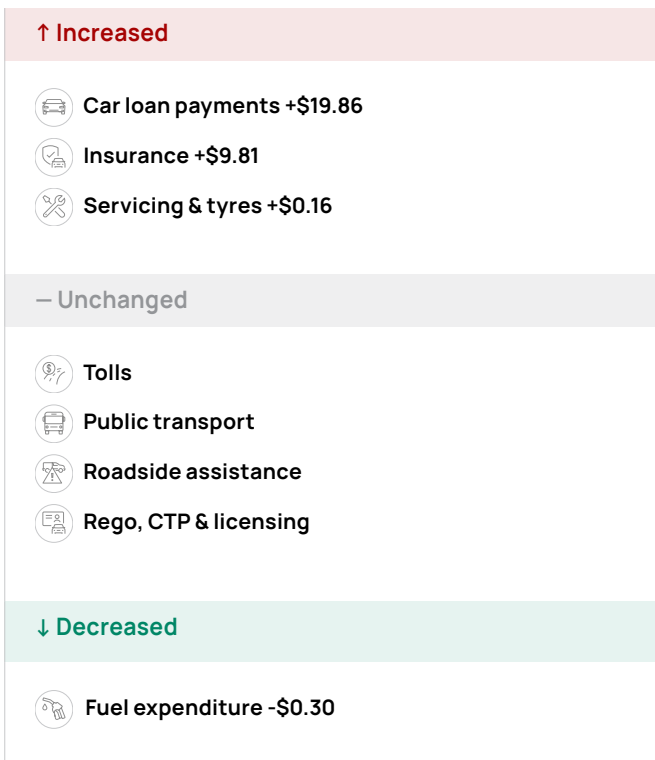


*by local purchasing power



*by local purchasing power

Changes in weekly transport costs





SA transport costs

Per household

Adelaide

In the March quarter, Adelaide's annualised typical household transport costs rose by \$1,119. The increase was largely driven by increased costs for car loan repayments (up \$1,000 a year) and comprehensive insurance (up \$202 a year).

But the Adelaide household's annualised fuel expenditure fell by \$101, and it had the lowest capital city servicing costs.

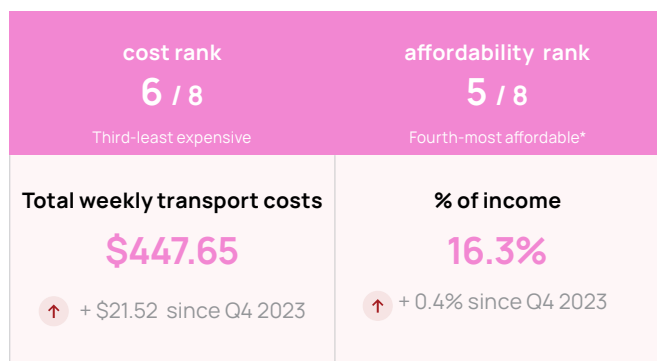
In the March quarter, Adelaide was the capital with the third-lowest transport costs (previously the second-lowest) and the fourth-best income-to-costs ratio (previously the third most affordable).

Mount Gambier

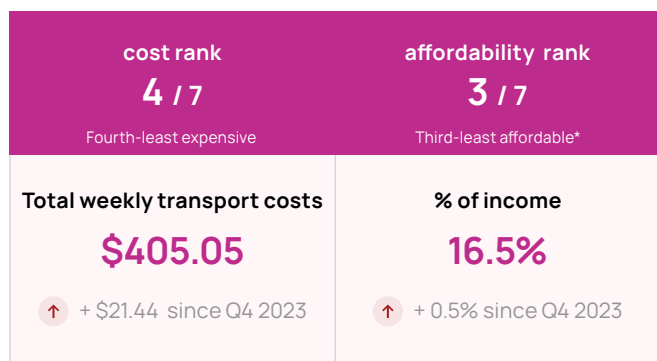
In the March quarter, Mount Gambier became the fourth-most expensive regional centre for transport, becoming dearer than Launceston.

Its annualised typical household transport costs rose to \$21,063 – up by \$1,115 from the previous quarter.

This was driven by significant increases in car loan repayments (up \$1,000 a year in line with Adelaide) and comprehensive insurance (up \$176).

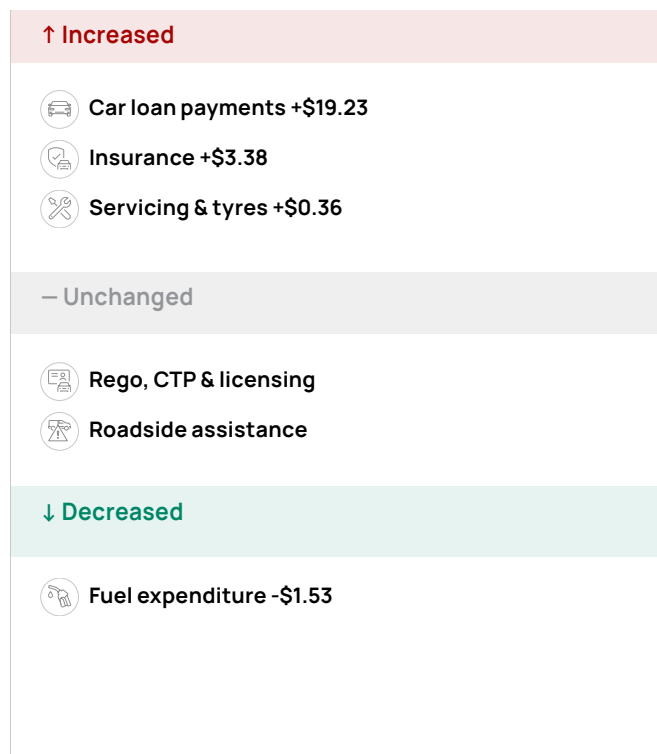
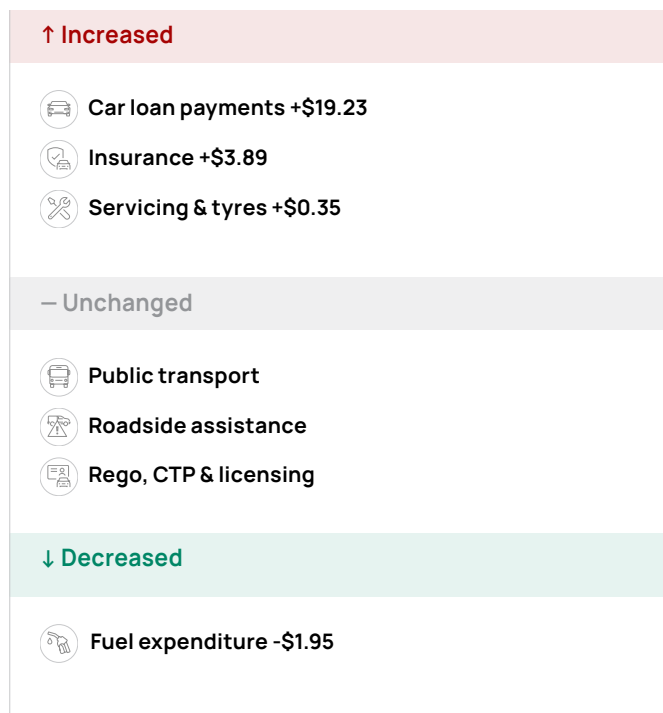


*by local purchasing power



*by local purchasing power

Changes in weekly transport costs





Perth

In the March quarter, the typical Perth household's annualised transport costs increased by \$1,216 to reach \$23,995. This was mainly due to annualised rises in car loan repayments (up \$1,050), registration, CTP & licensing (up \$159) and comprehensive insurance (up \$119).

Perth remained the city with Australia's most expensive car loan repayments.

But it still had the cheapest capital city comprehensive car insurance and fuel expenditure. Its typical household's annualised fuel expenditure fell by \$141.

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| cost rank 5 / 8 Fourth-least expensive | affordability rank 6 / 8 Third-most affordable* |
| Total weekly transport costs \$461.45 ↑ + \$23.39 since Q4 2023 | % of income 15.9% ↑ + 0.8% since Q4 2023 |

*by local purchasing power

Bunbury

Bunbury's typical annualised household transport costs rose by \$1,107 to reach \$22,788. This was mainly driven by higher car loan repayments (up \$1,050, in line with Perth), registration, CTP & licensing (up \$159) and comprehensive insurance (up \$167). Fuel expenditure fell by \$300.

Bunbury still had the most expensive car loan repayments, registration, CTP & licensing, and fuel expenditure among the benchmark regional centres. It also had the most expensive servicing costs, rising from second-most expensive in the December quarter.

But it still had the cheapest benchmark regional centre comprehensive car insurance.

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| cost rank 3 / 7 Third-most expensive | affordability rank 4 / 7 Fourth-most affordable* |
| Total weekly transport costs \$438.23 ↑ + \$21.28 since Q4 2023 | % of income 16.3% ↑ + 0.8% since Q4 2023 |

*by local purchasing power

Changes in weekly transport costs

↑ Increased

- Car loan payments +\$20.19
- Rego, CTP & licensing +\$3.06
- Insurance +\$2.29
- Servicing & tyres +\$0.56

– Unchanged

- Public transport
- Roadside assistance

↓ Decreased

- Fuel expenditure -\$2.71

↑ Increased

- Car loan payments +\$20.19
- Insurance + \$3.22
- Rego, CTP & licensing +\$3.06
- Servicing & tyres +\$0.59

– Unchanged

- Roadside assistance

↓ Decreased

- Fuel expenditure -\$5.78



TAS transport costs

Per household

Hobart

Hobart's annualised typical household transport costs rose to \$22,257 – up \$968 from the previous quarter. This was driven by significant increases in car loan repayments which increased by an annualised \$1,020.

Hobart was the only capital with no increase in comprehensive insurance costs.

The city's March quarter registration, CTP, and licensing costs – and its aggregate transport costs – were still cheaper than in any other capital.

Despite this, Hobart remained the capital with the least affordable transport when measured by local purchasing power.

| cost rank | affordability rank |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 8 / 8 | 1 / 8 |
| Least expensive | Least affordable* |
| Total weekly transport costs | % of income |
| \$428.02 | 19.7% |
| ↑ + \$18.61 since Q4 2023 | ↑ + 0.4% since Q4 2023 |

*by local purchasing power

Launceston

Launceston's annualised household transport costs rose by \$846 to reach \$20,940. Car loan repayments rose by an annualised \$1,020, in line with Hobart.

Annualised fuel expenditure fell by \$186. Launceston had the cheapest servicing and tyre costs among all benchmark locations, and it was the only benchmark regional centre with negligible rises in comprehensive insurance premiums.

Launceston became the third-cheapest regional benchmark centre for transport (previously fourth-cheapest). But it remained the least affordable benchmark location as it had the lowest average earnings.

| cost rank | affordability rank |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 5 / 7 | 1 / 7 |
| Third-least expensive | Least affordable* |
| Total weekly transport costs | % of income |
| \$402.70 | 20.4% |
| ↑ + \$16.28 since Q4 2023 | ↑ + 0.3% since Q4 2023 |

*by local purchasing power

Changes in weekly transport costs

| ↑ Increased |
|----------------------------|
| Car loan payments +\$19.61 |
| Servicing & tyres +\$0.25 |
| – Unchanged |
| Insurance |
| Public transport |
| Roadside assistance |
| Rego, CTP & licensing |
| ↓ Decreased |
| Fuel expenditure -\$1.25 |

| ↑ Increased |
|----------------------------|
| Car loan payments +\$19.61 |
| Servicing & tyres +\$0.23 |
| Insurance + \$0.02 |
| – Unchanged |
| Roadside assistance |
| Rego, CTP & licensing |
| ↓ Decreased |
| Fuel expenditure -\$3.58 |



NT transport costs

Per household

Darwin

In the March quarter, Darwin's annualised typical household transport costs rose by \$849 to reach \$23,266 a year.

This was driven by significant increases in car loan repayments, which rose by \$1,010 in annual costs. Annualised typical household fuel expenditure fell by \$228.

Darwin remained the capital with the cheapest public transport and became the capital with the second-lowest transport costs (becoming cheaper than Adelaide).

But it remained the capital with the fourth-least affordable transport.

Alice Springs

In the March quarter, Alice Springs' annualised transport costs rose to \$23,026 a year, up \$944 from the previous quarter.

But the town shifted from having the most expensive transport costs among benchmark regional centre to the second-highest costs, as Geelong's price rises outpaced it.

Alice Springs had significant increases in annualised car loan repayments (up \$1,010, in line with Darwin) and comprehensive insurance (up \$102). But its typical household fuel expenditure fell by \$183.

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| cost rank 7 / 8 Second-least expensive | affordability rank 4 / 8 Fourth-least affordable* |
| Total weekly transport costs \$447.43 ↑ + \$16.34 since Q4 2023 | % of income 17.7% ↑ + 0.4% since Q4 2023 |

*by local purchasing power

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| cost rank 2 / 7 Second-most expensive | affordability rank 2 / 7 Second-least affordable* |
| Total weekly transport costs \$442.81 ↑ + \$18.15 since Q4 2023 | % of income 18.7% ↑ + 0.5% since Q4 2023 |

*by local purchasing power

Changes in weekly transport costs

| |
|----------------------------|
| ↑ Increased |
| Car loan payments +\$19.43 |
| Insurance +\$1.04 |
| Servicing & tyres +\$0.26 |
| – Unchanged |
| Public transport |
| Rego, CTP & licensing |
| Roadside assistance |
| ↓ Decreased |
| Fuel expenditure -\$4.39 |

| |
|----------------------------|
| ↑ Increased |
| Car loan payments +\$19.43 |
| Insurance +\$1.97 |
| Servicing & tyres +\$0.27 |
| – Unchanged |
| Rego, CTP & licensing |
| Roadside assistance |
| ↓ Decreased |
| Fuel expenditure -\$3.52 |



ACT transport costs

Per household

Canberra

In the March quarter, the typical Canberra household's annualised transport costs rose by \$1,295 to reach \$24,788. The two biggest drivers of this increase were rising car loan repayments (up \$1,069 from the previous quarter) and comprehensive insurance (up \$209).

Canberra had the country's the most expensive registration, CTP and licensing costs, as well as servicing and tyre costs.

It remained the capital with the most affordable transport when measured by local incomes, despite having the fourth-highest total transport costs.

| cost rank 4 / 8 Fourth-most expensive | affordability rank 8 / 8 Most affordable* |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| Total weekly transport costs \$476.69 ↑ + \$24.90 since Q4 2023 | % of income 15.2% ↑ + 0.4% since Q4 2023 |

*by local purchasing power

Changes in weekly transport costs

| ↑ Increased | |
|-------------|-------------------------------|
| | Car loan payments +\$20.57 |
| | Insurance +\$4.03 |
| | Servicing & tyres +\$0.90 |
| – Unchanged | |
| | Public transport |
| | Roadside assistance |
| ↓ Decreased | |
| | Fuel expenditure -\$0.38 |
| | Rego, CTP & licensing -\$0.22 |

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Background and methodology

Overview

The AAA and SGS Economics developed the Transport Affordability Index as an indicator of movements in the total price of household transport through a longitudinal study design approach. It uses economic modelling to illustrate changes over time to transport costs relative to movements in the CPI and household incomes. The Index provides a snapshot of the costs of transport for a hypothetical or “benchmark” household in each capital city and in a regional location in each state and the Northern Territory by transport cost category (upfront, ongoing, and other “typical” costs) over time.

As with any economic modelling, the Index is built on a series of assumptions that remain constant over time. Since its release in 2016, the same specific data points have been updated and changes have been tracked quarterly. This longitudinal approach provides a way of understanding the degree and direction of change in costs by location over time. It is conceptually akin to the Australian Bureau of Statistics’ “basket of goods” used to identify and track CPI over time.

As well as tracking the original data points, the Index also accommodates all relevant government policy levers that impact transport costs (such as toll relief schemes and public transport discounts and caps).

The hypothetical households

The Index’s economic modelling is based on a “hypothetical household” whose key characteristics are drawn from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (including census data), the Bureau of Infrastructure and Transport Research Economics (including motor vehicle use), and industry (including new vehicle sales and fuel prices).

For the purposes of the economic modelling, it is assumed the hypothetical household:

- ◀ Comprises a 36-year-old male and a 38-year-old female with children living in a detached house.
- ◀ Has both adults employed full time and commuting each weekday to workplaces in or near their city or town’s CBD.
- ◀ Has two cars – a near-new car financed with a variable-rate car loan and an older car owned outright. Both vehicles are roadworthy and registered, and they are garaged at home.
- ◀ Has comprehensive car insurance (for this purpose the drivers have a spotless driving record).
- ◀ Services both vehicles according to manufacturers’ guidelines.

These characteristics are used to contextualise and model transport costs in each capital city and in one regional centre in every state and the Northern Territory.

The households in each capital city and benchmark regional centre are identical in almost all respects to enable ready comparison. But their transport costs differ based on where they live. Their assumed vehicle and public usage can also vary in some respects based on known local differences.

*“The Index is conceptually akin to the ABS **‘basket of goods’** used to identify and track CPI over time.”*



The capital city households

For each capital city household, it is assumed that the household's new car is driven 15,000 kilometres per year and its older car is driven 10,000 kilometres per year.

In each capital city, the hypothetical household is assumed to live in middle to outer-ring suburbs with relatively high population density and good access to public transport.

To ensure public transport costs are captured, the Index assumes one adult of the household commutes to and from work by public transport each weekday.

In the case of Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane, the family also uses toll roads to commute.

The Index assumes one member of the household uses toll roads every weekday in Melbourne and Brisbane to travel to and from work.

For Sydney, it assumes that one member of the family uses toll roads to commute only two days a week because toll costs are high and alternative routes are available.



The regional households

The Index's benchmark regional locations were selected as they have populations of over 10,000 people; have relatively dense populations; have ages similar to the average ages in the hypothetical city household; have a reasonable proportion of detached housing; and have a substantial proportion of couple family households with children.

The Index recognises that typical households in regional locations:

- < Generally face higher fuel prices than their city counterparts.
- < Earn less than their state or territory capital city counterparts.
- < Pay less for insurance because most jurisdictions offer lower comprehensive premiums on new and used cars in regional areas.
- < Do not pay to use toll roads.
- < Do not pay for public transport as there is little or limited availability in regional areas.
- < Have different commuting distances and patterns than their city counterparts (which are specific for the respective areas).

Incomes are based on ABS data for city and regional centres. This means that all the benchmark regional households have lower weekly earnings than their capital city counterparts.

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