



TRANSPORT AFFORDABILITY INDEX

DECEMBER QUARTER 2024



Australian
Automobile
Association

Released March 2025





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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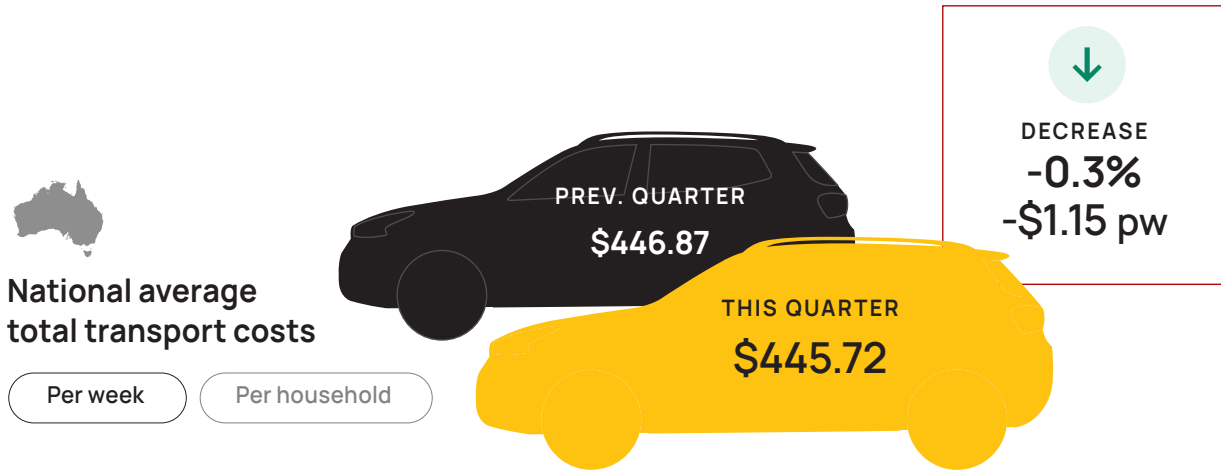
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Transport price inflation eases but costs remain elevated



After almost two years of constantly rising transport costs, transport affordability improved over most of Australia for the second consecutive quarter.

In the 2024 December quarter, typical household transport expenditure fell in all benchmark locations except Melbourne and Canberra. Melbourne's rise was negligible and Canberra's was driven by the end of a fare-free public transport period. But the rise in ACT public transport costs was so large that the capital city average rose. However, these costs remained lower than they were in the 2024 June quarter and Canberra's transport affordability returned to the level it had been at in late 2023.

This followed the September quarter's fall in transport costs, which was distorted by Brisbane's and Canberra's introduction of public transport fare relief but averaged a 0.7 per cent reduction in the five other state capitals.

In the September quarter, Australian typical household fuel expenditure dropped by \$338 on an annualised basis. In the December quarter, it declined again, falling by an annualised \$158.

However, this follows seven consecutive quarters of rising total household transport costs.

In Q3 2022, the typical Australian household spent 14.9 per cent of its income on transport. This peaked at 17 per cent in the June quarter of 2024 and settled at 16.1 per cent in 2024's September and December quarters.

This put average Australian transport affordability back to where it was in mid-2023. (Transport costs' share of typical Australian household income was 16.4 per cent in the September 2023 quarter and 15.9 per cent in the June 2023 quarter).

But transport costs remain significantly higher than they were before the pandemic. In Q4 2019, the typical Australian household spent 13.9 per cent of its income on transport.

Transport is a significant and unavoidable expense, and transport expenditure is also one of the key drivers of inflation. Governments at all levels must consider these cost pressures when formulating policy.



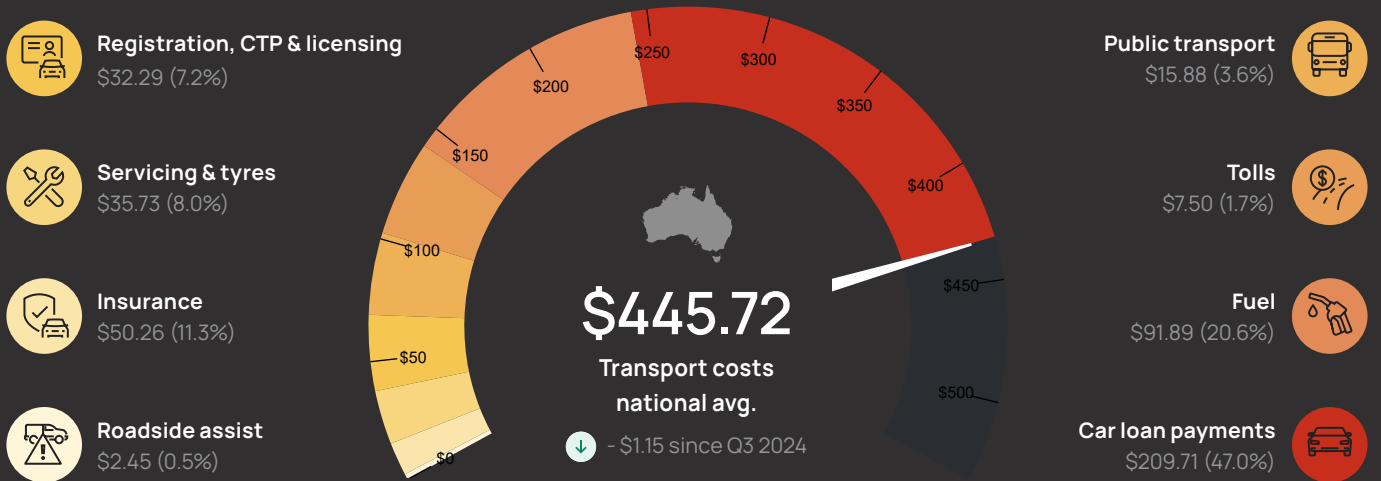
Michael Bradley
Managing Director
Australian Automobile Association

December Quarter 2024

Total transport costs

Per week

Per household



Capital cities

Regional

Total costs

AVERAGE	HIGHEST	LOWEST
 \$470.89 ↑ +\$1.25 since Q3 2024	 Sydney ↓ -\$1.52	 Hobart ↓ -\$1.38

Total costs

AVERAGE	HIGHEST	LOWEST
 \$416.95 ↓ -\$3.89 since Q3 2024	 Alice Springs ↓ -\$1.83	 Townsville ↓ -\$3.73

Affordability (% of income)

 16.2% Steady since Q3 2024	 Hobart ↓ -0.1%	 Brisbane ↓ -0.1%
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Affordability (% of income)

 15.9% ↓ -0.1% since Q3 2024	 Launceston ↓ -0.2%	 Wagga Wagga ↓ -0.1%
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Total transport costs

Per year

Per household

VIEW COSTS PER WEEK (PAGE 6) →



Capital cities

Capital average



\$24,486









↑ \$65 since Q3 2024

Insurance premiums, tolls, and servicing and tyres costs rose in the December quarter but this was more than offset by a decline in fuel prices.

Canberra and Melbourne were the only benchmark locations where total transport costs rose in the December quarter. Melbourne's annualised costs rose by just \$16. Canberra's rose by \$1,165 but this

was caused by the end of fare-free public transport as the ACT moved to a new ticketing system.

This rise meant the average typical capital city household's annualised cost of transport rose by \$65 to \$24,486 – a 0.3 per cent increase. The figures outlined in the index reflect costs for December, not for the whole of the quarter.

1	2	3	4
 <p>Sydney \$29,337</p> <p>↓ -\$79 since Q3 2024</p>	 <p>Melbourne \$27,369</p> <p>↑ +\$16 since Q3 2024</p>	 <p>Perth \$24,530</p> <p>↓ -\$151 since Q3 2024</p>	 <p>Canberra \$24,445</p> <p>↑ +\$1,165 since Q3 2024</p>
5	6	7	8
 <p>Adelaide \$23,527</p> <p>↓ -\$138 since Q3 2024</p>	 <p>Brisbane \$23,073</p> <p>↓ -\$84 since Q3 2024</p>	 <p>Darwin \$21,869</p> <p>↓ -\$137 since Q3 2024</p>	 <p>Hobart \$21,742</p> <p>↓ -\$71 since Q3 2024</p>

Average taxes



Fuel excise

\$1,331

– Steady since Q3 2024

+



Registration, CTP and licensing

\$1,751

↑ +\$3 since Q3 2024

=

Household total

\$3,082

↑ +\$3 since Q3 2024

Total transport costs

Per year

Per household

VIEW COSTS PER WEEK (PAGE 7) →



Regional

Regional average



\$21,681









↓ - \$203 since Q3 2024

The national benchmark regional household's annualised transport costs fell \$203 from the previous quarter – down 0.9 per cent – to a total of \$21,681.

This was more than the typical capital city household's costs reduction because the regional centres average was not impacted by Canberra's higher public transport prices.

The bulk of cost reductions came from lower fuel prices and cheaper new vehicle prices – annualised discounts of \$201 and \$79, respectively.

Geelong was the benchmark regional centre with the biggest decline in transport costs – an annualised reduction of \$262 from the previous quarter.

1	2	3	4
 <p>Alice Springs \$23,284</p> <p>↓ - \$95 since Q3 2024</p>	 <p>Bunbury \$23,137</p> <p>↓ - \$200 since Q3 2024</p>	 <p>Geelong \$22,745</p> <p>↓ - \$262 since Q3 2024</p>	 <p>Launceston \$21,197</p> <p>↓ - \$240 since Q3 2024</p>
5	6	7	 <p>Explore the interactive data</p> <p>DATA.AAA.ASN.AU</p>
 <p>Mount Gambier \$21,158</p> <p>↓ - \$254 since Q3 2024</p>	 <p>Wagga Wagga \$20,126</p> <p>↓ - \$172 since Q3 2024</p>	 <p>Townsville \$20,122</p> <p>↓ - \$194 since Q3 2024</p>	

Average taxes



Fuel Excise

\$1,396

– Steady since Q3 2024

+



Registration, CTP and Licensing

\$1,597

↑ + \$1 since Q3 2024

=

Household total

\$2,993

↑ + \$1 since Q3 2024

Total transport costs

Per week

Per household



Capital cities

Capital average











\$470.89

↑ + \$1.25 since Q3 2024

In the December quarter, the capital city rankings for total weekly transport costs remained almost the same, with Canberra (fourth) and Adelaide (fifth) swapping places.

Sydney and Hobart remained the capitals with the highest and lowest respective transport costs.

The typical Sydney household spent \$146.07 more on transport each week than its Hobart counterpart.

1	2	3	4
 <p>Sydney \$564.18</p> <p>↓ - \$1.52 since Q3 2024</p>	 <p>Melbourne \$526.33</p> <p>↑ + \$0.32 since Q3 2024</p>	 <p>Perth \$471.73</p> <p>↓ - \$2.91 since Q3 2024</p>	 <p>Canberra \$470.10</p> <p>↑ + \$22.41 since Q3 2024</p>
5	6	7	8
 <p>Adelaide \$452.44</p> <p>↓ - \$2.65 since Q3 2024</p>	 <p>Brisbane \$443.71</p> <p>↓ - \$1.61 since Q3 2024</p>	 <p>Darwin \$420.55</p> <p>↓ - \$2.65 since Q3 2024</p>	 <p>Hobart \$418.11</p> <p>↓ - \$1.38 since Q3 2024</p>

Total transport costs

Per week

Per household



Regional

Regional average



\$416.95









↓ - \$3.89 since Q3 2024

Nationally averaged benchmark regional centre costs were \$53.94 a week lower than average capital city household costs.

For the second consecutive quarter, the regional average hypothetical household saw a reduction in transport costs.

Alice Springs remained the benchmark regional centre with the highest transport costs.

In the December quarter, its typical household spent \$60.80 more on transport in a week than its counterpart in Townsville, the benchmark location with the lowest transport costs.

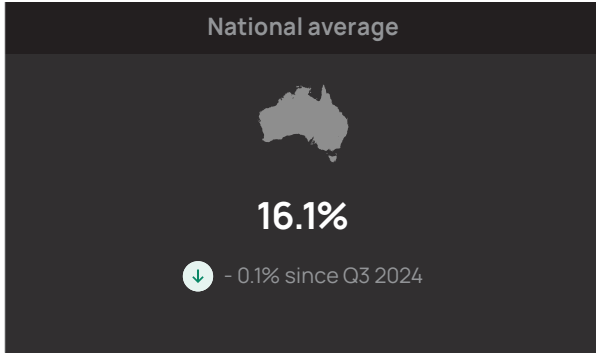
1	2	3	4
 Alice Springs \$447.77 ↓ - \$1.83 since Q3 2024	 Bunbury \$444.94 ↓ - \$3.84 since Q3 2024	 Geelong \$437.40 ↓ - \$5.05 since Q3 2024	 Launceston \$407.63 ↓ - \$4.62 since Q3 2024
5	6	7	
 Mount Gambier \$406.88 ↓ - \$4.88 since Q3 2024	 Wagga Wagga \$387.03 ↓ - \$3.32 since Q3 2024	 Townsville \$386.97 ↓ - \$3.73 since Q3 2024	 Explore the interactive data DATA.AAA.ASN.AU

Transport affordability

Costs as a percentage of income

Per week

Per household



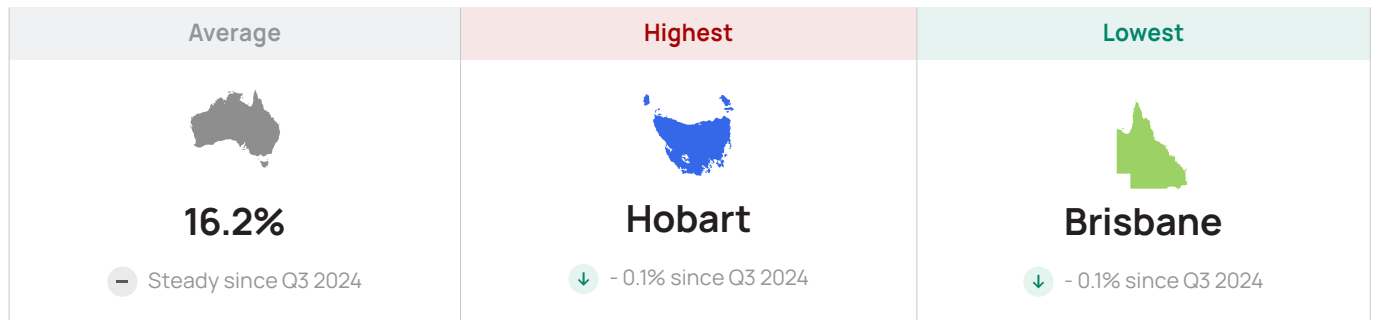
A location's costs-to-income ratio determines its local purchasing power – or affordability.

The typical Brisbane household's transport costs are higher than that of Hobart's. But the disparity in these cities' typical incomes meant Brisbane was the most affordable capital (spending 14.8 per cent of typical household income on transport) and Hobart the least affordable (spending 18.9 per cent of typical household income on transport).

In the December quarter, affordability either improved or remained steady for typical households in all benchmark locations except for Canberra and Melbourne.



Capital cities



Rank

		March Qtr 2024	June Qtr 2024	Sept Qtr 2024	Dec Qtr 2024
1	Hobart	19.7%	19.6%	18.9%	18.9%
2	Melbourne	18.5%	17.5%	16.9%	16.9%
3	↑ Sydney	16.1%	16.9%	16.3%	16.3%
4	↓ Darwin	17.7%	17.9%	16.4%	16.3%
5	Perth	15.8%	16.4%	16.1%	16.0%
6	Adelaide	16.3%	16.7%	16.1%	16.0%
7	↑ Canberra	15.2%	15.4%	14.1%	14.8%
8	↓ Brisbane	19.5%	17.9%	14.9%	14.8%
	Capital avg.	17.4%	17.3%	16.2%	16.2%

Transport affordability

Costs as a percentage of income

Per week

Per household

In the December quarter, transport costs consumed 16.1 per cent of the typical Australian household's income, down slightly (by 0.05 per cent) from the September quarter.

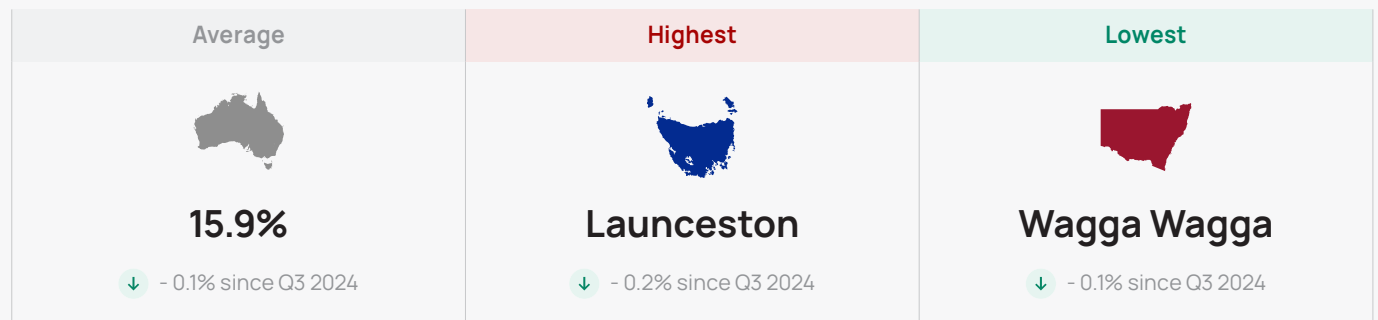
This is the first time since 2020 that affordability has improved in two consecutive quarters.

cent of a typical regional household's income (down from 16.1 per cent in the September quarter and 16.5 per cent in the June quarter).

It accounted for 16.2 per cent of typical capital city household incomes (no change on the September quarter but down from 17.4 per cent in the June quarter).

In the December 2024 quarter, transport consumed 15.9 per

Regional



Rank		March Qtr 2024	June Qtr 2024	Sept Qtr 2024	Dec Qtr 2024
1	Launceston	20.4%	21.2%	20.5%	20.3%
2	Alice Springs	18.7%	19.2%	18.5%	18.4%
3	Bunbury	16.2%	16.9%	16.4%	16.3%
4	Mount Gambier	16.5%	17.0%	16.3%	16.1%
5	Geelong	15.2%	15.3%	14.7%	14.6%
6	Townsville	14.5%	14.6%	13.6%	13.4%
7	Wagga Wagga	12.7%	13.0%	12.3%	12.2%
	Regional avg.	16.3%	16.7%	16.1%	15.9%



Explore the interactive data

DATA.AAA.ASN.AU →

Transport costs by category

Per week









Per household

In the December quarter, average typical household transport costs fell across Australia.

- **Fuel expenditure:** prices declined in all locations.
- **Car loan payments:** upfront new vehicle purchasing costs fell in all jurisdictions.
- **Public transport:** average national costs rose after free travel ended in Canberra.
- **Comprehensive Insurance:** costs rose in all benchmark locations except Adelaide and Mount Gambier.



Capital cities

1	2	3	4
 <p>Car loan payments \$209.78</p> <p>↓ - \$1.52 since Q3 2024</p>	 <p>Fuel \$90.88</p> <p>↓ - \$2.33 since Q3 2024</p>	 <p>Insurance \$53.60</p> <p>↑ + \$0.99 since Q3 2024</p>	 <p>Tolls \$37.52</p> <p>↑ + \$0.81 since Q3 2024</p>
5	6	7	8
 <p>Servicing & Tyres \$36.65</p> <p>↑ + \$0.51 since Q3 2024</p>	 <p>Registration, CTP & licensing \$33.68</p> <p>↑ + \$0.06 since Q3 2024</p>	 <p>Public transport \$29.77</p> <p>↑ + \$3.22 since Q3 2024</p>	 <p>Roadside assist \$2.46</p> <p>— Steady since Q3 2024</p>

Transport costs by category

Per week

Per household

Ranking of typical city and regional households' expenses remained unchanged over the December 2024 quarter. Car loan payments remained the largest and roadside assistance the smallest transport expenses.







But car loans and fuel costs declined considerably, making transport more affordable across most of the country.

The Index assumes a regional household does not rely on public transport for commuting, and the typical regional household costs decreased over the quarter.

Higher public transport fares in Canberra meant the average metropolitan household's public transport fares rose. But when the capital cities are examined individually, total transport costs fell in all but Canberra and Melbourne.



Regional

1	2	3
 <p>Car loan payments \$209.63 ↓ - \$1.52 since Q3 2024</p>	 <p>Fuel \$93.04 ↓ - \$3.86 since Q3 2024</p>	 <p>Insurance \$46.45 ↑ + \$0.96 since Q3 2024</p>
4	5	6
 <p>Servicing & Tyres \$34.68 ↑ + \$0.52 since Q3 2024</p>	 <p>Registration, CTP & licensing \$30.71 ↑ + \$0.01 since Q3 2024</p>	 <p>Roadside assist \$2.44 — Steady since Q3 2024</p>



Explore the interactive data

DATA.AAA.ASN.AU →

Transport costs by category

Per week

Per household



Car loan payments

Typical upfront costs of buying a new car fell by \$335. This meant typical Australian car loan payments fell by \$1.52 a week (or \$79 a year when annualised).

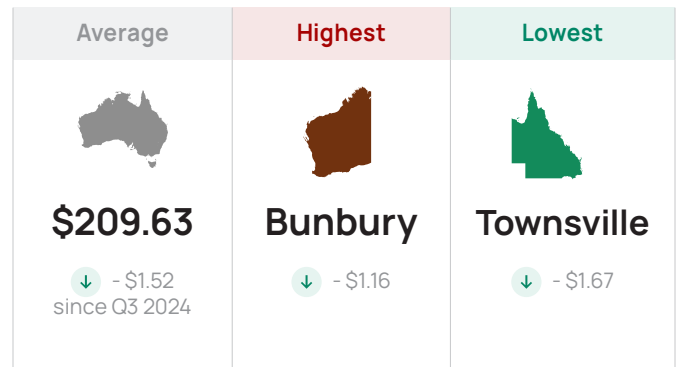
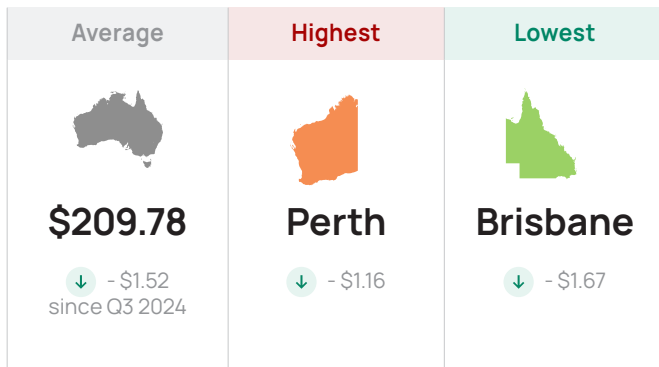
The Index tracks the drive-away costs for top-selling vehicles, and it assumes a state's regional centres and its capital city have the same interest rates and new car purchase costs.



Capital cities



Regional



Rank

1	Perth	\$212.67	- \$1.16
2	Canberra	\$210.87	- \$1.46
3	Sydney	\$210.69	- \$1.49
4	Melbourne	\$209.84	- \$1.56
5	Hobart	\$209.01	- \$1.57
6	Adelaide	\$208.99	- \$1.57
7	Darwin	\$208.34	- \$1.65
8	Brisbane	\$207.84	- \$1.67
	Capital avg.	\$209.78	- \$1.52

Rank

1	Bunbury	\$212.67	- \$1.16
2	Wagga Wagga	\$210.69	- \$1.49
3	Geelong	\$209.84	- \$1.56
4	Launceston	\$209.01	- \$1.57
5	Mount Gambier	\$208.99	- \$1.57
6	Alice Springs	\$208.34	- \$1.65
7	Townsville	\$207.84	- \$1.67
	Regional avg.	\$209.63	- \$1.52

Transport costs by category

Per week

Per household



Vehicle registration, CTP and driver's licence

Registration, compulsory third-party insurance (CTP), and licensing costs were steady in most locations except NSW and Tasmania which had minor changes.

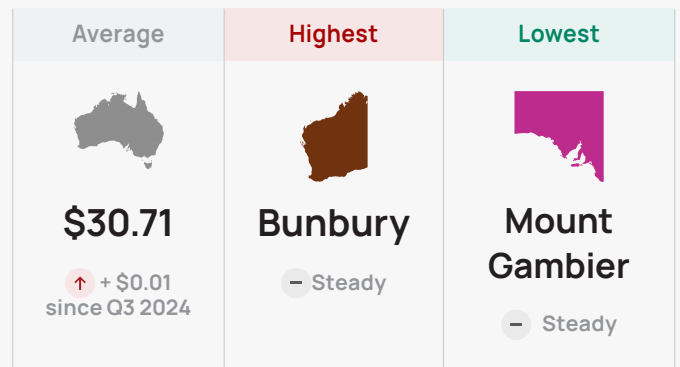
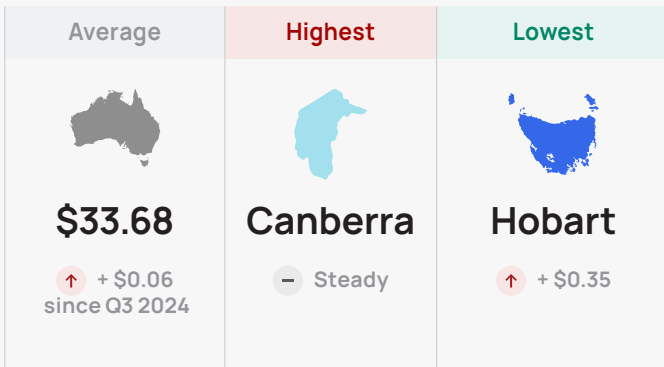
Queensland households continue to benefit from a 20 per cent reduction in registration fees to help ease cost-of-living pressures, which will continue to late 2025.



Capital cities



Regional



Rank

1		Canberra	\$43.08	-
2		Sydney	\$38.75	+ \$0.12
3		Perth	\$37.69	-
4		Melbourne	\$35.75	-
5		Darwin*	\$33.12	-
6		Brisbane	\$28.77	-
7		Adelaide	\$27.39	-
8		Hobart	\$24.89	+ \$0.35
		Capital avg.	\$33.68	+ \$0.06

*Q3 figure amended

Rank

1		Bunbury	\$37.69	-
2		Wagga Wagga	\$33.87	- \$0.28
3		Geelong	\$33.51	-
4		Alice Springs*	\$33.12	-
5		Townsville	\$28.77	-
6		Launceston	\$24.89	+ \$0.35
7		Mount Gambier	\$23.12	-
		Regional avg.	\$30.71	+ \$0.01

*Q3 figure amended



Explore the interactive data

DATA.AAA.ASN.AU →

Transport costs by category

Per week

Per household



Comprehensive car insurance

National capital city average comprehensive car insurance costs rose by \$51 per year and the national benchmark regional centre average rose by an annualised \$50.

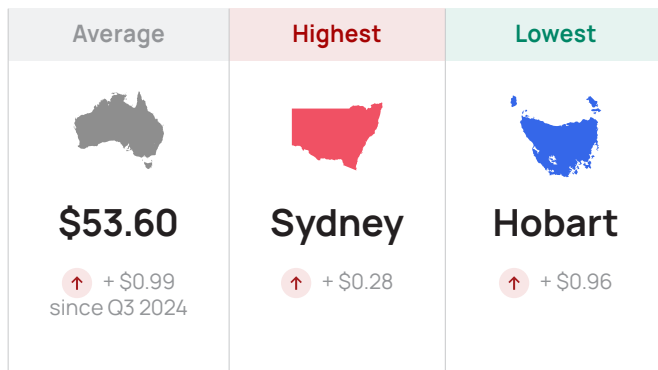
Alice Springs, Darwin and Bunbury had the biggest annualised rises – up \$190, \$136 and \$110, respectively. Adelaide and Mount Gambier were the only benchmark locations where insurance costs fell.

Sydney remained the location with the most expensive insurance and Hobart the capital with the cheapest. The typical Hobart household spent an annualised \$1,504 less on car insurance than its Sydney counterpart.

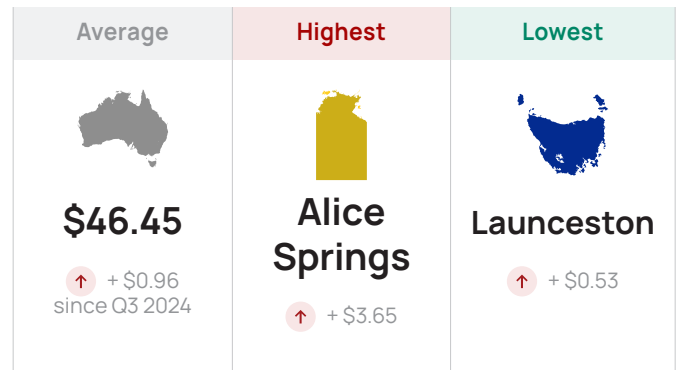
NSW had the biggest difference in car insurance costs between a typical capital city household and its benchmark regional counterpart – \$1,386 per year.




Capital cities











Regional



Rank

1		Sydney	\$71.27	+\$0.28
2		Melbourne	\$68.63	+\$1.07
3		Darwin	\$53.44	+\$2.62
4		Adelaide	\$49.68	-\$0.30
5		Brisbane	\$48.78	+\$0.34
6		Canberra	\$47.69	+\$1.48
7		Perth	\$46.98	+\$1.47
8		Hobart	\$42.35	+\$0.96
		Capital avg.	\$53.60	+\$0.99

Rank

1		Alice Springs	\$59.96	+\$3.65
2		Geelong	\$47.30	+\$0.37
3		Townsville	\$46.02	+\$0.04
4		Wagga Wagga	\$44.61	+\$0.28
5	↑ 	Bunbury	\$44.03	+\$2.10
6	↓ 	Mount Gambier	\$42.87	-\$0.24
7		Launceston	\$40.34	+\$0.53
		Regional avg.	\$46.45	+\$0.96

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 respective servicing and tyre costs.

Bunbury and Launceston remained the benchmark regional centres with the highest and lowest costs, respectively, in this category.




In the December quarter, a typical Canberra household paid \$16.68 a week (or \$867 annualised) more for servicing and tyres than its Adelaide counterpart. The typical Bunbury household paid \$12.27 a week (or \$638 per year) more than its Launceston counterpart.






Capital cities



Regional

Average	Highest	Lowest
 <p>\$36.65</p> <p>↑ +\$0.51 since Q3 2024</p>	 <p>Canberra</p> <p>↑ +\$0.48</p>	 <p>Adelaide</p> <p>↑ +\$0.58</p>

Average	Highest	Lowest
 <p>\$34.68</p> <p>↑ +\$0.52 since Q3 2024</p>	 <p>Bunbury</p> <p>↑ +\$0.32</p>	 <p>Launceston</p> <p>↑ +\$0.28</p>

Rank

1		Canberra	\$47.37	+\$0.48
2		Perth	\$37.69	+\$0.32
3		Melbourne	\$37.63	+\$0.76
4		Sydney	\$37.09	+\$0.52
5		Darwin	\$36.63	+\$0.36
6		Hobart	\$34.96	+\$0.26
7		Brisbane	\$31.14	+\$0.84
8		Adelaide	\$30.69	+\$0.58
		Capital avg.	\$36.65	+\$0.51

Rank

1		Bunbury	\$40.63	+\$0.32
2		Alice Springs	\$40.36	+\$0.36
3		Geelong	\$36.06	+\$0.73
4		Wagga Wagga	\$34.83	+\$0.51
5		Townsville	\$31.73	+\$0.85
6		Mount Gambier	\$30.81	+\$0.58
7		Launceston	\$28.36	+\$0.28
		Regional avg.	\$34.68	+\$0.52



Explore the interactive data

DATA.AAA.ASN.AU →

Transport costs by category

Per week

Per household



Fuel




In the December quarter, the average capital city regular unleaded petrol retail price fell by 3.9 cents per litre, and the average diesel retail price fell 8.5 cents per litre.

In benchmark regional centres, petrol prices fell by an average of 7.0 cents per litre and diesel by 8.9 cents per litre.

This is the second consecutive quarter that retail fuel prices have declined. Fuel prices are the second-biggest expense identified in the Index and the scale of this reduction was a leading factor in the overall decrease in total transport costs.






Capital cities

Average	Highest	Lowest
 \$90.88 ↓ - \$2.33 since Q3 2024	 Brisbane ↓ - \$1.12	 Darwin ↓ - \$3.98






Regional

Average	Highest	Lowest
 \$93.04 ↓ - \$3.86 since Q3 2024	 Geelong ↓ - \$4.59	 Wagga Wagga ↓ - \$2.34

Rank

1	↑		Brisbane	\$94.53	- \$1.12
2	↑		Sydney	\$93.80	- \$0.95
3	↓		Canberra	\$92.75	- \$3.85
4			Melbourne	\$91.66	- \$2.39
5			Hobart	\$90.65	- \$1.38
6	↑		Adelaide	\$89.32	- \$1.36
7	↓		Perth	\$87.55	- \$3.54
8	↓		Darwin	\$86.81	- \$3.98
			Capital avg.	\$90.88	- \$2.33

Rank

1		Geelong	\$108.11	- \$4.59
2		Bunbury	\$107.57	- \$5.10
3		Alice Springs	\$103.78	- \$4.19
4		Launceston	\$102.38	- \$4.21
5		Mount Gambier	\$98.72	- \$3.65
6		Townsville	\$70.28	- \$2.95
7		Wagga Wagga	\$60.45	- \$2.34
		Regional avg.	\$93.04	- \$3.86

Transport costs by category

Per week

Per household



Public transport

Annualised public transport costs in Canberra rose after the ACT started a new ticketing system and ended its fare-free period. But the new system includes free fares on Fridays, so costs will remain lower than they previously were.

Meanwhile, the NT Government has extended free bus services (originally only to apply for Q3 2024) until 30 June 2025. And the Queensland Government has pledged to make 50 cent public transport fares permanent (originally to end in February 2025).

Melbourne still has Australia's most expensive public transport. Its typical household spent an annualised \$53.00 week more on public transport than its Darwin counterpart.



Toll roads

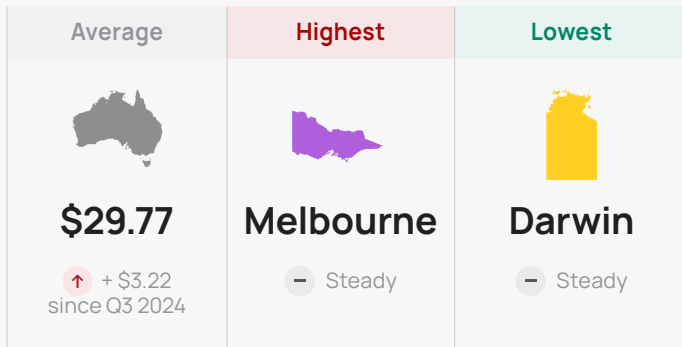
Only Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane use toll roads.

Scheduled quarterly indexation increased the typical Melbourne household's annualised toll costs by \$126, while typical Sydney and Brisbane household costs were unchanged. Brisbane only adjusts toll road costs at the start of the financial year and Sydney's toll cap meant the typical household was unimpacted by quarterly price rises.

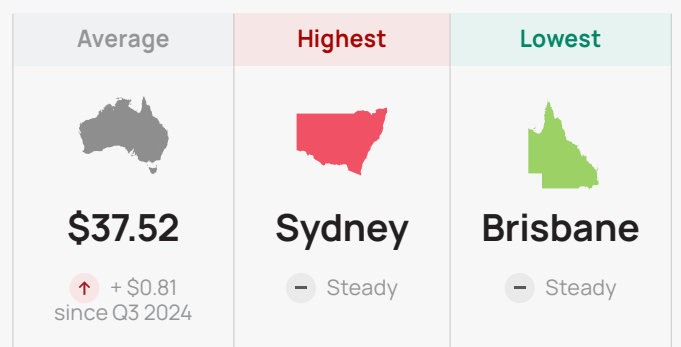
As a result, Brisbane became the cheapest city for toll road costs and Sydney remained the most expensive. The typical Sydney household's annual toll road costs were \$1,803 more than those of its Brisbane counterpart.












Capital cities







Capital cities



Rank

1		Melbourne	\$53.00	-
2		Sydney	\$50.00	-
3		Perth	\$46.80	-
4		Adelaide	\$44.00	-
5	↑ 	Canberra	\$25.76	+\$25.76
6	↓ 	Hobart	\$13.60	-
7	↓ 	Brisbane	\$5.00	-
8		Darwin	\$-	-
		Capital avg.	\$29.77	+\$3.22

Rank

1		Sydney	\$60.00	-
2	↑ 	Melbourne	\$27.24	+\$2.44
3	↓ 	Brisbane	\$25.32	-
		Avg.	\$37.52	+\$0.81



Explore the interactive data

DATA.AAA.ASN.AU →

Transport costs by category

Per week

Per household



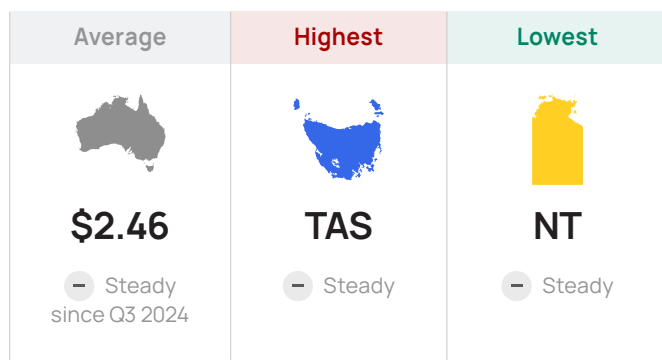
Roadside assistance

Costs in this category remained unchanged since previous quarter.










Tasmania has the highest ongoing roadside assistance costs at \$2.65 a week or \$138 per year. The Northern Territory's costs in this category remained the cheapest in the country at \$2.21 per week or \$115 per year.

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

Roadside assistance providers offer the same statewide pricing for capital city and regional households.



Rank

1	 TAS	\$2.65
2	 ACT*	\$2.58
2	 NSW*	\$2.58
2	 VIC	\$2.58
5	 SA	\$2.37
6	 WA*	\$2.35
7	 QLD	\$2.33
8	 NT	\$2.21
	 Avg.	\$2.46

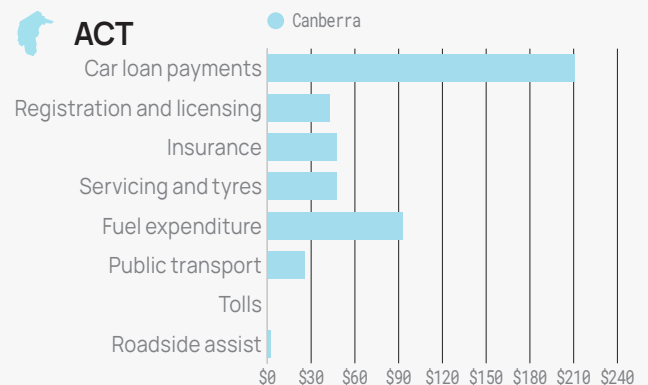
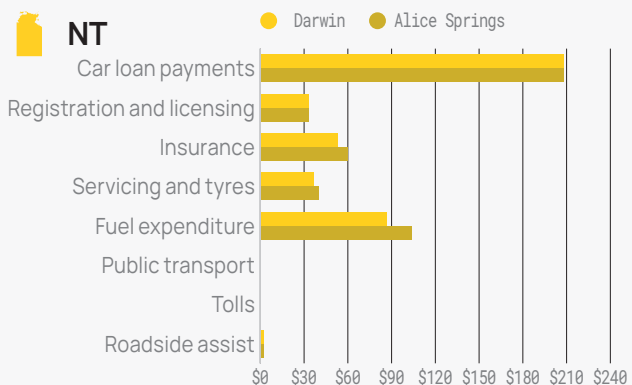
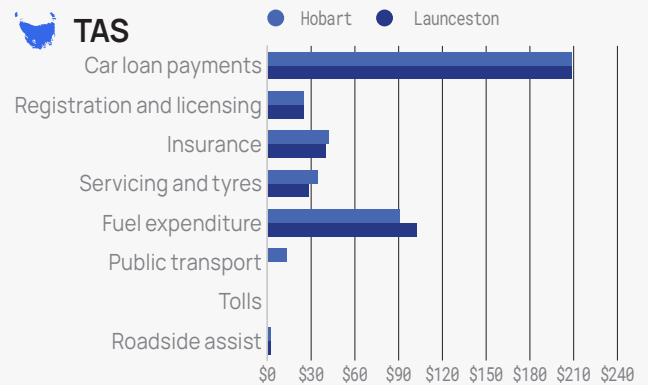
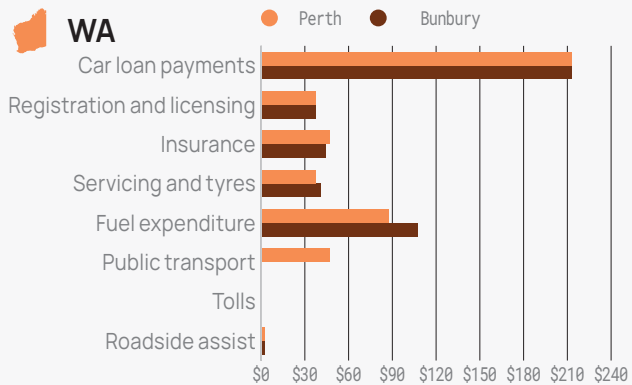
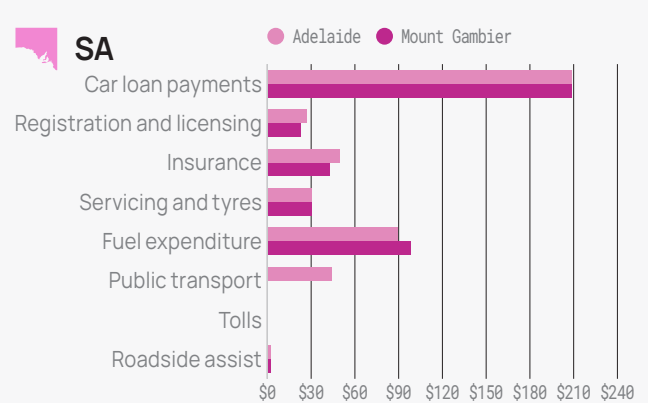
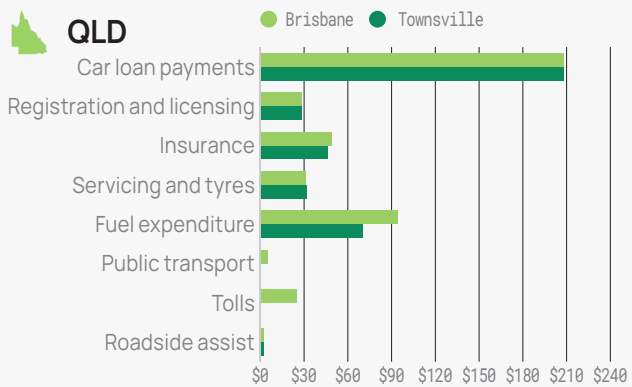
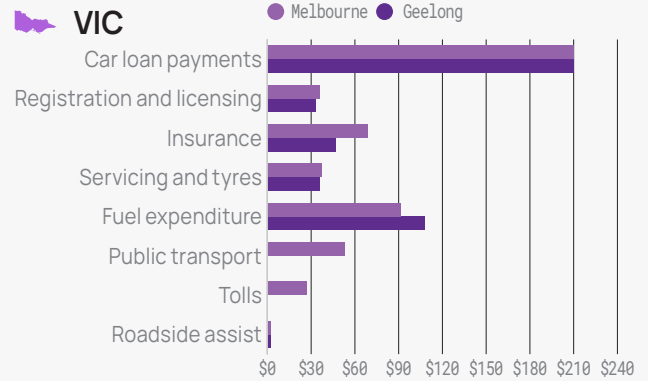
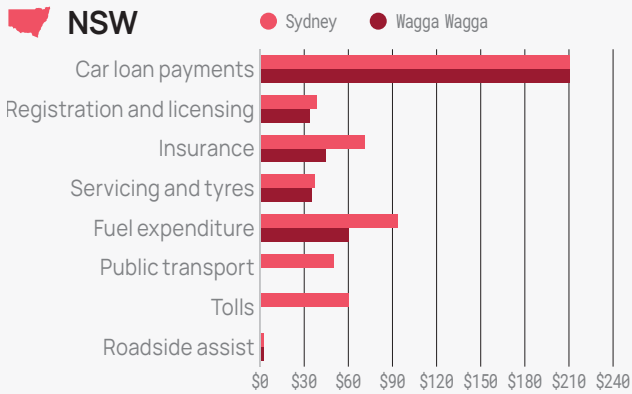
*Q3 figure amended

State by state overview

Capital city vs regional centre comparison

Per week

Per household





Sydney

In the December quarter, Sydney had Australia's highest transport costs. The typical Sydney household's transport costs are 7.2 per cent (\$1,968) higher than its counterpart in Melbourne, the second-most expensive capital city benchmark location.

Despite having the highest transport costs, Sydney's high incomes meant its typical household spent a slightly higher share of its income on transport than the capital city average - 16.3 per cent of income compared to 16.2 per cent.

Wagga Wagga

Townsville replaced Wagga Wagga as the benchmark regional centre with the lowest total transport costs but the NSW town retains its position as the most affordable benchmark location.

Its annualised typical household transport costs fell by \$172 as decreases in fuel expenditure and loan repayments (down \$122 and \$77 respectively) more than offset rises in other categories.

cost rank 1 / 8 Most expensive	affordability rank 3 / 8 Third-least affordable*
Total weekly transport costs \$564.18 ↓ - \$1.52 since Q3 2024	% of income 16.3% — Steady since Q3 2024

*by local purchasing power

cost rank 6 / 7 Second-least expensive	affordability rank 7 / 7 Most affordable*
Total weekly transport costs \$387.03 ↓ - \$3.32 since Q3 2024	% of income 12.2% ↓ - 0.1% since Q3 2024

*by local purchasing power

Changes in weekly transport costs

↑ Increased
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Servicing & tyres +\$0.52 Insurance +\$0.28 Rego, CTP & licensing +0.12
— Unchanged
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public transport Tolls Roadside assistance
↓ Decreased
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Car loan payments -\$1.49 Fuel expenditure -\$0.95

↑ Increased
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Servicing & tyres +\$0.51 Insurance +\$0.28
— Unchanged
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roadside assistance
↓ Decreased
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fuel expenditure -\$2.34 Car loan payments -\$1.49 Rego, CTP & licensing -\$0.28



Melbourne

In the December quarter, Melbourne remained Australia's second-most expensive benchmark location for transport.

The typical Melbourne household's annualised transport costs rose to \$27,369 – up \$16 from the previous quarter.

This was largely driven by scheduled quarterly indexation toll road costs (up \$126 annualised).

This increase in toll charges meant Melbourne overtook Brisbane to become the second-most expensive city for tolls.

Geelong

Geelong's annualised household transport costs fell by \$262 from the previous quarter, down to \$22,745.

This was driven by reduced fuel expenditure (down \$238) and car loan payments (down \$81).

Geelong remains the regional benchmark location with the highest fuel costs.

cost rank 2 / 8 Second-most expensive	affordability rank 2 / 8 Second-least affordable*
Total weekly transport costs \$526.33 ↑ + \$0.32 since Q3 2024	% of income 16.9% – Steady since Q3 2024

*by local purchasing power

cost rank 3 / 7 Third-most expensive	affordability rank 5 / 7 Third-most affordable*
Total weekly transport costs \$437.40 ↓ - \$5.05 since Q3 2024	% of income 14.6% ↓ - 0.2% since Q3 2024

*by local purchasing power

Changes in weekly transport costs

↑ Increased
Tolls +\$2.44
Insurance +\$1.07
Servicing & tyres +\$0.76
– Unchanged
Rego, CTP & licensing
Public transport
Roadside assistance
↓ Decreased
Fuel expenditure -2.39
Car loan payments -\$1.56

↑ Increased
Servicing & tyres +\$0.73
Insurance + \$0.37
– Unchanged
Rego, CTP & licensing
Roadside assistance
↓ Decreased
Fuel expenditure -\$4.59
Car loan payments -\$1.56



QLD transport costs

Per household

Brisbane

In the December quarter, the Brisbane typical household's annualised transport costs fell by \$84 – down to \$23,073.

Brisbane previously had Australia's most expensive public transport. But on 5 August 2024 the then Labor state government introduced 50 cent bus and train charges. In November, Queensland's new government confirmed it would retain the 50 cent fares.

With Brisbane's public transport fares remaining very low and Canberra's rising, Brisbane has replaced Canberra as the capital city with the most affordable transport.

Townsville

In the September quarter, the typical Townsville household's annualised transport costs fell by \$194 to a total of \$20,122.

This was driven by decreases in net fuel expenditure (down \$153) and car loan payments (down \$87).

Townsville became the benchmark regional centre with the least expensive total transport costs and remained the benchmark regional centre with the second-best local income-to-costs ratio.

cost rank 6 / 8 Third-least expensive	affordability rank 8 / 8 Most affordable*
Total weekly transport costs \$443.71 ↓ - \$1.61 since Q3 2024	% of income 14.8% ↓ - 0.1% since Q3 2024

*by local purchasing power

cost rank 7 / 7 Least expensive	affordability rank 6 / 7 Second-most affordable*
Total weekly transport costs \$386.97 ↓ - \$3.73 since Q3 2024	% of income 13.4% ↓ - 0.1% since Q3 2024

*by local purchasing power

Changes in weekly transport costs

↑ Increased
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⚙️ Servicing & tyres +\$0.84 👤 Insurance +\$0.34
– Unchanged
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📄 Rego, CTP & licensing 🚗 Public transport 💰 Tolls 🚚 Roadside assistance
↓ Decreased
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🚗 Car loan payments -\$1.67 🛢️ Fuel expenditure -\$1.12

↑ Increased
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⚙️ Servicing & tyres +\$0.85 👤 Insurance +\$0.04
– Unchanged
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 📄 Rego, CTP & licensing 🚚 Roadside assistance
↓ Decreased
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🛢️ Fuel expenditure -\$2.95 🚗 Car loan payments -\$1.67



SA transport costs

Per household

Adelaide

In the December quarter, Adelaide's annualised typical household transport costs fell by \$138 to a total of \$23,527.

Lower car loan repayments (down \$82) and net fuel expenditure (down \$70) offset some increases in other costs.

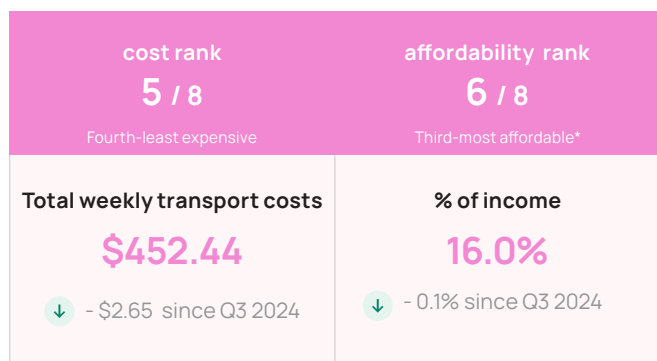
The Adelaide household's annualised comprehensive insurance also declined – down by \$16. Adelaide was the only capital where comprehensive insurance fees fell.

Mount Gambier

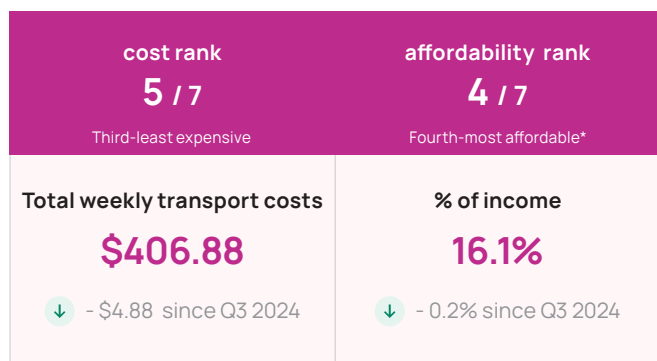
In the December quarter, Mount Gambier's annualised typical household transport costs fell to \$21,158 – down by \$254 from the previous quarter.

Reduced net fuel expenditure (down \$190 per year) more than offset some rises in other areas.

Mount Gambier remains the benchmark location with the least-expensive registration, CTP and licensing fees.

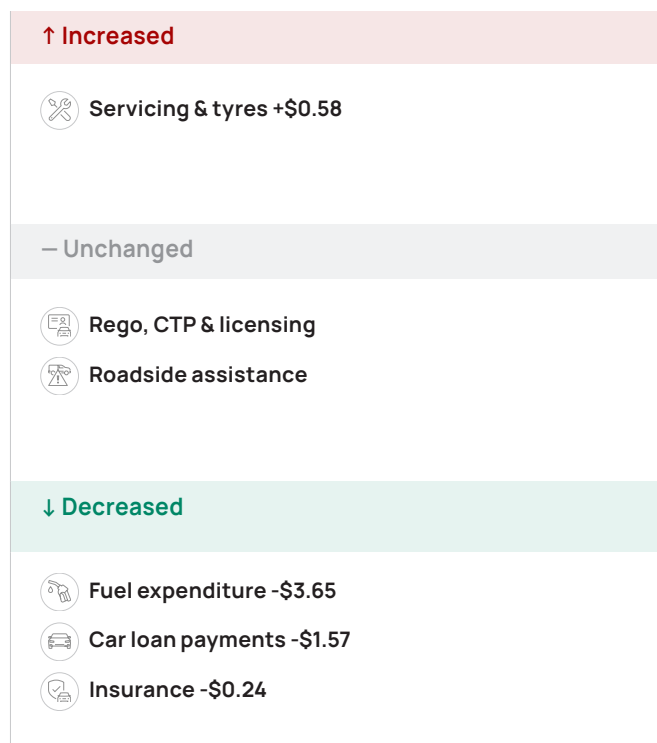
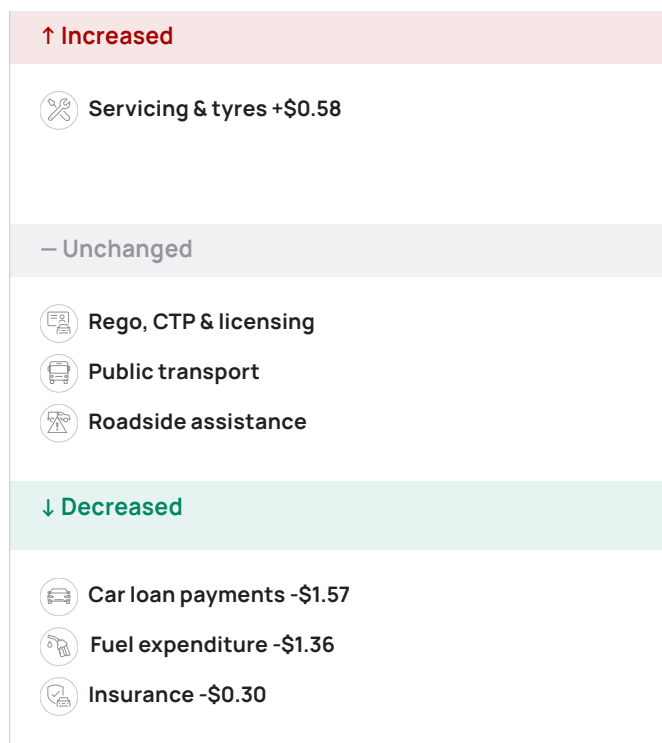


*by local purchasing power



*by local purchasing power

Changes in weekly transport costs



[Explore the interactive data](#) DATA.AAA.ASN.AU →



WA transport costs

Per household

Perth

In the December quarter, the typical Perth household's annualised transport costs fell by \$151 to a total of \$24,530.

This was largely driven by lower net fuel expenditure (down \$184).

Perth remains the city with Australia's most expensive car loan repayments. Perth has had the most expensive car loan payments since Q4 2022 when it overtook Sydney to become the capital with the highest costs in this category.

Bunbury

Bunbury's typical annualised household transport costs fell by \$200 to a total of \$23,137.

Lower fuel expenditure (down \$265) and car loan repayments (down \$60) offset increased costs in some other categories.

Bunbury remains the benchmark regional centre with the most expensive costs for car loan repayments; registration, CTP and licensing; and servicing and tyres. But it still has Australia's third-cheapest comprehensive insurance premiums.

cost rank 3 / 8 Third-most expensive	affordability rank 5 / 8 Fourth-most affordable*
Total weekly transport costs \$471.73 ↓ - \$2.91 since Q3 2024	% of income 16.0% ↓ - 0.1% since Q3 2024

*by local purchasing power

cost rank 2 / 7 Second-most expensive	affordability rank 3 / 7 Third-least affordable*
Total weekly transport costs \$444.94 ↓ - \$3.84 since Q3 2024	% of income 16.3% ↓ - 0.1% since Q3 2024

*by local purchasing power

Changes in weekly transport costs

↑ Increased
Insurance +\$1.47
Servicing & tyres +\$0.32
Roadside assistance +0.20
– Unchanged
Rego, CTP & licensing
Public transport
↓ Decreased
Fuel expenditure -\$3.54
Car loan payments -\$1.16

↑ Increased
Insurance + \$2.10
Servicing & tyres +\$0.32
– Unchanged
Rego, CTP & licensing
Roadside assistance
↓ Decreased
Fuel expenditure -\$5.10
Car loan payments -\$1.16



TAS transport costs

Per household

Hobart

Hobart's annualised typical household transport costs fell to \$21,742 – down \$71 from the previous quarter.

This was driven by lower car loan payments (down \$81) and lower fuel expenditure (down \$72).

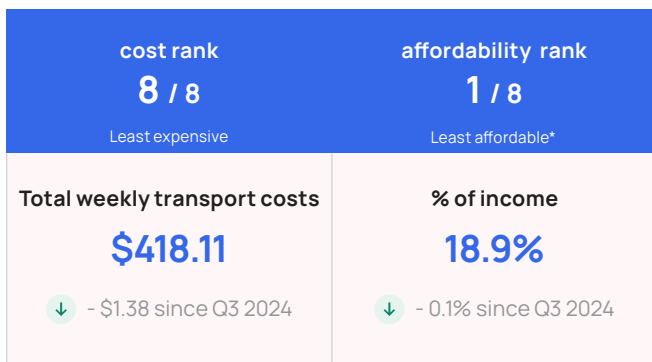
Hobart remained both the capital city with the lowest total transport costs and the one with the worst transport affordability (costs-to-income ratio).

Launceston

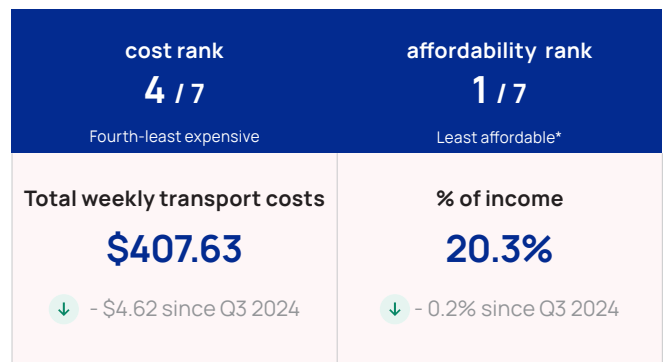
Launceston's annualised household transport costs fell by \$240 to \$21,197, largely driven by reduced fuel expenditure (down \$219).

Launceston again had the cheapest servicing and tyre costs, and comprehensive insurance premiums, among all benchmark locations. Despite this, Launceston is the overall least affordable benchmark location measured by the Index.

Launceston's typical household spent \$1,608 less on comprehensive insurance premiums than its Sydney counterpart.

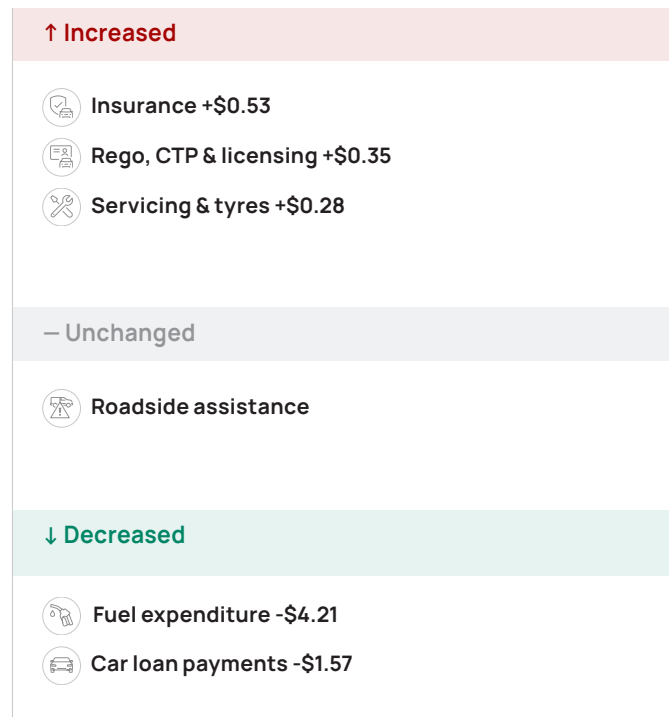
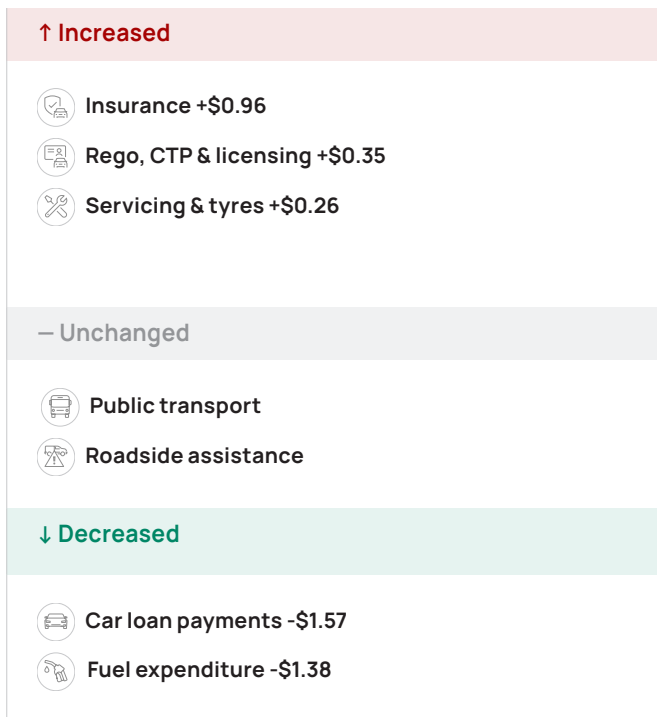


*by local purchasing power



*by local purchasing power

Changes in weekly transport costs





NT transport costs

Per household

Darwin

In the December quarter, Darwin's annualised typical household transport costs fell by \$137 to a total of \$21,869 per year.

This was mostly due to lower fuel expenditure (down \$207), which offset higher comprehensive insurance costs (up \$136). Darwin was the capital city with the largest increase in comprehensive insurance costs.

Darwin's free public bus services made it the capital with the cheapest public transport costs. During the quarter, the Northern Territory government announced it would extend this service until 30 June 2025.

Alice Springs

In the December quarter, Alice Springs' annualised transport costs fell to \$23,284 per year, down \$95 from the previous quarter.

Lower fuel expenditure (down \$217) offset increases to comprehensive insurance and servicing and tyres.

In the December quarter, Alice Springs remained the most expensive benchmark regional centre with annual transport costs \$147 higher than Bunbury (second-most expensive regional centre).

Alice Springs is the only benchmark location where insurance costs are higher than its capital city counterpart's.

cost rank 7 / 8 Second-least expensive	affordability rank 4 / 8 Fourth-least affordable*
Total weekly transport costs \$420.55 ↓ - \$2.65 since Q3 2024	% of income 16.3% ↓ - 0.1% since Q3 2024

*by local purchasing power

cost rank 1 / 7 Most expensive	affordability rank 2 / 7 Second-least affordable*
Total weekly transport costs \$447.77 ↓ - \$1.83 since Q3 2024	% of income 18.4% ↓ - 0.1% since Q3 2024

*by local purchasing power

Changes in weekly transport costs

↑ Increased
Insurance +\$2.62
Servicing & tyres +\$0.36
– Unchanged
Rego, CTP & licensing
Public transport
Roadside assistance
↓ Decreased
Fuel expenditure -\$3.98
Car loan payments -\$1.65

↑ Increased
Insurance +\$3.65
Servicing & tyres +\$0.36
– Unchanged
Rego, CTP & licensing
Roadside assistance
↓ Decreased
Fuel expenditure -\$4.19
Car loan payments -\$1.65



Canberra

In the December quarter, the typical Canberra household's annualised transport costs rose by \$1,165 to a total of \$24,445. This large increase was anticipated as the fee free transition from MyWay to the MyWay+ ticketing system was completed.

Despite this rise, the typical Canberra household's December quarter transport costs were lower than they were in the June quarter before the free fares were introduced - \$470.10 a week compared to \$478.52 a week. In Q4 2024, the household spent 14.8 per cent of its income on transport, down from 15.3 per cent in the June quarter and equivalent to its December 2023 transport costs-to-income ratio.

cost rank 4 / 8 Fourth-most expensive	affordability rank 7 / 8 Second-most affordable*
Total weekly transport costs \$470.10 ↑ + \$22.41 since Q3 2024	% of income 14.8% ↑ + 0.7% since Q3 2024

*by local purchasing power

Changes in weekly transport costs

↑ Increased
Public transport +\$25.76
Insurance +1.48
Servicing & tyres +\$0.48
- Unchanged
Rego, CTP & licensing
Roadside assistance
↓ Decreased
Fuel expenditure -\$3.85
Car loan payments -\$1.46

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 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).

As with any economic modelling, the Index is built on a series of assumptions. 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 with the ABS “basket of goods”, the Index can be updated over time to reflect the changing patterns of Australian households and their transport options and choices.

In the Q3 2024 release, the typical Brisbane and Melbourne households’ assumed use of toll roads were changed from five return trips to two return trips each week to align them with the Sydney household. In addition, the method of calculating comprehensive car insurance costs was broadened to cover substantially more data points from market leading insurers. To enable comparisons, adjustments have been made to the corresponding Q2 2024 costs.

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, fuel prices and insurance costs).

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. Both are employed full time and commute each weekday to workplaces in or near their city or town’s CBD. ¹
- Has two mid-range, high selling cars – a near-new car financed with a variable-rate car loan and an older car owned outright. Both vehicles are roadworthy and registered.
- Has comprehensive car insurance from market leading insurers.
- 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.

¹ Additional characteristics are considered for the purpose of calculating insurance costs.

*“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 twice a week to travel to and from work.



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 similar ages to the average ages in the hypothetical city household; have a reasonable proportion of detached housing; and have a substantial proportion of households with couples and 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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