Owning a pet comes with many financial responsibilities. On average, annual vet expenses alone are estimated to cost close to $400 for dogs and around $270 for cats – and that's before you factor in medications, surgery and emergency treatment.

* Giant dog breeds – Great Dane, Irish Wolfhound
* Large dog breeds – German Shepherd, Golden Retriever
* Medium dog breeds – Staffordshire Bull Terrier, Labrador
* Small dog breeds – Cavalier King Charles Spaniel, Pug

[Great Dane and the Irish Wolfhound](https://www.canstar.com.au/pet-insurance/dog-insurance-premiums/), are the most expensive to insure at all ages from puppyhood (<1 year old) up to 6 years old, with Great Danes surpassing the Irish Wolfhound at 7 years old.

The second most expensive breed is the humble Labrador. Perhaps it’s their propensity to swallow foreign objects – things like sticks, bones, and toys can all disappear down the throat. This can lead to a correspondingly high incidence of vomiting, dehydration, diarrhoea and surgery to remove those objects.

A screenshot of a screen

Description automatically generated

A table with numbers and percentages

Description automatically generated

[How Breed Affects Pet Insurance Costs | LendEDU](https://lendedu.com/blog/pet-insurance-rates-by-breed/#:~:text=Why%20breed%20is%20a%20factor%20in%20determining%20your%20premium.%20An)

The size of your pet doesn’t always lead to higher premiums. French Bulldogs and standard Bulldogs were both pricier to insure than German Shepherds and Retrievers.

1. [Breed](https://www.petinsuranceu.com/does-breed-matter-for-pet-insurance/#:~:text=The%20premium%20amount%20will%20depend%20on%20various%20factors%20such%20as)

Each breed has its own set of hereditary health risks, and these risks can vary significantly. Some breeds may be prone to joint issues, causing them to develop conditions like hip dysplasia or arthritis as they age. On the other hand, certain breeds may be more susceptible to respiratory problems, such as brachycephalic airway syndrome, which can lead to breathing difficulties and chronic snoring. Additionally, some breeds have a higher predisposition to certain types of cancer, making regular check-ups and early detection crucial for their well-being.

Inbreeding may result in a higher risk of congenital defects or hereditary conditions. Full-breed French Bulldogs, for instance, are [more prone to congenital heart disease](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7384636/) than many other breeds.

Though mixed-breed dogs live in all types of households, they are more likely found in lower-income households earning less than $100,000 per annum (43% vs 34% of households earning $100,000+). Their owners are also more likely to be not employed (e.g. unemployed, home duties, studying or retired - 46% vs 35% of people in employment) or receiving social security benefits (e.g. pensions - 46% vs 35%).

1. [Age](https://www.canstar.com.au/pet-insurance/dog-insurance-premiums/)

Apart from breed, dogs seemed to cost roughly the same to insure, with the difference in cost being based on age, not breed. The premiums reflect the fact that younger pets are more prone to getting into accidents, compared to older pets who are bigger, more coordinated, and hopefully more well-trained.

A close-up of a text

Description automatically generated

1. Coverage: excess & contribution
2. De-sexing

Health benefits

* De-sexed animals generally live longer, healthier lives;
* Reduced risk of cancer and other diseases affecting the reproductive organs; and
* Reductions in the frequency of pregnancy and therefore the need to raise litters which can cause exhaustion in female cats and dogs.

Behavioural benefits

* Less likely to run away, wander, get into fights or get injured;
* Less likely to suffer from anti-social behaviour

Cost remains the top reason for not purchasing insurance - particularly those with lower household incomes or older owners.

As noted in past reports, the propensity to insure dogs is linked to the following traits:

* City living (34% among those living in the inner city, falling to 8% among those living in regional or rural areas);
* Higher household incomes (24% of those earning $100,000 or more per annum vs 13% of those on lower incomes);
* Higher education levels (23% with university qualifications vs 12% without);
* Being younger (22% of Gen Z and Millennials vs 13% of those over the age of 40);
* Being employed (21% vs 9% of the rest of the population); and
* Prior experience with pets (20% less experienced owners vs 14% more experienced owners).

Cats and dogs are a big personal and financial commitment. With over 28.7 million of pet population, Australian households spend [over $33 billion](https://animalmedicinesaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/AMAU008-Pet-Ownership22-Report_v1.6_WEB.pdf) on pets annually and vet expenses make up 14% of that amount.

Based on the research in 2022, purebred dogs are the most common type in Australia (44%), followed by mixed-bred dogs (39%) and designer dogs (17%).