

Media release

The cost of 9am – 5pm; Australians spend a whopping \$39 billion a year being work-ready

- Research from ING DIRECT has revealed Australian employees spend an average of \$591 a month on going to work
- The biggest expense for workers is travel to and from their job, with Australians forking out an average of \$179 a month
- This is followed by the amount spent on lunches; \$129 on average per month
- Victorians shell out the most on being work-ready, spending on average \$663 per month

20 January, 2017: New research from ING DIRECT has revealed Australian employees are spending a whopping \$39 billion per year on going to work. Workers spend an average of \$7,094 each per annum after tax to be work-ready. This includes travel costs and the amount spent on work clothes, lunches, coffees, grooming and parking - equivalent to 8.7% of the average Australian wage¹.

The ING DIRECT 'Cost of Going to Work' report found employees spend the most travelling to and from the workplace, forking out an average of \$179 per month on transport costs. This is followed by the amount workers spend on lunch at \$129 per month.

Other costs involved in going to work each month include:

- Coffees/energy drinks: \$74
- Work clothes: \$37
- Work-related grooming: \$34
- Parking: \$16

John Arnott, Executive Director, Customers, at ING DIRECT, says Australians need to be mindful of the little costs that can add up.

“We’re a nation of hard workers, but the expenses that come with going to work can add up. From the cost of the daily commute, to barista coffees, take-away lunches, work-related grooming and work attire – a lot of the time we simply don’t consider the impact these expenses can have on our bank balance month-to-month,” he said.

“By being aware of how these costs can add up and taking proactive measures to switch habits, Australians can ensure they save more of their hard earned cash for themselves rather than spending it on actually going to work. For example, use public transport to avoid tolls and parking costs, or strategically shop for work attire by hitting the shops in the sales. Simple switches can make a big difference to your bank balance each month.”

¹ Based on average Australian wage according to [Living In Australia](#)

Victorians shell out the most on being work ready

The cost of work is higher for Victorians, who spend an average of \$663 per month, followed by NSW residents (\$622 per month). This is some \$120 more each week than Queenslanders (\$503 per month) and Western Australians (\$502 per month).

Millennials the biggest spenders

Gen Y workers spend twice as much as Baby Boomers on expenses, racking up an average of \$794 per month, or \$9,528 per annum – equivalent to 11.6% of the average Australian wage. In comparison, Baby Boomers spend just \$320 per month.

Millennials are clear caffeine fiends, sipping on almost \$100 worth of coffees or energy drinks each month. Baby Boomers, on the other hand, only spend \$46 on their monthly caffeine fix.

To help Aussies keep the costs associated with going to work at a minimum, John Arnott from ING DIRECT has shared four top tips to help save hard earned cash:

1. When it comes to the daily cup of barista-made coffee, look for ways to get the same value for a better price. Is there another coffee shop slightly further down the road that sells your soy cappuccino for cheaper? Alternatively, could you switch your regular sized cup to a small? If that's too much, do you have a group of coffee-loving colleagues who could pull together to purchase an espresso machine for the office to save money over the long term? Of course, we all love our coffee and have our favorite coffee spot, but if you're opting for your favourite cup of barista made coffee on a daily basis, you'll be racking up almost \$900 a year. By looking at the alternatives, you could be making significant cost savings over the long run.
2. Plan ahead and pack a lunch. We get it, sometimes it's just more convenient to pop to the café around the corner and pick up lunch than it is to make your own. However, by planning ahead and setting some time aside at the start of the week to make packed lunches, or by making enough dinner to have leftovers for lunch, you could save on the yearly average cost of \$1,548 for buying lunch out. That's equivalent to the cost of an additional holiday away!
3. Catch public transport to reduce the nasty hidden tolls. While driving can be more convenient, with it comes costs that quickly add up: petrol, tolls and parking. Switch to public transport to avoid these expenses. Equally, if you already use public transport, why not try walking, jogging or cycling to work? With the sunny summer weather and light mornings, there's no better time of the year to give this a go.
4. Predict and take advantage of the routine sales to purchase work attire. Our research shows that almost all Australian employees (91%) either definitely feel, or at least sometimes feel, the pressure to dress up or wear good clothes for work, such as business shirt or tie for men, or smart dress, suit or high heels for women. With the pressure to look good, Australians can find themselves purchasing clothing items for work on a regular basis. Try to be more strategic; map out periods in the year when sales hit and stock up on work wardrobe essentials at these times.

-ENDS-

Notes to editors:

The research was conducted by Galaxy Research on behalf of ING DIRECT in December 2016 and comprised an online poll of over 1,000 respondents.

To calculate the national spend, the individual spend in each category was converted to monthly spend, multiplied by 12 for each respondent (to get annual spend), then summed and averaged across all respondents, before being projected to the population using ABS latest population estimates.

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About ING DIRECT

ING DIRECT changed the way Australians bank 18 years ago by launching the country's first high interest, fee free online savings account. Since then, we've brought this low fee value to home loans, transactional banking and superannuation.

With over 1.6 million customers – and \$34 billion in savings and \$40 billion in mortgages – ING DIRECT has the highest Net Promoter Score of any bank.

Australia's most recommended bank.

Source: Nielsen Consumer & Media View Mar '16 – Aug '16 (n=10,597) when compared by customers of 14 other banks operating in Australia.