



Wednesday 17 December 2025

Revealed: Australia's festive parking personalities and the worst car parks for Christmas crashes

- **New AAMI data lifts the lid on who we become behind the wheel at Christmas**
- **Doncaster in Melbourne revealed as Australia's worst car park prang hotspot**
- **Rogue trolleys and bollards identified as common causes for car park prangs, with most accidents occurring on a Friday**

The silly season has officially hit Australia's shopping centre car parks, and new research from AAMI shows we take on some very distinctive alter egos when hunting for that prized parking space.

AAMI's national survey has identified five festive car park personas driving chaos in shopping centres throughout the country:

- **The Traditionalist** (40 per cent) - heads straight to the same level or section every time. Routines = results.
- **The Santa Stalker** (27 per cent) - quietly follows a shopper to their car, then swoops in like the spot was a present meant for them. A wave or a smile sometimes seals the deal.
- **The Christmas Miracle** (24 per cent) - somehow always lands a park, no matter how packed it is. Is it pure luck, Christmas magic or a bit of both?
- **The Christmas Spendthrift** (6 per cent) - pays for convenience: valet, premium parking or the car wash secures a guaranteed spot and buy a little festive peace of mind.
- **The Naughty-List Driver** (4 per cent) - desperate times call for desperate, and slightly questionable, measures. After circling endlessly, slips into a 'parents with prams', restricted spot or even a median strip... securing a car park, but also a spot on Santa's Naughty List.

Car park chaos: the data

Analysis of over 17,300 car park insurance claims lodged nationally between 1 September 2024 and 31 August 2025 found:

- The worst location for car park prangs in Australia is Doncaster in Melbourne's east, followed by Chadstone in Melbourne's south-east.

The top suburbs for car park collisions in each state and territory are:

VIC	NSW	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT
Doncaster	Chatswood	Maroochydore	Innaloo	Modbury	Kingston	Belconnen	Alice Springs

- **December** is the worst month for shopping centre car park collisions (1,876).
- **Top causes:** accidental damage while parked (40 per cent) and collisions with stationary objects such as bollards or trolleys (24 per cent).
- **Peak days:** Fridays are the riskiest, with Thursday and Saturday also busy – Sunday is the safest day to shop.
- **Peak times:** the afternoon (12.00pm- 4.00pm) sees the highest number of incidents.

Comments attributable to AAMI Motor Claims Manager, Leah James



"The festive rush turns shopping centre car parks into a real battleground - think last-minute gift runs, distracted shoppers and a whole lot of circling. It's no surprise we see so many fender-benders at this time of year," Ms James said.

"This season, we also flag the rise of electric and hybrid vehicles as a safety issue. They're much quieter than conventional cars, so pedestrians and other drivers may not hear them approaching or reversing - especially in dimly lit car parks."

"Whatever your car park personality the simplest way to avoid becoming a Christmas car park statistic is to slow down, be patient and stay focused."

AAMI's Top Tips for avoiding a car park prang and having a joyful festive season:

- **Check it twice:** Watch for cars moving in and out and look for reversing lights. Double check your blind spots.
- **Silent night:** Put the phone away and avoid distractions while navigating crowded car parks.
- **Better watch out:** Take particular care to watch out for children and other pedestrians, especially when reversing. If you drive an EV, be mindful that your car is silent.
- **Joy to the World:** courtesy goes a long way - embrace the festive spirit and don't let your temper get the better of you - and make you act in ways you may regret.
- **Bump in the night:** Like Santa delivering presents under the dark of night, be mindful of stationary objects including pillars and trolleys.
- **Make spirits bright:** Use headlights in darker underground or multi-level car parks to boost visibility for yourself and others.

Car Park Prang Hot Spots Around Australia

Victoria

Top three suburbs:	1. Doncaster
	2. Chadstone
	3. Ringwood
Worst day:	Friday
Worst time:	Afternoon (12pm - 4:00pm)

New South Wales

Top three suburbs:	1. Chatswood
	2. Campbelltown
	3. Brookvale
Worst day:	Friday
Worst time:	Afternoon (12pm - 4:00pm)

Queensland

Top three suburbs:	1. Maroochydore
	2. Carindale
	3. Indooroopilly
Worst day:	Thursday
Worst time:	Afternoon (12pm - 4:00pm)



South Australia

Top three suburbs:	1. Modbury
	2. Oaklands Park
	3. Marion
Worst day:	Thursday
Worst time:	Afternoon (12pm - 4:00pm)

Western Australia

Top three suburbs:	1. Innaloo
	2. Booragoon
	3. Mandurah
Worst day:	Wednesday & Saturday
Worst time:	Afternoon (12pm - 4:00pm)

Australian Capital Territory

Top three suburbs:	1. Belconnen
	2. Gungahlin
	3. Tuggeranong
Worst day:	Friday
Worst time:	Afternoon (12pm - 4:00pm)

Tasmania

Top three suburbs:	1. Kingston
	2. Glenorchy
	3. Devonport
Worst day:	Thursday
Worst time:	Afternoon (12pm - 4:00pm)

Northern Territory

Top three suburbs:	1. Alice Springs
	2. Palmerston
	3. Darwin
Worst day:	Saturday
Worst time:	Afternoon (12pm-4.00pm)

Notes to Editor

Claims data collected from AAI Limited trading as AAMI. Data sourced from motor insurance claims from AAI Limited's portfolio of brands from 1 September 2024 – 31 August 2025.

The research findings were compiled through a national survey with a representative sample of 2,005 Australian car drivers aged 18+ and was conducted by Pure Profile from 1-28 November 2025 on behalf of AAMI. (State specific stats are available on request).

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