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Car-park prangs spike during festive period

Analysis of over 21,000 AAMI car-park insurance claims across the country from 1 December 2021 to 30 November 2022 revealed:

- The highest number of shopping centre car-park collisions occurred in December (2,513), followed closely by January (1,881).
- There were around 39 per cent more car park crashes in December than the monthly average for the 12 months to 30 November 2022.
- The Melbourne suburb of Doncaster, home to one of the biggest shopping centres in Victoria, is Australia’s worst hotspot for car park collisions.
- The worst suburbs for car park collisions in each state are:

State	Suburb	Shopping centres
VIC	Doncaster	Westfield Doncaster
NSW	Chatswood	Westfield Chatswood
QLD	Mackay	Caneland Central
TAS	Kingston	Kingston Town
ACT	Belconnen	Westfield Belconnen
WA	Innaloo	Westfield Innaloo
SA	Modbury	Westfield Tea Tree Plaza
NT	Casuarina	Casuarina Square

- Thursday, followed closely by Friday, is the worst day of the week for shopping centre car park collisions across the year.
- The afternoon, between 12.00pm and 4.00pm is the worst time of day for crashes in shopping centre car parks.
- More than a third (42 per cent) of shopping centre car park collisions included accidental damage to an insured driver’s vehicle while parked and they were away from the vehicle, such as car door dings.
- Almost a quarter (24 per cent) of shopping centre car park collisions involved an insured driver hitting a stationary object such as a bollard, shopping trolley or pillar/wall.
- 22 per cent of shopping centre car park collisions occurred when at least one driver was reversing.
- One in ten shopping centre car park collisions involved an insured driver hitting a parked car.
- Female drivers and drivers aged 50 and over are the most likely to find themselves in a car park collision.

New AAMI research found some interesting insights on driving behaviours in car parks:

- Over half of Australians (52 per cent) find car parks are the most stressful during Christmas time, followed by Boxing Day (29 per cent).



- To create a less stressful environment in shopping centre car parks during peak times like Christmas:
 - o Almost half of Australians (47 per cent) drive slower.
 - o 42 per cent of Aussies will shop when it's quieter.
 - o Almost one fifth (18 per cent) of Australians are shopping online to avoid the stress of shopping centre car parks.
- Of those who have been involved in a car park accident or a near miss, including coming back to their car to see it damaged:
 - o Around a quarter believe the cause was another driver's bad driving and not their fault.
 - o One in ten blame trolleys or other items being left around the car park.
 - o Almost one in five (17 per cent) now park away from other vehicles, trolley collection points and bollards, however 14 per cent have not changed or altered their behaviour as they believe accidents just happen.
- When it comes to car park etiquette, the majority of Australians (59 per cent) say they would leave a note – regardless of how bad the damage was if they accidentally hit someone's car in a car park and no one saw.
 - o Just under a quarter (22 per cent) would only leave a note if the damage was bad, while 14 per cent could not guarantee they would leave a note.
 - o 6 per cent of Aussie motorists would not own up to nudging a parked car and would drive away without leaving a note.

AAMI Executive Manager of Assessing Coordination and Towing, Cameron McInnes said:

"It's the busiest time of the year for shopping centres, and trying to find that elusive car park can be a nightmare.

"If you plan on heading out to the shops – whether because you've missed out on shipping deadlines for online orders, or you simply prefer to shop in-store for those last-minute gifts, be prepared to battle it out for a car park with other Christmas shoppers," warned Mr McInnes.

"Typically – outside of the Christmas craziness, drivers expect to find a car park within 3-5 minutes. However, during the festive period – when car parks are busy, we find that nabbing that elusive car park can easily take upwards of 5-7 minutes.

"And the longer it takes to find a car park, the more frustrated we become – and the higher the chances are of being involved in a car park prang.

"As difficult as it may seem, our message to drivers this silly season who find themselves doing laps of the shopping centre car park is to stay calm, and avoid letting your emotions and impatience get the better of you.

"I know from experience that it is easier said than done, but if we don't keep these things in check, things can quickly escalate to driving erratically – which as we are all unfortunately too aware, is when and how accidents happen."



AAMI’s Top Tips for a prang-free parking experience:

- Take your time when parking or reversing out of a car space.
- Take particular care to watch out for children, especially when reversing.
- Watch out for stationary objects including pillars and trolleys.
- Obey the car park signage on speed limits and directional arrows.
- Don’t let impatience get the better of you and make sure you keep a safe distance between you and the car in front or reversing.
- Resist the urge to park quickly, particularly in shopping centre car parks where turning circles are a lot tighter.
- Avoid peak-times for shopping to avoid the crowds and increase your chances of finding a car park quickly.

Notes to Editor

Top 3 hotspots and insights for car park collisions in each state are:

Victoria		New South Wales	
Top Suburbs	1. Doncaster	Top Suburbs	1. Chatswood
	2. Ringwood		2. Miranda
	3. Chadstone		3. Brookvale
Most common Accident Type	Accidental damage while parked	Most common Accident Type	Accidental damage while parked
Worst Day	Saturday	Worst Day	Friday
Worst Time	Afternoon	Worst Time	Afternoon
Worst drivers	Females and drivers aged over 50 years	Worst drivers	Females and drivers aged over 50 years

Queensland		Western Australia	
Top Suburbs	1. Mackay	Top Suburbs	1. Innaloo
	2. Maroochydore		2. Baldivis
	3. Indooroopilly		3. Midland
Most common Accident Type	Accidental damage while parked	Most common Accident Type	Accidental damage while parked
Worst Day	Thursday	Worst Day	Friday
Worst Time	Afternoon	Worst Time	Afternoon
Worst drivers	Females and drivers aged over 50 years	Worst drivers	Females and drivers aged over 50 years



ACT		South Australia	
Top Suburbs	1. Belconnen	Top Suburbs	1. Modbury
	2. Gungahlin		2. Munno Para
	3. Greenway		3. Oaklands Park
Most common Accident Type	Accidental damage while parked	Most common Accident Type	Accidental damage while parked
Worst Day	Friday	Worst Day	Thursday
Worst Time	Afternoon	Worst Time	Afternoon
Worst drivers	Female drivers and those aged over 50 years	Worst drivers	Female drivers and those aged over 50 years

Tasmania		Northern Territory	
Top Suburbs	1. Kingston	Top Suburbs	1. Casuarina
	2. Glenorchy		2. Palmerston
	3. Launceston		3. Yarrowonga
Most common Accident Type	Accidental damage while parked	Most common Accident Type	Accidental damage while parked
Worst Day	Friday	Worst Day	Saturday
Worst Time	Afternoon	Worst Time	Afternoon
Worst drivers	Female drivers and those aged over 50 years	Worst drivers	Female drivers and those aged over 50 years

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Notes to Editor

The research findings were compiled through a national survey with a representative sample of 1,000 Australians aged 18+ and was conducted by Kantar in November 2022 on behalf of AAMI.

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