



Wealth Building

Report 2026

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Key Statistics

**1.63
million**

is the net wealth of the average Aussie household.

57%

of Australians still keep their retirement savings in a default superannuation fund

33%

of Australian investors say their biggest financial regret is not starting to invest earlier

73%

of household net wealth is held in property and super

Investors who **started investing** in their **20s** have **67% more wealth** than those who **started** in their **40s**

41%

of investors received financial gifts or loans from family

3 in 5

of Millennial investors are using AI tools for financial decisions or investing

Introduction

Australia is wealthier than ever. For the 13th consecutive year, the net wealth of Australian households has grown, now sitting at \$1.63 million.

This represents a spectacular rise of 208% since 2004.

Average household net wealth

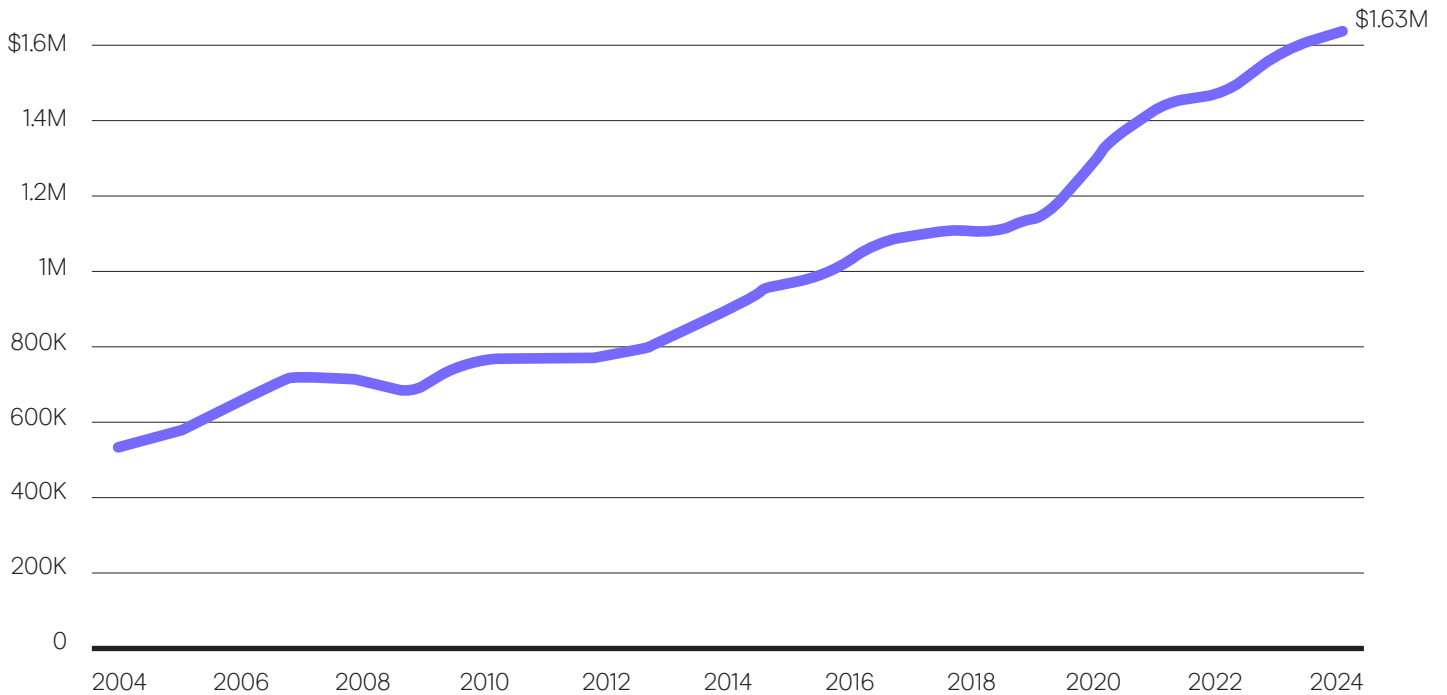


Chart: Finder • Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Finder

However, this rise in wealth hasn't been felt by everyone. This report examines the behaviours of investors and reveals important insights for Australians who want to grow their wealth.

In the following pages, we compare two data sources. Finder's Consumer Sentiment Tracker (CST) is an ongoing survey project examining the average Australian consumer and has been running since 2020. Finder's Wealth Report Survey is a specially commissioned survey of 1,001 Australians with an investment outside of superannuation, high-interest savings and their principal place of residence (PPOR). Comparing the responses of these two groups allows us to identify the behaviours key to growing wealth.



The wealth risk: concentration

Australians have 73% of their wealth tied up in property and superannuation. Both the property and stock markets have experienced significant growth over the last five years, meaning consumers without these assets have effectively missed out on the recent

boom. While those with exposure have benefited, it also means those with significant wealth are increasing their concentration risk. Diversification remains a challenge for many households when the two largest asset classes dominate the national balance sheet.

Percentage of net wealth held in property and super

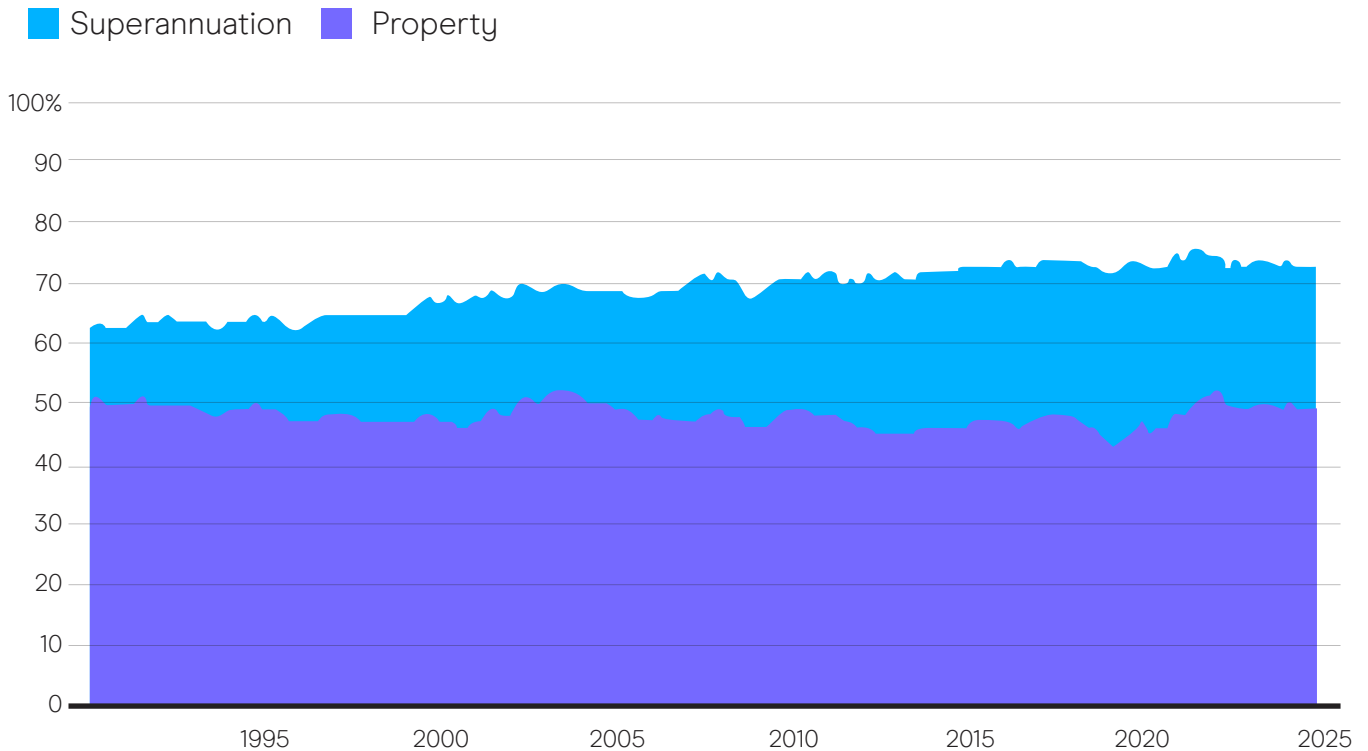


Chart: Finder • Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) National Accounts

Many Australians believe there is no risk in having the majority of their wealth tied up in superannuation and property. Local real estate has long been viewed as the ultimate safe bet, giving rise to the popular belief that the asset class is “safe as houses”. However, that phrase is no longer used in countries that felt the full impact of the Global Financial Crisis and resulting long-standing property market crashes, such as Ireland.

While superannuation and property are typically seen as too big to fail, this assumption has been questioned recently. More than \$1 billion in super was lost in the collapses of the First Guardian and Shield investment funds

in 2025. Meanwhile, last year in New Zealand property prices fell back to the same levels they were in 2019, wiping significant wealth from the balance sheet of everyday New Zealanders.

If similar property price drops happened in Australia, the average household would see roughly half of its wealth return to the same level it was 5 years ago. This would be a significant setback.

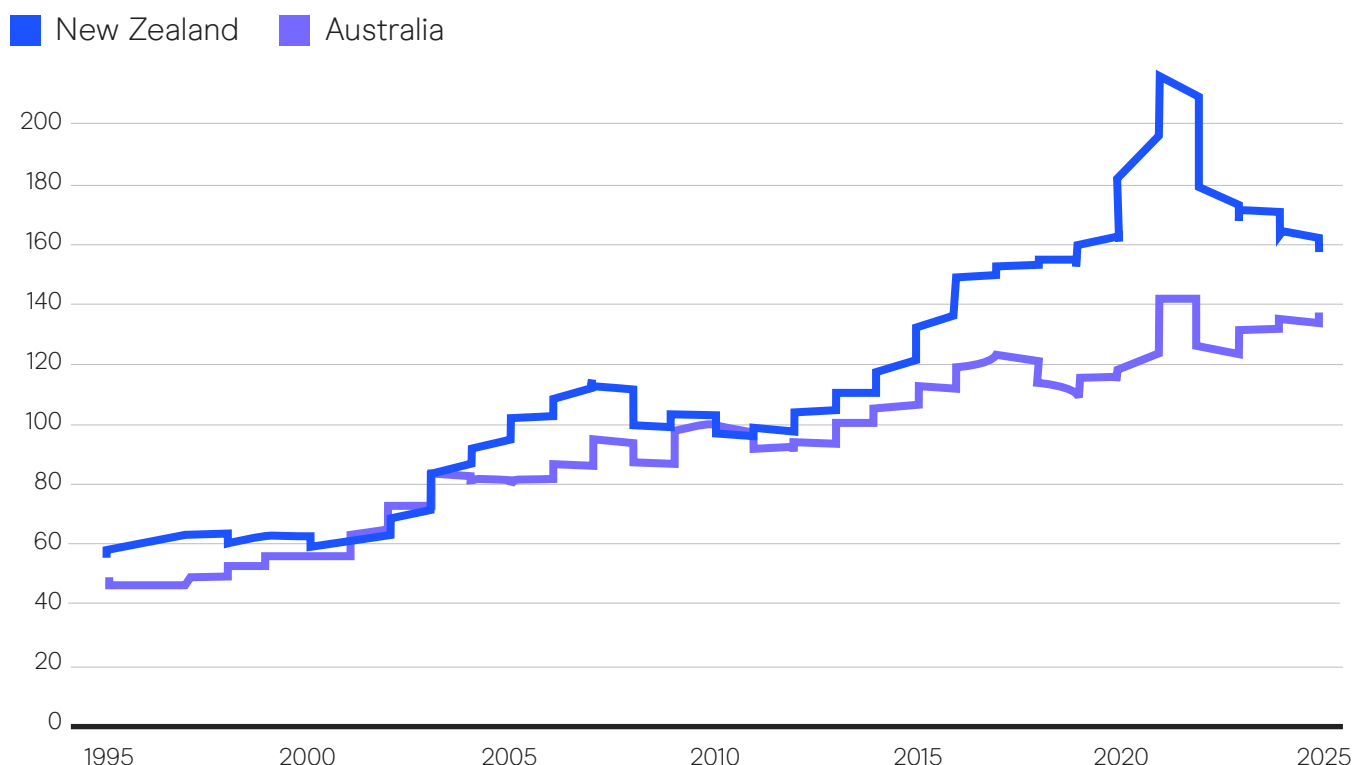
New Zealand property shares many similarities with Australian real estate. The sharp drop in prices was created by a confluence of factors as reported by media^{4,5}:

- Subdued investor demand due to tax changes, most notably, ending negative gearing
- Increased housing supply, caused by rezoning from low to medium-density
- Higher interest rates, which lowered affordability and reduced demand

The Australian market is susceptible to all these factors. Proposed changes to tax breaks

for property investors have gained traction over the past two years due to extreme housing affordability issues. At the same time, interest rate cuts are expected to be off the table for at least the next 6 to 12 months. Following the RBA's 25-basis-point hike in February 2026, most economists from the big four banks are now predicting at least one more rate rise this year.

Real residential property prices in Australia and NZ



Index: 2010=100

Chart: Finder: Finder • Source: Federal Reserve Bank Of St Louis (FRED)

Investors are getting ahead of this risk by diversifying their assets. They are three times more likely than non-investors (36% vs 12%) to have money in alternative investments like bonds, cryptocurrency or private companies, according to Finder data.

Interestingly, investors are also using simple strategies to protect their wealth, like putting more emphasis on savings. Only 58% of average Aussies say they have money saved, while 84% of investors do.



What are the main contributors to investors' growing wealth?

As we explored in the 2024 Wealth Building Report, the main contributors to wealth for investors were and continue to be the fundamental habits of budgeting, cutting back on expenses and investing frequently.

However, the drivers of wealth shift depending on the age of the investor. For example, more than twice as many Millennials as Gen Xers say working in a high-paying field has contributed the most to their net wealth (13% vs 5%).

This makes sense as the average Millennial is currently navigating the most expensive stage of their life with many raising children and trying to buy their first property. Any extra income helps put them ahead of their peers.

Conversely, Gen X places a greater emphasis on paying off debt. It was cited as the main wealth driver for 11% of Gen Xers compared to just 7% of Millennials.



The second-best time to start investing is now

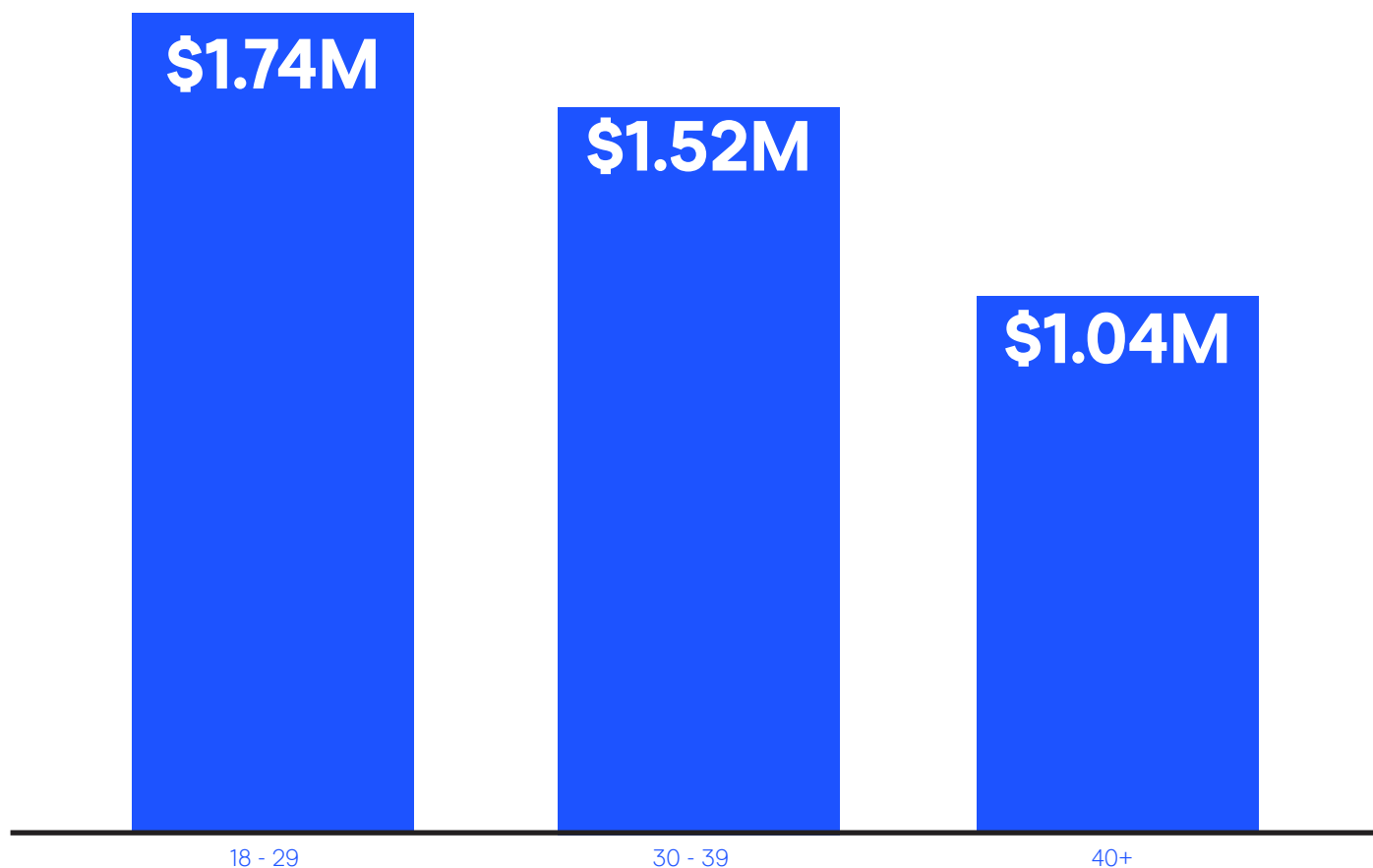
Not investing earlier in life is the most common regret among investors. One-third (33%) of investors share this sentiment, while the next most common regret is passing up on an investment (17%). Finder's analysis of the reported net wealth of 1,000 investors reveals a significant financial justification for this regret.

Mature investors, defined as those aged 40 or older, who began their investment journey in their 20s hold a substantially higher net wealth

compared to those who started in their 40s.

The average net wealth of a mature investor who started investing aged 20 is \$1.74 million. For those who began in their 30s, the figure is \$1.52 million, while those who started in their 40s have an average net wealth of \$1 million. This data serves to prove the long-held belief in investment communities that 'time in the market' is more important than 'timing the market'.

Average net wealth of investors by age of first investment



Only includes investors who are aged 40 years or older

Chart: Finder Source: Finder Wealth Survey 2026

How to get started investing?

Many high-net wealth individuals engage professionals to manage and offer guidance on their investment decisions. Unfortunately, affordable access to these professional investors isn't always available to those who don't have the means to pay several thousand dollars per year in fees and commissions.

The typical minimum investment is also \$50,000 and in some cases, you have to pass a sophisticated investor test which requires at least \$2.5 million in net assets or \$250,000 in gross income over the past two years.

However, every Australian can access broader investment opportunities simply by investing in their superannuation. Australian super funds pay an entire team of professional investors to manage their customers' money. Their whole job is to maximise the returns you get, while minimising the risk of you losing money.

While 74% of Australians – equivalent to 15.8 million people – have superannuation, a much smaller percentage actively engage with their super.

- 18% don't know how their super has performed over the past 12 months. This is highest among Gen Z, with 24% unaware of their super fund's performance.

- A shocking 39% are still with the default superannuation fund from their first employer and a further 18% are with the default fund from their current employer. That's 57% of Australians who have their retirement savings with a default super fund.
- And 21% of those with super, roughly 4 million Australians, have 2 or more super accounts. These Aussies are paying multiple sets of fees.

Distinguishing between those who ignore their super and those who engage with it is important, because the financial impacts of disregarding super can be significant.

Over 2 in 5 (41%) wealthy investors* make additional super contributions on top of the regular payments from their employer. This is much higher than the average Australian, where only 33% of average Australians make additional super contributions.

For example: A 30-year old who increases their individual contributions by \$5,000 a year (equivalent to \$96 per week) until retirement age, could have an extra \$693,039 in their superannuation when they reach 65.



The wealth impact of making additional superannuation contributions

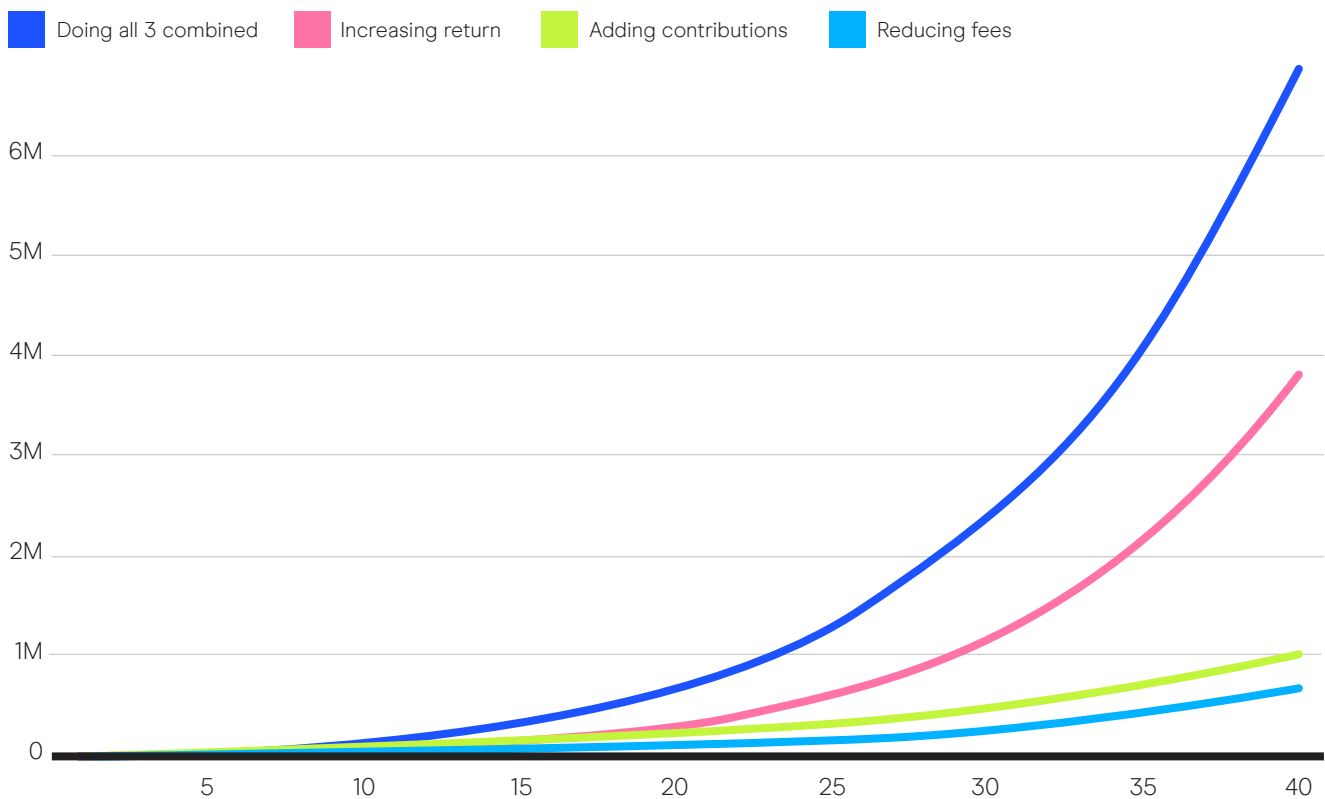


Chart: Finder • Source: Finder Wealth Report 2026

Many people don't engage with their super fund, because they can't access or spend it until retirement, so they think of it as a "future me" problem. However, Finder's data analysis shows that a few small interactions can help boost your returns and your retirement wealth by a substantial amount – in some cases, by six to seven figures.

There are several ways you can optimise your super:

- Consolidate your funds, so you only pay one set of fees.
- Switch to a super fund that charges lower fees
- Move your investments to a higher-performing (but higher risk) growth fund
- Add additional superannuation contributions

Just taking action on one of these points can impact your retirement wealth. But when all of these improvements are performed together, the results are compounded.

For instance, a 30-year-old who still uses their default fund and:

- makes no additional contributions
- pays fees of 1.5%, and
- get a return of 7% on average

Would be on track to have \$1,614,489 in retirement.

However, if they switch their fund so that:

- Average returns increase from 7% to 10%
- Fees are reduced from 1.5% to 0.5%
- They make additional contributions of ~\$96 each week

Would have \$5,638,681 in their super at 65.

This is a significant difference of \$4,024,192.

The power of compounding in superannuation means it is one of the most effective ways to grow wealth. While the primary drawback is that funds generally remain inaccessible until retirement, many investors find the long-term benefits outweigh the lack of immediate liquidity.

How much risk is too much?

Investors with a higher existing net wealth can grow their wealth faster, because capital that an individual would typically put in a savings account, has the potential to earn higher returns through investments. That potential is balanced by the risk that the investment might not perform – which those with more money are more likely to recover from, than those with less.

While this is a significant financial advantage, it should not come at the expense of stability. Emergency savings are foundational to financial security, yet almost half of Australian investors (48%) do not have an emergency fund.

It should be noted that many investors who don't have emergency saving still have money saved, including money in their everyday savings account, to cover in their everyday savings account. However, almost 1 in 4 (24%) investors don't have enough saved to cover the average \$5,130 cost of a financial emergency.

Emergency savings act as a cushion against unexpected financial events such as large medical bills, sudden job loss or home repairs. Without a buffer to fund these expenses, investors risk facing two main financial consequences:

- Being forced to sell their investments early (potentially for a loss, or for less than they'd projected)
- Having to take on more debt

Respondents don't have much of an excuse for their empty emergency funds. The average investor has \$92,563 in their savings account. While this is skewed by some high balances, almost 2 in 5 (39%) still have \$50,000 or more saved. This is compared to just 19% of average Australians

However, more investors (86%) do have at least one financial safeguard in place compared to just 69% of average Aussies.

Over half of investors have a will (56%), compared to just 41% of non-investors. Life insurance (27% vs 19%) and income protection insurance (17% vs 9%) are also much more popular among the investing class. Still, almost half of investors are skipping one of the most basic financial safeguards.



The Bank of Mum and Dad

Over 2 in 5 Australian investors (41%) say family have gifted or loaned them money to assist with life expenses.

The most common expense family helped with was a wedding (13%). This is followed by a property deposit (12%) and car purchases (12%). Education, including university and other courses, is the fourth most frequent category.

Investors received \$42,946 on average from their family. However, when the 56% of investors who received no financial help are excluded, the average jumps to \$98,374.

Younger investors are significantly more likely to have received help, highlighting the difficulties of building wealth during a cost of living crisis. Many young Australians without parental assistance must make a trade-off between investing, saving for a home and enjoying their youth.

More than half (57%) of Millennials received some form of financial assistance from their parents, compared to 36% of Gen X and just 22% of baby boomers.

Percentage of investors who have received financial assistance from family by generation

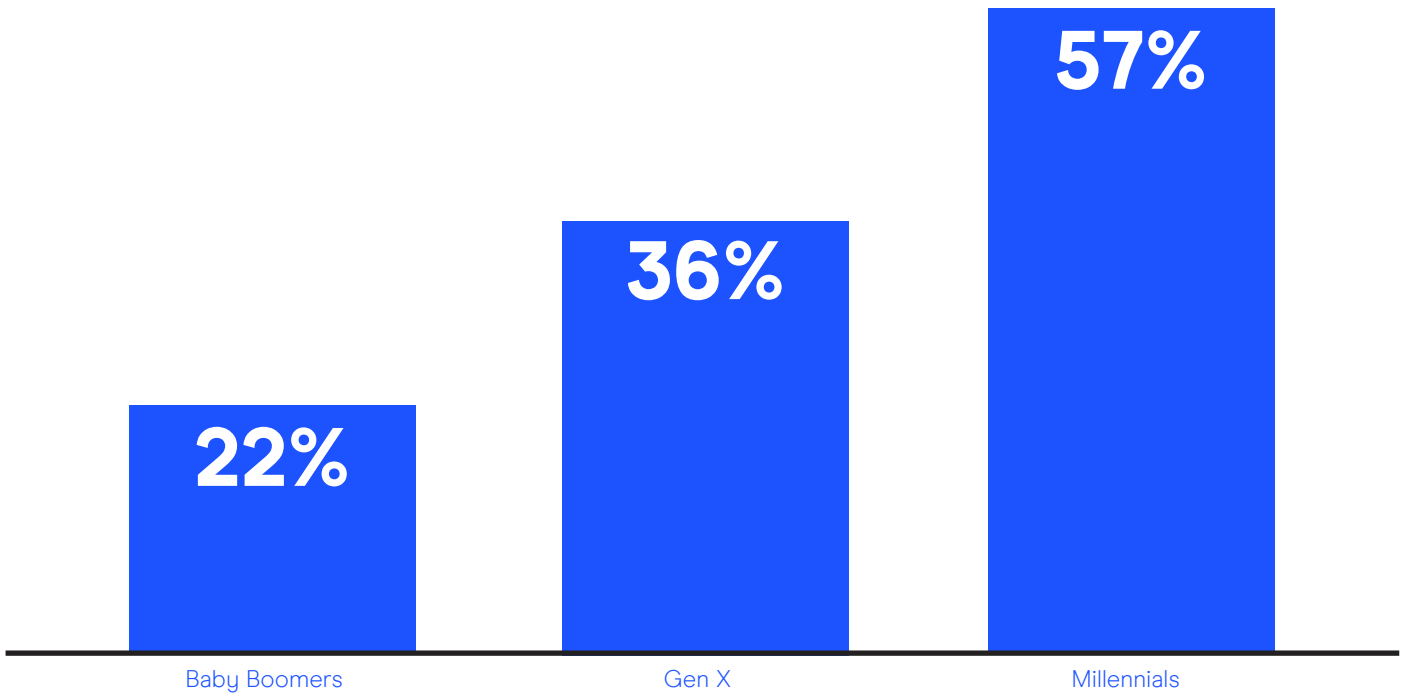


Chart: Finder • Source: Finder Wealth Report 2026

Parental support for Millennial investors was spread more evenly across a variety of life stages. While Gen X investors primarily received assistance for specific milestones like weddings (14%) or property deposits (12%), Millennials saw a broader range of financial backing, receiving parental help to purchase a car (15%), fund university education (16%) or even seed their personal investments (14%).

Top 5 most popular areas of financial assistance form family by generation

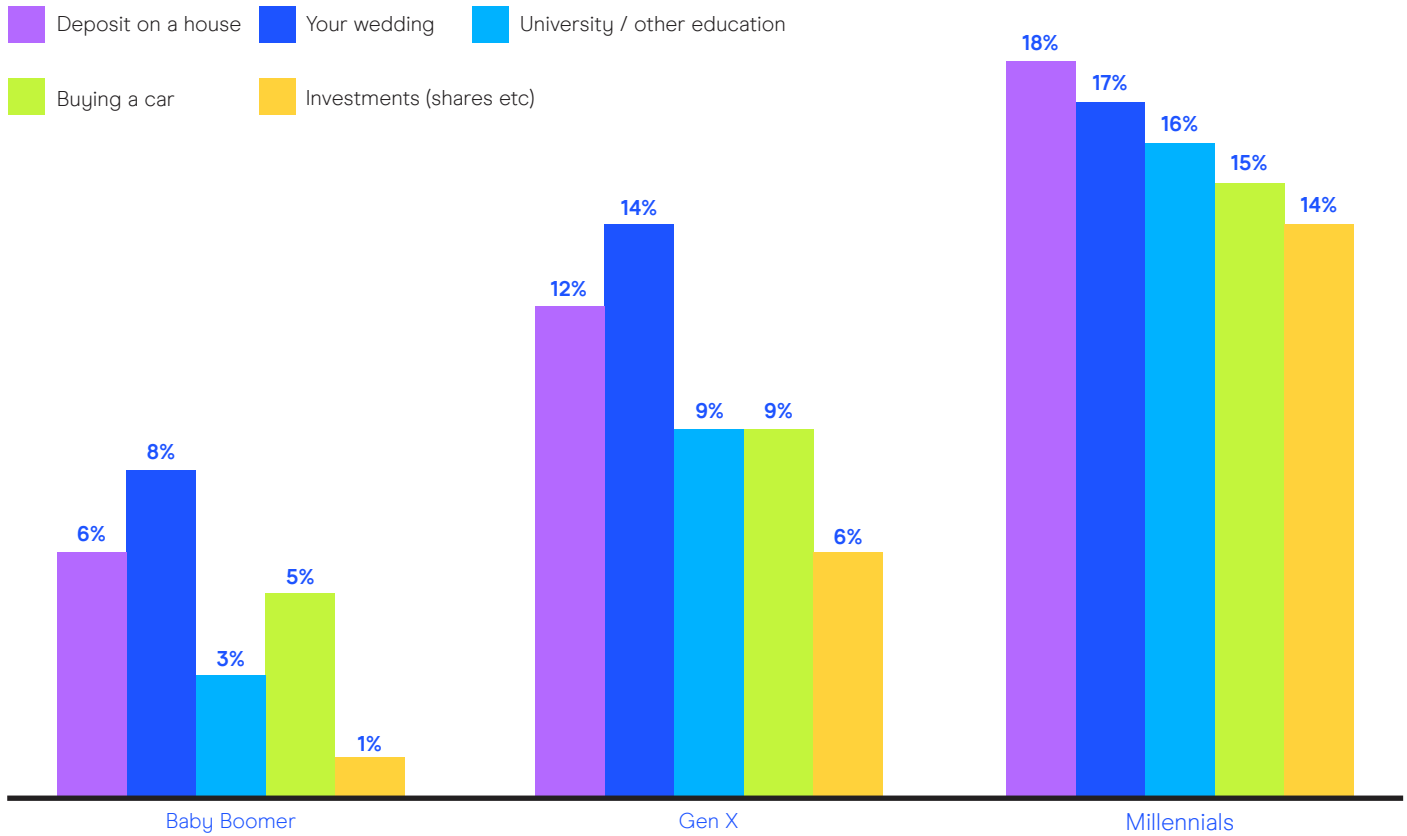


Chart: Finder • Source: Finder Wealth Report 2026



While many parents help their children with the first financial milestones of adulthood, some are starting earlier. One of the earliest financial decisions a parent can make is investing any money that their child receives rather than saving it.

An impressive 44% of average Aussie parents have invested on behalf of their children in 2025, up from just 33% in 2024.

As expected, Australians who have already invested for themselves are much more likely to also invest for their offspring. Exactly 2 in 3 (66%) investors have invested for their children.

Only 15% of average Aussies invest for their children regularly while almost double (29%) the amount of investors regularly make contributions. For most Australians, investing for their children will be a one-off decision. Investors have made this wealth creation habit into a routine.

The impact of investing for your children consistently and early can be huge once they hit adulthood.

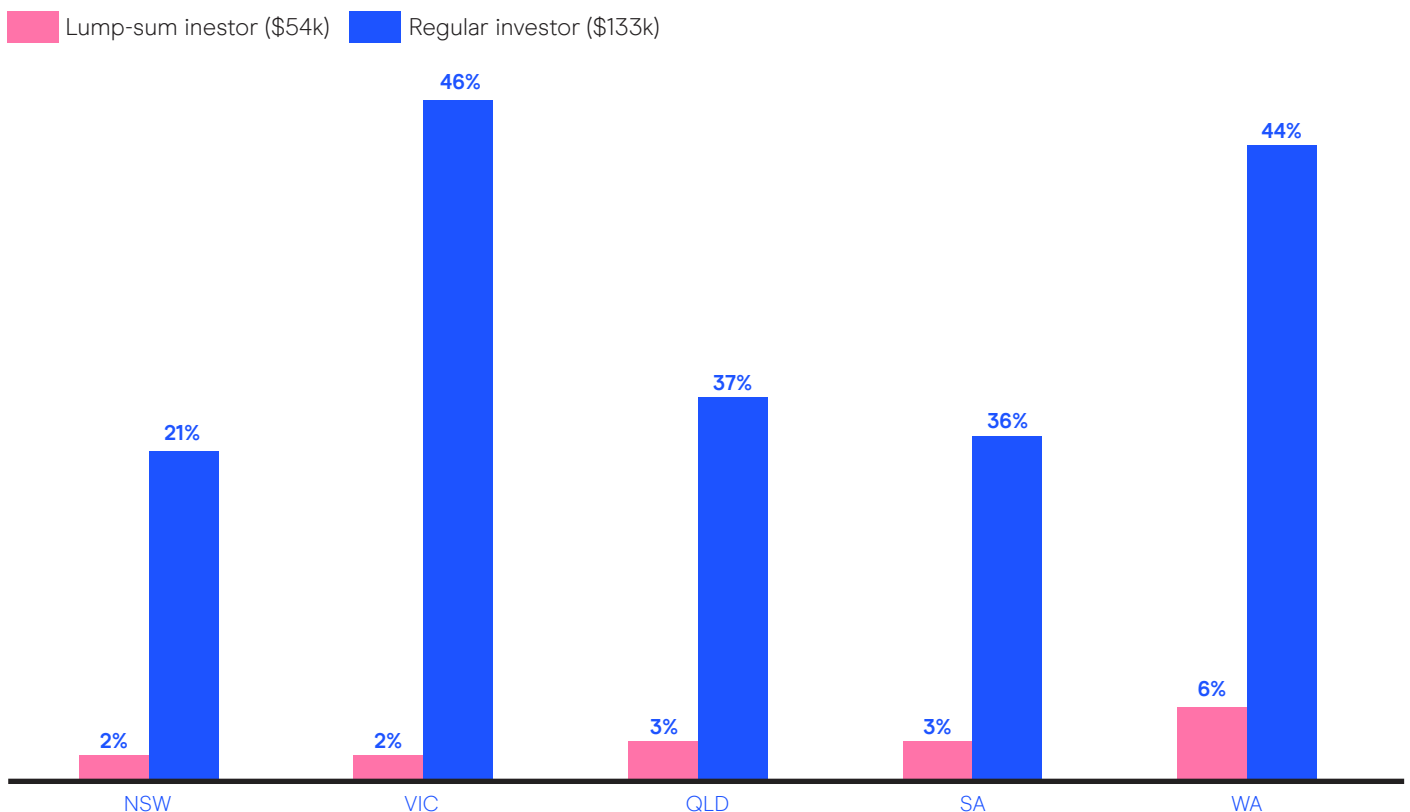
Let's compare two different scenarios:

- A parent invests \$10,000 in a fund when their child is born. The average annual return is 7%.
- A parent invests \$10,000 in the same fund when their child is born and then adds \$100 each month from their pay. The average annual return is the same.

After 25 years, the one-off investor would have \$54,274 to give their child. The parent who invests regularly has almost triple that: \$133,021. In this situation, the second parent contributed far more funds (\$1,200 per year for 25 years, so an extra \$30,000). But the compounding returns over time delivered substantial wealth.

The difference in opportunity for the children on the other end of this equation can be massive. For example, the hypothetical children of a lump-sum investor would be able to use their financial windfall towards a 20% deposit on only 2% of New South Wales suburbs today. This is compared to the children of the lump-sum investor, whose \$133,000 stretches much further, and allows them to put a 20% deposit down in 21% of suburbs.

Percentage of suburbs that are currently affordable for children of different investors



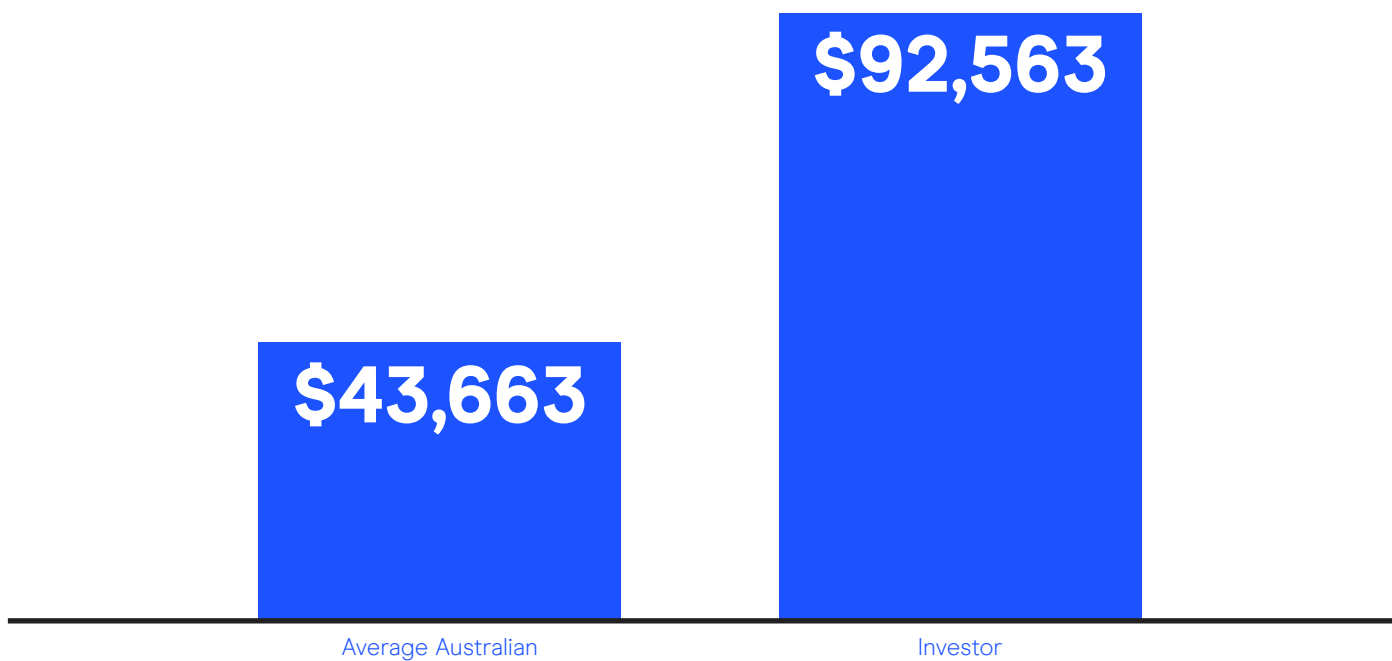
*Only suburbs with available price data were included in analysis.

Chart: Finder • Source Cotality (CoreLogic), Finder

The savings gap

The average investor has \$92,563 saved, while the average Australian has less than half this amount (\$43,663).

Difference in savings balances between average Australians and investors



Source: Finder Wealth Survey 2026

Just 14% of investors have less than \$1,000 saved, compared to 42% of the general population.

Worryingly, almost one in five Australians (19%) have no savings at all, while only 2% of investors have an empty account.

This disparity is logical, given that surplus cash is a prerequisite for investing. Furthermore, the surveyed investing cohort naturally skews older, meaning these individuals are more likely to have amassed significant savings over time.



The rise of financial advisors

In 2024, 27% of investors said they speak to a financial advisor when researching investment opportunities. This has increased to 33% in

2025. This coincides with a drop in investors doing their own research from 64% to 56% of investors.

Changes in popularity of financial advisers and personal research when exploring investment opportunities

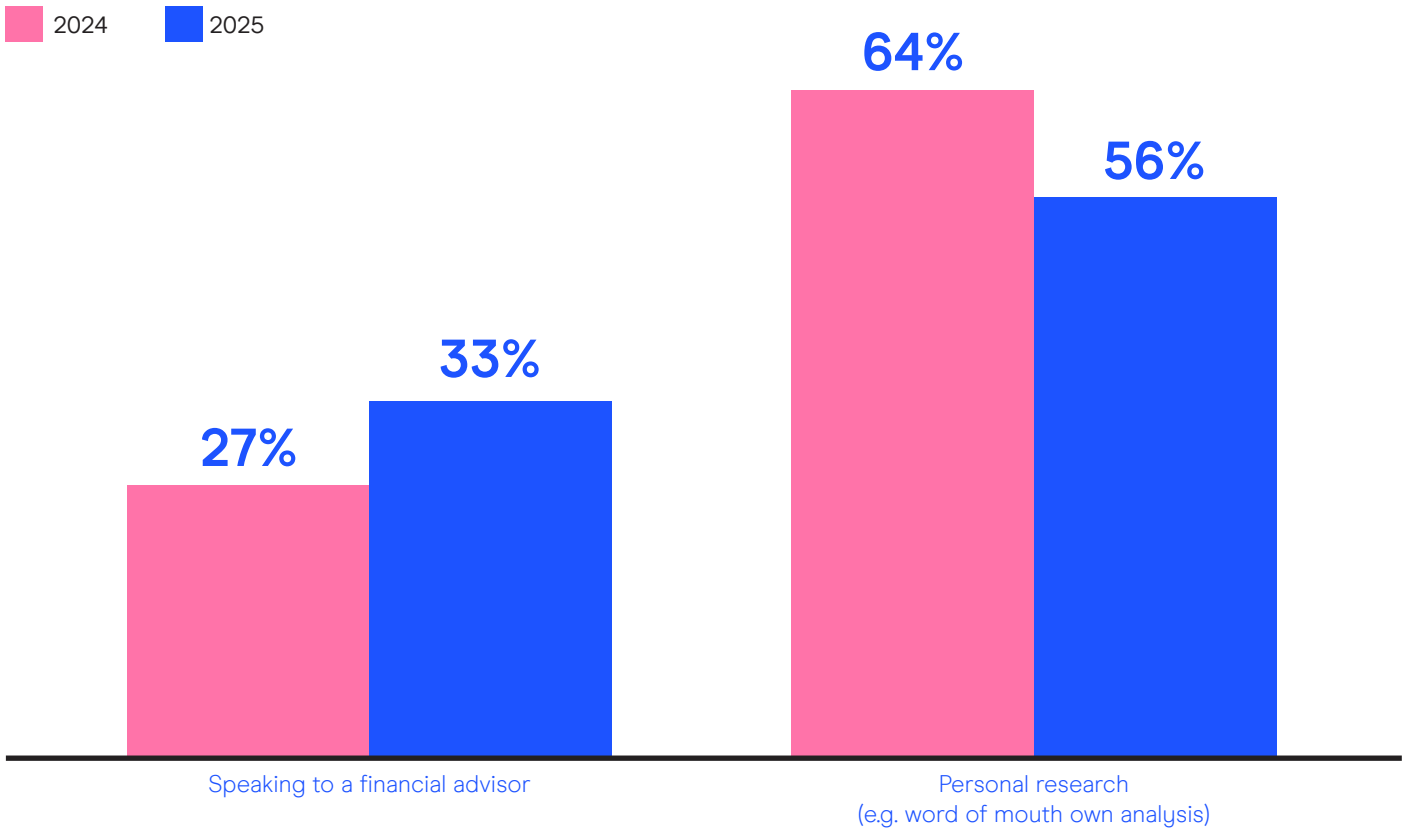


Chart: Finder • Source: Source: Finder Wealth Survey 2026

Financial advisors have historically been very expensive for the average Australian. Over the last 5 years, the median financial advice annual fee rose by 67% to \$4,668. However, improvements in technology such as artificial intelligence, could reduce the cost of professional advice significantly.

It is clear that investors see value in professional advice. Almost 2 in 5 (39%) investors who received financial advice said their investment or assets appreciated in value over the last 12 months. This is compared to just 31% of unadvised investors.

Investors who have received financial advice also have a higher net wealth balance of \$1.56 million compared to \$1.17 million for unadvised investors. There is a higher barrier to entry for

financial advice because of the large fees and occasional minimum investment requirements. Consequently, it is difficult to discern whether higher net wealth is a result of financial advice or simply a prerequisite for receiving it.

The rise of alternative advice

Artificial advice

While financial advisors are gaining popularity among investors, other less-regulated forms of advice are also being utilized by younger investors who are priced out of traditional financial advice.

AI-powered tools or apps are now used by 1 in 3 (32%) investors to assist them with everything from investing to more general financial decisions.

More than half (57%) of millennial investors use AI-powered tools or apps compared to just 29% of Gen X investors.

A further 24% of millennial investors are interested in utilising AI to assist with these important decisions. That's 82% of millennial investors who are actively using or considering using AI in their financial lives.

Social media and “finfluencers”

Over 54% of Millennial and 69% of Gen Z investors say social media has at least some influence on their financial or investment decisions.

A much smaller percentage of Gen X (24%) and barely any Baby Boomers (3%) are influenced by social media when making their financial decisions.

Social media has had a positive impact on financial education by democratising information that was once only available to high-net wealth individuals.

However, the financial advice from social media is largely unregulated. There is so much content posted across multiple platforms that it is difficult for regulators like ASIC to detect all unlicensed advice.



A cautious outlook

These alternate channels of financial advice have made this important step much more accessible. However, continued regulation is important to avoid inaccurate or high-risk financial advice.

Most global sharemarkets have had a stellar run over the past two years. The S&P 500 has

risen by 46% and the ASX 200 by 20% at the time of writing. However, extreme valuations of AI-adjacent companies combined with the strong performance of the past 2 years has led more investors to expect a market correction is coming.

Share market fear and greed index

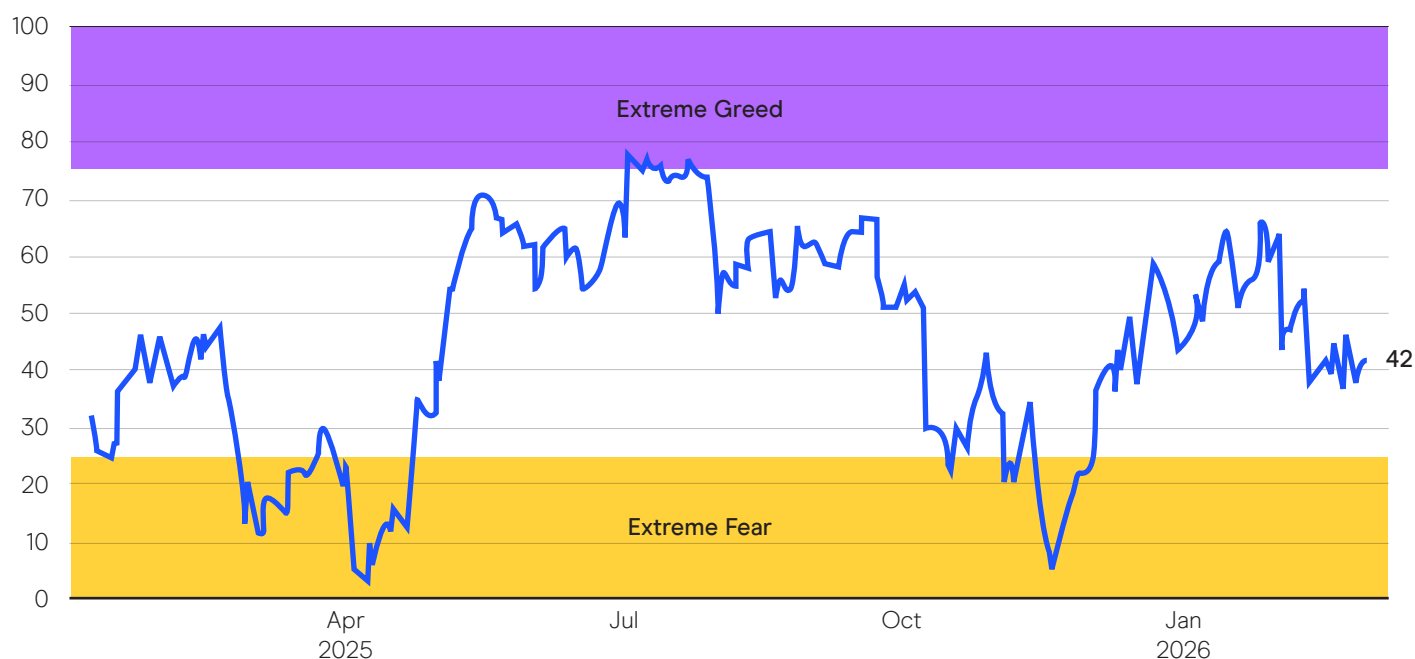


Chart: Finder • Source: CNN

Towards the end of 2025, the US fear and greed index which analyses several indicators of investor sentiment was sitting in the 'extreme fear' territory. The last time it was this low was during the tariff induced sell-off in April 2025.

Australian investors also seem cautious. A quarter (25%) of them aren't planning to make any additional investments in the next 12 months.

Of the investors who are planning to invest, almost half (48%) say they will invest most heavily in the ASX over the next 12 months. Only 7% of the cohort say they will focus their investment in US shares over the same period.

While it is important to pay attention when share markets get overheated, our 2024

report revealed that "time in the market" is more important than "timing the market". The ASX 200 index, tracking the 200 largest ASX companies, illustrates the value of patience.

For example, a one-month holding period yields positive returns 58% of the time over the last decade. Meanwhile, a three-month period has a 60% success rate. The chance of being "in the green" rises to 65% by holding for over a year, and this keeps rising as the investment period extends, up to 98% of investments in the ASX 200 providing a profit over a 10 year holding period.



The wealth paradox: Why we feel poor but look rich By Graham Cooke, Head of Consumer Research

It is a tale of two economies. On the one hand, the latest results from Finder's Cost of Living Pressure Gauge are concerning. The gauge currently sits in the "very high" range at 77%, with 58% of mortgage holders and renters alike now reporting they are stressed about their housing costs. Nearly a quarter of investors are living so precariously that they could not cover a basic financial emergency.

Yet, on the other hand, the data in this report paints a picture of unprecedented prosperity. For the 13th consecutive year, the net wealth of Australian households has grown, now averaging a staggering \$1.63 million.

How can we be simultaneously so wealthy and yet feel so financially squeezed? The answer lies in the composition of that wealth and, crucially, how accessible it is.

The great divide: A two-tier society

The primary driver of this wealth paradox is our heavy reliance on two specific assets. Our research shows that 73% of Australian wealth is tied up in property and superannuation. While these are powerful vehicles for long-term growth, this concentration has created a stark two-tier society: the asset-rich and the asset-poor.

For those on the property ladder, rising home values act as a "wealth generator" that requires no active effort – on paper, at least. But for the millions locked out, the path to that \$1.63 million average is becoming mathematically impossible. They are not just missing out on capital gains; they are funding the wealth of the asset class through escalating rents, all while inflation erodes their ability to save a deposit.



This heavy concentration creates a wealth illusion even for owners. We see the net worth figure rising, but our daily cash flow remains choked by the cost of servicing the very assets – primarily mortgage debt – that are making us rich.

The "too big to fail" fallacy

This creates a dangerous psychological safety net. There is a pervasive belief in Australia that the property market is "too big to fail". The logic goes that because Australian banks, politicians and households are so heavily leveraged into housing, the government simply cannot allow it to crash.

But history suggests this confidence is misplaced. We need only look to Ireland for a sobering counter-narrative.

Prior to the Global Financial Crisis, Ireland's economy was being referred to globally as the Celtic Tiger. Like Australia today, it had a booming economy, high migration and a population that believed property prices could only go up. "Safe as houses" was a common phrase used to refer to a reliable plan. When the bubble burst in 2008, the property market was decimated. Irish apartment prices fell by more than 50% from their peak, plunging thousands into negative equity and forcing a national bailout. While house prices recovered in a few years, apartment prices stayed negative for more than ten.

The Irish example proves that when a market detaches from economic fundamentals, no amount of political will can hold back the tide. Nobody says anything is "safe as houses" in Ireland any more.

Australia vs Ireland: The risks and the critical difference

Are we facing an Irish-style catastrophe? There are uncomfortable parallels. Australian household debt is among the highest in the world and, like pre-crash Ireland, our prices have far outstripped wage growth. We have banked on future capital gains to justify present-day struggle.

However, there is one critical difference between Ireland 2008 and Australia 2025: Supply.

The Irish crash was fueled by a massive oversupply of housing – entire ghost estates were built where nobody wanted to live. In contrast, Australia is in the grip of a chronic housing shortage. We simply have not built enough homes to house our growing population. This supply-demand imbalance provides a floor under our prices that Ireland did not have.

The verdict

While a 50% crash is unlikely due to these supply constraints, the risk for Australian investors is not negligible. Relying on a single asset class - one that requires you to go deeply into debt, is a high-stakes game.

As we move through 2025, the goal for Australian households must be to move beyond housing. The wealthy have already figured this out: 40% of wealthy investors do not earn a traditional salary, instead relying on diversified income streams like dividends.

To truly build resilience, we must look to diversify income, build liquid emergency buffers and, crucially, start investing outside of our homes and super funds. Property is a pillar of wealth, but it shouldn't be the only one holding up the roof.



Methodology

Where there is no in-text citation, the data has come from one of two surveys commissioned by Finder for this report:

1. Finder's Wealth Survey 2025 surveyed 1,001 Australians who are actively engaged in building their wealth. For this survey, respondents were selected if they reported owning at least one of the following:

- Shares in listed companies
- Investment property
- Other investments (e.g. bonds, cryptocurrency, shares in private companies)
- Other assets

The survey is a selected sample based on the above criteria and therefore is not naturally representative. The data from this survey gives us a statistically significant (less than 5% margin of error at a 95% confidence level) insight into the behaviours and attitudes of Australians who are actively building their wealth.

2. Finder's Consumer Sentiment Tracker (CST) surveys over 1,000 Australians every month through a survey distributed by Qualtrics. The survey sample is nationally representative in age, gender, location and income. The CST has run since April 2019 and surveyed over 68,000 Australians to date. The survey also has a margin of error below 5% at a 95% confidence level and gives us an insight into average Australians and a nationally representative sample of 613 Australians who are not actively growing their wealth.

Where a reference to "wealthy investors" is made, this is referring to investors with a net wealth of \$1 million or more.

All values mentioned throughout are in AUD unless specified otherwise.

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