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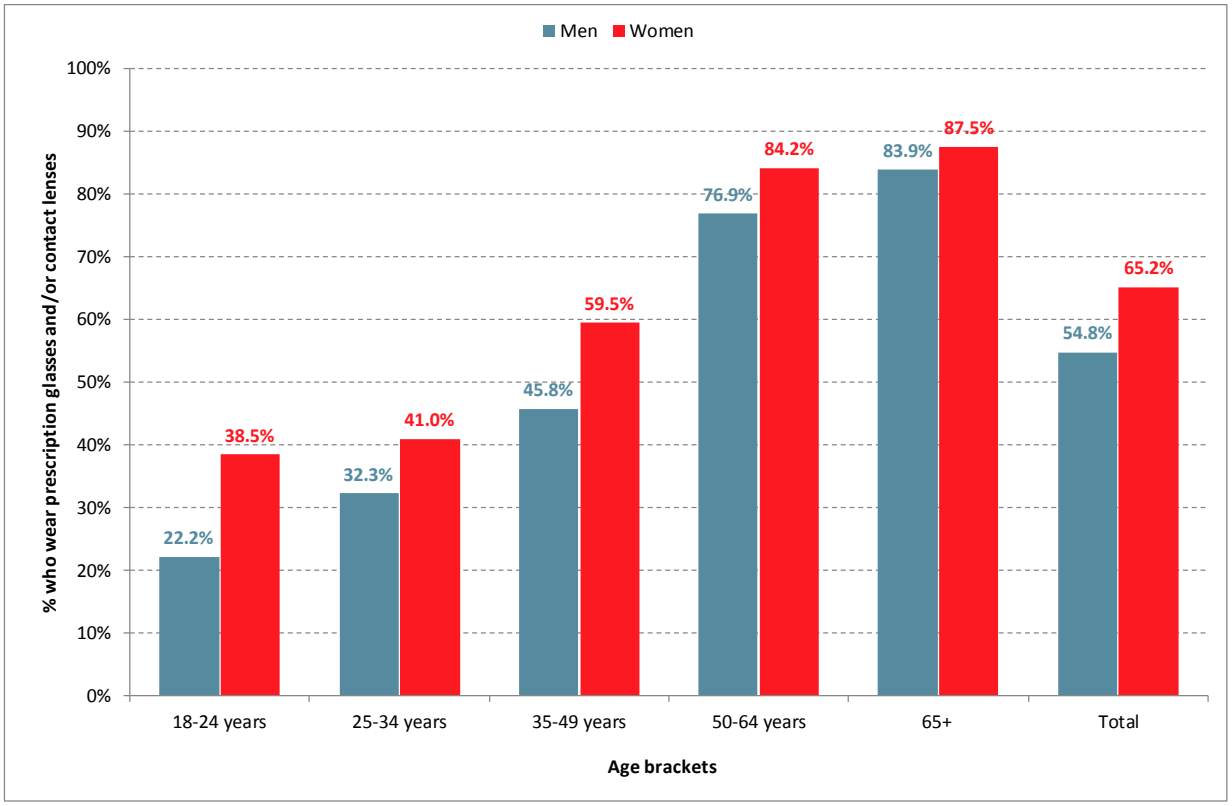
Women more likely than men to wear prescription glasses and/or contact lenses

Like grey hair and pensioner discounts, deteriorating eye sight is a common consequence of getting older. Whereas just over three in 10 Aussies aged 18-24 years wear prescription glasses and/or contact lenses, this figure almost triples among the 65+ age bracket (85.8% of whom need optical assistance). So far, so predictable. But the plot takes an intriguing turn when gender is taken into account…

According to the latest findings from Roy Morgan Research, 65.2% of Australian women 18+ wear prescription glasses/contact lenses, compared with 54.8% of men. While the prevalence of vision impairment rises for both genders as they get older, women consistently outnumber men, particularly among the younger age brackets.

For example, 38.5% of women aged 18-24 years wear glasses and/or contact lenses, making them almost 75% more likely to than their male peers (22.2%). Among the 25-35 year and 35-49 year age brackets, there are also significantly higher proportions of glasses-/contact lens-wearing women than men.

Australians who wear prescription glasses and/or contact lenses: men vs women



Source: *Roy Morgan Single Source (Australia), January-December 2015 (n=14,674).* ***Base****: Australians 18+*

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Once past the half-century mark, the gender gap narrows as encroaching age starts to even the playing field.

Norman Morris, Industry Communications Director, Roy Morgan Research, says:

> *"While our data conclusively shows that wearing prescription glasses and contact lenses is more widespread among Australian women than men, it is not clear why this is the case. Our data also shows that women are more likely than men to experience age-related eye conditions such as cataracts, glaucoma and macular degeneration.*
>
> *"Whereas medical experts believe that women's longer life expectancy is behind the higher incidence of the above-mentioned age-related conditions, theories explaining why more women than men need prescription glasses and/or contact lenses are not so cut and dried. Of course, women tend to be more diligent than men in attending to their health issues (so perhaps some men are simply undiagnosed rather than possessed of 20/20 vision!), but it's worth noting that our data has shown previously that women are more susceptible than men to other health conditions such as insomnia, asthma, lactose intolerance and psychological problems.*
>
> *"Health insurers, medical professionals and, evidently, women's health specialists, need to fully understand the diverse factors that may be at play in each individual case of vision impairment. Roy Morgan Research's health data provides in-depth insights into many demographic, behavioural and medical variables that could contribute to a person needing glasses or contact lenses, as well as other conditions they might be susceptible to. "*

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For comments or more information about Roy Morgan Research's health data, please contact:

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Related research findings

View our range of optical profiles, including People who wear contact lenses and People who wear prescription glasses.

Compiled with data from Roy Morgan's Single Source survey (the largest of its kind in the world, with 50,000 respondents p.a), these ready-made profiles provide a broad understanding of the target audience, in terms of demographics, attitudes, activities and media usage in Australia.

About Roy Morgan Research

Roy Morgan Research is the largest independent Australian research company, with offices in each state of Australia, as well as in Indonesia, the United States and the United Kingdom. A full service research organisation specialising in omnibus and syndicated data, Roy Morgan Research has over 70 years' experience in collecting objective, independent information on consumers.

Margin of Error

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. Margin of error gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the actual estimate. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

Sample Size	Percentage Estimate			
	40%-60%	25% or 75%	10% or 90%	5% or 95%
5,000	±1.4	±1.2	±0.8	±0.6
7,500	±1.1	±1.0	±0.7	±0.5
10,000	±1.0	±0.9	±0.6	±0.4
20,000	±0.7	±0.6	±0.4	±0.3
50,000	±0.4	±0.4	±0.3	±0.2