

## Guns in Australia: Key facts

17 December 2025

There are more guns in Australia now than ever before.

Australia Institute [research](#) shows that as of 2024 there are over 4 million guns legally owned in the civilian population in Australia. This is 25% more than before the Port Arthur shootings in 1996 when there were around 3 million guns, a figure that dropped to below 2.5 million after the Howard Government gun reforms.

This shows that Australian governments know how to implement effective gun control. They have done it before, and it is now time to do it again.

In most of Australia there is no limit on the number of guns an individual can own – there are 75 people who own more than 100 guns each in NSW alone, according to [NSW police data](#). Many are in inner Sydney.

The exception to this is [Western Australia](#), the only state to have legislated a cap on the number of guns an individual can own. For most licensees, this cap is five guns, 10 for farmers and competition shooters.

There is huge community support for stricter gun laws. [Polling](#) conducted in September 2024, before the Bondi massacre showed:

- 77% of respondents supported limits on the number of guns an individual can own.
- 70% thought gun laws should make it harder to access a gun.
- The majority of respondents across all voting intentions supported tougher gun laws.

Owning a gun in Australia is not a right. It is “a privilege that is conditional on the overriding need to ensure public safety”, according to the [National Firearms Agreement](#) to which all states and territories and the federal government agreed in 1996. They reaffirmed their agreement in 2017.

Almost 30 years since the National Firearms Agreement was made, key parts of it have still not been implemented. For example, there is still no [National Firearms Register](#) to centralise information about guns in Australia.

Theft of legally owned guns is a serious problem in Australia. [Australia Institute research](#) has shown that 2,000 guns are stolen from legal owners each year, one gun every four hours, ending up in the hands of criminals.

Australian Governments have been complacent about gun control in recent decades. It is time to reduce the number of guns in Australia and make the community safer.