

# Petbarn Pet Pulse July 2022



# Welcome to **Pet Pulse**



**Our insights can tell a  
broader story about  
Australian society, the  
economy and more.**





## Australians love their pets, with over 30.4 million sharing our homes.<sup>1</sup>

They are a huge part of our lives and impact us more than we know.

To understand this better, Greencross Pet Wellness Company has launched Pet Pulse, the largest and most representative analysis of Australian pets done to date.

Drawn from data on the 2.3 million pets serviced by Petbarn's 200 stores, Greencross Vets (Australia's biggest network of vet clinics) and other experts and authorities

**Pet Pulse is a monthly barometer into the issues that matter to pets and their pet parents.**

From the most popular products, breed insights and vet treatments, Pet Pulse's insights have significance not only to our four-legged friends but can tell a broader story about Australian society, the economy and more.

All statistics stated in Pet Pulse have been sourced from data across the Petbarn and Greencross network unless stated otherwise.

<sup>1</sup> Animal Medicines Australia. Pets and the pandemic: A social research snapshot of pets and people in the COVID-19 era. 2021. [https://animalmedicinesaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/AMAU005-PATP-Report21\\_v1.4\\_WEB.pdf](https://animalmedicinesaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/AMAU005-PATP-Report21_v1.4_WEB.pdf).

# Vet Insight

**As vets, the health and wellbeing of our pets is our number one priority.**



**Dr Michael Yazbeck**  
Veterinarian, Greencross Vets

We, like you, know they are more than just an animal, they are a friend, a companion and a member of the family.

When they visit us at Greencross Vets, their care and your peace of mind is paramount and we are acutely aware of the important role they play in your lives.

**It's true, pets have become more human and we want the best for them now more than ever.**

For this first Pet Pulse, we are charting the rise of one of the most fascinating groups of designer breeds ever seen, the Oodles. From their humble origins not long ago as guide dogs, their proliferation and the ever-growing combinations of Poodle crosses has been astounding.

Yet, as with any breed, Oodles come with their unique quirks, health concerns and care requirements. So, as well as deep-diving into how this amazing dog came to happen and why, the team at Greencross Vets and Petbarn have shared the best advice on how to make sure your Oodle is the happiest and healthiest it can be, so you can feel confident in being the best possible pet parent.







# The Rise of the Oodle

**The term Oodle represents the vast myriad of poodle-cross designer breeds that have risen through the ranks to become Australia's most popular breeds.**



For the very first Pet Pulse, Petbarn has reviewed internal data including on over 750,000 new puppies at Greencross Vets in the last 10 years and millions of transactions in Petbarn stores to produce the most definitive report into a dog breed ever undertaken.

Pet Pulse also includes analysis, insights and advice from some of Australia's top vets, product specialists and groomers to provide the most complete guide to owning Australia's most popular type of dog.

It also tells the story of how the Oodles led the movement towards the humanisation of pets, whereby pets have become and are treated like a member of the family.

**To have Oodles rise through the ranks so swiftly and in such a short time is nothing short of astonishing.**

### **Where did Oodles come from?**

What many people might not know is that Oodles all stemmed from the creation of the Labradoodle (Labrador-Poodle cross) over 30 years ago in Australia.

Breeder Wally Conron was tasked with breeding a non-shedding guide dog for a blind lady whose husband was allergic to dog hair, "a dog with the working ability of the Labrador and the coat of the Poodle."

After the first litter was born, one pup, Sultan had the right hypoallergenic and temperamental properties and two suitable puppies were bred from there. Despite a six month wait for guide dogs, families were still unwilling take one of these Labrador crosses.

It was from there that Guide Dogs Victoria coined the term Labradoodle as a way to get guide dog clients interested in this new crossbreed.

A huge amount of media coverage followed profiling the Labradoodle both here in Australia and internationally, largely due to its catchy name, with pet owners clamouring to get their hands on their very own Oodle.

Wally had some concerns however, as the Labradoodle's popularity took off and breeders started selling their own, often for a lot of money and not with the controlled breeding he thought necessary. Despite some regrets on this front, his original experiment with Sultan led to several successful Labradoodle guide dogs as well as starting the rise of the Oodles.



2 Pepper F. The first ever labradoodle wasn't a designer dog, he was a guide dog. ABC News ABC News, 2019. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/science/2019-09-23/labradoodle-guide-dogs-designer-regret/10717186>. Retrieved July 27 2022.



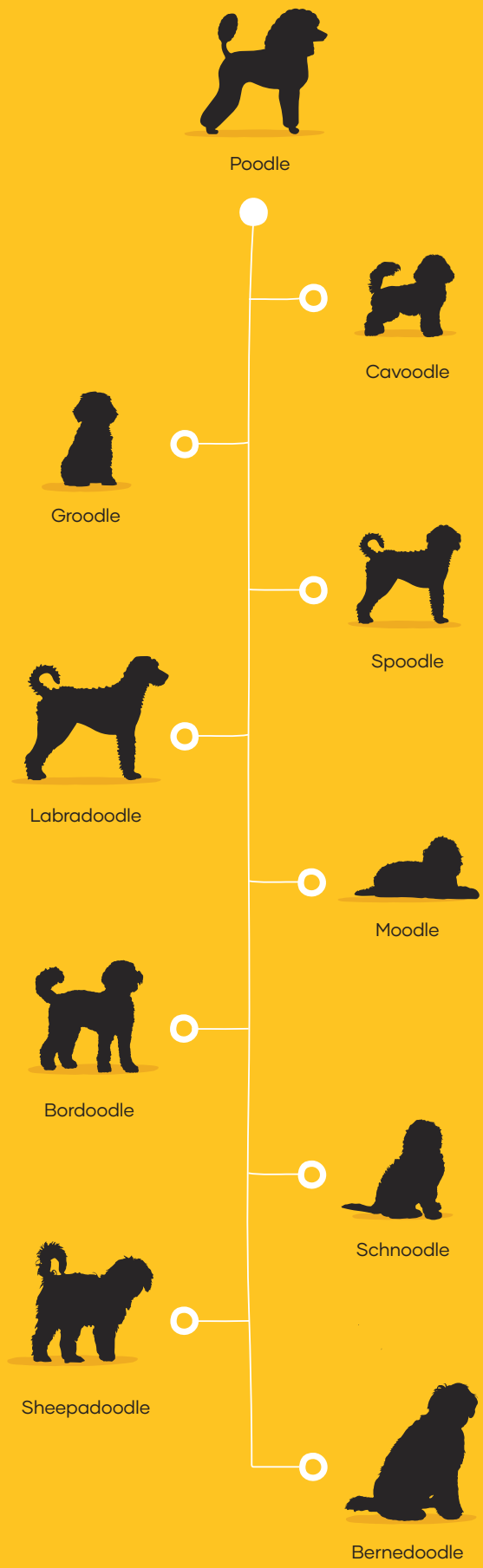
# Ooodles of Ooodles

OODLE DOG NAME	ALSO KNOWN AS	BREED MIX
Aussiedoodle		Australian Shepard and Poodle
Bern Bernedoodle edoodle		Bernese Mountain Dog and Poodle
Bordoodle		Border Collie and Poodle
Cavoodle	Cavapoo	Cavalier King Charles Spaniel and Poodle
Cockapoo		Cocker Spaniel and Poodle
Corgipoo		Corgi and Poodle
Goldendoodle	Groodle	Golden Retriever and Poodle
Labradoodle		Labrador and Poodle
Maltipoo	Moodle, Malipoo	Maltese and Poodle
Pooton	Poo-ton, Cottonpoo	Coton De Tulear and Poodle
Shih-Poo		Shih-Tzu and Poodle
Sheepadoodle		Old English Sheepdog and Poodle
Spoodle	Cockerpoo, Cockapoo	Cocker Spaniel and Poodle
Yorkipoo		Yorkshire Terrier and Poodle





# Know your Oodle



# 1 in 5



8  
Oodles



in top 100  
dog breeds  
of 2021

## Key Findings

**Pet Pulse has tracked breeds data since 2008 and the 2021 rankings include 571 different breeds and cross breeds**

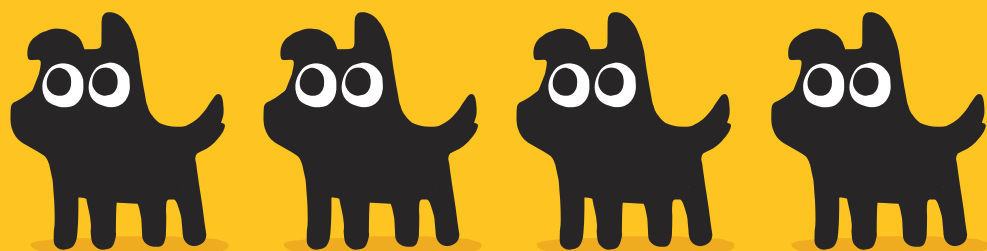
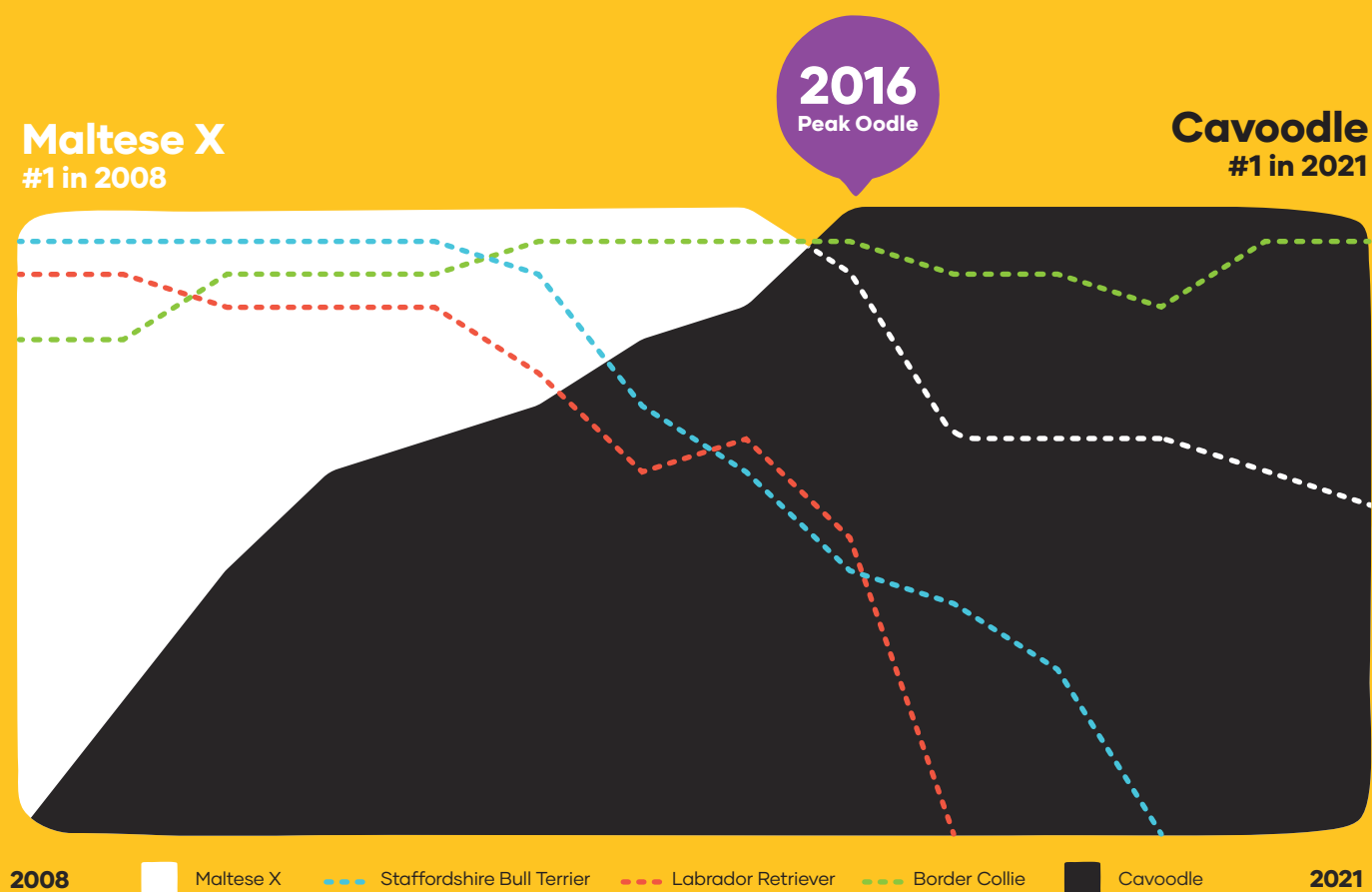
The Cavoodle is Australia's most popular dog and has been number one since 2016, rising rapidly through the ranks since entering the top twenty in 2009

- 1 Three Oodles are in the top twenty dog breeds of 2021 (15%)**  
Cavoodle (1), Labradoodle (9) and Groodle (13)
- 2 There are eight in the top 100**  
Cavoodle (1), Labradoodle (9), Groodle (13), Spoodle (24), Moodle (25), Poodle X (29), Toy Poodle X (64) and Schnoodle (81)
- 3 Cavoodles are the most popular breed in every state,** with the ACT loving Oodles the most (features most in top 20)
- 4 Almost 1 in 5 dogs born in the Greencross Vets network 4 in 2021 were Oodles**
- 5** This aligns with a huge boom in pet ownership during the pandemic with an estimated 30.4 million pets across the country. This has been led by a surge in dog ownership, with over 1 million dogs being brought into Australian households since 2019 and over half (55%) are aged under 5 years.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Animal Medicines Australia. Pets and the pandemic: A social research snapshot of pets and people in the COVID-19 era. 2021. [https://animalmedicinesaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/AMAU005-PATP-Report21\\_v14\\_WEB.pdf](https://animalmedicinesaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/AMAU005-PATP-Report21_v14_WEB.pdf).



# puppies born in Australia are now Oodles.



# Top 20

## Why the rise of the Oodle?

The rise of the Oodle is a perfect combination of several different factors but the key driver has been the humanisation of pets. Couple this with their affable nature, cuteness and the benefit of them being hypoallergenic and you have, for many Australians, the perfect dog.

### Health benefits

"The legend of the hypoallergenic dog has had a huge impact on the rise in the Oodle's popularity," says Dr Yazbeck.

### What is hypoallergenic?

Some dogs have hypoallergenic properties... that is, they are less likely to cause an allergic reaction like sneezing, itching and breathing issues like asthma than other dogs.

Dog allergens typically include dander, saliva and shed hair and if you are very sensitive to these allergens you can be at risk of a reaction.

Pet Pulse research found a statistically significant correlation between the rise in respiratory diseases and the increased popularity of the Oodle, known for their hypoallergenic qualities. Looking at Pet Pulse breeds data and tracking it against the rise in health conditions like Hayfever and Asthma from Census data, a strong correlation is very evident.<sup>4</sup>

Poodles and Poodle mixes generally have lower levels of dog allergens, meaning they are more attractive to potential owners who want a dog but have allergies.

**Oodles typically shed less, lack an undercoat, have curls that catch dander and some are easier to groom due to these factors.**

However, Dr Yazbeck cautions that the term hypoallergenic doesn't mean that all Oodles are 100% so.

<sup>4</sup> Labradoodle's / Cavoodle's rise had a 0.97 / 0.98 correlation coefficient with Hayfever and 0.93 / 0.92 with Asthma respectively when compared to Census data on long-term health conditions where a coefficient close to +1 = a high positive correlation (source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, National Health Survey 2020-21).

### Cavoodle

Border Collie

French Bulldog

Labrador

Miniature Dachshund

American Staffordshire Terrier

German Shepherd

Golden Retriever

Labradoodle

Maltese X

Dachshund

Jack Russell Terrier

Groodle

Kelpie X

English Staffordshire Bull Terrier

Toy Poodle

American Staffordshire Terrier X

Border Collie X

Kelpie

Staffordshire Bull Terrier X





**15%**  
of oodles



in the top  
20 dog breeds  
of 2021

**The key driver  
behind the rise of the  
oodle has been the  
humanisation of pets.**

## Why the rise of the Oodle? Cont.

"It's a common misconception, and whilst yes, some Oodles are less likely to shed hair and dander, no dog is completely hypoallergenic. It all depends what their final hair coat is like and what you might be allergic to. Dogs with predictable, non-shedding coats are likely to produce less dander, resulting in fewer reactions."

"If you're looking to purchase an Oodle, it is recommended to consult with the breeder to understand how hypoallergenic the cross is, and ideally have any members of the family with allergies to meet the puppy prior to buying," says Dr Yazbeck.

"There are other ways you can reduce the risk of allergies, including bathing and brushing your Oodle regularly, purchase high quality food with omega-3 fatty acids as well as vacuuming and consider using of an air purifier."

### Looks, Personality & Breeding

Known for their fun names, loveable nature and teddy-bear looks, it's hard not to see why Oodles have taken off in popularity and cemented their spot in the upper echelons of designer breeds.

**Poodle crossbreeds get their interesting monikers by mashing oodle, doodle or poo with the non-Poodle breed name, in the best way that works.**

"Whereas a purebred dog comes from years of breeding to achieve a standard look and temperament, the Oodle is a distinct mix of two breeds which means you won't necessarily know what genetic traits, and therefore looks and personality, they will have. In fact, one litter can have a wide range of appearances," says Dr Yazbeck.

"Oodle breeders have developed their own unofficial system of codes to describe how dogs are bred and help owners understand better what they are buying."

If you remember Wally Conron breeding the first cross of a Labrador and Poodle, this resulted in what's called an F1 Doodle, or the first generation from two purebred dogs. From there, breeders continued to experiment crossing different generations of Oodles to see the different combinations that would result and help people better understand a dog's lineage. This is based on the percentage of mix with both breeds.

"Despite this guide, it's still difficult to guarantee an F1B Oodle is 75% Poodle and 25% Golden Retriever as we don't know which genes are handed down each time they are bred," says Dr Yazbeck.

"It is still useful however in giving vets a better indication of the dominance of a certain breed in the mix, which can help inform what health conditions they may be susceptible to and their personality type/"

"All being said, no Oodle is the same. If you are interested in finding out more information on your Oodle, you can speak to your vet about genetic testing to get a better understanding of its breed percentages."

### Oodle Generation Classification

Cavoodle	Cavoodle	Cavoodle
F1 Doodle =	Retriever X Poodle	50% Poodle / 50% Retriever
F1B Doodle =	F1 Doodle X Poodle	75% Poodle / 25% Retriever
F1BB Doodle=	F1B Doodle x Poodle	87.5% Poodle / 12.5% Retriever
F2 Doodle =	F1 Doodle X F1 Doodle	50% Retriever / 50% Poodle
F2B Doodle =	F1 Doodle X F1B Doodle	62.5% Poodle / 37.5% Retriever

### Other Macro Factors

According to PetSure's Pet Health Monitor, the increasing popularity of designer breeds (like the Oodles) is more likely to be in cities and urban areas, with the proportion of designer breeds increasing by 63% between 2013 and 2018.

The latest Census data also shows that we are increasingly choosing to be apartment dwellers. Over 2.5 million Australians now live in apartments and this is set to increase with apartments accounting for nearly 30.9% of the increase in private dwellings since 2016.

"Small to medium sized dogs like the Cavoodle are well suited to apartment or townhouse living and their intelligence makes them highly trainable – a big plus for those living in close proximity to both humans and other dogs," says Dr Yazbeck.





**It's hard not to see  
why Oodles have  
taken off in popularity**



## Top 20 breeds from 2016-2021

#	2016	2017	2018
01	<b>Cavoodle</b>	<b>Cavoodle</b>	<b>Cavoodle</b>
02	Border Collie	Labrador	Labrador
03	Maltese X	Border Collie	Border Collie
04	American Staffordshire Terrier	American Staffordshire Terrier	French Bulldog
05	German Shepherd	French Bulldog	American Staffordshire Terrier
06	English Staffordshire Bull Terrier	Kelpie X	German Shepherd
07	Staffordshire Bull Terrier X	German Shepherd	Kelpie X
08	Kelpie X	Maltese X	Maltese X
09	French Bulldog	Staffordshire Bull Terrier X	Staffordshire Bull Terrier X
10	Labrador	English Staffordshire Bull Terrier	English Staffordshire Bull Terrier
11	Labrador Retriever	Golden Retriever	American Staffordshire Terrier X
12	Staffordshire Bull Terrier	American Staffordshire Terrier X	Golden Retriever
13	Golden Retriever	Staffordshire Bull Terrier	Labradoodle
14	Jack Russell Terrier	Labradoodle	Miniature Dachshund
15	Chihuahua	Border Collie X	Staffordshire Bull Terrier
16	Cavalier King Charles Spaniel	Chihuahua	Dachshund
17	American Staffordshire Terrier X	Kelpie	Jack Russell Terrier
18	Bull Arab X	Jack Russell Terrier	Chihuahua
19	Border Collie X	Bull Arab X	Border Collie X
20	Rottweiler	Pug	Bull Arab X





2019	2020	2021
Cavoodle	Cavoodle	Cavoodle
Labrador	Border Collie	Border Collie
French Bulldog	French Bulldog	French Bulldog
Border Collie	Labrador	Labrador
American Staffordshire Terrier	American Staffordshire Terrier	Miniature Dachshund
German Shepherd	German Shepherd	American Staffordshire Terrier
Kelpie X	Miniature Dachshund	German Shepherd
Maltese X	Golden Retriever	Golden Retriever
Golden Retriever	Maltese X	Labradoodle
Staffordshire Bull Terrier X	Labradoodle	Maltese X
Miniature Dachshund	Kelpie X	Dachshund
American Staffordshire Terrier X	Dachshund	Jack Russell Terrier
English Staffordshire Bull Terrier	Jack Russell Terrier	Groodle
Labradoodle	Staffordshire Bull Terrier X	Kelpie X
Dachshund	English Staffordshire Bull Terrier	English Staffordshire Bull Terrier
Jack Russell Terrier	American Staffordshire Terrier X	Toy Poodle
Chihuahua	Border Collie X	American Staffordshire Terrier X
Border Collie X	Groodle	Border Collie X
Rottweiler	Kelpie	Kelpie
Bull Arab X	Toy Poodle	Staffordshire Bull Terrier X

**Six years  
running at  
the top**

# Humanisation of Pets

**The humanisation of pets has completely changed the pet industry, with owners ever more seeing their furry friends as members of the family.**

**90%**  
of owners



**say pets have  
positive impact  
on their lives**

zzz



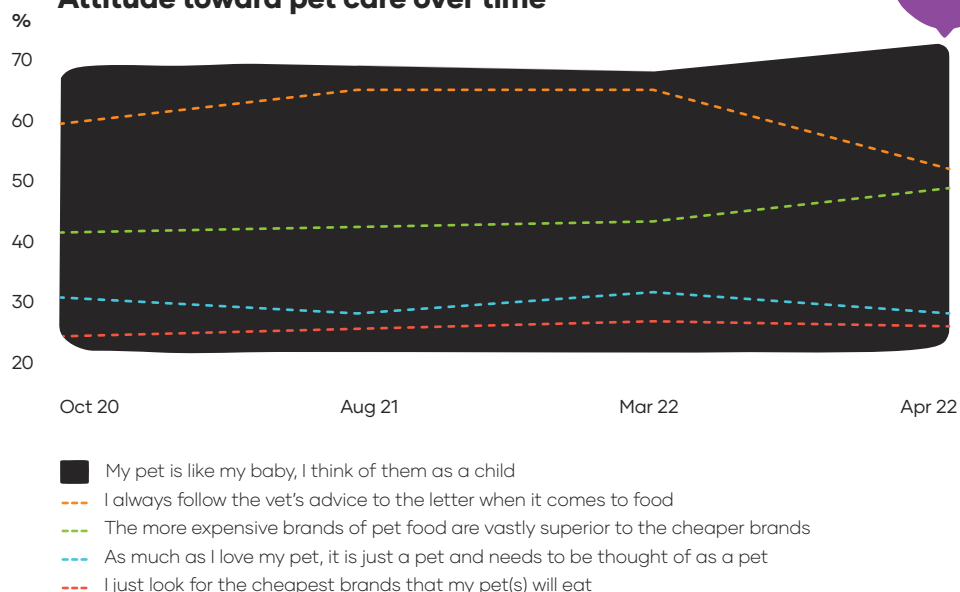
5 Animal Medicines Australia. Pets in Australia: a national survey of pets and people. 2019. [https://animalmedicinesaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/ANIM001-Pet-Survey-Report19\\_v1.7\\_WEB\\_low-res.pdf](https://animalmedicinesaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/ANIM001-Pet-Survey-Report19_v1.7_WEB_low-res.pdf).

6 Animal Medicines Australia. Pets and the pandemic: A social research snapshot of pets and people in the COVID-19 era. 2021. [https://animalmedicinesaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/AMAU005-PATP-Report21\\_v1.4\\_WEB.pdf](https://animalmedicinesaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/AMAU005-PATP-Report21_v1.4_WEB.pdf).



+5%

## Attitude toward pet care over time



Almost 90% of pet owners said their pets have a very positive impact on their lives with the key benefits cited as love, affection and companionship,<sup>5</sup> 70% say their pet has improved their lives during the COVID-19 period,<sup>6</sup> and 71% agree with the statement "My pet is like my baby, I think of them as a child" and only 24% say they think of their pet as "just a pet".<sup>7</sup>

These trends have been observed in Pet Pulse data and have been a driving ethos for Petbarn and Greencross Vets in the way they support ever-evolving needs through the 5 Pillars of Wellness - Nutrition, Health, Comfort, Training and Play - underpinning everything.

**Most strikingly, the willingness to financially invest more in pets is pronounced in the Oodle breeds.**

"Our data shows that our customers are increasingly prepared to spend more on food and products that are healthy and improve their pets' quality of life," says Dr Yazbeck.

"And they're not just spending more, they are more often choosing premium products than other owners."

"This is especially the case for the Oodle breeds, with Labradoodle customers spending 153% more than the average dog in-store."

"This extends into them being more likely to buy premium foods, grooming products, clothing and accessories."

"The humanisation of pets is also influenced by human trends. We have seen an increased focus on natural, human-grade ingredients like The Nosh Project range, pet wellness and sustainability."

According to Dr Yazbeck, Petbarn has seen massive growth in wellness products like supplements, bone broth, and human-grade food. He recommends consulting your vet or seeking advice in-store before starting your pet on any supplements or treatments.

"The pandemic has seen not just a surge in pet ownership but also more specialist services both in-store and at the vet."

"Many pet owners might not realise that vets are all-in-one animal doctors and whilst human medicine has dedicated specialists, general practice vets are masters of many fields. They can be anaesthetists, surgeons, gastroenterologists, dentists, ophthalmologists, dermatologists, pathologists, gynaecologists, paediatricians and emergency physicians, and we are increasingly advancing our skills in alternative therapies," says Dr Yazbeck.

# Food &

**Oodle owners are**

**25%**  
**more likely**



**to buy  
natural  
food (most  
premium food  
category)**



than other owners and 56% less likely to buy standard food (lowest price point). Natural Foods are higher in premium ingredients and protein.

"First up, it's important to feed your Oodle a food that suits their needs. Small Poodle crosses can be prone to heart disease as well as dental issues, and larger crosses can be prone to joint issues," explains Dr Yazbeck.

Foods formulated with taurine, arginine and Vitamin E can help keep their heart healthy, while a highly palatable wholefood-based meal can tempt fussy eaters while providing bio-available nutrients.





It is key that your Oodle is kept at a healthy weight to help protect their joint and heart health.

"This would be a consideration if your Labradoodle has a more dominant mix of Labrador – so think about the different crosses in your Oodle."

**"Certain foods are created with the dog's behaviour in mind. For example, Labradors tend to Hoover up their food, so the kibble's shape is designed to slow down their eating."**

– Dr Yazbeck

Foods with human-grade ingredients are also on the rise. The Nosh Project, for example, is made with fresh ingredients and essential vitamins and can be more attractive to smaller-dogs which can tend to be picky eaters," says Dr Yazbeck.


"Again, remember that all Oodles aren't the same."

# Comfort & Grooming

**With their variety of fur and hair, Oodles can need a lot of care and not just for cosmetic reasons.**







**And the best brushes? Sharon recommends a slicker brush and a metal tooth comb to gently break up any small matts that occur.**

According to Sharon Hall, Grooming Training Coordinator at Petbarn, comfort is key and an essential part of Oodles' wellness.

"I would say Oodles are the most popular dog in the grooming salon, but one that takes a lot of different approaches based on their individual coats and condition."

"Breeders refer to Oodle coats as hair, fleece/wool or curly and whilst this isn't formalised it can inform pets' grooming requirements," says Sharon Hall.

Breed mix will affect coats and depending on the gene mix, individual puppies in a litter can have different coats.

"Those with hair will shed more whilst those with fleece or curly coats are very prone to matting."

Sharon says that many new Oodle owners are shocked when their puppy's coat suddenly changes almost overnight and big matts develop.

"For Oodles with bad matting, the most humane way to deal with them is to fully clip the dog, something that can horrify new pet parents."

"Not all owners are aware that Oodles need a lot of grooming – brushing and trimming every day or every second day at home, with a professional groom every 4–6 weeks. It's also important to use a decent conditioning spray, like the Melanie Newman range, to break up matting," says Sharon.

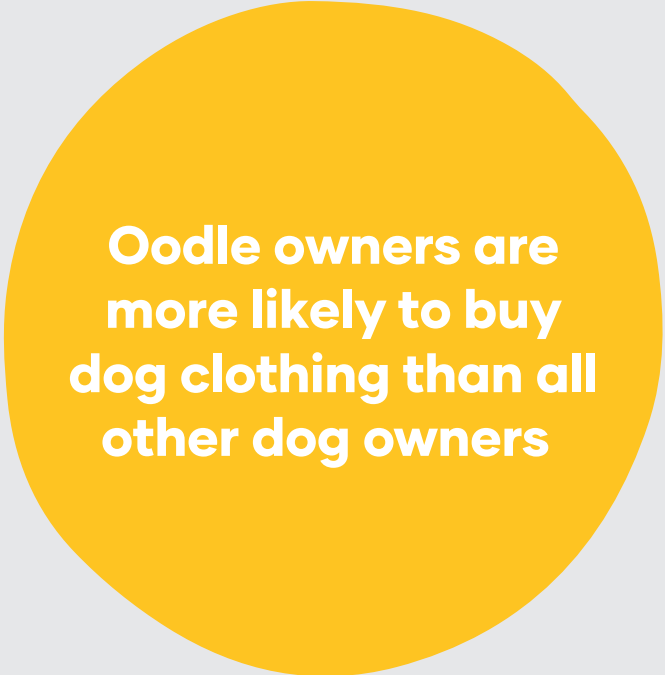
With this increased care comes increased investment in Oodle grooming:

**Oodle owners spend 27% more on grooming accessories like brushes, nail clippers, shampoo and conditioner compared to all other breed owners.**

## COMFORT

# Clothing and Accessories

**Whilst dog clothing and accessories have a fashionable appeal, and one that resonates with their owners, clothing has an important functional element.**



**Oodle owners are more likely to buy dog clothing than all other dog owners**



According to Stephen Mangion, Clothing & Accessories Category Manager at Petbarn, there are three key aspects to consider; the cold, the rain and friction.

"For Oodles specifically, they will often need to be clipped short, even during winter, so with shorter hair they are definitely susceptible to the cold," says Stephen.

"Their coats provide a natural thermal protection, and without this a coat that gives additional warmth, something thick or with a high-pile like fleece or knitwear is great."

The rain, and especially the increased rain seen in Australia recently, can affect Oodle coats, yet they still need their walks.



**"Water can make Oodle coats more prone to matting so a coat or jacket with a water-repellent shell can protect against this."**

**– Stephen**

Finally, fitting a coat or jacket correctly is essential. According to Stephen a two-finger width between Oodle and their clothing will minimise friction whilst still staying snug.

"If a coat or jacket is too tight this can increase friction which is a key cause of matting."

"And whilst Oodle parents may often base their purchase decision on aesthetic factors, which is great, they should try to strike a balance and consider the functional benefits too."








# Training & Play





# Training helps all Oodles become a happy family member and play keeps them occupied, exercised and calmed.

According to Dr Yazbeck Oodles generally have a good reputation as friendly, loyal dogs with high intelligence from the Poodle side.

"The Poodle part of an Oodle makes them wonderfully suited to both families and individuals although they can have a tendency to be highly strung. This can often be managed through training and early socialisation."

"The other part can differ

**"Labradoodles, Goldendoodles/ Groodles and Aussiedoodles can have a high energy level so consider whether this will suit your lifestyle."**

**– Dr Yazbeck**

greatly though, with a dog's temperament based on environmental factors, their genetic lineage and the other breed crossed with the Poodle," says Dr Yazbeck.

Depending on the cross-breed, temperament, training requirements and energy levels can vary greatly.

Regardless of your Oodle-mix, good puppy training, socialisation with other dogs and humans and making sure they have stimulating toys will go a long way to a happy and healthy Oodle.

# Case Study



## Alan Bloom

**DOG NAME** Cosmo Bloom

**AGE** Almost 4 yrs old

**BREED** F1 Standard Groodle  
(mother was a golden retriever and father was a big red poodle!)

### What led you to choose an Oodle?

Recommended by friends – dog that didn't shed, was a good size, great personality and reputable breeder.

### What do you feed your Oodle? Do you consider Oodle specific needs in their diet?

Hill's Science Diet - Oral Care with some salmon or tuna on the top and Oravet twice a week as an evening snack! (Lots of treats!)

### Where does your Oodle sleep?

Not in her bed we bought for her – on the floor of our bedroom and then at some point in the middle of the night she climbs onto our bed!





**Would you say your Oodle is more than just a pet to you?**

Definitely not a pet – she is one of the family (I say a human on four legs!) and is part of everything we do and our lifestyle has started revolving around her – like morning walks!

**How often does your Oodle need grooming? Is this done DIY or professionally?**

Her coat is thick and gets matted easily – she is on a rolling 8 week booking with the groomer for a cut and once a month she has a bath and nail cut at the local vet, where she stays at doggy daycare for the day. So professionally done, definitely!





