

## 40 years of change: 1975 to today



Since 1975 Australia has seen four decades of massive change – demographically, socially, economically, politically, globally, culturally and technologically.

In such an area it is important to not just observe the changes but to understand the trends and respond, so that we can thrive in these massive times of change.

In this video below Social Researcher and Demographer [Mark McCrindle](#) outlines these changes.

### **Australian population bigger and older**

In 1975 the Builders generation was firmly in control, the Baby Boomers were emerging and Generation X were still kids. More than half of Australia's population wasn't born in 1975

and since then we've seen massive generational change. We've also seen massive population change. Back then Australia's population was 13.7 million and today it's almost 24 million people, an increase of more than 10 million in four decades.

In the 1970s, the average age of an Australian was in the late 20's, while today it's in the late 30's, such has been the ageing of our population in that time.

Our life stages have also changed in the past 40 years. People were getting married in their early twenties back in the seventies, while now the median age of marriage is approaching the thirties, indicating great social change as well.

Demographics	1975		2015	
Australian Population	13.7 million		Almost 24 million	
Median Age	Late 20's		Late 30's (37.3)	
Median Age of marriage	M: 23.8	F: 21.4	M: 29.9	F: 28.3

### Earning more, costing more

Australians are also earning a lot more now than we were back then; the average full time earnings in 1975 was \$7,600 per year, today the annual average earnings exceed \$72,000 per annum.

And while we are earning more, costs are a lot more today than they were back then. The cost of a loaf of bread today is more than 10 times the price it was in 1975, while a litre of milk today is 3 times the cost it was 4 decades ago.

	1975	2015
<b>Full time earnings</b>	\$7,618	\$72,000
<b>Everyday costs</b>		
Loaf of bread	\$0.24	\$2.84
1 litre of milk	\$0.30	\$1.45
Newspaper	\$0.12	\$2.50
Petrol	\$0.57 / litre	\$1.20 / litre

Four decades ago Sydney had the highest house cost, averaging \$28,000 while today it exceeds \$850,000. So while earnings have gone up, by almost tenfold, house prices have gone up by more than thirtyfold in that same period of time.

Location	1975	2015
Sydney	\$28,000	\$850,194
Melbourne	\$19,800	\$615,068
Brisbane	\$17,500	\$473,924
Adelaide	\$16,250	\$459,258
Perth	\$18,850	\$604,822
Canberra	\$26,850	\$573,326
Hobart	\$15,200	\$322,274
Darwin	\$87,500* (1986)	\$667,115

**The year of the Dismissal and an end to the Vietnam War**

1975 was a year of massive political change as well. The year began with Gough Whitlam as Australia’s Prime Minister, but it was the year of the Dismissal and so it ended with Malcom Fraser as Prime Minister.

Gerald Ford was the president of the United States and it was the year that the Vietnam War ended, a time of massive global change.

Politically	1975	2015
Australian Prime Minister	Gough Whitlam / Malcom Fraser	Tony Abbott
U.S President	Gerald Ford	Barack Obama
TIME person of the year	'American Women'	'Ebola Fighters' (2014)

## Jaws vs The Lego Movie

From a popular culture perspective it was quite a different era. We had harsher tastes back then perhaps because Jaws was the movie of the year compared to The Lego Movie of today. ACDC had the album of the year back then compared to Taylor Swift currently.

1970: The Beatles break up.

1972: M\*A\*S\*H Show premieres.

1972: Terrorist attack at the Olympic Games in Munich.

1973: U.S pulls out of Vietnam.

1975: Pol Pot becomes the Communist Dictator of Cambodia and the Cambodian Genocide begins.

1975: Gough Whitlam is dismissed and Malcom Fraser elected.

1975: NBC's Saturday Night (later known as Saturday Night Live) debuts.

1976: Jimmy Carter is elected President of the United States.

1979: Margaret Thatcher becomes the first woman Prime Minister of Great Britain.

1979: Mother Theresa awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

1979: The World Health Organisation certifies the eradication of smallpox.

## **Technological advancements that changed the world**

1970: Computer Floppy Disks are introduced.

1971: VCRs introduced.

1975: Microsoft is founded by Bill Gates and Paul Allen, who develop a BASIC program for the Microcomputer Altair 8800, and is released the same year.

1975: The world's first digital camera is created by Steven Sasson and Kodak Company.

1975: The laser printer is invented.

1977: The first personal computers (PC) are introduced.

1979: Sony introduces the Walkman.

1979: Cell phones are invented.

The speed and impact of these changes remind us to not just observe the changes but to understand the changes and respond so that we can thrive in these times of massive change.

### **For more information**

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