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 **Latest release**

# Work-related injuries

People who experienced a work-related injury or illness, including type of injury, job details and work-related injury rates

Reference period 2021-22 financial year

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Released 15/02/2023

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## Key statistics

- 497,300 people had a work-related injury or illness (3.5% of people who worked at some time during the year).
- The most common cause of injury or illness was 'Lifting, pushing, pulling or bending' (24%).
- 66% had time off as a result of the injury or illness.
- 31% received workers compensation for the injury or illness.

## Work-related injuries microdata in DataLab

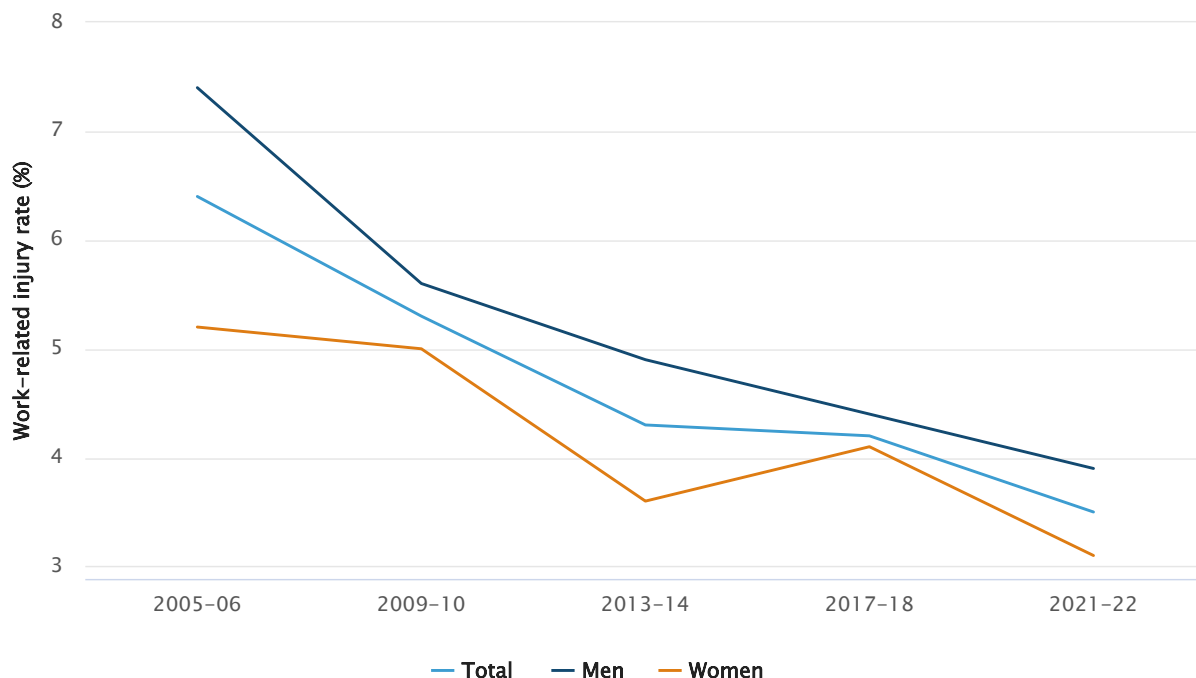
Work-related injuries microdata from Sep 2000 to 2021-22 is now available in ABS DataLab, released as a supplementary file for the [Longitudinal Labour Force \(/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/available-microdata-tablebuilder/longitudinal-labour-force-australia\)](/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/available-microdata-tablebuilder/longitudinal-labour-force-australia) (LLFS) microdata. All existing users of the LLFS microdata will automatically get access to the additional file and new users can apply for access to both files.

A detailed data item list for the Work-related injuries microdata is available in [Microdata: Work-related injuries \(/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/available-microdata-tablebuilder/work-related-injuries\)](/statistics/microdata-tablebuilder/available-microdata-tablebuilder/work-related-injuries).

## Overview

In 2021-22, there were 14.1 million people who had worked at some time during the last 12 months. Within this group, there were 497,300 people who experienced a work-related injury or illness during that same 12 month period. This equates to a work-related injury rate of 3.5%, which is down from 4.2% in 2017-18 and 6.4% in 2005-06.

Graph 1 - Work-related injury rate by sex



Note: It should be noted that trends in the incidence of work-related injuries are influenced by a multitude of factors, which include improvements in workplace health and safety, as well as changes in the nature of work, as more people work in clerical and service-related roles. The impacts of COVID-19 also had some influence over the results of the 2021-22 survey, as noted below.

### COVID-19 Impacts

The latest data presented in this release of Work-related Injuries was collected between July 2021 and June 2022 and covers any work-related injuries that occurred in the 12 months prior to interview (as far back as July 2020). ABS advises caution when analysing the incidence of work-related injuries over this period, as the reduced level of economic activity during this time contributes to a lower likelihood of experiencing a work-related injury.

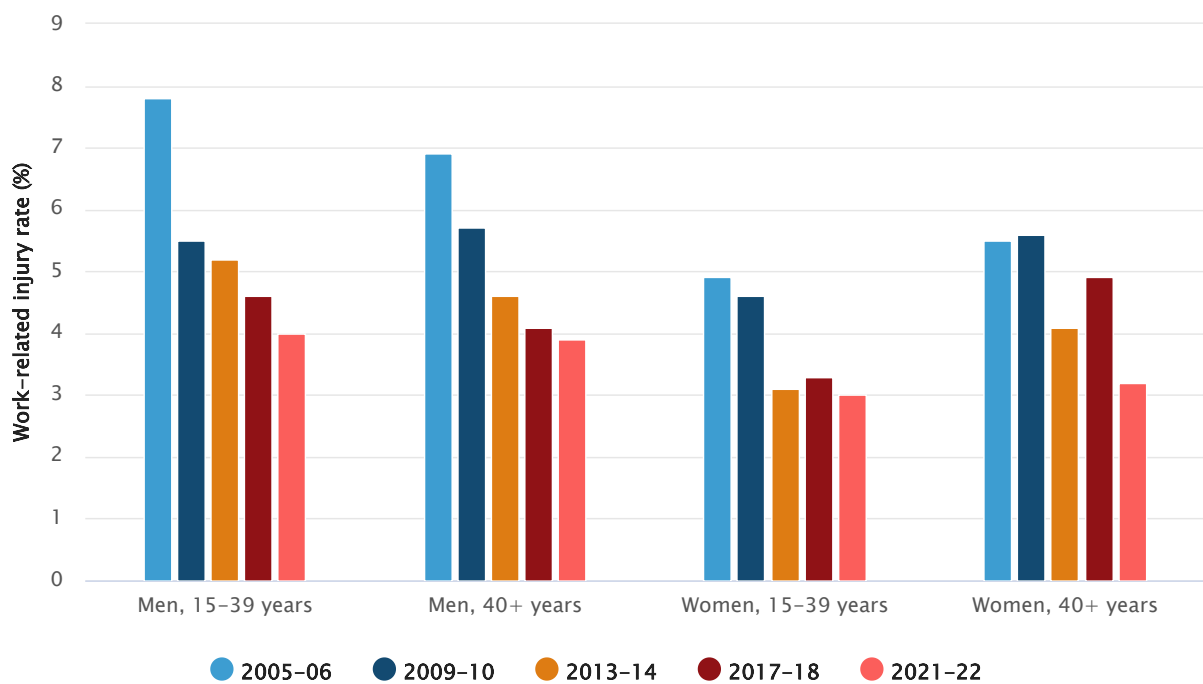
Of the people who experienced a work-related injury or illness in 2021-22:

- 85% continued to work in the job where their injury or illness occurred.
- 8% changed jobs.
- 7% left or lost the job where the injury occurred and were not working (at the time of interview).

More than half of the people who experienced a work-related injury or illness were men (58%).

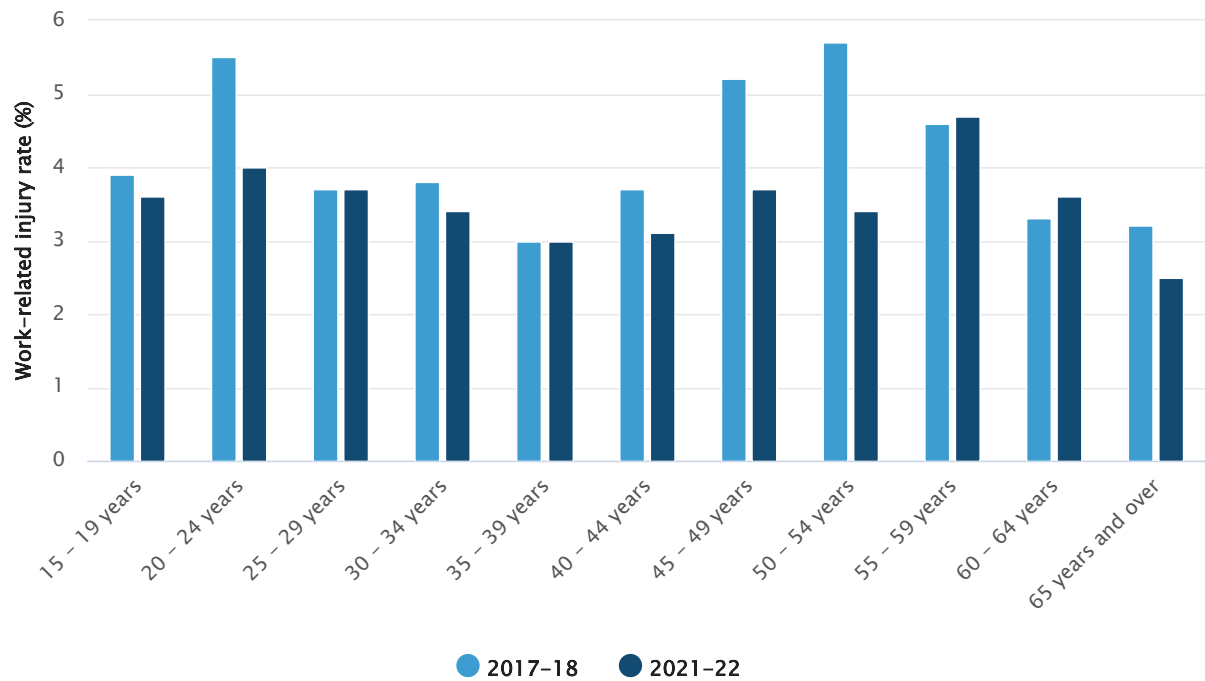
In 2021-22, 3.9% of males who worked in the last 12 months experienced a work-related injury or illness, down from 4.4% in 2017-18. The proportion of females who experienced a work-related injury or illness in the last 12 months decreased from 4.1% in 2017-18 to 3.1% in 2021-22.

**Graph 2 - Work-related injury rate by sex and age**



The age group with the highest rate of work-related injuries or illness was people aged 55 - 59 years with a rate of 4.7% (up from 4.6% in 2017-18), followed by people aged 20 - 24 years at 4.0% (down from 5.5% in 2017-18).

Graph 3 - Work-related injury rate by age

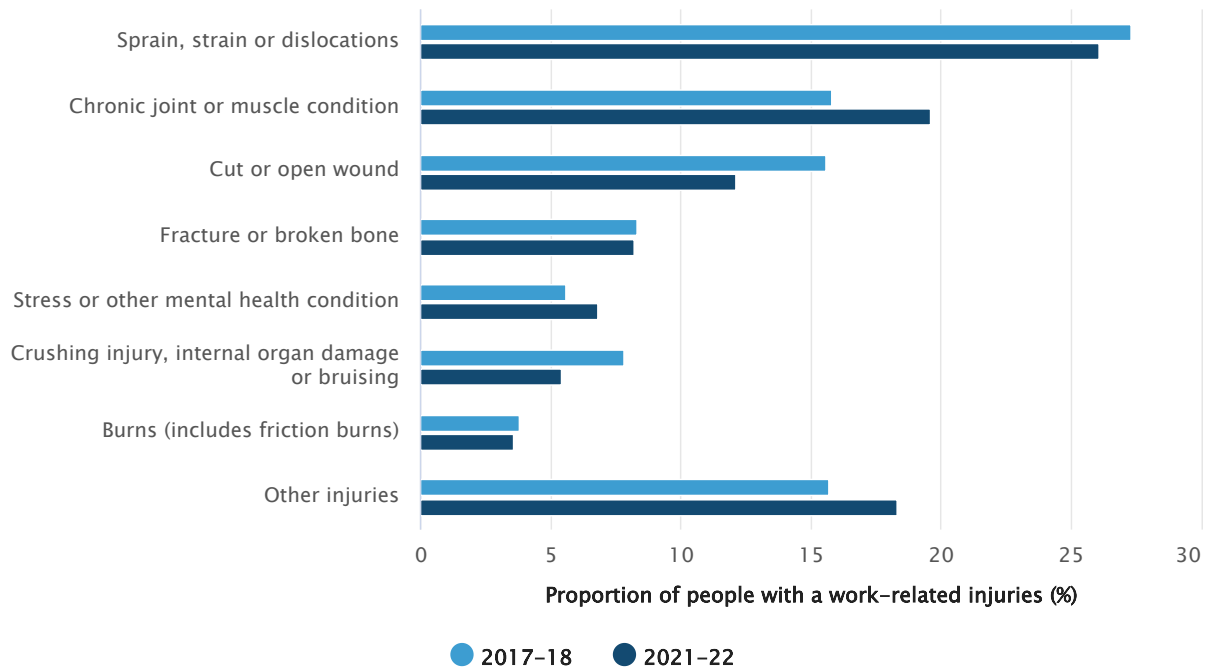


## Injuries

The most common types of injuries or illnesses sustained remained the same in 2021-22 as in 2017-18. The most common injuries were:

- Sprains, strains or dislocations - 29%.
- Chronic joint or muscle conditions - 20%.
- Cuts or open wounds - 13%.

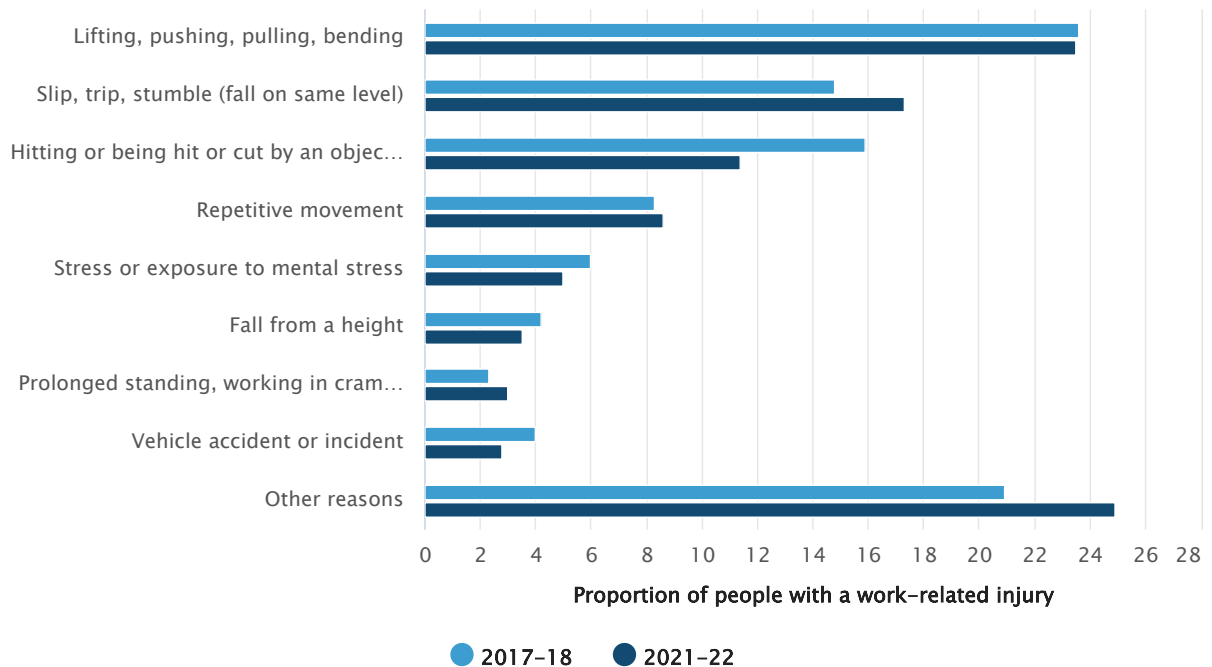
Graph 4 - Most common types of work-related injuries



In 2021-22, the most common causes of work-related injuries were:

- Lifting, pushing, pulling or bending - 24%.
- Fall on same level (including slip or fall) - 17%.
- Hitting or being hit or cut by an object or vehicle - 16%.

**Graph 5 - Most common causes of work-related injuries**



In 2021-22, most work-related injuries occurred in the workplace (91%). 6% of injuries occurred while travelling on business, travelling to or from work, or while on lunchtime or break activities. Only 1% of work-related injuries occurred while working from home.

## Working arrangements

Of the 497,300 people who experienced a work-related injury or illness in 2021-22:

- 88% (436,500) were employees in the job where the most recent injury occurred.
  - 68% (338,500) were employees with paid leave entitlements.
  - 20% (98,000) were employees without paid leave entitlements.
- 12% (59,800) were owner managers.

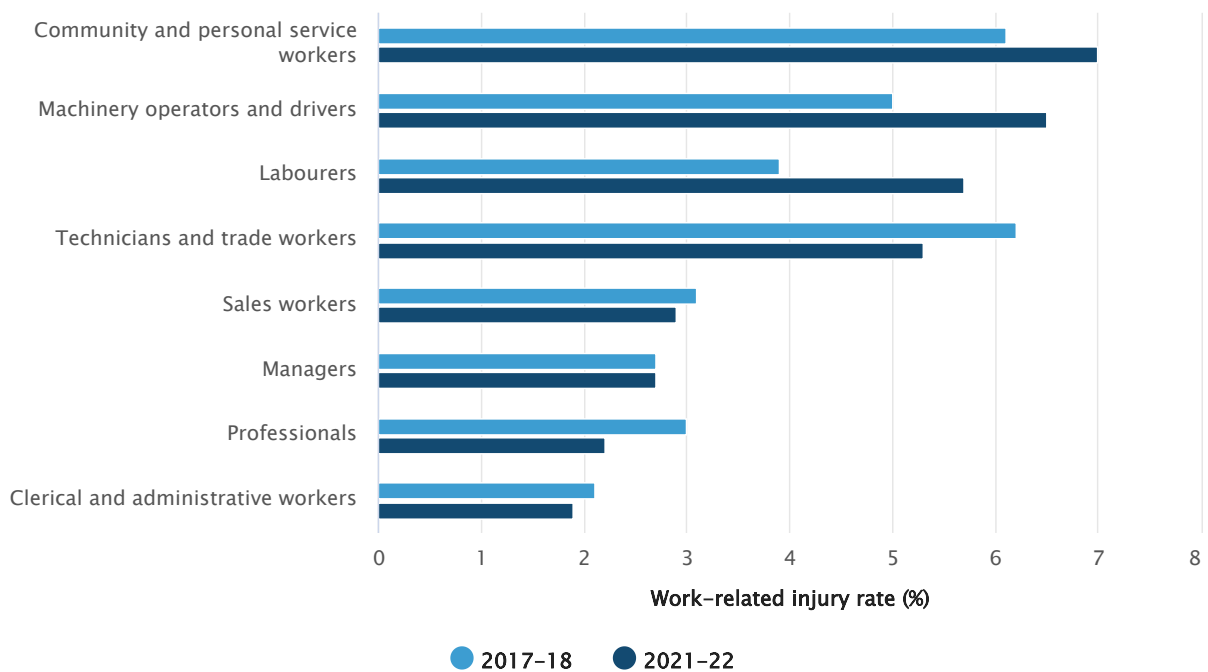
63% (311,100) of people who experienced a work-related injury or illness in the last 12 months were working full-time. 32% (157,200) were working under shift arrangements.

## Occupation and Industry

In 2021-22, the occupation groups with the highest rates of work-related injuries were:

- Community and personal service workers - 7.0%.
- Machinery operators and drivers - 6.5%.
- Labourers - 5.7%.
- Technicians and trades workers - 5.3%.

Graph 6a - Work-related injury rates by Occupation





## Graph 6b - Work-related injuries by Occupation



The industries with the highest rates of work-related injuries were:

- Accommodation and food services - 5.6%.
- Agriculture, forestry and fishing - 5.4%.
- Transport, postal and warehousing - 5.1%.

The industries with the lowest rates were:

- Professional, scientific and technical services - 1.0%.
- Financial and insurance services - 1.3%.
- Administrative and support services - 2.3%.

Of the 288,800 males who experienced a work-related injury or illness in the last 12 months, the most common occupations were:

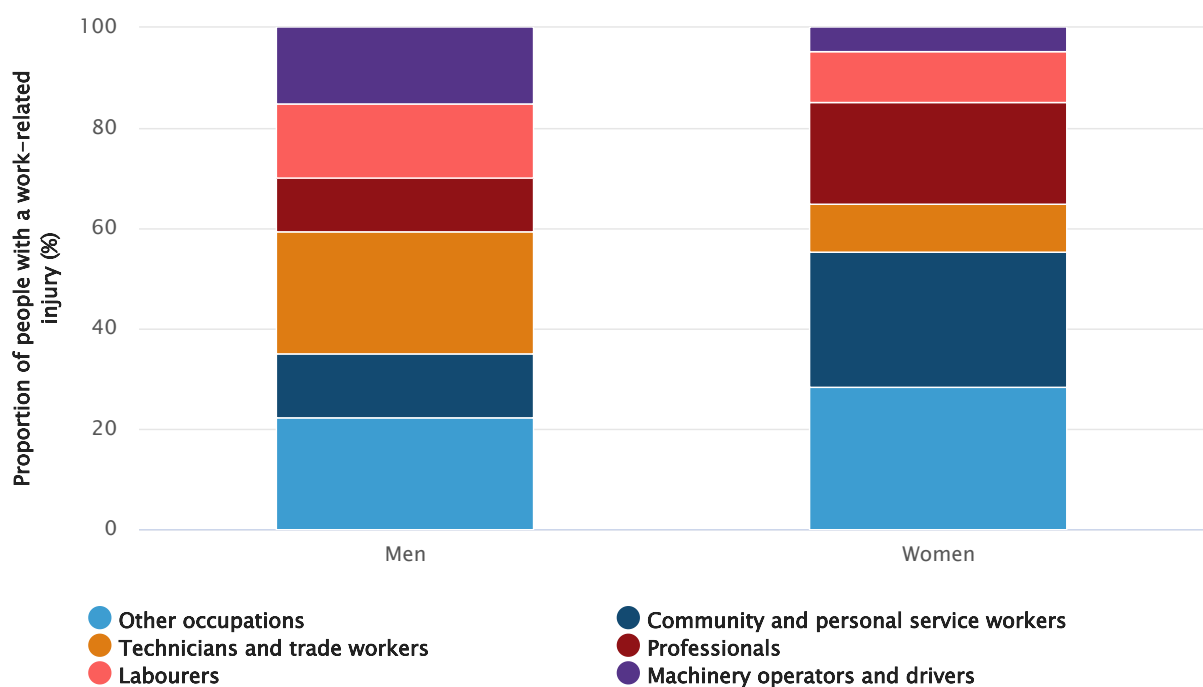
- Technicians and trades workers - 24%.
- Machinery operators and drivers - 15%.

- Labourers - 15%.

There were 208,500 females who experienced work related injuries or illnesses in 2021-22, and the most common occupations were:

- Community and personal service workers - 27%.
- Professionals - 20%.

**Graph 7 - Work-related injuries by sex and occupation**



In 2020-21, the most common industries where men experienced a work-related injury or illness in the last 12 months were:

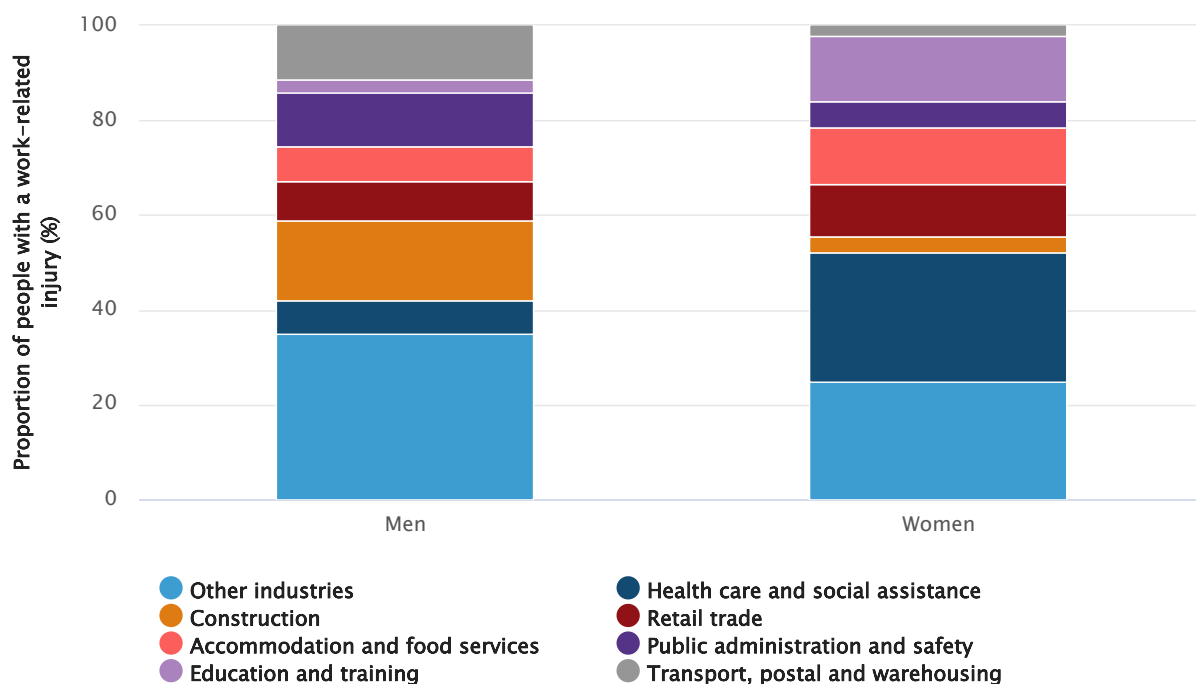
- Construction - 17%.
- Public administration and safety - 12%.
- Transport, postal and warehousing - 11%.

And for women the most common industries were:

- Health care and social assistance - 27%.

- Education and training - 14%.
- Accommodation and food services - 12%.

**Graph 8 - Work-related injuries by sex and industry**



## Absences

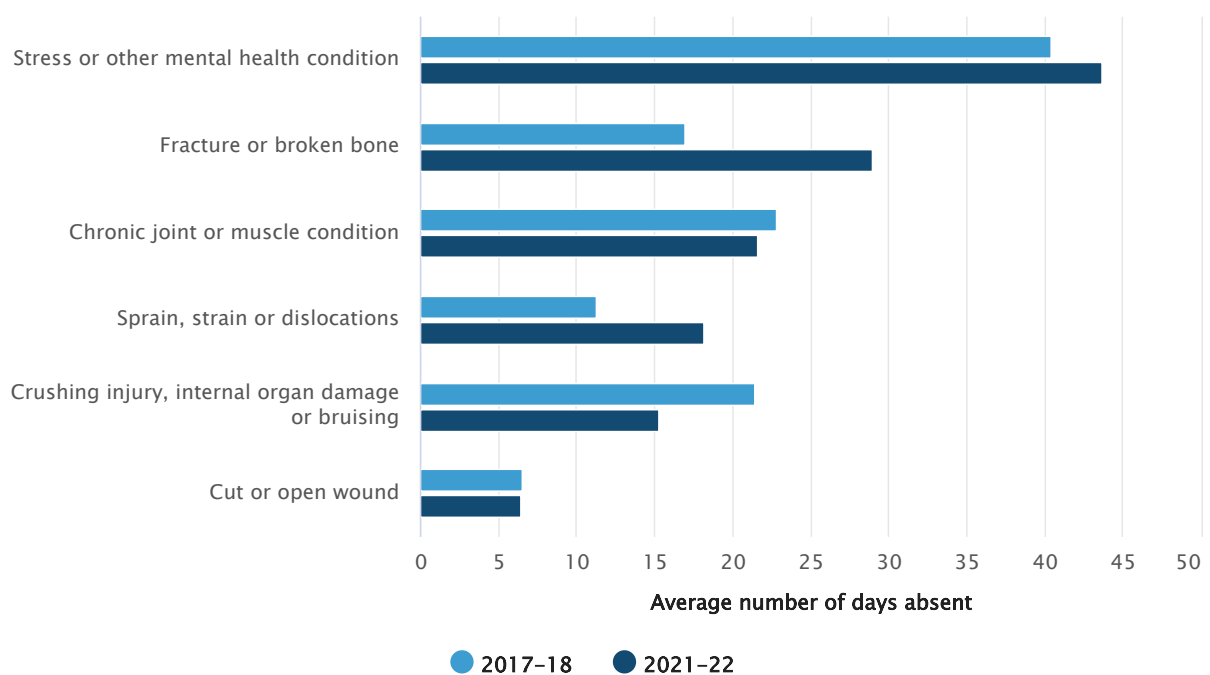
Of the 497,300 people who experienced a work-related injury or illness, two out of three (66%) had some time off work. Of those who took time off:

- 10% took off part of a day or shift.
- 36% took one to four days off.
- 17% took five to ten days off.
- 34% took more than ten days off.
- 4% had not returned to work since the injury or illness occurred.

Of those who took time off work, the injuries or illnesses that had the highest average number of days off were:

- Stress or other mental health conditions - 44 days off.
- Fractures or broken bones - 29 days off.
- Chronic joint or muscle conditions - 22 days off.

**Graph 9 - Average days absent by injury**



15% of people who experienced a work-related injury were no longer working in the job in which the injury or illness occurred. Of these, 32% left as a result of the injury.

## Financial assistance

Of those who experienced a work-related injury in the last 12 months, over half (57%) received some sort of financial assistance. Of those who received financial assistance:

- 54% received workers' compensation.

- 43% did not apply for workers' compensation.
- 3% applied for and did not receive workers' compensation.

The number of people who did not receive financial assistance has decreased from 47% in 2017-18 to 43% in 2021-22.

The proportion of people who experienced a work-related injury and were on workers' compensation has increased from 27% in 2017-18 to 31% in 2021-22.

Of the 323,700 people who did not apply for workers' compensation:

- 39% did not apply because they considered their injury to be minor or did not think workers' compensation was necessary.
- 14% did not think they were eligible for workers' compensation.
- 10% were not covered or not aware of workers' compensation.

## Reporting injuries

Of those who experienced a work-related injury in 2021-22, 88% (439,300) reported it to someone in the workplace. The most common people who were informed were:

- Supervisor or Line manager - 77%.
- Health and safety representative - 17%.
- Employer - 13%.

## Data downloads

### Tables

[↓ Download all \(758.68 KB\)](#)

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#### Table 1. Work-related injury or illness summary, 2005-06 to 2021-22

[↓ Download XLSX](#)  
[51.11 KB]

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#### Table 2. Characteristics of people who experienced a work-related injury, 2021-22

[↓ Download XLSX](#)  
[107.26 KB]

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#### Table 3. Characteristics of job where work-related injury occurred, 2021-22

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[55.77 KB]

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Table 4. Occupation and Industry of job where work-related injury occurred, 2021-22

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[62.23 KB]

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Table 5. Characteristics of work-related injury, 2021-22

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[65.87 KB]

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Table 6. Absences due to work-related injury, 2021-22

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[68.4 KB]

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Table 7. Reporting work-related injury to someone in the workplace, 2021-22

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[56.59 KB]

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Table 8. Workers' compensation by characteristics of job where injury occurred, 2021-22

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[56.76 KB]

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Table 9. Workers' compensation by characteristics of injury, 2021-22

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[53.24 KB]

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Table 10. Financial assistance for work-related injury, 2021-22

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[51.12 KB]

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Table 11. Main reason did not apply for workers' compensation, 2021-22

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[59.02 KB]

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Table 12. Status in employment of job where injury occurred, 2021-22

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[58.8 KB]

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Table 13. Main reason for ceasing job where work-related injury occurred, 2021-22

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[48.32 KB]

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Table 14. Populations by State and Territory, 2021-22

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[43.52 KB]

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## Previous catalogue number

This release previously used catalogue number 6324.0.

Information related to work-related injuries is also available in:

- [\(https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/second+level+view?ReadForm&prodno=4384.0&viewtitle=National%20Health%20Survey:%20%20Injuries,%20Australia~2001~Latest~19/11/2003&&tabname=Past%20Future%20Issues&prodno=4384.0&issue=2001&num=&view=&\\_\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/second+level+view?ReadForm&prodno=4384.0&viewtitle=National%20Health%20Survey:%20%20Injuries,%20Australia~2001~Latest~19/11/2003&&tabname=Past%20Future%20Issues&prodno=4384.0&issue=2001&num=&view=&_) (4384.0), 1995-2001.
- [Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses, Northern Territory](https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/6301.7Oct%201997?OpenDocument) (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/6301.7Oct%201997?OpenDocument) (6301.7), 1997.
- [Work Related Injuries and Illnesses, South Australia](https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/6301.4October%201996?OpenDocument) (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/6301.4October%201996?OpenDocument) (6301.4), 1996.
- [Work Related Injuries and Illnesses, New South Wales](https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/6301.1October%201993?OpenDocument) (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/6301.1October%201993?OpenDocument) (6301.1), 1993.
- [Industrial Accidents - Queensland](https://archive.org/details/australian-statistics?query=6301.3&sort=-date) (https://archive.org/details/australian-statistics?query=6301.3&sort=-date) (6301.3), 1966-1979.
- [Industrial Accidents \(Series A\) - Western Australia](https://archive.org/details/australian-statistics?query=6301.5&sort=-date) (https://archive.org/details/australian-statistics?query=6301.5&sort=-date) (6301.5), 1962-1979.
- [Industrial Accidents \(Series B\) - Western Australia](https://archive.org/details/australian-statistics?query=6302.5&sort=-date) (https://archive.org/details/australian-statistics?query=6302.5&sort=-date) (6302.5), 1961-1979.
- [Industrial Accidents - South Australia](https://archive.org/details/australian-statistics?query=6301.4&sort=-date) (https://archive.org/details/australian-statistics?query=6301.4&sort=-date) (6301.4), 1961-1977.
- [Industrial Accidents and Workers' Compensation - Victoria](https://archive.org/details/australian-statistics?query=6302.2&sort=-date) (https://archive.org/details/australian-statistics?query=6302.2&sort=-date) (6302.2), 1957-1975.
- [Industrial Accidents: Preliminary Statement - Victoria](https://archive.org/details/australian-statistics?query=6301.2&sort=-date) (https://archive.org/details/australian-statistics?query=6301.2&sort=-date) (6301.2), 1967-1974.
- [Industrial Accident Statistics, Quarterly - Queensland](https://archive.org/details/australian-statistics?query=6302.3&sort=-date) (https://archive.org/details/australian-statistics?query=6302.3&sort=-date), 1966-1970.
- [Industrial Accidents, Preliminary - South Australia](https://archive.org/details/industrial-accidents-south-australia-1963-1964-prelim) (https://archive.org/details/industrial-accidents-south-australia-1963-1964-prelim), 1963-64.

- [Labour Report \(https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/second+level+view?ReadForm&prodno=6101.0&viewtitle=Labour%20Report~1970~Previous~01/12/1970&&tabname=Past%20Future%20Issues&prodno=6101.0&issue=1970&num=&view=&\)\(6101.0\),](https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/second+level+view?ReadForm&prodno=6101.0&viewtitle=Labour%20Report~1970~Previous~01/12/1970&&tabname=Past%20Future%20Issues&prodno=6101.0&issue=1970&num=&view=&)(6101.0),)  
1913-1969.

## Methodology

[Work-related injuries methodology, 2021-22 financial year](#)