SPECIAL 25TH ANNIVERSARY TRUSTED BRANDS ISSUE

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25 TH ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL

2024 Trusted Brands Supplement

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Reader's Comments And Opinions

Flood Of Tears

'Yellow Dog's Travels' (My Story, Feb/Mar) made me reminisce back to 2010 when our family dog, Molly, disappeared after we were hit by a flood. Molly was very close to my grandmother and losing Molly made her feel a little lost.

A year went by. One day, my father and I were driving through the countryside when, like a bolt out of the blue, we saw a brown dog that looked like Molly. She was guarding a



warehouse about 45 kilometres from our home. We rushed to pick up Grandma and drove back excitedly. Their reunion made us all cry. They were never separated after that. MARCELLA ADISUHANTO

Medical Miracles

I was profoundly inspired by the article 'Lives In The Balance' (Bonus Read, Feb/Mar). On my first reading, I was impressed by the tenacity and dedication of neurosurgeon Dr Christopher Honey. After I reread it, the thought that came to me was, *this transcends medicine*. It is about the miracles of medicine.

Dynamic Metropolis

I loved reading the travel story 'Heart & Seoul' (Feb/Mar). The article brilliantly captures Seoul's vibrant blend of tradition and modernity, offering readers a vivid glimpse into its rich cultural tapestry, from ancient palaces to dynamic street markets. It is a captivating guide for anyone considering a visit to Seoul. SUJEEVA WIJERATNE >

Let us know if you are moved – or provoked – by any item in the magazine, share your thoughts. See page 8 for how to join the discussion.

EDDIE RUSSELL

EDITOR'S NOTE

An Honest Opinion

CELEBRITY CHEF Jamie Oliver, this month's cover feature (page 28), is well known for his views on the importance of healthy eating, particularly for children. But his opinions have attracted criticism. In a frank interview, the 49-yearold father of five discusses his food campaigns and why honesty has always been his starting point.

Also in this issue: we look at the 20-year fight to clear Australian Kathleen Folbigg's name after she was imprisoned for murdering her four infants ('A Mother's Conviction', page 136); explore the not-so-often trekked parts of Laos ('Next Stop: Who Knows?', page 124); and delve into the history and benefits of yoga ('13 Things: Mind-Bending Facts About Yoga', page 64).

This month marks the 25th year of our annual Trusted Brands survey (page 157). We are very proud of the survey and the widely recognised Reader's Digest Trustmark logo. Congratulations to all this year's winning brands!

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LOUISE WATERSON Editor-in-Chief



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Flown The Coop

Like the story 'Empty Nest Syndrome' (Feb/Mar), my youngest moved out recently. When he left, I sat on his bed and cried. My youngest had been at home for 26 years and suddenly his bedroom was empty.

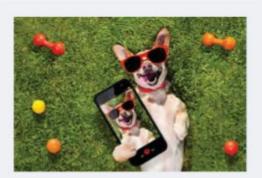
We had spent a lot of time together – I home-schooled him for four years. I was lost when he left, but after floundering for a while I managed to find myself again. At meal times he would recount his day.

Now, walking around the supermarket I see the things I used to buy for him and it's hard. I still shed a tear every so often. The house feels empty, too big. We started out as two and grew to five. Now we are learning to find our way back to the days before children.

KATHRYN HEATHCOTE

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PUPPY PAW-TRAIT We asked you to think up a funny caption for this photo.

Mastering the art of a 'fur-fect' selfie! AFIEKA "Let's paws for a selfie!" CHAN JIN MING Dogumenting the day. LESLIE YEE A day in the life of a canine influencer. SANA NADEEM Smile, you're on candog camera. CAROLYN DOWNING

Congratulations to this issue's winner, Chan Jin Ming.



CAPTION CONTEST

Come up with the funniest caption for the above photo and you could win \$100. To enter, email editor@readersdigest.com.au or see details on page 8.

PILOT





If you're over 50 and have had a fracture, have a family history of fractures, or suffer from back pain, you could have osteoporosis, The Big O. Osteoporosis is serious but it's also treatable. You already get pap smears and mammograms, now get a bone density scan. It only takes about ten minutes; you remain fully clothed and it's painless. Rebates are also available for eligible people.

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Reference: 1. Osteoporosis Australia. What you need to know about osteoporosis. Consumer guide. 2017. www.osteoporosis.org.au. [Accessed 29 September 2023].

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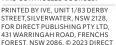
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When I Stopped Hiding

Everyone is concealing something — but embracing that secret part of yourself can change everything

BY Ruth Rathblott

y birth was a little more dramatic than the standard way a baby enters the world. Within minutes of coming out, I was whisked away into another room while doctors gave my parents the difficult news: I was born missing my left hand. I'm sure it was quite jarring for them. An entire hand was just... not there?

As surprising as it was at the time, it isn't super rare. Having extra fingers or toes is the most common limb difference. My form, called amniotic band syndrome, is more rare, occurring in one out of every 10,000 to 15,000 births. Regardless of the form the disability takes, these families have to learn all the ins and outs of navigating that disability – from finding accessible travel to building confidence in their kids – from day one.

Indeed, that announcement of my limb difference would come to define

the rest of my life, and it might have been a disaster if it hadn't been for what happened next. I'm told that a nurse placed me in my mother's arms and instructed: "You will take her home. You will love her. You will raise her like you would any child. You will treat her as normal."

My parents took that admonition seriously. I played sports, acted in theatre, excelled in school, participated in student government and had playdates. While I did get some stares and 'polite' questions about my disability, I am lucky because I wasn't made fun of for my limb difference.

As kids do, I learned to adapt. One of my earliest memories is my father trying to teach me to tie my shoes. I gently nudged him out of the way because his two-handed method wouldn't work for me, and I figured out a way to do it with one hand. Not every challenge was that simple, however. Because my parents were trying so hard to make me feel 'normal', that also meant I didn't really have space to talk about my limb difference – and it was different. No matter how we tried to reframe it, other kids had two hands and I had only one.

The fact that I was different hit me hard my first day of high school. I was 13, an age when kids are already very self-conscious. I remember getting on the bus and one of the other kids stared just a little too long at my left arm. The staring unnerved me in a way it never had before, and I felt a sudden urge to hide my hand, so I impulsively slipped it into my pocket.

I spent the next two decades keeping my limb difference hidden at all times. I'd keep it in my pocket, cover it with extra-long sleeves or tuck it behind bags or underneath jackets. But the thing about hiding is that the very act implies there is something bad or wrong (or else why would you need to hide it?). In my mind, I had decided that my missing hand made me hideous and that if people knew about it they would not want to be around me anymore. I internalised this self-loathing, and it only strengthened over the years. Making friends felt challenging

Ruth Rathblott is a diversity and inclusion speaker, non-profit leader and TEDx speaker.



By learning to be comfortable with herself, Ruth Rathblott made others more comfortable as well

enough, but trying to find love felt particularly daunting. As I started dating, I made deliberate efforts to hide my limb difference. Eventually we'd reach a point in the relationship where I knew I had to tell them. I'd agonise over the 'big reveal' and build it up in my mind and theirs for days. I'd tell them, "There's something I really need to tell you," and then leave them to imagine what terrible thing I was hiding. When I had steeled myself, I'd call them on the phone and say abruptly, "I was born missing my left hand" - and then immediately hang up before they could respond. I'd wait in shame and fear for them to call me back (which they all did, to their

credit), but even then, I couldn't bear to talk about it, so I'd let it go to the answering machine and then listen to their message later.

Everyone I shared this with – friend, co-worker or boyfriend – said kind things like, "You shouldn't hide it" or "It's no big deal." But their words didn't matter to me. The only words that really mattered were the ones I was telling myself, that story of how I was unworthy of love. Hiding feels a lot like lying, and it's hard to build relationships when you feel like you're lying to your loved ones.

When I was 38 years old, exhausted of hiding, I met someone special and invited them in. The combination of me finally feeling ready to unhide and his willingness to go through the unhiding process with me was what I needed. For the first time in my life, I allowed someone to really hold my limb, look at it, take pictures of it, touch it, love it – love me.

That relationship ended after ten years, but I kept the self-love and compassion I learned from it. From that point on, I saw my limb difference as something unique and beautiful about me, something that should be shown, not hidden.

It was a transformational experience, and through that process, I learned to love me, too. This ability to love myself changed how I lived my entire life, and it made me happier.

It started with physical care: for

years, I'd gotten frostbite on my left hand every winter because I'd shove it so deep into my pocket that I wouldn't feel it freezing. Unhiding it meant learning little things, like how to keep it warm and protected.

My relationships also improved. I learned that being comfortable with myself made other people more comfortable as well. Talking about my struggles gave them permission to talk about theirs as well, and I was able to bond on a deeper level with a much larger group of people.

For 25 years, I'd worked in nonprofit organisations working with young people, but accepting my disability sparked a passion in me to educate others about disability as part of diversity, through public speaking and writing.

If I've learned one thing through my advocacy work, it's that hiding is universal. My missing hand is just a tool to talk about it. Hiding things, especially from loved ones, is exhausting and isolating, and it prevents us from getting support.

So why do we all do it? It's that primal shame for being different and the fear of being rejected. It's such a universal experience, yet we all feel like we can't talk about it. It's time to change that.

Do you have a tale to tell? We'll pay cash for any original and unpublished story we print. See page 8 for details on how to contribute.

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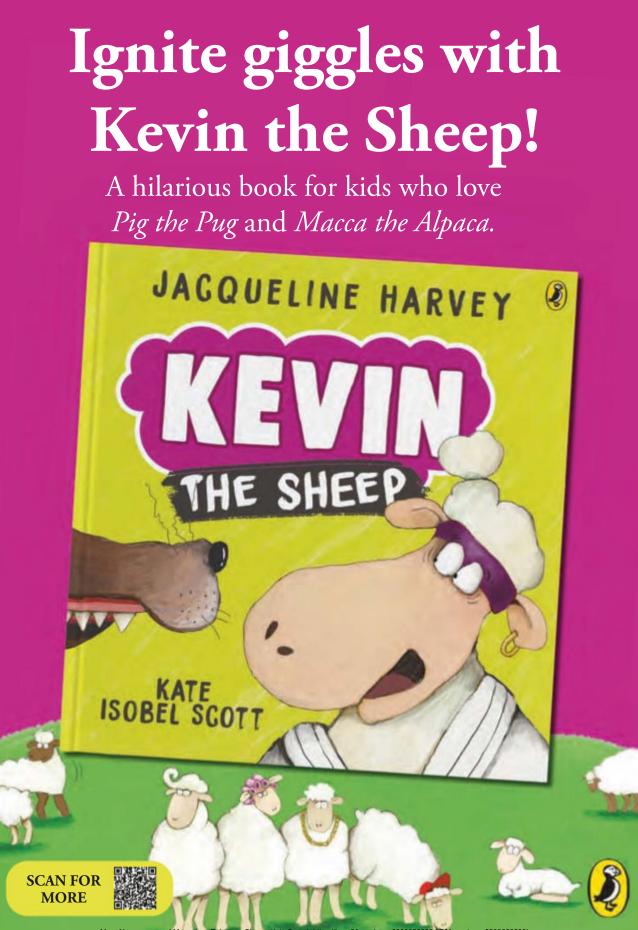
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Good Pet. Better Friend GEORGENE A.

When I first got my turtle, Nicky, I was ten years old, and she was about the size of a coin. We've grown together (I'm now 80 and she weighs 2.5 kg), and she's been my best friend through it all.

Nicky lives in our backyard pond in the summer, and has her own room and filtered kiddie pool in the winter. She's also quite social and curious. As the star of 'Show And Tell' for four kids and eight grandchildren, she cranes her neck out of her shell to get a good look at her fans. Nicky loves munching on the tomatoes and pretzels the neighbourhood kids feed her, and she's even gutsy enough to steal a mouthful of dog food.

On her 50th birthday (these turtles typically live 50 years or more), we threw her a party, complete with a gift any turtle would die for: her own in-ground pond.

She is a good pet and a better friend. She keeps all my secrets. Nicky was in my lap the day after my wedding and each time we moved home. I hope she'll be there till the very end.

You could earn cash by telling us about the antics of unique pets or wildlife. Turn to page 8 for details on how to contribute.

A Most Amazing Cat

JOAN ANNE MARR

When I was younger and living in a small flat on my own I was lonely, so went to the cat shelter for a kitten. As I walked down the rows of cages with the assistant, one mature cat sat huddled in the back looking sad, so I stopped for a moment.

"Oh, you'll like this one," the woman said, and before I could reply she opened the door. The cat flew out onto me and wrapped his paws around my neck in a tight hug. "Oh, I've never had one do that before," the assistant said. It was a job prying him off me and putting him back into the cage.

When I got home I couldn't stop thinking about that poor cat. He was going to be euthanised, so I rang early the next morning and said I'd pick him up later that day.

When I went to work the next day, I left the cat, Sylvester, in my flat. When I got home round 6 o'clock and opened the door, Sylvester bolted outside. I thought he'd run away and was rather upset. A few minutes later, a meow at the door told me he'd come back. Then I realised I hadn't left him a kitty-litter tray. I bought one the next day but he never seemed to use it.

One night I was awoken by Sylvester sitting on my chest with his paws over my mouth. As I started to move he pushed harder with his paws as if to say, don't speak or



move. It was then I heard drawers being quietly opened and closed. *Good grief, I've got an intruder,* I thought. I had nothing really to steal and lay still and quiet. I heard my flat door quietly open and close. Sylvester sprung off the bed, checked all around the flat and came back to me purring, as if to say, it's safe now.

Later, after I got married, I discovered Sylvester was using the toilet when he needed to go. He was the most amazing cat. When I arrived home from anywhere, he would jump and hug me like that very first meeting.



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PETS CORNER

Signs Your Cat Needs To See A Vet

You may just think a hairball is normal — but if it starts happening regularly, it could signal a bigger problem

BY Meghan Jones

reality of being a responsible cat owner is that they need care when sick and regular health checks. But, of course, cats can't talk, so you'll have to look for indicators. Keep an eye out for these tell-tale signs that your pet may not be 100 per cent.

HAIRBALLS

A common and potentially dangerous misconception about cats is that coughing up hairballs is just something they do. Yes, they groom themselves and will sometimes cough up hair. But if you're noticing it regularly, it can be cause for alarm. "Either the cat is consuming too much hair (ie. overgrooming due to an allergy) or there is a gastrointestinal problem and the digestion and motility of hair through the intestinal tract is being compromised (such as inflammatory bowel disease)," says veterinarian Dr Geoff DeWire. "It may be time for a change of diet or other factors in your cat's environment."

APPETITE CHANGES

Keep an eye on how much your cat eats. Obviously, if his appetite suddenly seems to dwindle to nothing and he's not eating, that's an issue. But also be aware that any changes in appetite can be a red flag. Which leads us to ...

WEIGHT LOSS OR GAIN

You should make sure your cat's weight doesn't fluctuate too much, up or down, or too quickly. To determine exactly what that issue

is, it's probably worth a trip to the vet. Significant weight gain, regardless of age, is not normal.

COUGHING

Just as a persistent cough can be a sign that something is wrong in humans, it can be a sign that your cat is ill, too.

Specifically, coughing could indicate airway disease, like asthma. Look for signs that your cat is going to vomit, but produces nothing.

ACHES AND PAINS

A common problem in cats, especially as they get older, is orthopaedic pain. "A 2009 study evaluated 100 domestic cats over six years old and involved taking X-rays of all of the major joints, such as shoulders, knees and elbows. Sixtyone per cent of cats had significant osteoarthritis in one of their major joints," Dr DeWire says.

Unfortunately, prevalent as it is, it's something that can be tricky

to spot. "As your cat ages, chances are high that they are coping with orthopaedic pain and likely hiding it from you," he explains.

If you see obvious signs your cat is in pain, arthritis might be to blame. But even if you don't, it's something you should bring up during vet check-ups. "Ask your vet for joint supplement recommendations to

> help support your cat's orthopaedic health as it ages," Dr DeWire says.

He also adds that if your cat is overweight, that puts him at greater risk of such issues.

BATHROOM ISSUES

Another obvious, yet unpleasant sign that all

is not right with your cat is if he's suddenly having issues doing his business. Urinating outside of the litter box could indicate a lower urinary tract infection or bladder crystals. And if you're cleaning the litter box and see that he doesn't seem to be producing as much as normal, that is another

BEHAVIOURAL CHANGES

If you start to notice changes in your cat's behaviour, from major to seemingly minor, you should take note. Significant changes that cause you concern should always be brought to your vet's attention.

warning sign.

KEEP AN EYE

ON HOW MUCH

YOUR CAT EATS.

CHANGES IN

APPETITE CAN

BE A RED FLAG

Australians Saying No to Traditional Rigmarole and Expense of Hearing Aids, with New 'Pocket Aids' now the Alternative Path to Solve Mild-to-Moderate Hearing Difficulties.

This No-Hearing-Test, No-Appointment, and Ready-to-Use Solution is Gaining 5-Star Reviews, with Countless Numbers Finding them Superior to their Previously Owned Devices, which had cost them up to \$12,000.

For far too long, many individuals with mild-tomoderate hearing trouble have been subjected to a process that significantly exceeds the simplicity their situation demands. This journey involves navigating through intricate layers of hearing tests, consultations, and often facing exorbitant hearing aid pricing—which in many cases is vastly disproportionate to their needs.

"People with mild-to-moderate hearing loss have frequently encountered a process that misaligns with the straightforward support their condition necessitates. Australia-wide there are countless numbers of people who have normal or near-normal hearing across several of the major speech frequencies, paying thousands of dollars for hearing aids to address a simple hearing loss presenting at just a few frequencies on the speech spectrum. The complexity of accessing suitable hearing aids for this group has not only been daunting at times, but also excessively burdensome and very expensive given the straightforward support their situation requires."

A mild to moderate hearing loss is different. These people report hearing difficulty only in certain situations. This type of hearing loss, characterised by difficulties in hearing soft sounds or understanding speech in noisy environments, doesn't always translate to a constant need for auditory assistance. This subtler form of hearing loss might not disrupt daily life to the extent of its more severe counterparts, but can still pose specific challenges in certain scenarios, such as conversing in crowded places or listening to distant speakers.

In an audiological leap forward during the Covid-19 pandemic, *PocketAid* redefined hearing assistance for Australians with mild-to-moderate hearing loss. This era of innovation was sparked by the global crisis, which saw audiology clinics deserted as thousands hesitated to attend in-person consultations. Facing the daunting reality of a service model reliant on face-to-face interactions, *PocketAid*, embarked on a mission to create an advanced broad prescription device, which could be posted direct to the customer, and ready to use straight out-of-the-box, with no need for a related hearing test or appointment.

Rooted in a deep dive into audiology data, PocketAid leveraged over 1,000 real-world audiograms to inform the frequency responses and digital programming of their hearing aids. And the results were extraordinary.



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ADVERTORIAL PROMOTION



Michael wears the Jaspa 3 Dura.

"We had numerous customers report they were doing better with the *PocketAid* hearing aids than the hearing aids that they had spent thousands of dollars on, and we knew we could provide these devices at much more affordable prices Australia wide."

The PocketAid range of hearing aids allows customers to choose from three distinct models, depending on their preference for style. Discreet behind-the-ear (including a rechargeable option), and tiny in-the-ear models are now available. All devices are ready-to-use straight-out-of-thebox, and give users access to various settings and volume levels via a simple on-board button. No digital apps or programming is required. Prices range from just \$429 to \$595 per aid.

All Pocket Aid orders come with a 30-day

money back guarantee, standard warranties, and free delivery Australia wide. No hearing tests or appointments are required to use the devices. PocketAid, an Australian company, also offers local Australian phone support if required. Pocket Aids can be purchased at

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MOST RECENT REVIEWS



ROLANDO, NSW

I'm so happy that finally there is now a hearing aid that really solved my hearing difficulty. There is so much clarity in hearing the sound, the words being spoken that I don't feel I am actually wearing one. It is so small that people around me don't even notice I'm wearing a hearing aid. You can never go wrong in handling it, just follow the instructions given in the quick reference guide or video attached to the email. Thank you so much PocketAid, you are super fantastic, a real lifesaver.

$\star \star \star \star \star$

Reviewed by AL, NSW

Simply put the Jaspa 3 gives me better hearing for TV and for conversations than my \$9000 dollar pair.

* * * * *

Reviewed by CHRIS, NSW

I am unable to distinguish any difference between the Jaspa 3 and the \$5500 set of aids that I trialled from my Audiologist. Particularly in terms of sound quality. And that's what is most important to me. The hearing quality.

Reviewed by PETER C. OLD



I have now been using the Spot Mini 6 hearing aid for 6 weeks and I can highly recommend the product. It is small, fits to the base of the ear comfortably and is almost invisible. It is easy to maintain and to set up and the sound response is excellent even in noisy environments, it can be used also when engaging in moderate physical activities without fear of being dislodged. Thumbs up for this product.

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Staying Active

The advice for living with arthritis is to participate in physical activity. But which sports should you choose?

BY Susannah Hickling

YOGA

In a survey from health website patient.info, 64 per cent of healthcare professionals recommended yoga and Pilates for arthritis. Both are gentle, lowimpact exercises that strengthen the muscles. This in turn helps to support joints. A good yoga or Pilates teacher will adapt the movements to your condition.

GOLF

Physical activity can ease the pain and stiffness of arthritis, but exercising isn't always that easy. One manageable low-impact sport is golf. Regular golfers stay active thanks to all the walking they do, but there are other advantages, too. A survey by UK and Australian academics found that 90 per cent of golf-playing respondents with osteoarthritis rated their health good, very good or excellent compared with 64 per cent of the general population with the condition. Golfers also reported better mental health, possibly due to the sociable nature of the game.

WALKING

If a round of golf doesn't grab you, normal walking brings the same health benefits, including a reduction in the risk of heart disease, diabetes and obesity. Brisk walking helps to keep joints flexible. Use walking poles if you need to – you might even want to try Nordic walking, which uses poles to propel you forward and work your core muscles. But never force a painful joint.

SWIMMING

Exercising in water literally takes the weight off your feet. Water supports your body weight and reduces the strain on joints. It also provides resistance, which helps strengthen your muscles. And, like other sports, it's good for your general health and wellbeing. A Korean review of existing research found aquatic exercise reduced pain and joint dysfunction more effectively and improved quality of life more than land-based exercise.

Breaststroke, however, is best avoided if you have arthritis in the hips or knees. If swimming isn't for you, there are plenty of other aquatic activities to choose from, including aqua aerobics classes or aqua walking, which you can do by yourself by simply walking round the pool.

CYCLING

Get outside on your bike and you'll see improvements to your mental health as well as physical benefits. But a stationary bike is just as good for fitness and for building up muscle around your knees, and you don't have to worry about the weather or the traffic. A 2021 review of studies by Chinese and Australian researchers found that stationary cycling reduced pain and had a positive effect on joint function in people with knee osteoarthritis. Aim to ride for 20 minutes three to five days a week.

BOWLS AND BOULES

I bet you didn't realise the civilised, sedate game of bowls, or boules if you prefer the French variety, was good for you. Again, there's minimal stress on joints, and you'll be enhancing your mobility – and your social life – just by getting out onto a lawn or a pétanque pitch with friends.



7 Ways To Improve Concentration

BY Susannah Hickling

esearch has shown that over the past couple of decades, people's attention spans have shrunk in measurable ways. But there are steps you can take to help you focus better.

Minimise distraction. Removing yourself from people and devices will allow you to concentrate better. If you find yourself sidetracked by digital devices, turn off notifications and train yourself to check them at set intervals. Set a timer. **Find the right sound.** Whether it's music, white noise or even silence, you might find there's a particular sound that helps you maintain your attention. This enhances alpha waves, brain waves that promote relaxation and are thought to play a role in cognition and, according to a small 2015 US study, make you more creative.

Move your body. When you exercise, your heart rate increases, prompting your body to release a protein called brain-derived neurotrophic factor, or BDNF, which aids nerve cell growth. This is important for concentration, memory and learning.

Follow a healthy diet. You might get a boost from certain so-called 'brain foods'. These include fish, nuts, blueberries and leafy greens.

Sleep well. Who doesn't suffer from brain fog after a bad night? Everyone needs different amounts of shut-eye, but aim for seven to nine hours.

Structure your life. Having a daily routine, including breaks, will minimise the brain fatigue that goes with having to make endless spontaneous decisions and allow you to focus on the the important stuff.

Fix health issues. Tackle hearing problems, which demand sometimes exhausting concentration, sleep apnoea or depression.

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News From The

WORLD OF MEDICINE

YOU CAN'T REVERSE SLEEP DEPRIVATION

With help from people who volunteered to stay up overnight, US scientists tested two popular ways of compensating for sleep deprivation: caffeine and napping.

Sleeplessness took a toll on people's ability to stay focused on a task and to follow a complex set of directions. Consuming caffeine equal to two cups of coffee improved focus but not direction-following. Taking a 30- or 60-minute snooze didn't fully restore their brain function, either. So while loading up on caffeine and taking a quick nap at midday might help you get through the day, neither will have you performing at your best.

began by reading stories about cruelty or violence. Some stopped there, while others were asked to proceed to either light-hearted anecdotes, or stories about acts of kindness.

Not surprisingly, the negative reports dampened readers' moods. The amusing tidbits helped to temper this effect, but it was the stories about kindness that cheered people the most.

COMMON VACCINES HELP AVERT ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

Staying up to date with your immunisations reduces your chances of developing Alzheimer's disease, suggests a US study of people over 65. Specifically, the vaccines for tetanus and diphtheria (adults should get a booster every ten years),

shingles (recommended for people over age 65) and pneumococcal disease (recommended for seniors over 70) lowered the relative risk of Alzheimer's by 30 per cent, 25 per cent and 27 per cent, respectively.

DOSE OF GOOD NEWS

Although bad news stories can be worth your attention, adding some good news into your media diet could benefit your mental health, concludes a new UK experiment. More than 300 participants

Discover the upside of ageing

LiveUp is a free healthy ageing guide funded by the Australian Department of Health and Aged Care, designed to help you stay independent and socially connected as you get older.

There are lots of myths and stereotypes when it comes to getting older, but it's proven that how we age is mostly determined by the lifestyle choices we make each day.

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INTERVIEW

Celebrity chef Jamie Oliver on success, credibility and better nutrition

"The Only Thing I Can Do Is To Be Honest"

By Michael Neudecker

oday he is a global star. His cookbooks have made him the second most successful British author after *Harry Potter* creator J.K. Rowling. Jamie Oliver's career began in the kitchen of his parents' pub in a small town in the county of Essex. As a chef in the TV cooking series *The Naked Chef*, he won over an audience of millions. Thirty years on, Oliver's conviction to simple 'naked' ingredients is as fundamental to any delicious dish that still holds firm.

In addition to your cookbooks and restaurants, you are famous for your campaigns for healthy eating for children. Eighteen years ago, you were in a school in London's Greenwich district with television cameras for Jamie's School Dinners. There was criticism at first, but later 270,000 people signed a petition for better school meals.

Knowing that what I do is ultimate-

ly wanted by most people is the most important thing for me. And I don't campaign if I don't know that I'm 99 per cent right: right in terms of the facts, but also morals, law and ethics. That sounds arrogant. But I would never waste my time doing something

controversial. Nothing we've done in our campaigns so far has been particularly clever. It's always about fundamental things.

For example: in the UK, it's estimated that 5.5 million children are fed breakfast and lunch in schools every day, 180 days a year. That means about half of those children's diet throughout their childhood takes place at school. Do we have any standards or rules for this? No. We have standards for dog food, and if you don't adhere to them, you are punished. So you think: aha, the British like their dogs more than their children.

I BELIEVE IN ETHICS AND INTEGRITY IN EVERYTHING, NOT JUST IN COOKING, BUT IN LIFE

In the county of Yorkshire, angry mothers tried to launch a countercampaign against you and your school meals a few years ago. Have success and wealth impacted your credibility?

To be honest, when I start a campaign, I don't really enjoy it. It's very hard, especially as I'm much shyer than people think. I like peace and quiet. But when I have to fight, I

> fight, because I think that's what people ultimately expect from me. Selling books is like a vote for me, and a real one at that. Not a meaningless 'like', not a cheap comment on social media.

Don't you worry that some people now see

you as the rich, hip Jamie Oliver with the fancy house who wants to tell people what to eat?

I didn't get rich on my own, the public made me wealthy. And I see myself as their servant in my campaigns. For me, it's a very simple, very clean, very pure relationship. I don't do these campaigns because I feel like fighting. On the contrary, I hate that. The period after the launch of *Jamie's School Dinners* was the 18 worst months of my life.

Our house was broken into, computers were hacked, I had to spend hundreds of thousands of pounds fixing it all. I have a full-time security service, including a guard dog, and of course that's incredible. But when you're playing with the Matrix ... I mean, if you expose parts of the food industry and its morals in your stories, you'll see how your career fares.

That sounds grim.

Come on, that shouldn't surprise you! You're stirring up a can of worms. It's all a blatant game in which I, too, am just a puppet. A puppet in the puppet theatre of the establishment, however you want to define the establishment, with money, status, whatever. And you are also part of the system, the media, in both a negative and positive sense. I was the a**hole, the do-gooder, the pain-in-the-ass for a year and a half back then.

When I put chili con carne on my menu, people got upset, *now he's ruining chili con carne. Chili con carne is now posh,* and so on. Come on! Chili con carne is never posh, I just made sure that the meat was good quality.

One day a newspaper ran a positive story, and when it was printed, everyone was suddenly nice to me. I learned then what and by whom I should feel offended and what and by whom not. The only thing I can do is to be relentless and honest – and always put the children's health first.

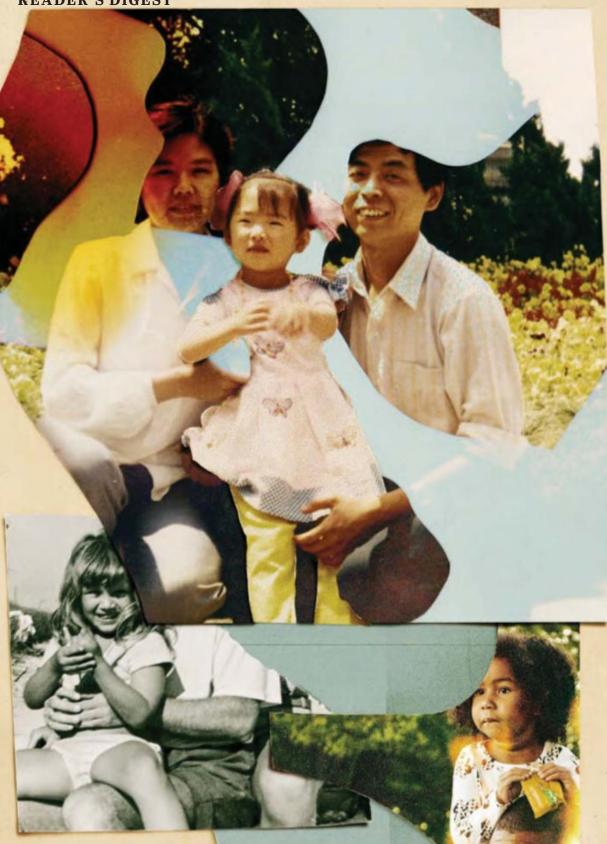
JAMIE OLIVER

Jamie Oliver's parents Trevor and Sally ran The Cricketers pub in Clavering, a small town in Essex, England. Oliver, who had struggled with dyslexia since childhood, worked there from an early age. The TV show *The Naked Chef* made Oliver globally famous in the late 1990s. Today, he is active in various campaigns for better nutrition and his cookbooks have sold almost 50 million worldwide. He is married and has five children.

If it all affects your life so much, you could just keep selling a lot of books and enjoy life.

That's right, with the right timing, the right tone and because you're hitting a certain zeitgeist, you can sell a few million books. But I'm heading for 50 million books sold. That's more than just successful, that's a very clear vote for me. It's not as if I'm a bloody genius. Perhaps the only thing I'm good at is listening. And being persistent. And yes, OK, I'm famous now, but I wouldn't advise anyone to aspire to that. Being famous is not healthy, neither for yourself nor for your family. I'm at a point now where there's no way out of fame for me. I'm stuck in my role. And if that's the case, I might as well make sure it's worth it. That what I do, I do well. 🔳

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Reunited

How DNA testing is bringing families together

BY Sarah Treleaven

ILLUSTRATION BY

In 2018, Jeff Highsmith started a Facebook page on behalf of his family. The page had one objective: to find Melissa Suzanne Highsmith, Jeff's sister. At just 21 months, she had been abducted from the family home in Fort Worth, Texas, by her babysitter 51 years earlier and the family was desperate for answers.

In addition to the Facebook page, they made flyers with baby Melissa's face and age-progression photos that indicated what she might look like now, in her 50s. Remarkably, they were convinced she was still alive all these years later, and determined to be reunited with her.

They knew that more tools were now available to help locate missing persons – such as genealogy kits with DNA tests. And so, the family bought DNA DIY kits, and then uploaded the results to a public genetic genealogy research database called GEDmatch. It seemed like a shot in the dark, but it worked.

In November 2022, the Highsmith family found Melissa through a key DNA match: Melissa's daughter. By pulling the threads of DNA matches, triangulating connections on a much bigger family tree, they zeroed in on the baby snatched so long ago. The family reunion was a joyful one. Melissa described being found as "the most wonderful feeling in the world."

The story of Melissa Highsmith and her family got global news coverage. But it's only one of many cases of people being connected by DNA analysis. Two sisters – one in the United Kingdom, the other in the Netherlands – met for the first time in 75 years after learning that they have the same father. While in Canada, siblings separately adopted from Romania when they were babies were reunited in their 50s when both took a DNA test to learn more about their biological health; it turns out they had spent much of their lives within a 30-minute drive of each other.

There are countless stories. In Spain, a DNA database has been set up to identify the 'stolen babies' of the Franco dictatorship. Black Americans are using DNA tests to learn about family lineages disrupted by slavery. And stories about recent tragedies – including the devastating February earthquake in Syria and Türkiye – have included details about how DNA was being used to reunite children with their parents.

Much of the news coverage of DNA technology advances has focused on capturing a killer or identifying a long-dead victim. But there's another, equally compelling possibility: solving cold cases involving a living



victim or missing person. In other words, someone out in the world, location and identity unknown, who can be made aware of who they really are only through DNA.

Law enforcement agencies have stepped up efforts to use it, and private businesses have also hopped on board, creating databases and putting the tools for DNA collection into the hands of consumers. Crucially, there's also been a rise in citizen sleuths and investigative genetic genealogists, perhaps bolstered by our insatiable love for true crime, who are helping to bring ordinary families together again.

According to Michael Marciano, director of research for the Forensic and National Security Sciences Institute (FNSSI) at Syracuse University's College of Arts and Sciences in New York, there have been major advances in recent decades in how forensic DNA analysis is done. One has to do with sensitivity: our ability to detect lower amounts of DNA than ever before. That means researchers can now identify the DNA that's deposited from someone touching an object or a person.

It also means that mixed DNA samples (samples that include more than one person's DNA) can be disentangled. "For example, a perpetrator enters a bank, picks up the pen where you fill out your deposit slips, writes a note and gives it to the teller," says Marciano. "We know the perpetrator picked up the pen, but how many other people did? Their DNA might be on it too." Now, it's much easier to isolate the perpetrator's genetic material.

The second major development has to do with how results are analysed.

CONSUMERS ARE BUYING THE PROMISE TO UNCOVER THEIR HERITAGE AND MAKE CONNECTIONS

Software and computing power have improved sufficiently that we can create better models and more accurate statistics that help analysts interpret the samples they've collected.

But still, to get a match, researchers must be able to link a sample to a DNA profile. "Forensics is about comparisons," says Marciano. "If I have a fingerprint or DNA profile but nothing to compare it to, I can't determine whose it is."

This is where databases of DNA profiles come in. Sometimes, those profiles are derived from court-mandated samples or samples collected from crime scenes or missing persons cases. Dean Hildebrand runs a forensics lab at B.C. Institute of Technology in Canada, and for decades he has done work for the government coroner service, running DNA samples that primarily come from missing persons or their families. Some are from remains found at scenes. Other times, he runs samples from the belongings of a missing person – a blanket the person couldn't sleep without, or a pair of broken glasses left behind.

"We have an avalanche of those samples coming through all the

TWENTY YEARS AGO, WE COULDN'T SIMPLY SPIT IN A TUBE AND GET A REPORT ON OUR LINEAGE

time," says Hildebrand. Many are attached to long-cold cases. More than a decade ago, Hildebrand helped develop a missing persons database so law enforcement officials can log unidentified remains and the samples from missing persons.

But lately, DNA searching has had little to do with foul play. Companies such as Ancestry.com, 23andMe, FamilyTreeDNA and MyHeritage have sold consumers on the idea of uncovering their heritage and making connections. It's DNA analysis as a party game for the whole family.

And it's very popular. By the start of 2019, according to *MIT Technology Review*, more than 26 million people had sent their DNA to one of four commercial ancestry and health databases.

These products and their analysis are the result of technological advancement; 20 years ago, it wouldn't have been possible for you and your family to spit in tubes, put them in the mail, then receive a report on your lineage. But they also reflect a growing social phenomenon: a fascination with drawing connections and insights into the self through the use of genetic material.

With good quality DNA, these labs can capture vast amounts of information about an individual. And as databases of private ancestry or genealogy kit companies have grown, individuals now have the option of putting their DNA sample on public databases, and people can make additional connections.

GEDmatch is one such public database. It allows users to compare samples across a broader spectrum than a single site, looking for matches with overlapping genetic material. The bigger the overlap, the more likely the match is a close relative such as a parent, child, grandparent or first cousin.

The more people in the database, the more potential there is to make a connection, even if it's a far-out one. Then it's the genealogists' and the investigators' job to rebuild all that missing information for these big family trees or kinship determinations.

The work of armchair detectives, uploading samples and combing through DNA matches, can yield a mixed bag of implications, and is doing a lot of good solving cold

Reunited

cases. Yet not everyone likes the information they find, especially when there's been infidelity and things of that nature that were previously not known or discussed.

The number of public and private databases for genetic identification is growing. In China, authorities keep a database that includes the DNA of parents of missing children, and of any children found by police. The system was thrust into the spotlight in 2021 when a family was reunited with their kidnapped son after 24 years – a case that also drew attention to the devastation of living with the uncertainty of a loved one's disappearance.

Before the family was reunited, the son's father, Guo Gangtang, spent years criss-crossing the vast country determined to find his son, Guo Xinzhen, often sleeping outdoors and travelling by motorbike with flyers and a flag displaying his son's image. Without the help of DNA, he likely would never have found his son. According to Chinese media, thousands of missing children have been found thanks to the database.

The desire to connect with family members, missing or not yet discovered, has given rise to another phenomenon: Investigative Genetic Genealogy (IGG). IGG takes all the newly public DNA information being uploaded to genealogy websites and combines it with other sources of public and private data – such as Facebook profiles, marriage records



Guo Xinzhen was reunited with his family 24 years after he was abducted at age two

and even worn paper copies of family trees – to infer relationships and build out networks of people.

It's as much a social phenomenon as a technological one, and a wave of IGG investigators are now working in tandem with families and law enforcement to find missing persons and solve long-standing mysteries. One recent example is when an IGG investigator, a retired lawyer with a PhD in biology named Barbara Rae-Venter, helped police track down California's 'Golden State Killer,' who had eluded authorities for decades, by combing through DNA of the killer's distant relatives.

But IGGs are also being consulted to help families find long-lost relatives. In 2022, Christa Hastie of California decided to help her mother, Vera, age 80, solve a family mystery: what had happened to Vera's sister, Rosemarie, when she vanished from the streets of Montreal one winter's



Vera (left, at age 11) with her sister, Rosemarie (at 13)

day in 1954 at the age of 14. Over six months, Vera and Christa dedicated themselves to searching for any and all information related to Rosemarie's disappearance.

Christa already had a DNA profile on Ancestry, and then she added profiles to other major sites. She also got an investigative genealogist to help her zero in on the maternal matches. They found a DNA match close enough to be Rosemarie's grandchild, but when Christa reached out to the person, they claimed not to know Rosemarie.

Since Vera had been born in Germany, she and Christa enlisted the help of a genealogist with experience in DNA testing there. Carolin Becker put Vera's grandmother's surname into a database she had constructed,



An age-progression poster of what Rosemarie might have looked like as an older adult

and her software found nine generations of ancestors. "A whopping 34 pages of tiny text," says Christa.

Becker cross-referenced the data with matches from DNA sites, ruling out anyone who wasn't both a maternal and paternal match to Vera. And she helped Christa and Vera reach out to long-lost relatives, adding their DNA to the family tree and bolstering the search.

Ultimately, more than 900 people fleshed out that family tree, dating to the 17th century. Using DNA Painter, a website with genealogy research tools, Christa was able to re-confirm the specific match: Rosemarie's granddaughter, who had been identified before.

Christa reached out again, this time with proof, and Christa and Vera connected with Rosemarie's whole family. The truth was astonishing: Rosemarie had died years earlier, but her life hadn't ended when she disappeared all those decades ago; she went on to have children and grandchildren. So while there would be no reunion, no explanation for Rosemarie's disappearance, knowing she had not been murdered was a huge comfort to Vera.

There was another upside to their search: because the IGG helped them map out a comprehensive family tree, they were united with or introduced to relatives they now keep in touch with. Christa and Vera emerged from this exercise with an expanded sense of family.

That's exactly the promise of commercial DNA sites. And it's easy to imagine any number of positive outcomes. We now have the capability to reunite lost family members separated by war or other circumstances. We can pinpoint the ancestral homes of adoptees or others whose biological connections have been severed.

But now imagine a less rosy scenario: a family tries DNA kits as a fun activity, swabbing the inside of their cheeks while standing around the dinner table, and then eagerly awaits the results – only to have those kits show, unexpectedly, that one of the kids is not a biological match. "The more information we're collecting from our DNA, the more we open this Pandora's box of ethical considerations," says Hildebrand. "Because there can be big surprises awaiting – some of them really great, and some shocking."

The privacy implications can also be astounding. At least one consumer site (GEDmatch) now has an optin clause allowing what you upload to be searched by law enforcement and the public. Since DNA is shared between biological family members, if a relative uploads theirs to one of these sites, they are potentially implicating you, because their DNA is linked to yours. So anyone who wants to, say, anonymously donate sperm or give up a baby for adoption could one day be identified, even if they never provide their own DNA sample.

"I think it's a very powerful thing," says Hildebrand, adding that if only around ten per cent of people add their DNA samples into one of these public or private databases, we would be able to identify every human on Earth. And that comes with benefits and drawbacks.

"As people get more into this, we'll be closer to the point where you pretty much can't hide," he says. "It'll be possible to link every family in the world."

For the Highsmith family, who were happily reunited in Texas after decades apart, DNA was the link. "Our finding Melissa was purely because of DNA, not because of any police involvement, podcast or our family's own private investigations," notes one Facebook update. "DNA WINS THIS SEARCH!" INSPIRATION

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JUNE/JULY 2024

MY DAY OF NO PLASTIC

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Is that even possible? One man went to extremes to find out

MONTONCOM

BY *A.J. Jacobs* FROM **THE NEW YORK TIMES**

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n the morning of the day I had decided to go without using plastic products – or even touching plastic – I opened my eyes and put my bare feet on the carpet, which is made of nylon, a type of plastic. I was roughly ten seconds into my experiment and I had already committed a violation.

Since its invention more than a century ago, plastic has crept into every aspect of our lives. It has made possible thousands of modern conveniences, but it has come with downsides, especially for the environment. In a 24-hour experiment, I tried to live without it altogether in an effort to see what plastic stuff we can't do without and what we may be able to give up.

At the start of my no-plastic day, I made my way towards the bathroom, only to stop myself before I went in. "Could you open the door for me?" I asked my wife, Julie. "The doorknob has a plastic coating."

She opened it for me, letting out a *this is going to be a long day* sigh.

My morning hygiene routine needed a total revamp, which had required detailed research and preparations before my experiment. I could not use my regular toothpaste, toothbrush, shampoo or liquid soap, all of which were encased in plastic or made of plastic. Fortunately, there is a huge industry of plastic-free products targeted at eco-conscious consumers, and I had bought an array of them, a haul that included a bamboo toothbrush with bristles made of wild boar hair. Instead of toothpaste, I had a jar of grey mint-charcoal toothpaste pellets. I popped one in, chewed it, sipped water and brushed. It was nice and minty, although the ash-coloured spit was unsettling.

I liked my shampoo bar, which is just what it sounds like. Mine was scented pink grapefruit and vanilla, and it lathered up well. According to shampoo bar advocates, it is also cheaper than bottled shampoo on a per-wash basis (one bar can last 80 showers), which is good, because the plastic-free life can be expensive.

Taking a blogger's advice, I mixed a DIY deodorant out of tea tree oil and baking soda. It left me smelling a little like a medieval cathedral, but in a good way. Making your own stuff is another way to avoid plastic, but it requires another luxury: free time.

Before I was done in the bathroom, I had broken the rules a second time, by using the toilet.

Getting dressed was also a challenge, given that so many clothing items include plastic. I had ordered a pair of woollen pants that promised to be plastic free, but they had not arrived. In their stead, I chose a pair of old Banana Republic chinos. The tag said '100% cotton', but when I checked the day before with a very helpful Banana Republic public relations representative, the full story turned out to be a little more complicated. The main fabric



is indeed 100 per cent cotton, but there was plastic lurking in the zipper tape, internal waistband, woven label, pocketing and threads, the representative told me. I cut my thumb trying to slice off the black brand label with a metal knife. Instead of a Band-Aid – yes, plastic – I used some gummed paper tape to stop the bleeding.

Happily, my underwear – blue boxers from Cottonique made of 100 per cent organic cotton with a cotton drawstring in place of the elastic (which is often plastic) waistband – did not represent a plastic violation. I had found this item via an internet list of '14 Hot & Sustainable Underwear Brands for Men'.

For my upper body, I lucked out. Our friend Kristen had knitted my wife a sweater for a birthday present. It was 100 per cent merino wool.

"Could I borrow Kristen's sweater for the day?" I asked Julie.

"You're going to stretch it out," Julie said.

"It's for planet Earth," I reminded her.

The world produces about 400 million metric tonnes of plastic waste each year, according to a UN report. About half the plastic we encounter in daily life is tossed out after a single use.

The report noted that "we have become addicted to single-use plastic

products – with severe environmental, social, economic and health consequences."

I'm one of the addicts. I'd estimate that I toss about 800 plastic items in the garbage each year – takeaway containers, pens, cups, packages with foam inside and more.

Before my Day of No Plastic, I immersed myself in a number of no-plastic books, videos and podcasts. One of the books, Life Without Plastic: The Practical Step-by-Step Guide to Avoiding Plastic to Keep Your Family and the Planet Healthy by Jay Sinha and Chantal Plamondon, came from Amazon wrapped in clear plastic, like a slice of cheese. I mentioned this to Jay Sinha, and he promised to look into it. I also called Gabby Salazar, a social scientist who studies what motivates people to support environmental causes, and asked for her advice.

"It might be better to start small," she said. "Start by creating a single habit, like always carrying a stainless-steel water bottle. After you've got that down, you start another habit, like taking produce bags to the supermarket. You build up gradually. That's how you make real change. Otherwise, you'll just be overwhelmed."

"Maybe being overwhelmed will bring some sort of clarity?" I said.

"That'd be nice," Salazar said. Admittedly, living completely without plastic is probably an absurd idea.

Despite its faults, plastic is a crucial ingredient in medical equipment, smoke alarms and helmets. There's truth to the plastics industry's catchphrase from the 1990s: "Plastics make it possible."

In many cases, plastic can help the environment: plastic plane parts are lighter than metal ones, which means less fuel and lower carbon dioxide emissions. Solar panels and wind turbines have plastic parts. That said, the world is overloaded with the stuff, especially the disposable forms. The Earth Policy Institute estimates that people go through one trillion single-use plastic bags each year.

The crisis was a long time coming. There's some debate over when plastic entered the world, but many date it to 1855, when a British metallurgist, Alexander Parkes, patented a thermoplastic material as a waterproof coating for fabrics. He called the substance Parkesine. Over the decades, labs across the world birthed other types, all with a similar chemistry: they are polymer chains, and most are made from petroleum or natural gas. Thanks to chemical additives, plastics vary wildly. They can be opaque or transparent, foamy or hard, stretchy or brittle. They are known by many names, including polyester and Styrofoam, and abbreviations like PVC and PET.

Plastic manufacturing ramped up for World War II and was crucial to the war effort, providing nylon parachutes and Plexiglas aircraft windows. That was followed by a post-war boom, said Susan Freinkel, author of *Plastic: A Toxic Love Story*, a book on the history and science of plastic. "Plastic went into things like Formica counters, refrigerator liners, car parts, clothing, shoes, just all sorts of stuff that was designed to be used for a while," she said.

Then things took a turn.

"Where we really started to get into trouble is when it started going into single-use stuff," Freinkel said. "I call it prefab litter."

The outpouring of straws, cups, bags and other ephemera has led to disastrous consequences for the environment. According to a study by the Pew Charitable Trusts, more than 11 million metric tons of plastic enter oceans each year, leaching into the water, disrupting the food chain and choking marine life. Close to 20 per cent of plastic waste gets burned, releasing CO_2 into the air, according to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, which also reports that only nine per cent

of plastics are recycled. Some aren't economical to recycle, and other types degrade in quality when they are.

Plastic may also harm our health. Certain plastic additives, such as BPA and phthalates, may disrupt the endocrine system in humans, according to the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences. Worrying effects may include behavioural problems and lower testosterone levels in boys, and preterm births and lower thyroid hormone levels for women.

"Solving this plastic problem can't fall entirely on the shoulders of consumers," Salazar told me. "We need to work on it on all fronts."

Early in my no-plastic day, everything looked menacing, as if it might be harbouring hidden polymers. Anything I could use for cooking was off-limits – the toaster, the oven, the microwave. Even leftovers were a nogo. My son waved a plastic bag filled with French toast. "You want some of this?" Yes, I did.

Instead, I decided to go foraging for raw food items.

I left my apartment using the stairs, rather than the lift with its plastic buttons, and walked to a health food store nearby. I brought along shopping bags of varying sizes, all of them cotton. I also had two glass containers.

At the store, I filled up one of my bags with apples and oranges. Each had a sticker. Another likely violation, but I ignored it. At the bulk bins, I scooped walnuts and oats into my glass containers using a steel ladle I had brought from home. The bins themselves were plastic, which I ignored, because I was hungry.

I went to the cashier. It was time to pay, which was a problem. Credit cards were out. So was Apple Pay, as smartphones contain plastic. And although US paper currency is made mainly of cotton and linen, each bill likely contains synthetic fibres, and the higher denominations have a security thread made of plastic to prevent counterfeiting. To be safe, I had brought along a cotton sack full of coins that I had withdrawn from the bank and my kids' piggy banks.

At the checkout counter, I started stacking coins as quickly as I could between nervous glances at the customers behind me.

"I'm really sorry this is taking so long," I said.

"That's OK," the cashier said. "I meditate every morning so I can deal with turmoil like this."

He added that he appreciated my commitment to the environment. It was the first positive feedback I'd received. I counted out \$19.02 – exact change! – and went home to eat my breakfast: nuts and oranges on a metal tray, which I balanced on my lap.

A couple of hours later, in search of a plastic-free lunch, I walked to a sandwich and salad shop, toting my rectangular glass dish and bamboo

My Day Of No Plastic



cutlery. "Can you make the salad in this glass container?" I asked.

"One minute please," the man behind the counter said tersely.

He called over a manager, who said OK. Victory! But the manager then rejected my follow-up request to use my steel scooper.

After lunch, I headed to the park, figuring that this was a spot where I could relax in a plastic-free environment. I took the subway there, which scored me more violations, since the trains themselves have plastic parts and you need a MetroCard or smartphone to get through the turnstiles.

At least I didn't sit in one of those plastic orange seats. I brought my own: an unpainted fold-up chair, hard and austere. It's what I had been using at the apartment to avoid the plastic-tainted chairs and couches. I plopped my chair down near a pole in the middle of the carriage. The other passengers were so buried in their phones that the sight of a man on a wooden chair didn't faze them.

Walking through the park, I spotted dental floss picks, a black plastic knife and a plastic bag.

Back home, I recorded some of my impressions. I wrote on paper with an unpainted cedar pencil from a Zero-Waste Pencil Tin Set (regular pencils contain plastic-filled yellow paint). After a while, I went to get a drink of water, which brings up perhaps the most pervasive foe of all: microplastics. These tiny particles are everywhere – in the water we drink, in the air we breathe, in the oceans. They come from, among other things, degraded plastic litter.

Are they harmful to us? I talked with several scientists, and the general answer I got was "We don't know yet". But those who are extra cautious can use products that promise to filter microplastics from water and air.

I had bought a jug by LifeStraw that contains a membrane microfilter. Of course the jug itself had plastic parts, so I couldn't use it on the Big Day. Instead, the night before, I spent some time at the sink filtering water and filling up jars. Our kitchen looked as though it was ready for the apocalypse. The water tasted particularly pure, which I'm guessing was some sort of a placebo effect.

I wrote for a while. Then I sat there in my wooden chair. Phone-less. Internet-less. Julie took some pity on me and offered to play a game of cards. I shook my head.

"Plastic coating," I said.

At about 9pm, I took our dog for her nightly walk. I was using a 100 per cent cotton leash I had bought online. I had



ditched the poop bags – even the sustainable ones I'd found were made with recycled or plant-based plastic. Instead, I carried a metal spatula. Thankfully, I didn't have to use it.

At 10.30pm, exhausted, I lay down on my makeshift bed – cotton sheets on the wood floor, since my

mattress and pillows are plasticky.

I woke up the next morning glad to have survived my ordeal and to be reunited with my phone – but also with a feeling of defeat.

By my count, on my day of no plastic, I had made 164 violations. As Salazar had predicted, I felt overwhelmed. And also uncertain. Is it a good idea to use boar's hair toothbrushes, tea tree deodorant and microplastic-filtering devices, or does the trouble of using those things make everyone so bonkers that they actually end up damaging the cause?

I called Salazar for a pep talk. "You can drive yourself crazy," she said. "But it's not about perfection, it's about progress." Believe it or not,



My Day Of No Plastic

individual behaviour matters. It adds up. "Remember," she continued, "it's not about plastic being the enemy. It's about single-use as the enemy. It's the culture of using something once and throwing it away."

I thought back to something that the author Susan Freinkel had told me: "I'm not an absolutist at all. If you came into my

kitchen, you would be like, 'You wrote this book and look at how you live!'" Freinkel does make an effort, she said. She avoids single-use bags, cups and packaging, among other things. I pledge to try, even after my not wholly successful attempt at a one-day ban.

I'll start with small things, building up habits. I liked the shampoo bar. And I can take produce bags to the supermarket. I'll start packing my steel water bottle and bamboo cutlery. And from there, who knows?

And I'll proudly wear the 'Keep the Sea Plastic Free' T-shirt I bought in the days leading up to the experiment. It's just ten per cent polyester.

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A Very Short Amount

Often used as a phrase, 'in a jiffy' can be a real measurement of time. In computer animation, 1/100th of a second is a jiffy. MATHNASIUM.COM



Seeing The Funny Side



"Much better! I swapped our bowls so they match the shape of our faces."

Swept Along

I was waiting for my wife at the checkout of a supermarket when I noticed that someone had left behind their broom.

When no one came to claim it, I went outside to search for a couple of women I remembered seeing in the queue while I stood there. I spotted them getting into their car and hurried over.

"By any chance, did you leave your broom inside?" I asked one of the women.

She smiled and replied, "No, I came by car."

STEVE HOLLANDS

Making The Rules

My granddaughter was playing a board game with her cousins and was clearly not playing by the rules. Her dad told her off and said she was cheating.

"I am not cheating, Dad," she replied indignantly. "I am just helping myself win." JANE HARDEN

Technical Difficulties

No one is more panicked than me when I call customer service with a complex issue and the automated rep asks me to describe what I'm calling about "in a few words".

@COPYMAMA

Life's Like That

Slip Of The Tongue

My front doorbell rang late one night. This made me a bit nervous, so I texted my neighbour to see if someone had also knocked on their door. It was only later that I realised a mistake in my text: I'd also told my neighbour I was 'licking' my back patio door. I have since reiterated that I don't do that. They were relieved. AUDREY BEATTY

Stop And Go

My husband and I were a few hours into a road trip when I asked him to pull over so I could use a restroom. He nodded and drove on, passing potential pit stops at petrol stations and fast-food places. After half an hour, I said with urgency, "I really have to go!"

Looking puzzled, he asked, "Still?" LINDA FINK

Falling Short Of The Goal

My football crazy brother came to visit me with his three-year-old son. After watching a match on the TV, my nephew confessed, much to the delight of my brother, that he would like to be a football player when he grows up, after all.

On the way to my house, my brother had told him to, "Tell Aunty Denise what you would like to be when you grow up."

My nephew had replied, "A pink cat."

DENISE BURGESS



THE GREAT TWEET-OFF: FASHION-FAILS EDITION Our tweeters recommend checking

the mirror before leaving home.

I once wore a silver jacket to college and turned up late for class. I apologised and the lecturer said it was OK, then waited until I was halfway across the class before saying: "Trouble with the spaceship again, was it?" @MRWEIR

I wore an orange rain poncho to an outdoor show during a storm. A girl who was on the phone trying to find her friends said: "I'm standing next to someone who looks like a traffic cone." @BILLYANANIA

During my goth days and dressed all in black, I overhead an elderly lady in a village shop say, "Bless, she must have lost someone dear to be in constant mourning like that." @EILEENLEFT5

Going on a date and dressed in a nice pair of jeans and smart jumper, I had an Uber driver tell me I looked like an undercover policeman. @COMEDYSAVAGE

I wore a camouflage T-shirt once. The response in the pub was "Oooooh, it's a floating head."

@DAMIENSREENAN

HEALTH

Conquer Your Heartburn

A variety of new treatments could finally mean relief from acid reflux

BY *Lisa Fields* illustrations by **antoine doré**

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In 2019, after enduring three years of headaches and frequent bouts of heartburn,

Murali Bharadwaj learned what sparked his discomfort: gastro-oesophageal reflux disease (GORD, or GERD), a chronic condition caused by stomach acid repeatedly rising into his oesophagus. Whenever Bharadwaj drank beer or ate late in the evening, he experienced symptoms.

"The acid reflux meant I couldn't focus on the present moment, in meetings, playing sport or having social drinks with my friends," says the 41 year old. "My thoughts always went to the burning sensation in my throat."

He began taking medication called proton pump inhibitors (PPIs) to lower the acidity in his stomach. It helped, but only a little. In 2021, his doctor suggested a procedure to strengthen his lower oesophageal sphincter, the valve between the stomach and oesophagus. Bharadwaj was sceptical, but when he learned that transoral incisionless fundoplication (TIF) didn't involve invasive surgery – it's performed endoscopically through the mouth and oesophagus – he decided to try it.

In TIF, a small portion of the upper stomach is folded over the bottom of

the oesophagus and stapled in place. After the procedure, Bharadwaj says his quality of life improved, and he no longer needed to take PPIs as often.

"I used to take them once per day, minimum, sometimes twice," he says. "Since the procedure, it's been just three times per week. I get acid reflux sometimes, but it's way more manageable – less frequent and less intense."

GASTRO-OESOPHAGEAL REFLUX DISEASE (also known as chronic acid reflux) affects up to 25 per cent of Europeans, around 12 per cent of Australians and up to eight per cent of people in East Asia, according to a 2018 American study. When stomach acid repeatedly enters the oesophagus, it can change the delicate tissue, which over time can lead to bleeding or ulcers. Complications may include narrowing of the passage due to repeated healing and scar formation, which can make swallowing difficult, or Barrett's oesophagus - permanent changes in the lower oesophagus lining that, in very rare cases, can lead to cancer.

Many people experience occasional acid reflux, perhaps after

Conquer Your Heartburn

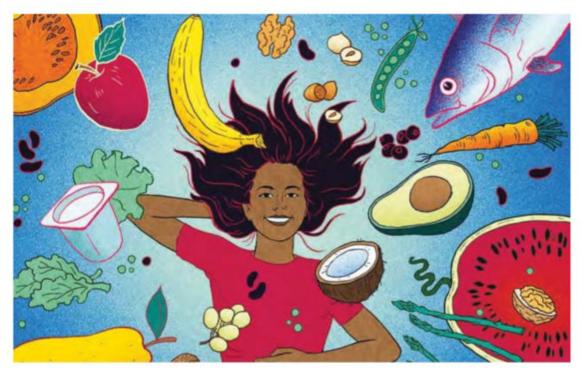
overindulging in alcohol or certain foods. The vast majority of people will never see a doctor about it, says Dr Arjan Bredenoord, gastroenterologist at University Medical Centres Amsterdam. And that's OK, because "bothersome symptoms can be managed with lifestyle adjustments or over-the-counter antacids," he says.

But GORD is different. It happens when people experience heartburn, regurgitation, chronic cough, hoarseness or chest pain three or more times a week. People with GORD often also have a hiatal hernia – when part of the upper stomach pokes through the diaphragm muscle in the chest, making it easier for stomach contents to enter the oesophagus.

"The symptoms of GORD are typically heartburn and regurgitation," says Dr Edoardo Savarino, assistant professor of gastroenterology at the University of Padua in Italy. "So when you have these two symptoms, it's likely that you have reflux disease."

Doctors may diagnose GORD after performing an upper endoscopy to examine the oesophagus. If it looks normal, other tests may be offered, including catheter-based pH-impedance monitoring or a wireless pH test. Proper diagnosis is necessary because if it isn't GORD, treatments for GORD won't help (for example, if the problem is actually dyspepsia, commonly known as indigestion; an ulcer; or gastroparesis, when the stomach empties into the small intestine too slowly).

Ten per cent of GORD sufferers will develop Barrett's oesophagus. "With



Barrett's, you need to get an endoscopy every two or three years to see if there are any changes, because you can treat it early," says Dr Rami Sweis, a gastroenterologist with University College Hospital in London who advises the non-profit Guts UK. If any pre-cancer or cancer is detected, he says, treatment can be provided through the endoscope.

When doctors diagnose GORD, they usually prescribe PPIs, medication that suppresses acid production within the stomach. H2 blockers, another type of acid suppressor, are prescribed less often because they are less effective.

"In reflux, gastric acid comes up into the oesophagus and causes symptoms or lesions," says Dr Jan Tack, gastrointestinal (GI) disorders researcher at KU Leuven in Belgium. "So controlling acid makes a big difference for the majority of patients, and apparently does not have a negative effect on the digestive process."

Doctors also recommend lifestyle changes to discourage stomach acid from entering the oesophagus. They include refraining from eating between two and four hours before bedtime, sleeping with your head elevated (wedge pillows are specially designed to relieve GORD; they go underneath your regular pillow), avoiding tight-fitting clothing and



losing weight. "In perhaps 75 per cent of patients with reflux, treatment with lifestyle changes plus medication are absolutely successful," says Dr Sebastian Schoppmann, head of the upper GI department at Medical University of Vienna.

Some GORD patients seek other kinds of treatment because medication doesn't improve their symptoms well enough, as with Bharadwaj, or it has unwanted side effects.

The good news for patients is that the number of GORD treatments has grown in recent years. "The reason there are more treatment choices is that no one thing is perfect for everyone," says Dr Paul Goldsmith, an upper GI surgeon at Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust in the UK.

Fundoplication

Fundoplication is the most common treatment to strengthen the valve between the oesophagus and stomach. >>

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FOODS THAT TRIGGER REFLUX

For many people, certain foods or drinks cause reflux, especially acidic and fried foods, caffeine, carbonated beverages and alcohol. Common 'trigger foods' are pizza, sausages, cheese, tomatoes, bacon, citrus fruits, chocolate, peppermint and anything containing chilli or black pepper.

It is performed laparoscopically, meaning that open surgery (when one large incision is made) can usually be avoided. The surgeon makes several small incisions in the abdomen and inserts the tools and a camera. The hiatal hernia is corrected by returning the upper stomach to its place below the diaphragm. Next, the uppermost portion of the stomach is wrapped around the valve, which strengthens its ability to stay closed – reducing the risk of stomach acid rising into the oesophagus.

In the past, surgeons mostly performed a 360-degree stomach wrap, but that was often too tight; as a result food didn't move down the oesophagus as easily, and some patients had difficulty belching or vomiting. Some also had trouble swallowing Avoiding your triggers may minimise symptoms. How much you eat, and when, may also impact your symptoms, according to Dr Radu Tutuian of the Civic Hospital Solothurn in Switzerland. Having smaller meals and not eating late in the evening may ease symptoms.

food. Today, surgeons can perform one of several partial wraps, such as a 270 or 180 degrees, which improve GORD symptoms without causing more discomfort.

Dr Radu Tutuian, chief of gastroenterology at Civic Hospital Solothurn in Switzerland, recalls treating a man in his 60s with heartburn, regurgitation and a chronic cough. After he underwent fundoplication, most of his GORD symptoms faded, although he had trouble swallowing and was not able to eat full meals during recovery.

"For a couple of weeks he was very uncomfortable," Dr Tutuian says. "But he said, 'I don't want to go back to how I was before, to my reflux and the cough.' He felt better and no longer needed to take PPIs. So his goals were met."

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Transoral Incisionless Fundoplication (TIF)

Appropriate for people with small hiatal hernias, TIF is a version of fundoplication that surgeons perform endoscopically, placing a camera and tools through the mouth and oesophagus to the upper stomach. A barrier is created at the lower oesophageal sphincter by folding a portion of the upper stomach over itself and stapling it in place.

Dr Tack was involved in a study of the treatment that was published in 2015 in the journal *Alimentary Pharmacology and Therapeutics*. He says 59 per cent of patients who had TIF did not experience GORD symptoms for six months afterwards (the end point of the study) and were able to stop taking PPI medication.

LINX Device

A band of magnetic titanium beads is placed around the lower oesophageal sphincter during this laparoscopic procedure. The magnetic force among the beads helps to tighten the valve, discouraging stomach acid from entering the oesophagus. When you eat, the force of swallowing moves the beads apart, and food passes easily from oesophagus to stomach.

Whereas most other GORD procedures are irreversible, the LINX device can later be removed if needed. And a hiatal hernia can be repaired during the procedure. Years ago, there were problems with the device, as the beads migrated from where they were implanted. But newer versions of the device fit better and are lighter, so that risk is substantially reduced.

Stretta

For this endoscopic procedure, surgeons insert a camera and catheter via the mouth and oesophagus to deliver radiofrequency energy to the oesophageal wall near the stomach opening.

"The idea is that, over time, it strengthens the sphincter muscle," Dr Tack says. "There is evidence, based on measurements of pressure in the sphincter, that it has an anti-reflux effect. However, it is not a huge effect and does not match the efficacy of fundoplication."

RefluxStop

During this laparoscopic procedure, which is done under general anaesthetic, surgeons repair a hiatal hernia, then place a spherical device the size of a ping-pong ball into the upper stomach – the area that may contribute to the reflux – to bulk it up. The procedure is reversible.

"It restores our anatomy to the way it was before we were suffering from reflux," Dr Goldsmith says.

RefluxStop is the newest GORD treatment, and researchers have only two to three years' worth of safety data. It may appeal to people who worry that tightening the lower

Conquer Your Heartburn

oesophageal sphincter could cause swallowing difficulties.

The benefits of GORD therapies don't necessarily last forever. "This is soft tissue that moves," Dr Sweis says, for example, when you swallow. So, the new structure might change over time.

After five or ten years, some patients need to go back to PPIs if their symptoms return. "Therapy for your GORD does not necessarily guarantee that you're going to have 30 years of proton-pump-inhibitor-free life," says Dr Ian Gralnek, chief of gastroenterology at Emek Medical Centre in Afula, Israel, and president of the European Society of Gastrointestinal Endoscopy. Within a few years, doctors may be able to prescribe potassium-competitive acid blockers (P-CABs) to treat GORD. The medication, which has been approved in Japan and Korea, is more effective than PPIs at neutralising stomach acid. "The suppression of the gastric acidity is longer," Dr Savarino says. "With PPIs, you have to take them one hour before a meal. But with P-CABs, you can take them even if you have just eaten."

Another possible therapy which may alleviate symptoms is strengthening the oesophageal lining, making it less sensitive. "This is an avenue of further research," Dr Tack says.

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...DIFFERENTLY

Giant Pineapples?

When pruned, the blue agave looks like a giant pineapple. But, from a botanical point of view, the blue agave belongs to the asparagus family. And like the vegetable asparagus, lots of people enjoy it. However, the blue agave is consumed in liquid form – tequila is distilled from it. It takes ten to eight years for the plants to be harvested, as seen here on a plantation in Jalisco, Mexico – the country's centre for agave cultivation.

PHOTOS: AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES/ULISES RUIZ

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Mind-Bending Facts About Yoga

BY Stephanie Gray

It's been around for roughly 5000 years – first appearing in the *Rig-Veda* (or Rigveda), the oldest of the sacred books on Hinduism – but yoga is more popular today than ever. Experts say its accessibility and the fact that you can practise it anywhere are big reasons why. More than 300 million people practise worldwide. 2 Westerners have adopted yoga as a form of exercise, but at its roots, it is a way of life. The philosophy of yoga, recorded in the *Yoga Sutras* by the Indian philosopher Patanjali, is based on the idea that the mind, body and spirit are one. Many gurus believe that controlling the breath rejuvenates the body and can extend your life. B In addition to reducing stress, yoga can improve your posture and balance, strengthen bones and muscles and keep your back and joints healthy. Different poses offer different benefits. Downward-facing dog can help relieve back pain, while plank pose is good for building a strong core and upper body. For a quick break, come to your hands and knees and sit back, bringing your chest to the floor, with arms outstretched for child's pose – a gentle stretch that helps you rest and refocus.

If you're new to yoga, you might hear some words during class that you don't recognise, like *Tadasana* (mountain pose) or *Uttanasana* (standing forwards bend). These words are Sanskrit, the root of many Indian languages – and the language of yoga. Yoga (*yuj*) means 'to unite', and refers to the merging of the two selves: the individual and the divine.

5 Hindu monk Swami Vivekananda is credited with popularising yoga in the West. In 1893, he travelled from India to the US for the World's Fair and gave a ground-breaking speech calling for religious tolerance for which he received a two-minute standing ovation. He went on to write numerous books including *Raja Yoga*, published in 1896, which adapted Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras* for a western audience. Yoga has since become a huge business: the industry generated A\$57 billion globally in 2019 and is expected to generate A\$101 billion annually by 2027. Famous practitioners include Madonna, Meghan Markle, NBA star LeBron James and Paul McCartney – who in 2020, at the age of 78, told podcast listeners that he regularly practises the headstand pose.

Yoga might not seem like an activity that can send you to the hospital, but a 13-year US study found that almost 30,000 individuals went to the emergency department with a yoga-related injury between 2001 and 2014. Strains, sprains and overstretching tend to be the most common issues, but serious injuries - although rare - can happen even to advanced yogis. One 39-year-old woman suffered a stroke after tearing an artery while attempting a handstand pose. To prevent injury, work with a qualified instructor, warm up thoroughly and don't try positions beyond your comfort level.

Wearing yoga pants – stretchy, sweat-wicking bottoms typically thicker than leggings – used to mean you were on your way to yoga class, but today they're worn everywhere from the gym to the office. Lululemon, founded in 1998, is frequently credited as the inventor of modern-day yoga pants. Despite a costly recall in 2013, after their black nylon-and-Lycra pants were found to be see-through, the brand still dominates yoga wear, with A\$12 billion in global sales in 2022.

9 Kids are striking a pose, too, and the benefits are more than physical. Yoga can help reduce anxiety and improve focus in children, which is especially beneficial for kids with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). It's also been found to help children with autism spectrum disorder improve their emotional-regulation abilities.

10 Dubai-based yoga instructor Yash Moradiya, 22, is a nine-time Guinness World Record holder for his ability to maintain different yoga poses. In 2022, he broke the record for holding the very difficult upside-down scorpion (*Vrischikasana*) position – in which one's head and toes touch while doing a handstand – with a time of 29 minutes and four seconds. To prepare, he practised for three hours a day for five years.

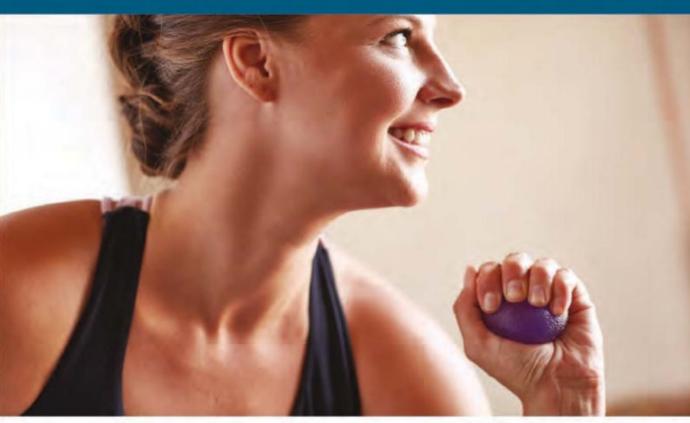
Vinyasa yoga, also called flow, is one of the most popular styles in the West. It focuses on linking a series of poses with the breath in a quick, fluid pace. Ashtanga is like vinyasa, but more structured: it is made up of a series of postures done in the same order every time. Hot yoga is performed in a sauna-like room heated between 33-40°C. The heat is said to increase stamina, flexibility and kilojoule burn.

12 Already into yoga and looking to change up your practise? Try one of the many modern yoga variations, such as aerial and animal yoga. Aerial yoga involves hanging from a silk hammock suspended from the ceiling; it reduces joint pressure that some people feel while doing floor poses. Animal yoga, on the other hand, is less about mastering poses and more about decreasing stress and boosting your mood by practising alongside puppies, goats and even horses.

13 Corpse pose, or Savasana, looks simple: it involves lying flat on your back, with arms resting beside the body, palms facing up, eyes closed. But it can be deceivingly difficult to master, as it calls for a state of meditative calm.

Typically the final position of a yoga class, the purpose of this pose is to allow your practise to settle in your mind and body, and it's ideally done for at least five minutes. After that, you and your classmates typically acknowledge each other with a greeting that even non-yogis know: *Namaste.*

FEEL BETTER BE BETTER!





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SOTHAT'S WE DO THAT! Where did all these common habits

Where did all these common habits and inventions come from?

BY Karuna Eberl

Walking 10,000 Steps (Or Aiming To!)

This benchmark of maintaining good health started with one of the first personal fitness pedometers. The Manpo-kei hit the market in the 1960s, around the time the Tokyo Olympics boosted public interest in fitness. Its name, which translates to '10,000 steps meter', was a catchy marketing move by manufacturer Yamasa, since the Japanese character for 10,000 (77) looks a lot like a person walking.

While hoofing it obviously improves health, the target of 10,000 steps was never based on actual science. However, several recent studies have proved it to be mostly true. Research shows that middle-aged men and women who walk at least 8000 steps per day were about half as likely to die prematurely from heart disease or develop dementia. Also, walkers had a greater likelihood of dodging strokes and 13 types of cancer.

Counterintuitively, anything over 10,000 didn't produce much more benefit, but even walking a total of just 3000 or 4000 steps on top of your daily routine can lower your risk of premature death by about 40 per cent. So what are you waiting for? Lace up a pair of sneakers and get moving.

Having Escape-Release Latches Inside Car Boots

Janette and Greig Fennell had just pulled into their garage in 1995, when two armed men forced them into the boot of their Lexus. As they headed south, Janette clawed at the carpeting, exposing wires, trying to see what had become of their baby, Alex, who was in the backseat at the time of the abduction.

Eventually the car stopped, and the kidnappers opened the boot just long enough to get the Fennells' jewellery, bank cards and PINs. Then they slammed it shut on the Fennells and fled. Luckily, Janette noticed a light coming through the opening where she'd ripped through to the wires. She started pulling at the cables until one of them released the boot. They were now free. But their baby was gone.

After the couple's frantic call to the police from a phone booth, police went to the Fennells' house and found Alex cooing on the front porch in his car seat, where the kidnappers had left him. Janette researched similar stories and learned that many people were not so lucky. Some kidnapping victims held captive in boots were eventually murdered.

Just as distressing, some kids got stuck in boots and died from overheating.

Janette set out to lobby politicians and the media in the US as part of a campaign she waged to require all new cars to include escape releases in their boots. The US government agreed and today, most cars manufactured after 2002 have an escape-release latch fitted inside the boot.

Putting Candles On Birthday Cakes

Credit for our festive birthday candles likely goes to the ancient Greeks. They purportedly made cakes adorned with candles to honour Artemis, the goddess of the moon and the hunt. The round shape of the cakes was a tribute to the moon, and the lit candles made the icing glow like the moon's surface. It's said that when the candles were blown out, the smoke helped ward off evil spirits or carried prayers to the gods on Mount Olympus.

How birthday candles progressed from Zeus to present day is a little more obscure. One theory puts them at pagan celebrations. Pagan and other cultures believed bad spirits visited people on their birthdays, so candles and a room full of friends were necessary to protect the birthday boy or girl. A few hundred years later, birthday candles resurfaced in Germany, where the custom developed of adding one candle on the cake for each year of a person's life, plus one extra candle in the middle for good fortune in the year to come. Hundreds of years later, we're still lighting up our birthday celebrations.

So That's Why We Do That!

Going Through Airport Security

From the early 1960s to early 1970s, aeroplane hijackings were common. These incidents never resulted in serious injuries, so they were mostly viewed as a nuisance, after which passengers would typically get free drinks and a good story to tell. But in 1970, a US domestic commuter flight from Newark to Boston changed everything. (One passenger, noted the Boston Globe at the time, was flipping through a Reader's Digest.) A man with a gun gained entry to the cockpit and shot both the pilot and the co-pilot. Though mortally wounded, the co-pilot seized the gun from the would-be hijacker, shooting and wounding him, while the pilot, whose both arms had been shot, managed to land the plane. Needless to say, US Congress reacted swiftly, holding hearings just two days later regarding new airport security measures.

Soon after there were 2000 undercover and armed sky marshals aboard select flights in the US. By 1973, passengers had to pass through metal detectors and have their bags searched. The following year, all US airports adopted metal-detection screening portals for passengers and X-ray inspection systems for carry-on bags. These airport security measures were the largest airline security changes until another fateful day, September 11, 2001.



Using Plastic Bags

In 1959 a Swedish engineer who was lamenting the destruction of forests invented a product that he thought would save the planet: plastic bags.

They were stronger and cheaper than paper, and included convenient handles. Creator Sten Gustaf Thulin always carried one folded up in his back pocket to reuse as needed. He expected everyone else would do the same. But his creation was far more popular than he ever dreamed. Worldwide, we now use around 500 billion plastic bags a year.

Ironically, Thulin's invention – meant to save the environment – has contributed to marine plastic pollution that is expected to outweigh all the fish in the ocean by 2050.

In recent years, many governments have passed legislation banning or limiting the use of lightweight plastic bags.

Wearing Diamond Engagement Rings

Giving diamond-studded engagement rings is a ritual we rarely question, thanks in part to a 31-year-old advertising copywriter named Mary Frances Gerety. She came up with the catchphrase 'A Diamond Is Forever' in 1947 as part of a marketing campaign launched by Britain's De Beers Consolidated Mines Ltd.

Sitting on a diamond lode in South Africa, De Beers set about persuading young men and women that diamonds were a crucial measure of love. The marketing campaign even went so far as to dictate how many months' salary the prospective groom should spend on an engagement ring. In the 1930s, that figure was one month's salary. Today, says the wedding website The Knot, the



price of showing one's affection has risen to three months' salary. The campaign worked. Before World War II, just ten per cent of brides wore diamond engagement rings. Today, that number is 75 per cent.

Saying 'Pardon My French'

You know something juicy is about to be said when someone utters the phrase 'Pardon my French' or 'Excuse my French'. For a century, we've used the idiom to excuse profanity. But why are the French the target? Blame it on the English.

Only 32 kilometres of water – but an ocean of bitterness – separate France from England. Culture, land... they've fought over it all. Tensions hit an especially acute high in 1066, when French patriot William the Conqueror invaded England and seized the throne. Soon the language of British aristocracy swung towards French, and though it eventually swung back, about 7000 French words remained in the vocabulary.

Because of this, 'Pardon my French' was originally meant as a way to apologise for French words someone was using that English speakers might not understand. But when feuds flared, anything rude started to be deemed 'French'. Even leaving a party improperly without saying goodbye to the host became known as a French exit. In France, however, it is known as an English exit.

Oh, well. C'est la vie.

R

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The Best Medicine



"My wife ordered iced coffee!"

Rewording Word Of The Day

The Merriam-Webster dictionary produces a word of the day, and the folks at Fark helpfully show us how to use it in a sentence:

M-W word of the day: gainsay Helpful Fark: "I'm going to eat way too much over the holidays and gainsay five to ten kilograms."

M-W word: abandon

Helpful Fark: "Paul McCartney and Wings' biggest hit was abandon the run."

M-W word: countenance

Helpful Fark: "We were curious how many insects were in the colony, so we spent the whole day countenance."

Dinner Guest

When asked by *The New York Times Book Review* which writer he'd invite to a dinner party, comedian John Cleese answered, "Mark Twain... because he said, 'Wagner's music is much better than it sounds,' which I think is the greatest joke ever made."

Laughter

Bragging Rights

Don't want to brag, but at school I was voted most likely to cling on to past achievements.

CRAIG DEELEY

Licence To Chill

It's -35°C in Alaska, and Ned is drinking at his local bar.

"Ned," says the bartender, "you owe me quite a bit on your tab."

"Sorry," says Ned, "I'm flat broke."

"That's OK. I'll just write your name and the amount you owe right here on the wall."

"But I don't want my friends to see that."

"They won't," says the bartender. "I'm going to hang your parka over it until it's paid."

SUBMITTED BY ERIK FREEMAN

Slow Progress

There were three men in suits in my coffee shop. One of them said, "My personal idea of progress is moving things forward." Which is the definition of the word.

@STILLORANGED

Direct Answer

The hotel receptionist asked me, "How do you find your room?" I thought, *Is this a test*? But I replied anyway: "Go up to the third floor, turn right, and it's the second door in the hallway." I only realised later that that's not what she meant.

SUBMITTED BY AN XIU XIE

BAG SOME LAUGHS

As we pun our way through the shopping aisles.

Customer: May I try on that dress in the window, please? Assistant: No, ma'am. You'll have to use the fitting room like everyone else.

While I was shopping, I saw an ad in a window. It said, "Television for \$1, volume stuck on full." There's no way I can turn that down.

My wife asked me to put tomato sauce on the shopping list. Now I can't read anything.

I don't like how shopping centres are so similar. You see one, you've seen a mall.

What do you call security guards working outside Samsung shops? Guardians of the Galaxy.

So my wife wondered how the pancakes got into our shopping trolley. I said maybe they crêped in there.

SOURCES: WWW.SCARYMOMMY.COM, LAFFGAFF.COM

Mother's Last Words Ter

FAMII

The joy of her wedding day was enriched by her mother's special message

BY Sue Hoffart

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essie McIndoe was 14 the first time she stepped into her mother's wedding dress. The custom-made satin and lace confection fit so perfectly – mum and daughter shared the same slim build – that the New Zealand schoolgirl immediately turned to face her beaming parent. *I'd love to wear this one day,* she said, ensuring her lips could be easily read.

Within weeks, the dress was forgotten as Jessie and her parents, Denise and Paul McIndoe, faced frightening news. Cancer had seized hold of Denise's diminutive, endlessly energetic frame. A Stage 3 breast cancer diagnosis rocked this small, tightly-knit family and launched Jessie on an 11-year journey that would reunite her with the wedding dress and deliver a single, precious, last message from her mother.

Denise had always been small but healthy, though doctors realised she was profoundly deaf soon after her birth in the North Island city of Palmerston North. It was 1960 and a rubella outbreak had swept through New Zealand, damaging the baby girl's inner ear while she was still tucked inside her mother's womb. The hearing impairment failed to slow Denise down as she grew into an outgoing, outdoor-loving woman who cycled, sailed, sewed and loved to laugh.

In early 1989, a hearing-impaired girlfriend invited her to dinner. The friend's brother, Paul, made such an impression, the pair were engaged within three months.

Their garden wedding was a humble affair with a single extravagance. Denise knew exactly what she wanted to wear on the day and commissioned a local seamstress to create a dress with long, lace sleeves, a high neck, a fitted silhouette that flared mid-thigh to a lace train, and all lined in silk. After the ceremony, the garment was tucked into a trunk and stored alongside other family treasures while the McIndoes made a life for themselves in the kiwifruit-growing town of Te Puke. They found a brick house near the fire station, five minutes from the supermarket, and within walking distance from local schools.

Six years after their wedding, Den-

ise gave birth to the couple's only child. Baby Jessica was the last of her generation to wear the christening gown that her aunts and older cousins had worn before her.

The child grew up easily understanding the altered cadence of her mother's hearing-impaired speech. She also knew sign language and learned early on to face any hearing-impaired person when speaking. From age three, Jessie would answer the phone if it rang when her fa-



DENISE FACED THE DIAGNOSIS WITH HER USUAL STOICISM AND HUMOUR

trips with other families and immersing herself in vintage car club activities. She also worked full-time at a hearing-impaired support agency while completing a not-for-profit management diploma with the help of an interpreter. Or communicating silently with her daughter across a

crowded room, using hand signals.

When Denise found a lump in her breast, she faced the diagnosis, the subsequent mastectomy and rounds of chemotherapy and radiation therapy with her usual stoicism and humour. As teenaged Jessie and her father cycled through fear and worry, they also had to laugh when Denise accidentally tried to text friends using her morphine pump. The patient recovered well and wasted no time resum-

ther wasn't nearby. *Mum can't talk,* the toddler would tell callers. *Can you phone back*?

There was plenty her sociable mother could do, though, including cheering from soccer sidelines and creating costumes for all of Jessie's dance recitals, organising camping ing her old interests, adding dragon boating to help regain strength and meet other cancer survivors.

Eighteen months on, doctors announced she was in remission so the trio celebrated with a family photo shoot beneath Rotorua's towering redwood trees. But Denise had a persistent cough and a series of niggling infections that refused to heal. Eventually, severe back pain landed her in hospital, where an ultrasound showed a shadow on her liver. A biopsy confirmed the cancer had returned. This time, the tumour was too big to remove and the first round

of chemotherapy made her horribly ill. There were no more treatment options available and she returned home, to be cared for by hospice nurses, friends and family.

Sixteen-year-old Jessie helped with the drainage tubes, dressings and medication as well as her mother's whims and needs. When Denise announced she wanted to swim in the sea one last time, Jessie and Paul found a way to get her to the water's edge to paddle.

Only one person knew of Denise's final wish, though.

As her liver failed and her body weakened, communication with visiting nurses became more difficult so her colleague and friend Maureen Baker stepped in to interpret. Initially, the two women used sign language. Then, once Denise was unable to speak or open her eyes, they used tactile sign language; a version of the hand signals made famous by Helen Keller, who is well-known for overcoming the limitations of both blindness and deafness.

Unbeknown to Jessie, Maureen was

helping her bedridden friend with an extra task. As her own life ebbed, Denise painstakingly wrote or dictated notes destined for four key days in her daughter's future. She poured her love into short, simple messages that were written inside each of the greeting cards Maureen had purchased. As they signed and wrote together, the women spoke about the life Denise wanted for her daughter.

On 15 October 2012, just four weeks

after her mother's diagnosis, Jessie was summoned from the classroom. *Jessie's coming*, Maureen signalled into her friend's palm. *Jessie's here*, she tapped when the girl arrived home, still in school uniform, to wait while her mother took her last breath.



SHE POURED HER LOVE FOR JESSIE INTO SHORT, SIMPLE MESSAGES

Two days before the funeral, Maureen handed Paul a small box containing a bundle of envelopes. Each one, she told him, should be given to Jessie at the appropriate time.

The first envelope contained a card to be opened two months later, on December 25. Denise had always

made a fuss over the festive season, decorating the tree, baking treats, wearing a Santa hat to work. She wanted Jessie to have something to hold in her absence.

The second envelope would go to Jessie on her 18th birthday and the third on her 21st. The final card was to be handed over on her wedding day.

Jessie took over the cooking and many of the household chores while living with her grieving father. As the initial mile-

stones passed, the teenager grew into a self-assured young woman. Quiet and practical like Paul, with Denise's compassion and strength. She became a professional baker, often sweetening the lives of those she cared for with exquisitely decorated cakes.



JESSIE LOOKED NERVOUSLY FROM THE ENVELOPE TO HER FUTURE HUSBAND

As passing years eased the knot of sadness, Jessie met a bright, kind, intensive care nurse who captivated her from their first date. When he slipped an engagement ring on her finger, Jessie knew three things; she wanted to marry Gabriel Brockelsby, she would wear her mother's

> dress, and the nuptials would mean she could open her mother's final card.

> There was some panic when an initial fitting found the dress was slightly too snug, but Jessie's high school sewing teacher, Carol, came to the rescue. Carol had known Denise and now lived six doors down from the McIndoe home. Leading up to the wedding day, measurements were taken and rechecked, seams were unpicked, the

neckline lowered and lengths of lace carefully cut and rejigged.

On a sunny November morning, Jessie unclasped the fine chain she always wore around her neck, then slipped her mother's wedding band and engagement ring off the necklace onto her right hand. She picked up the flat rectangle envelope that was sitting, waiting for her alongside a photo of her mother wearing the very dress that would hug her figure as she walked up the aisle in a few hours.

The day had been planned for months, from the special women who would help her dress to the four different cake flavours and the modern jive-style dance she and Gabriel had been practicing for months. But first the envelope.

The bride-to-be looked nervously from the envelope to her future husband. Gabriel sat alongside, delivering the same support he would soon promise in wedding vows he had written himself. Jessie had no doubts about the pending nuptials but felt daunted by the significance of the envelope in her hands. Much as her wedding day signalled a joyous new beginning, it was also the final time she would open a gift from her mother.

As she read the few laboriously penned words, saw the familiar handwriting and the 'love from Mum' signature at the bottom, Jessie allowed herself to experience the deep sorrow of loss. Then she dried her tears and prepared to relish every jubilant moment of the day her mother had pictured as she wrote the last card.

Wearing the dress was a comfort, the closest Jessie had come to being wrapped in her mother's arms in 11 years. Perhaps the garment will be treasured and refashioned by a future daughter. For now, it has been carefully cleaned and folded into a box, awaiting the moment Jessie will unpack it and encourage her own children to touch the lace and silk that connect them to their grandmother.

The Magic Of Mushrooms

Mushrooms are more than a tasty food source found in the produce aisle. In fact, mushrooms hold the potential to break down and absorb some of the most toxic of human-created waste through a process called mycoremediation. One recent study found that three fungal strains even removed potentially dangerous plastic particles from water. Mycotecture, or using mushrooms for architecture, is gaining momentum, too. Using biocycling, which combines construction waste with cultured bio-binders (like fungi and plants) new materials can be created for construction, such as wood-like bricks. www.AL.COM/NEWS; WWW.REALMUSHROOMS.COM

Nutrition Myths

And what health experts want you to know instead

BY Sophie Egan FROM THE NEW YORK TIMES

82 JUNE/JULY 2024

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MYTH 1: Fresh fruit and vegetables are healthier than canned, frozen or dried varieties.

HFAITH

Despite the enduring belief that 'fresh is best', research has found that frozen, canned and dried fruit and vegetables can be just as nutritious as fresh.

"They can also be a money saver and an easy way to make sure there are always fruit and vegetables available at home," says Sara Bleich, a professor of public health policy at Harvard University.

One caveat: some canned, frozen and dried varieties contain added sugar, saturated fat and sodium, so be sure to read nutrition labels, especially on prepared foods. Choose the ones that keep those ingredients to a minimum.

MYTH 2: All fat is bad.

When studies published in the late 1940s found correlations between high-fat diets and high levels of cholesterol, experts reasoned that if you reduced the amount of total fats in your diet, your risk for heart disease would go down. The assumption was that a low-fat diet could benefit everyone, even though there was no solid evidence that doing so would

prevent heart disease, obesity and other health issues.

As a result, says Dr Vijaya Surampudi, an assistant professor of medicine at the University of California, Los Angeles, Center for Human Nutrition, many people - and food manufacturers - replaced kilojoules from fat with kilojoules from refined carbohydrates such as white flour and added sugar.

"Instead of this helping us stay slim, rates of overweight and obese people went up significantly," she says. In reality, not all fats are bad.

PHOTOS: K. SYNOLD, TMB STUDIOS

While certain types, including trans fats, can increase your risk for heart disease or stroke, healthy fats help reduce your risk. Examples of those include monounsaturated fats (olive oil, avocados, some nuts and seeds) and polyunsaturated fats (sunflower oil, fish, flaxseed).

Good fats also supply energy, produce important hormones, support cell function and aid in the absorption of some nutrients.

If you see a product labelled 'fatfree', don't assume it is healthy, Dr Surampudi says. Prioritise products with simple ingredients and no added sugar.

MYTH 3: 'Kilojoules in, kilojoules out' is the most important factor for maintaining weight.

It's true that if you consume more kilojoules than you burn, you will probably gain weight. And if you burn more kilojoules than you consume, you will probably lose weight – at least for the short term.

But research does not suggest that eating more will result in becoming overweight or obese.

Rather, it's the types of food we eat that may be the long-term drivers of those conditions, says Dr Dariush Mozaffarian, a professor of nutrition and medicine at Tufts University in Massachusetts. Ultraprocessed food – such as refined starchy snacks, cereals, crackers, energy bars, baked goods, fizzy drinks and sweets – can lead to weight gain. That's because they are rapidly digested and flood the bloodstream with glucose, fructose and amino acids, which the liver converts to fat.

The best way to maintain a healthy weight is to make the shift from counting kilojoules to prioritising healthy eating overall. Go for quality over quantity.

MYTH 4: People with type 2 diabetes shouldn't eat fruit.

While fruit juice can raise blood sugar levels because of its high sugar and low fibre content, research has found this isn't the case with whole fruit. Some studies show, for instance, that those who

10 Nutrition Myths

consume a serving of whole fruit per day (particularly blueberries, grapes and apples) have a lower risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

And other research suggests that if you already have type 2 diabetes, eating whole fruit can help control your blood sugar.

It's time to bust the myth, says Linda Shiue, director of culinary medicine and lifestyle medicine at Kaiser Permanente San Francisco. She says that everyone – including those with type 2 diabetes – can really benefit from fruit's health-promoting vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and fibre.

MYTH 5: Plant beverages are healthier than dairy milk.



Kathleen Merrigan, professor of sustainable food systems at Arizona State University disagrees. She says that while the nutrition of plantbased beverages can vary, many have more added ingredients – such as sodium and added sugar, which can contribute to poor health – than cow's milk.

Consider protein: typically, cow's milk has about eight grams of protein per 250 millilitres, whereas an almond beverage typically has one or two grams in the same amount. Oat beverages usually have around two or three grams.

MYTH 6: Potatoes are bad for you.

Potatoes have been vilified because of their high glycaemic index, which means they contain rapidly digestible carbohydrates that can spike your blood sugar. However, potatoes can actually be beneficial for health, says Daphene Altema-Johnson, a programme officer of food communities and public health at Johns Hopkins University.

Potatoes are rich in vitamin C, potassium, fibre and other nutrients, especially when consumed with the skin on. They are also inexpensive and available year-round. The healthiest ways to prepare them include baking and boiling.

MYTH 7: Never feed peanut products to little kids.

For years, experts told new parents that the best way to prevent their children from developing food allergies was to avoid feeding them common allergenic foods, such as peanuts or eggs, during their first few years of life. But now, allergy experts say, it's better to introduce peanut products early on.

After checking with your doctor to confirm your baby isn't at risk of having severe eczema or a potential food allergy, you can start introducing peanut products (such as peanut powders or watered-down peanut butter, but



not whole peanuts) when they are four to six months old, around the time your baby is ready for solids.

Start with ten millilitres of smooth peanut butter mixed with water, breast milk or formula, two to three times a week, says Ruchi Gupta, director of the Center for Food Allergy & Asthma Research at Northwestern University in Illinois. "It's also important to feed your baby a diverse diet in their first year to prevent food allergies," Dr Gupta says.

MYTH 8: The protein in plants is incomplete.

"'Where do you get your protein?' is the most common question vegetarians are asked," says Christopher Gardner, a nutrition scientist and professor of medicine at Stanford University in California. "The myth is that plants are completely missing some amino acids," also known as the building blocks of proteins, he adds. But in reality, all plant-based foods contain all 20 amino acids, including the nine essential ones. The difference is that the proportion isn't as ideal as the proportion of amino acids in animal-based foods.

So to get an adequate mix, you simply need to eat a variety of plantbased foods – such as beans, grains and nuts – through the day, and eat enough total protein.

"It's easier than most people think," Dr Gardner says.

10 Nutrition Myths



MYTH 9: Eating soy can increase breast cancer risk.

High doses of plant oestrogens in soy, called isoflavones, have been found to stimulate breast tumour cell growth in animal studies.

"However, this relationship has not been substantiated in human studies," says Frank B. Hu, chair of the department of nutrition at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. So far, the science does not indicate a link between soy and breast cancer risk in humans. Instead, consuming soybased foods and drinks – including tofu, edamame, miso and soy milk – may even have a protective effect towards breast cancer risk and survival.

"Soy foods are also a powerhouse of beneficial nutrients related to reduced heart disease risk, such as high-quality protein, fibre, vitamins and minerals," Professor Hu says.

MYTH 10: The best nutrition advice keeps changing.

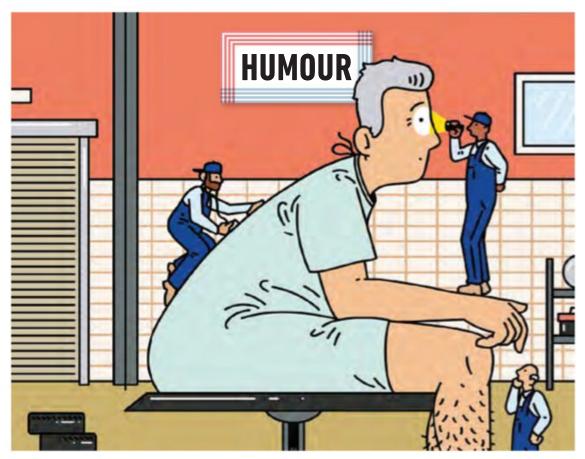
Not true, says Marion Nestle, a professor emerita of nutrition, food studies and public health at New York University. In the 1950s, she explains, the first dietary recommendations for prevention of obesity, type 2 diabetes, heart disease and other ailments advised balancing kilojoules and minimising foods high in saturated fat, salt and sugar. That is still the case today.

Yes, science evolves, but the bottom-line guidance remains consistent. As famed author Michael Pollan put it: "Eat food. Not too much. Mostly plants." That advice leaves plenty of room for eating foods you love.

THE NEW YORK TIMES (JAN. 19, 2023), © 2023 BY NEW YORK TIMES COMPANY.

Question For Grammar Nerds

"Why is it that writers write and painters paint, but fingers don't fing? Why don't grocers groce, and why don't hammers ham?" AUTHOR UNKNOWN; BABBEL.COM



GETTING OLD Is A Full-Time Job

BY Richard Glover

66 V ou're a candidate for glaucoma," the optometrist told me the other day. 'Candidate' sounds rather grand, as if I'm in the running for a PhD. I wondered if, like a university degree, I could abandon my candidacy, but, alas, glaucoma apparently runs its own race.

"Don't worry," said the optometrist.

"It's not that you have glaucoma, just that we need to keep an eye on it."

I'd like to report that he chuckled at his sight-related pun. Instead, the young optometrist flashed the concerned but understanding look you become used to receiving once you are over 60.

The medical profession has taken a collective look at me and decided

I am about to fall apart. Every doctor and specialist I see is convinced that the author of my demise will be the disease in which they happen to have expertise.

The optometrist wants to see me once a year, the skin cancer fellow wants to see me at six-month intervals, and the physiotherapist wants to see me once a month. The dentist, who I last saw three years ago, sends me monthly reminders of increasing disappointment and barely concealed anger. My family doctor needs to check my blood pressure before more pills are issued. If I were him, I'd check the dentist's blood pressure, too.

I wonder why my medical team can't develop an annual pit stop, much like a mechanic who checks my oil (cholesterol), replaces my brake pads (knees) and refocuses the headlights (eyes) all at once.

I'm not saying the medical folks don't mean well. I'm not saying they are using me as one might use an ATM to make regular withdrawals. I'm not saying they have private school fees to pay. They've studied my odds, I'm sure, and they know I need help.

All the same, being over 60 feels like a full-time occupation. "What do you do?" a kindly young person might ask at a party. "Oh, I'm over 60," I reply. "That means medical appointments most mornings, an operation or two every year and vaccinations as if I were a pincushion. I fit in paid employment as best I can."

At this point, the young person discovers they need to get another beer.

It's not just the medical appointments; unless he has been given the gift of baldness, a man over 60 needs a haircut at least once every five weeks.

Once you are over 60, a two-week extension past your normal hair appointment starts to matter. It's the difference between 'well-preserved old dog' and 'crazed conspiracy theorist'.

Keeping my weight under control is another full-time occupation. Luckily, my wife Jocasta and I have been watching the Australian version of the TV series *Alone*, in which contestants try to survive in the wilderness with limited tools. The smart ones put on ten or 12 kilograms beforehand, so they can survive on their 'stores'.

Now, whenever Jocasta queries my second serving of dessert or third beer, I tell her that I'm in training for the next series of *Alone*. "You never know when a contestant might drop out at the last minute and the phone will ring."

Maybe I should be thanking the medical world for its care. When the call from *Alone* comes, I'll need sharp eyes, strong knees and cancer-free skin. I'll need the good teeth I would have if only I would respond to my dentist.

A haircut may be the most crucial of all. After all, I'll be on TV.



The View From

These benches invite you to linger – and offer magnificent perspectives

BY Doris Kochanek

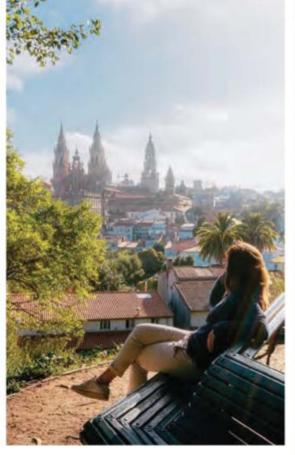
▲ Silence in the hustle and bustle.

The Taj Mahal in Agra, India, is a crowdpuller. However, anyone who takes the time to sit apart can admire the harmony of the building in peace.

Reward of the effort. The Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Spain is the destination of pilgrims on the Way of St James. Seen from this park bench, its silhouette rises above the city of Santiago.

Colourful splendour. Lake Louise in the Canadian Rockies is famous for its shimmering turquoise water. If it is undisturbed, the banks are reflected in it.

▼ Wonders of nature. You can fly over, hike or boat across the Grand Canyon in the USA. But you can also simply let yourself be overwhelmed by its majesty.



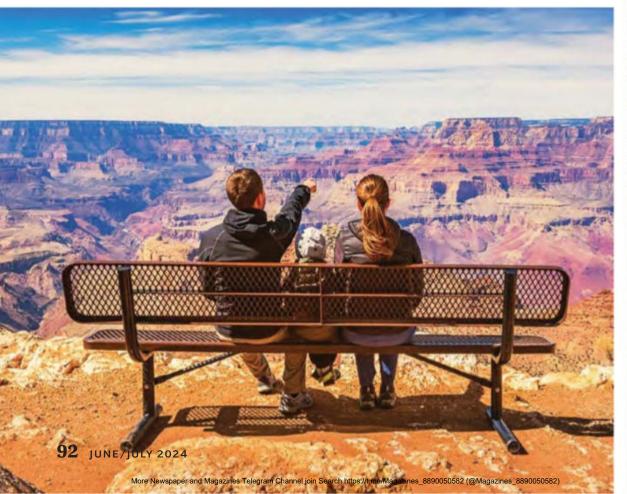


Photo Feature





Photo Feature

PHOTOS: (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) STANISLAV SABLIN/GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO; GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO; UWE UMSTAETTER/GETTY IMAGES/WESTEND61 Far in the north. Before the film *Leviathan* was released in cinemas, hardly anyone knew about the Russian village of Teriberka, where part of the filming took place. Since 2014, the moments when you can look north all alone on the beach have been rare.

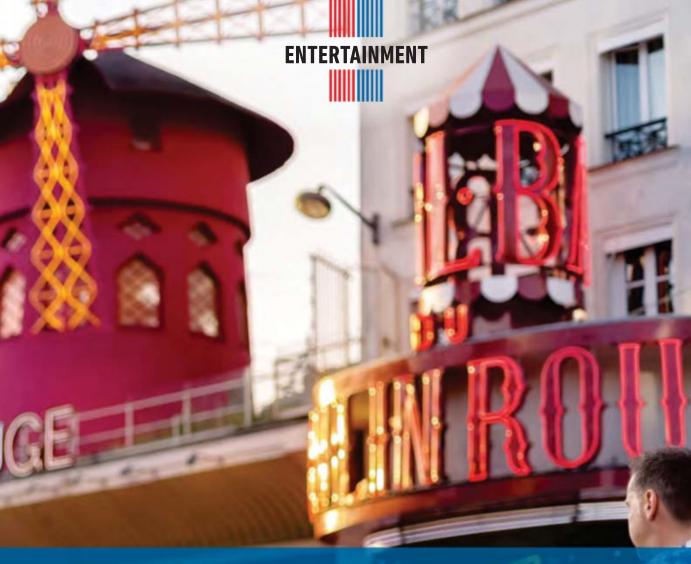
▶ The peaks beckon. Viewed from this bench on the Blomberg in southern Germany, the peaks of the Alps seem near and far at the same time. Like many of the 'bergs', or mountains, in the region, the Blomberg has a cable car for visitors who prefer comfort.

♥ Witness of time. Across the Hudson River you have the best view of the southern tip of Manhattan in New York. Today, One World Trade Center rises in place of the twin towers that were brought down by the terrorist attack on September 11, 2001.



Dancer Madison Ayton poses for Reader's Digest in front of the famous cabaret

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As a toddler, she dreamed of becoming a dancer. Today, every evening, she sets a mythical stage ablaze in Paris

AT THE HEART OF THE Moulin Rouge

BY Paul Robert

readersdigest.com.au 97

64 M NOT SURE I can do that." As the audience around her erupted in cheers, 18-yearold Australian dancer Madison Ayton stared in awe and a touch of terror at the dance company receiving the applause on the stage in front of her.

The dance moves or the choreography didn't worry her. She was experienced and confident enough to know that she could learn those. What overwhelmed her that first time she saw the show was its complexity, the rapid succession of split-second costume and scenery changes. There was a world of difference between the classical dance scene that she had been forced to leave and this, the most famous cabaret stage in Paris and arguably the world: the Moulin Rouge.

To dance. For as long as she remembers, that was what she wanted to do. "Even as a toddler, whenever I heard music, I began to dance around," Madison says, sitting at a table in the lobby of the cabaret. On the walls are original posters by Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec (1864-1901), the French artist whose name and work are inseparably linked to the early history of this illustrious theatre. Outside, scores of tourists take pictures of themselves and of each other in dance poses against the backdrop of the iconic red windmill on the roof, a landmark almost as famous as the Eiffel Tower.

It's been four years since Madison's debut here. She is 22 now and, in the European summer of 2023, one of the lead dancers in the team. It wasn't her ultimate ambition to be a show dancer in a French cabaret. As a child, in Brisbane, she dreamt of being the prima ballerina in a famous classical company. "My mother sent me to ballet lessons when I was three," she says. "I knew at once that that was what I wanted to do."

As her budding talent was recognised, Madison combined school and dance classes. At the age of 15 she won bronze in the prestigious Genée International Ballet Competition, and shortly afterwards her parents gave up their jobs and moved the family to London, so Madison could pursue a dance career. Her big break came in 2017. "I auditioned for the school of the Dutch National Ballet in Amsterdam, and instead got a contract with their Junior Company," one of Europe's big dance troupes.

HER STINT IN AMSTERDAM was a harsh experience, "brutal", she calls it. Straight out of school "I was supposed to know everything", but barely 16, without her parents, in a new city, she felt lost. Training and competition were heavy, but still "I loved every second of it." Madison was on her way to becoming everything she had always dreamt of.

"Then my body put a stop to it," she says. "I had a growth spurt and was suddenly too tall for classical ballet." Female dancers are not supposed



Centre stage, Madison in the legendary and breathtaking French Cancan

to tower over their male partners, and because they spend much of their time on the tips of their toes, reaching 1.8 metres can be a problem. Madison's classical career was now doomed before it had seriously started.

"I went to auditions again", she says. Still performing in Amsterdam, she also travelled to other places to explore new opportunities. Her future in classical ballet had hit a ceiling, but she thought of her long-time Australian friend Courtney Male, who danced in Paris, at the Moulin Rouge. Courtney loved her life in Paris and it would be great to join her. The Moulin Rouge holds annual

auditions, and not only in France, explains Fanny Rabasse, the company's public relations manager. Artistic director Janet Pharaoh. a former Moulin Rouge dancer herself, regularly travels overseas, to countries as far flung as Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Norway and her native UK. There, she holds mass auditions to select new talent for the 90-strong team in Paris. These are often attended by more than 100 ambitious young dancers at a time and only a happy few pass the test. Madison was one of these. "I was hired at once," she says. At the Moulin Rouge, it turned out, her height and long legs, are an outstanding advantage.

MADISON MOVED TO PARIS in July 2019. The Moulin Rouge had an apartment waiting for her and dedicated staff helped her with the necessary paperwork and health insurance as she was warmly embraced by her new colleagues.

Work of course starts immediately for the young dancers. There are sessions with dressmakers and the company's in-house shoemaker. Each of the 90 dancers in the troupe have their own tailor-made costumes and footwear. Behind the stage every evening, 14

dressers organise the costumes in a specific order, so that each dancer can find her or his next outfit in seconds. Some costumes, with LED-illuminated wings, are too large to be hung on racks and are suspended from the ceiling, to be lowered between numbers, in time for the next costume change. And then, most importantly, there's training in the French Cancan, the trademark dance of the cabaret.

"It is the first thing that everybody has to learn," says Madison. "The high kick brings the foot behind the head, so if you don't do it right, you risk hitting yourself or your neighbour in the face," she explains.

It is this erstwhile risqué dance



Madison backstage at the Moulin Rouge, a few minutes before going on stage

that appeared in Parisian working-class dancehalls almost two centuries ago, featuring local women in petticoats and long dresses performing high kicks in unison, exposing their stocking-clad calves and thighs to loud cheers and encouragement from the watching menfolk.

The dance was already half a century old when Charles Zidler and Joseph Oller established their dance hall on the Boulevard de Clichy in 1889, in Montmartre. This folksy neighbourhood on a hill, overlooking the French capital, was a magnet for writers and painters like Toulouse-Lautrec and Vincent van Gogh who brought a bohemian quality to the area that was later amplified by cinema and musical stage shows.

Today the French Cancan at the Moulin Rouge is an evolved version of the raucous original, performed in cheerful petticoat dresses in the national colours of France: red, white and blue.

"It is very different from classical ballet," agrees Madison, "but my classical training certainly helped. I also had to dance other styles." The dancers have to alternate these high kicks with rapid front splits. With the total duration of the French Cancan being six minutes and 30 seconds, it is the most strenuous part of the show and not a dance that the 19th-century neighbourhood amateurs, who lacked the professional training, would have been able to perform.

"AFTER TWO AND A HALF WEEKS

I was ready to go on stage," remembers Madison. She had practised all the steps, had the necessary French Cancan training and gone through all the costume changes again and again, until they felt natural. But that was without an audience.

The night of her first performance arrived. "I was fine until I could hear the murmur of these hundreds of people and when the music started, the adrenaline hit me. I was terrified. *OK*, I thought, *here we go.*"

That night, she dashed forward and for a brief moment, her heart pounding, she doubted herself; would she be able to follow her sequence of movements? But her gestures, her cadence, everything was in place. In the front row, in a swirl, she saw smiling, luminous faces. A weight lifted off her shoulders. "It was as if all my hard work in the past weeks had paid off."

The nerves didn't return until later shows when she started to perform topless. Topless dancing has been a tradition at the Moulin Rouge since the theatre was rebuilt after a devastating fire and opened again in 1921. It was part of what gave Paris an international reputation that is best captured in the expression 'Ooh-lala', although the moral perception changed over time between the roaring 20s, the conservative 50s, the sexual liberation of the 60s, and the 21st century with the #MeToo movement and its neo-prudism.

"We regard it as an expression of the freedom women have here to perform as they please, contrary to some other countries," says Fanny Rabasse. "Not all dancers want to perform topless, and they don't have to. We also have roles that remain fully dressed." There are also dancers who can't perform topless because their breasts are heavier and they could hurt themselves in the show. Still, it wasn't easy for Madison to drop her top in order to move forward to a more central role. She was used to walking around half naked between other dancers. But to be on



For 135 years, the Moulin Rouge façade has been a central landmark of the Parisian nightlife

stage with the feeling that the entire audience is looking at you, is something different. "But then I looked beside me and there were 14 other topless girls and I was OK. And of course, there is nothing erotic about our dancing."

In the past, topless dancing at the Moulin Rouge may have been intended to be erotic, but today the show in no way stresses the fact that the girls are topless. They just are. On the day of the interview, the only time during the show that the audience erupted in a roar to cheer a performing artist on was for the strongman acrobat who teasingly took his shirt off and flexed the muscles of his naked torso.

The acrobat is one of several short circus acts that interrupt the dancing in the 105-minute show titled *Féerie*, that is performed on the stage twice per night, seven nights per week, 52 weeks per year. Unchanged since 2000, the programme is dedicated to what the Moulin Rouge once was. It looks back to the earliest days and the post-war glamour years when some of the world's greatest artists, like Edith Piaf, performed here.

HOWEVER, THE MOULIN ROUGE'S well-preserved 'Ooh-la-la' image is affected by the surrounding Pigalle neighbourhood, with

its porn shops and sex shows, where the boundaries that the Moulin Rouge once crossed have been pushed way beyond the point where the cabaret stayed. "Many people have the wrong idea of what we do here. They think of what happens in some of the clubs down the street," says Madison.

These are misunderstandings the dancers may run into in their private lives also, but Madison has found romantic happiness with someone who understands perfectly: one of the waiters. "We also work the same hours," she says.

To dance may be a life-long ambition, but the shelf-life of a professional dancer is limited. At 22, Madison is well aware that an injury could derail or even end her career. And if that doesn't happen, her age will be as decisive ten or at most 15 years from now. Some former dancers of

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the Moulin Rouge are still employed by the company, like artistic director Janet Pharaoh. Others have become dance teachers with their own studios, while others have pursued other careers. "I don't necessarily want to stay in the dance world when I stop," says Madison. "Fortunately, I have lots of time off during the day to take up other interests. I have always been interested in interior design and pottery, so that is what I am looking at. I'm starting a new French course next month, and after that I will consider studying something else."

Right now, however, she's looking forward to another high in her career at the Moulin Rouge. In two weeks' time she'll be making her debut as one of the two female soloists in the show. "It's quite challenging," says Madison. "But I have been given lots of help by another Australian dancer who has been doing this for years. We will be performing it together." And with a broad smile, she adds: "My mother is coming over from London to see it."

FOR NOW, on this warm summer evening, Madison goes backstage where she transforms herself with make-up into her stage persona, and teams up with some of her fellow dancers for a relaxed warm-up before the show. As they talk and laugh, they stretch their backs and hamstrings to extremes.

Then, finally, in the auditorium, a voice welcomes the audience and stresses that taking photos or videos during the show is strictly prohibited. The music swells as the last bottles of champagne are served at the tables. And there they are, the dozens of young, eager dancers in their glittering costumes, with Madison in the front, right-hand corner of the stage, as they go into their first number: 'Paris Dances'.

THE MOULIN ROUGE, 82, BOULEVARD DE CLICHY, 75018 PARIS.

Fancy A Dip In The Seine?

Politicians are not renowned for walking the talk. But French President Emmanuel Macron is prepared to put his body on the line by swimming in the Seine to prove his government has cleaned all sewage from the river for the Paris Olympics this year. "You bet I will," he told reporters. Macron is not the first French politician to promise to swim in the Seine. Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo has also said she would do so more than three decades after her predecessor Jacques Chirac (later the French President) famously promised to do it "in the presence of witnesses" but never did. REUTERS



Einstein Did What?

Silly slip-ups from some of history's greatest genius minds

BY Katie Spalding FROM THE BOOK EDISON'S GHOSTS

104 JUNE/JULY 2024

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It's possible that some people are just too smart for their own good. Or that some of history's best-known 'brainiacs' lacked some good old-fashioned common sense. Consider these scenes from the past



Einstein Put The 'Nauti' In Nautical

Einstein is most famous today as, well, Einstein. His name is synonymous with what he was. But among the accolades is something that stands out as truly impressive: his uncanny ability to make dozens of complete strangers save his life, over and over again, and never once did it look like he might learn from it.

The year was 1939, and Einstein had rented a cottage in the sleepy coastal hamlet of Cutchogue, Long Island. He had just one thing on his mind: sailing. Einstein loved sailing. Relaxing on a boat, he said, he could be oblivious to the world. There was just one problem. He was a terrible sailor.

"You had 30 people around here who'd tell you they rescued Einstein when he capsized, and towed him and his boat in," recalled Cutchogue local Robert Rothman.

"We kids, who were growing up around here, knew how to sail," agreed fellow local Louise Thompson. "He didn't."

Einstein was so bad at his favourite hobby that he was known across the Eastern Seaboard for his nautical mishaps. He even made national news after somehow stranding himself in Connecticut.

This salty seadog never learned how to swim, which, considering how much time he appeared to have spent falling into water, was honestly kind of impressive – forcing others to be alert to his rescue.

But if the residents of Cutchogue – and everywhere else Einstein was fond of capsizing – knew the truth, they might not have been so

forgiving. It's not like he was doing it on purpose, right?

"While we were engaged in an interesting conversation I suddenly cried out 'Achtung!' for we were almost upon another boat," wrote fellow academic Leon Watters. "He veered away with excellent control and when I remarked what a close call we had, he started to laugh and sailed directly towards one boat after another, much to my horror. But he always veered off in time then laughed like a naughty little boy."

Pranked By Benjamin Franklin

To give US Founding Father and scientist Benjamin Franklin his due, he



made seriously groundbreaking discoveries in the field of electronics. He invented both battery (the word) and batteries (the things) and came up with the concept of 'positive' and 'negative' charges. But all this comes second to Franklin's true electrical vocation: practical jokes.

Picture the scene: it's summer 1749 and you're invited to a party at your pal Ben's house. You sit down, pick up your wine glass to take a sip ... and are hit with an electric shock straight to the mouth.

Unfortunately, this was a typical hazard of being friends with Benjamin Franklin. Not only did Franklin's guests have to put up with electrified wine glasses, they were also spooked

> by dancing spiders made from cork and string, and invited to send sparks of electricity between one another through air kisses.

> Franklin even invented a party game called Treason, in which players were told to touch a portrait of King George and would receive a shock when they did so. He even adapted the game to work with multiple players at once.

> "If a Ring of Persons take a Shock among them," he wrote, I assume while giggling, "the Experiment is called the Conspiracy."

The father of electricity first

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encountered its wonders after witnessing an experiment/ vaudeville show in 1743, and was 'electrified' by the experience, to say the least.

"I never was before engaged in any study that so totally engrossed my attention and my time as this," he wrote to fellow electrician Peter Collinson.

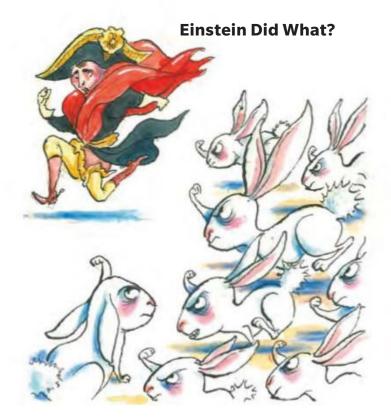
Collinson had just sent Franklin an exciting gift: a brand-new invention called a Leyden jar. Physicists had been able to generate electricity for millennia. But the Leyden jar allowed them to

store and use it on demand. It would take nearly seven trillion jars to store the amount of electricity in a single AA battery today. But for physicists of the time, a whole new world of experiments had opened up.

Napoleon's Fluffiest Foe

History is written by the victors, which is how Napoleon Bonaparte managed to be such a noble man of the people, right up until he was defeated at Waterloo, at which point he became a short, angry warmonger. Still, he fought more than 70 battles and only lost eight times, which is an impressive record. If only one of those defeats hadn't been against a colony of bunnies.

Pleased with himself at having won the War of the Fourth Coalition



against most of Europe, Napoleon decided to celebrate by taking his favourite generals on a rabbit hunt. Thousands of rabbits were brought to a field in cages. Presumably, the hunters expected the rabbits to take one look at their assembled might and run for the hills. What most likely happened was that the rabbits thought, *Excellent, some humans, who might have cabbage,* while hopping merrily towards them.

The rabbits swarmed the coaches, overpowering the coachmen with fluffiness. Napoleon jumped into his carriage and beat a hasty retreat.

Fresh from victory against the combined armies of Britain, Russia, Prussia, Sweden, Saxony and Sicily, the emperor of France had finally been defeated.

NASA Spaces Out

Some parts of the world are used to thinking of NASA as the forefront of human knowledge, bringing us images of the farthest reaches of the universe. But, in the 1990s, NASA's reputation was flagging. A new unofficial policy of 'faster, better, cheaper' and a string of costly failures had earned the agency the nickname Not Another Space Attempt.

In 1999, NASA had just launched the Mars Climate Orbiter, or MCO for short, to study the Red Planet. At first, everything looked good: the MCO entered Mars's orbit right on schedule. It would have to fly behind Mars, temporarily losing contact with mission control, before coming back on the other side of the planet about 20 minutes later.

As anticipated, radio contact with the orbiter was lost at 9.05am. NASA waited.

And waited.

Two days later, the mission was declared a loss. The probe, NASA discovered, flew more than 160 kilometres too close to the surface and disintegrated in the planet's atmosphere.

Another mission failure might not have been so hard to swallow, had its cause not been so simple: essentially, a maths error. By 1999, most of the world had switched to metric units. The one major outlier, of course, was the US. Basically, the probe was run by a computer that measured the effect of its thrusters in imperial units (feet and pounds) but adjusted course in metric (metres and newtons). The probe veered off course, burning up in space after taking just a single photograph.

It was an embarrassing loss, but it could be forgiven if they hadn't gone on to make the exact same mistake again six years later when a test spacecraft crashed into the satellite it was meant to dock with after reading GPS data in feet instead of metres.

Despite nominally converting to metric in 1990, the agency continues to use a mix of metric and imperial to this day.

Ada Lovelace's (Husband's) Family Jewels

If somebody asked you to imagine the world's first computer programmer, there's a certain character you'd likely imagine. Glasses, extra thick. Pants pulled up to the armpits. It's 1953. Maybe his name is Eugene.

You couldn't be more wrong.

The world's first computer programmer was born in 1815. She was named Augusta Ada King, and she was kind of a party girl. King was the product of a fraught, short-lived marriage between Annabella Milbanke and poet Lord Byron. At 17, King was sent to London to find someone to marry. Instead, she found Charles Babbage, a 41-year-old crank. But for King, who showed an aptitude for science and maths from a young age,

Einstein Did What?



none of that mattered, because Babbage had the Difference Engine: an unfinished, four-tonne steam-powered super-calculator. A 'computer' as you might call it.

King immediately saw the possibilities of the machine. "It might act upon other things besides number," she wrote, before immediately predicting the invention of the iPod: "Supposing, for instance, that the fundamental relations of pitched sounds in the science of harmony and of musical composition were susceptible of such expression and adaptations, the engine might compose elaborate and scientific pieces of music of any degree of complexity."

To her, it was a portal to the future. But knowing the machine would never get off the ground without funding, King began gambling compulsively. This would've been less of a problem if she was any good at it. She was so bad at gambling that she once lost £3200 on a single horse race, which is about A\$380,000 today. She had to beg her loved ones to bail her out.

The crowning glory of King's inability to hold on to money came on her deathbed, when she confided to her mother that she had pawned her husband's family jewels for gambling funds – the ones in their place were paste replicas. Her mother dug deep and paid for all the jewels to be replaced before her daughter left this mortal plane.

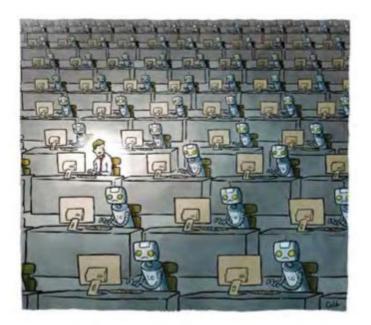
Weeks away from death, with her debts finally paid off, King pawned the replacement jewels for more gambling money – and lost the whole lot. Who could've predicted those odds?

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READER'S DIGEST



Humour On The Job



"Now, before my lunch break, does anybody else need help with a CAPTCHA?"

All Part Of A Teacher's Day

I was walking through the hall at school when I noticed a fellow substitute teacher standing forlornly with his forehead against a steel locker.

"How did you get yourself into this?" he whispered, over and over.

Knowing he'd been assigned a difficult class, I asked, "Are you all right?"

He replied, "I'll be fine as soon as I get the kid out of his locker."

SUBMITTED BY YEFIM M. BRODD

Perfect Crime

Mystery writer Carol Higgins Clark liked to share the excellent advice that her mother, Mary Higgins Clark, also a mystery writer, once gave her: "If someone's mean to you, make them a victim in your next book."

THE NEW YORK TIMES

Passing The Buck

Replying "that sounds like a you problem" to every work-related email as a social experiment.

@DRAKEGATSBY

All In A Day's Work

Call Into Question

Literally no one understands something more completely than a woman in a meeting who starts a question with "Just so I understand..." @TAYKAYPHILLIPS

Mottos Nurses Will Swear By

"Be nice to nurses. They're the ones who choose your catheter size."

"Yes, I am a nurse. No, I don't want to look at it."

"You can't cure stupid, but you can sedate it."

"Emergency department nurse – the first person you see after saying 'Hold my beer and watch this'."

NURSEBUFF.COM

Gazing Into The Future

Our son is an officer on a large tugboat that delivers fuel up and down the coast, so he spends many hours at the helm checking navigation, looking for shoals and various other hazards. He chuckles when he recalls one of his high school teachers telling him he would never get a job "just sitting and gazing out the window".

SUBMITTED BY BOB AND CAROL PETRIE

Punchy Punctuation

There really needs to be a semi exclamation point for when a full stop conveys too little enthusiasm in a work-related email but using the full exclamation point makes you seem like a psychopath.

@NATESILVER538

YOU MAY WELL ASK

Employsure, one of New Zealand's largest external employment relations advisors, shared with Newshub some of the odd questions they've received from Kiwi businesses.



"Can I pay my workers half in cash and half in food, if I can prove that the value of the food is of equal value? I can attach the food pricing to their payslip if they ask for it."

"My employee has called in sick because his cat is sick, and the vet has given him a medical certificate for the cat."

"Can I issue my staff with a warning letter for wearing the same perfume?"

"My employee is a bit of a downer. Can I terminate them for not being happy at work?"

"Do I have to pay the security guard dog wages?"

"I received a complaint about one of my staff stripping naked at a hotel swimming pool, while wearing company uniform. Can I fire him?"

SOURCE: NEWSHUB.CO.NZ



SHP AHOY!

Ten questions about gigantic ships and other vessels

BY Karin Schätzle

112 JUNE/JULY 2024

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QUESTIONS

The world's largest bulk carriers are over 360 metres long and 65 metres wide. The Valemax class ships carry up to 400,000 tonnes of cargo. How do these colossuses manage to float instead of sinking from their own weight?

- a) Their shape assists in remaining buoyant.
- b) Helium in their double bottom gives them buoyancy.
- c) Ships are made of aluminium.d) A ship's total weight is at most equal to the amount of water they displace.

Chinese junks undertook great voyages long before Europeans took to the world's oceans. Marco Polo made his return trip from China in 1292 on such a ship. Even then, junks had ...

- a) a stern rudder.
- b) a keel-less, flat bottom.
- c) watertight bulkheads.
- d) all of the above.

Only the best sailors have a chance in ocean races. Considered the toughest in the world, the Vendée Globe starts and finishes in Les Sables d' Olonne on the French Atlantic coast. What is the special challenge in this race?

a) The boats are assigned by lot.
b) Competitors sail only at night.
c) Each sailor competes independently, without a support crew.

d) The race is against the clock.

As a naval power, the ancient Tunisian port city of Carthage was superior to ancient Rome for a long time. This changed when the Romans developed the corvus. What was this secret weapon?

- a) A raven trained to attacked enemy boats.
- b) A ram spur below the water line.
- c) A barbed boarding bridge.
- d) A type of torpedo.

In order to be visible to others at night while at sea, ships use different coloured lights that are visible to the naked eye. Where does the red light go?

- a) On the stern.
- b) On the port side, i.e. in the direction of travel on the left.
- c) On the starboard side, i.e. in the direction of travel on the right.
- d) On the top of the mast.

The price paid by ships for passage through locks and canals is usually based on the vessel's gross tonnage. This also applies to the Panama Canal. The cheapest ticket ever issued by the Panama Canal dates back to August 1928 and cost US36 cents. Who used the canal at this ridiculously low price?

- a) Amelia Earhart on a surfboard.
- b) Richard Halliburton swimming.
- c) Sir Edmund Hillary in a boat.
- d) Queen Elizabeth II while on board the royal yacht HMY *Britannia*.

Today, countless tankers and cargo ships sail under the flags of countries with which they have no real link. Third place on the list of countries with the most registered merchant ships is occupied by one of the smallest countries in the world. Which one is it?

- a) Marshall Islands.
- b) San Marino.
- c) Vatican City State.
- d) Monaco.

On November 17, 1869, the Suez Canal was opened with great fanfare. It shortens the route of a ship sailing from Rotterdam, Netherlands to Singapore by about 6000 kilometres. How many days of travel time does the Suez Canal save on average?

a) Three.

- b) Six.
- c) Nine.
- d) Eight.

Privateers, who existed in ancient times, have been described as pirates with papers. These private individuals would sail privately-owned, armed ships and carry out quasi-military activities commissioned by governments and sovereigns, which included permission to plunder merchant vessels. What was this permission called?

- a) Letter of marque.
- b) Letter of praise.
- c) Letter of reprisal.
- d) Letter of ownership.

As a result of the sinking of the RMS *Titanic* on April 15, 1912, the first version of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea was adopted in 1914. What has been required for every ship since then?

- a) Places for everyone in life boats and on life rafts.
- b) Searchlights on the bow.
- c) Radio watches manned around the clock.
- d) Iceberg detectors.

In 1985, the deteriorating wreckage of the RMS *Titanic* was located in the North Atlantic at a depth of around 3800 metres

>> Turn to page 116 for quiz answers

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ANSWERS

1d) Like all ships, those of the Valemax class float as long as their total weight does not exceed the weight of the water they displace.

2d) Junks were equipped with stern rudders, watertight bulkheads and a flat bottom – and they still are today.

3c) The Vendée Globe is a single-handed sailing race. On their trip around the world, the participants are all alone on their boat. They are also not allowed to set foot on solid ground along the way.

With the corvus, the Romans turned a sea battle into a land battle. This barbed boarding bridge enabled the soldiers to storm the Carthaginian ships.

5b) The port side of a ship is marked with a red light at night. The starboard side has a green light. If the stern also carries a light, it is white. Large ships over 50 metres long will carry two masthead lights.

6b In August 1928, the travel writer Richard Halliburton swam the Panama Canal. It took him ten days and he paid a fee of just US36 cents to do so. In today's money, that would amount to around US\$6.18.

7a) In 2021, ships with a total gross tonnage of 274 million sailed under the flag of the Marshall Islands, which has an area of only 181 square kilometres.

8C) About 12 per cent of the trade goods transported by sea pass through the Suez Canal. On the Rotterdam-Singapore route, it saves ships about nine days of travel time.

9a) The letter of marque allowed privateers to plunder ships of those nations with which their home country was at war. It was not until the Paris Declaration Respecting Maritime Law of 1856 that privateering was abolished.

10a+c) The RMS *Titanic* had places in lifeboats and on life rafts for only about half of its passengers and crew – and yet this was still more than legally required at the time.

The SS *Californian*, which was close by, did not respond to distress calls because its radio watch was not manned that night.

Since 1914, ships have been required to keep rescue stations available for everyone on board, and radio watches have been manned around the clock.



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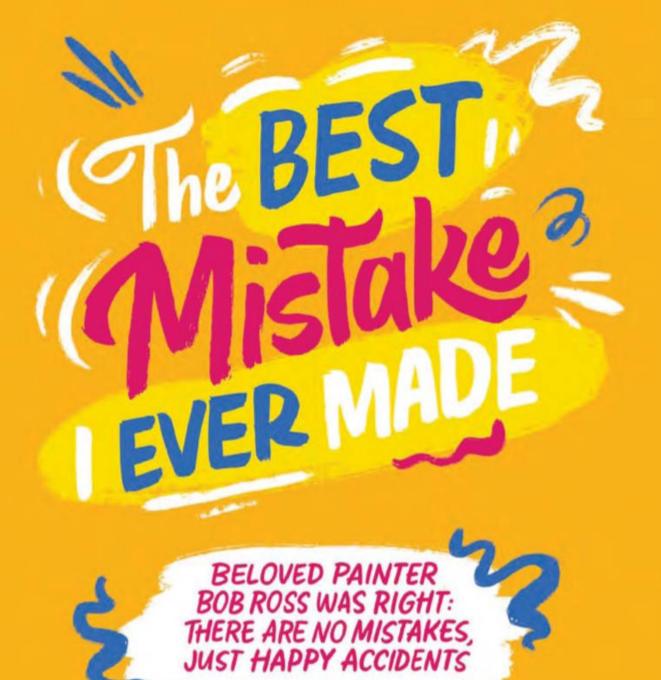
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ART OF LIVING



BY Reader's Digest Readers ILLUSTRATIONS BY ANGELA SOUTHERN

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WRONG PERSON, RIGHT TIME

I saw an old high school friend's name pop up on Facebook. The account had no photo, but I was excited and wrote her a message: "Melinda, I'm so happy to find you again!" She replied, "Nice to hear from you, Bonnie. Let's catch up." We went back and forth, updating each another on the years since high school. But something wasn't right. The stories just didn't jibe with my memories. Turned out this was a different Melinda from high school, not the one I had thought. But we were having so much fun, we kept in touch, and she's become a valued friend. I'm quite thankful for the case of mistaken identity. —BONNIE DRURY

Old Flame Name Game Years ago, I called my then-boyfriend by my ex's name. I felt horrible, but then I realised I missed my ex and had never got over him. We've been back together ever since.

-NICOLE TREVISAN



DOWN TO A FINE ART

As a primary school art teacher with one classroom sink, I found it challenging to clean 30 pairs of hands at the end of class. I usually stood at the front of the line passing out paper towels.

One day I accidentally dropped a full roll into the running sink. Frustrated, I grabbed the soaked roll, gave it a quick squeeze, and passed damp towels down the line. Our routine was forever changed.

Clean-up helpers love passing damp paper towels out while students wait at their tables, and everyone's hands are clean in no time. I passed this tip down to the art teacher who succeeded me, and she loved it.

-JEANNE CROSBY

MISTAKING THE CAKE

Years ago, I was making a chocolate cheesecake for a social function. As I mixed ingredients, I was suddenly unsure if I had included the correct amount of chocolate. Overcompensating, I added three times the amount of chocolate that the recipe called for. But my cheesecake was a huge hit and was dubbed Joanne's Chocolate Truffle Cheesecake, much to my delight.

-JOANNE BIRNBERG

PARK THAT THOUGHT

I parked my car in a hotel car park while I played in a tennis tournament. I won second place in men's doubles. A group of us, including the cute redhead who had won second place in women's doubles, were heading out to celebrate when I realised my car had been towed away. I recovered it quickly and was still able to meet up with the group. The redhead and I began dating, and we've now been married for 38 years. To this day, she claims my calm reaction to my car being towed away helped her realise I was special.

-TIM FERGUSON

Making A Splash During a water fight at camp, I filled a bucket to toss at a fellow counsellor. He ducked, and to my horror, I drenched a random visitor who was standing behind him. I ran into my cabin to hide, and when I slunk out, the stranger was waiting on the roof and got me back by dumping his own bucket of water on me. He was the camp bus driver, and to my surprise, he asked me on a date. Ron and I enjoyed 59 years of marriage. I wouldn't trade those years for anything.

TIKTOK WIN

A few years ago, my daughter asked me to film her doing a silly dance. The next morning, she screamed in disbelief. She'd mistakenly posted it publicly on TikTok and it had already gone viral. We agreed she could keep the video up if I made my own account to keep an eye on things.

I'm a human resources consultant and I began posting industry knowledge of my own. Recently, a follower thanked me because my post helped her realise that her company was under-paying her and she was compensated \$10,000 in back pay.

Hard to believe this old gal now has an account with thousands of followers and hundreds of people thanking me for the help I've been able to provide. —CINDY OPEKA

-EILENE ROECKER

The Best Mistake I Ever Made

Burning Out And Starting Up I realised I was out of fuel for my grass trimmer. I needed only a bit more and thought it wouldn't matter if I used chain saw fuel. Turns out, it did matter, and I burned up my engine. However, that inspired me to create a tool that could easily mix a small amount of fuel in any ratio. Thirty years later, we have sold 2.6 million units.

-TIM RICHARDS

A CHANGE OF JOB

I left a job at McDonald's to work for a telephone company at a significant pay cut. At first, I wondered if I'd made a mistake: Mc-Donald's might've been a dead end, but it paid more. But my new gig turned into a 30-year career during which I benefited from the company's tuition assistance programme to finish my undergrad and graduate degrees. I also became a manager and worked with wonderful people who are still my friends. Best 'mistake' I ever made, for certain. —JAN CARTER

THE PRICE IS RIGHT

My husband and I had just opened a business selling cleaning products. I accidentally priced some cleaning scrapers at \$0.79 instead of \$1.79. I realised my mistake when a customer bought out the entire stock. Turns out he was the buyer for the local district and inquired about prices for several other products. They have been our best customer since.

-TERRI COSTANZO

Moon Caverns Could Make Ideal Homes

Slight variations in the moon's gravitational tug suggest that kilometres-wide tubular lava caverns lurk beneath the lunar surface. Planetary geophysicist Dave Blair of Purdue University and colleagues theorise in *Icarus* that the colossal caves will be prime real estate for lunar pioneers. Lava tubes could offer protection from the extreme temperatures, harsh radiation and meteorite impacts on the surface. SCIENCENEWS.ORG

READER'S DIGEST



QUOTABLE QUOTES

I THINK OUR *First Heroes* WITH WHOM *We Discover Flaws* ARE *Our Parents*.

TAIKA WAITITI, FILM DIRECTOR

You should never apologise for who you are and what makes up your world and your life. You should always ask for help when you need it. DONNA HAY, FOOD EDITOR



No man ever steps in the same river twice, for it's not the same river and he's not the same man.

HERACLITUS, GREEK PHILOSOPHER





I WISH I HAD MORE **PATIENCE.**

TONI COLLETTE, ACTOR

Too much joy, I swear, is lost in our desperation to keep it.

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We wanted to do a once-in-a-lifetime trek in northern Laos. Just getting there became the adventure

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WHO KNOWS?

BY Bonnie Munday

Dusk on the Nam Ou River in northern Laos

readersdigest.com.au 125

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I recently read that a new highspeed train route had opened in Laos at the end of 2021. The Lao-China Railway can get you the 150 kilometres from the ancient capital of Luang Prabang north to the Chinese border in just 90 minutes. It carries more than 1.5 million passengers a year, a game-changer for a country with very little transport infrastructure.

As someone who has visited this remote corner of Laos, I wondered: what fun is that sort of speed when you can take three days to do pretty much the same trip by boat – never knowing if you'll actually get there?

It was the spring of 2017, and my husband, Jules, and I had just spent two weeks travelling around Laos. We had poked around the humid, sprawling capital, Vientiane, in the south and explored the fascinating Plain of Jars in the middle of the country. We were really enjoying it – the people were kind, and it wasn't as touristy as we knew Vietnam, the country we planned to visit next, would be.

We saved Luang Prabang, Laos's historic former capital, for last. Located at the confluence of the Mekong and the Nham Khan rivers, the UNESCO World Heritage Site was quiet, with several gilded Buddhist monasteries. Its well-preserved French colonial buildings date back to the first half of the 20th century, when Laos was part of French Indochina. We strolled the peaceful back streets and colourful craft markets and climbed Phousi Hill to take in the view. Relaxing at a bistro across from a wat (Buddhist temple), we watched saffron-robed monks stroll by as we enjoyed coffee and croissants, another vestige of France's colonial regime. At a bamboo-stilted riverfront café we ate traditional Lao *larb* – spicy ground pork or chicken mixed with fresh seasonings – served with the refreshing local brew, the rice-based Beerlao.

As the sun sank on the Mekong River, we watched multicoloured longboats glide by while the breeze carried the deep, soft sounds of the wats' gongs. I couldn't think of a more serene place to spend our final days in Laos.

Then things took a sharp turn. Walking down Luang Prabang's main drag on our second-last day, Jules spotted a trekking outfitter that offered a multi-day hike among the Akha hill tribes outside the small city of Phongsali. It would mean travelling to the mountainous frontier area near Laos's northern border with China and Vietnam.

Jules and I had talked about visiting the area once we got to Vietnam. We had seen photos of Akha women wearing silver-beaded headdresses, and we were intrigued by the fact that the ethnic minority Akha people, along with other tribes living in the mountainous regions of Laos,

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Myanmar, China and Vietnam, had managed to maintain their traditional way of life.

But we'd been having second thoughts. Though numerous tour companies ran treks to the Akha villages in Vietnam, we weren't big fans of overly planned group tours. Maybe a hike to the Akha villages in less-touristy Laos, just the two of us with a guide, would be more our style.

"Let's not go to Vietnam yet," Jules said. "We should see more of Laos."

I liked the idea, but I needed to know how we'd get to northern Laos before committing to it. Phongsali was so far away and the roads weren't great. Our *Lonely Planet* guidebook had very little information about that part of the country.

Maybe we could go by plane? At the local tourism office we were told that Lao Airlines did not fly there at that time of year because of thick smoke: it was 'burning season' in central Laos, when farmers torch their fields ahead of planting.

We could catch a bus, but it would take 15 hours, much of it on mountainous switchbacks. What was worse, reviews on Trip-Advisor had tales of the bus drivers falling asleep at the wheel. That didn't sound like much fun. We called a trekking outfit in Phongsali on WhatsApp. "You might be able to get a riverboat," the owner, Sivongxay, told us. "But I'm not sure. Call me if you make it here and we'll take you on a trek!"

So we would just head into the unknown? I'm the type who likes to plan my journeys, but the idea of travelling by river sounded very appealing. I tamped down my reservations and said to Jules, "Let's give it a try."

The local tourist office told us that any boat journey that might get us to Phongsali would be on the Nam Ou River. To get to the river, we'd need to take a four-hour minibus ride to a town called Nong Khiaw. Seemed reasonable.

A Buddhist temple in Luang Prabang



"And from there?" I asked the young tourism officer.

"I think boats go north, but I don't know how far," she responded. We bought the minibus tickets anyway, for the next morning.

That evening in our guesthouse we hit Google to find out about boat rides on the Nam Ou. We had no luck. While there was decent information about the popular tourist regions of Laos, there was hardly anything about the country's farthest reaches.

One reason for this is that some areas are littered with unexploded bombs dropped by the Americans during the Vietnam War, as a deterrent to Viet Cong using the Ho Chi Minh Trail through eastern Laos. Nearly five decades later, the stilllive bombs, partially or fully buried, remain a daily danger to farmers and road builders.

Our journey into the unknown had to start somewhere, and the first step was catching the minibus the next morning. We arrived in Nong Khiaw at about noon and walked to the riverboat ticket office. It was closed. But according to a schedule posted outside the office, a boat did head north once a day – and today's had just departed.

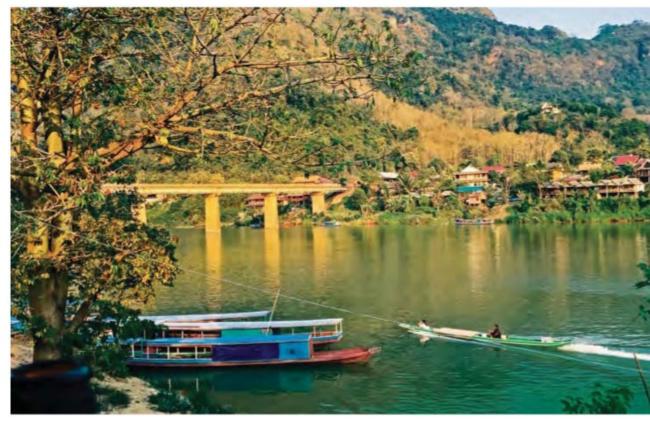
There are worse places to be stuck for a night: Nong Khiaw, which had a population of around 3500 at the time, was surrounded by misty, jungle-covered limestone karst formations. We spent much of the afternoon exploring the town. Later we found a guesthouse that served noodles and Beerlao, plugged our phone into their speaker system, put on some music and watched a mother washing clothes in the river while her kids splashed around, jumping to the beat of the music.

The next morning, we arrived at the boat office at 9.30. We were eager to find out how far these boats actually went and where in Laos we might end up sleeping that night. We learned that one leaving at 10.30 would take us to the village of Muang Khua, a five-hour journey.

Would there be another boat from there to Phongsali? We couldn't get an answer, and our map of Laos, which was short on details, didn't help. The map did have one important piece of information: Muang Khua had a tourist office. We were confident our questions would be answered once we arrived there that afternoon.

We took the front two seats of the blue wooden longboat and placed our packs at our feet; a dozen young backpackers piled into the boat and sat down behind us. Two hours later, at the first stop, everyone except us got off. With the entire boat to ourselves for the next few hours, we sat back to enjoy the rest of our journey.

And what a journey it was, like something out of an Indochina period film: the Nam Ou was wide, smooth and brown, and the clear sky



The boat jetty at Nong Khiaw on the Nam Ou River

had a misty quality above the lush banks. We munched on our packed lunch – water, apples and baguettes with Laughing Cow cheese – and sipped boxed red wine from our travel mugs as we slipped past tall, rounded karst landforms and quiet villages of bamboo huts where goats wandered the dusty lanes.

Children shrieked as they ran along the riverbanks in the shallow waters. Mud-covered water buffalo ambled down to cool themselves, too. Women filled their woven baskets with the greens they grow on the edge of the river at this time of year, when the water is low. It was truly a blissful, magical boat trip that we treasure even more now. Because although we didn't know it at the time, we were among the last to experience this particular river journey, one that people had been taking for centuries. Just eight months later, in late 2017, a massive hydroelectric dam on this stretch of the river would be completed, ending a way of life for several villages whose lifeblood was the Nam Ou.

One by one, dams were being built along the river as part of the Belt and Road initiative, China's massive international infrastructure programme. Many villagers had been relocated, river transport was reduced to the short stretches between the dams, and fishing and local riverside agriculture had taken a hit, reducing local food resources.

We later realised that this was why we had so much trouble finding information about travel on the river: the dams were being built so quickly that it was hard for anyone who didn't live in the area to know what stage each one was at.

Just before 4.30pm we stepped off the longboat at Muang Khua and walked up the steep road, packs on our backs, in search of the tourist office. We found it – just as the young woman who worked there was locking up. Uh-oh. Still hoping to travel onward that day, we asked, "Is there a boat to Phongsali? A bus?" She shook her head and pointed to a sign that

Oxen cooling themselves on the Nam Ou River



said the office would open at 8am the next day. We were staying the night.

Walking the dusty roads along with strutting chickens and the odd wandering dog, we came across a concrete bunker of a hotel, checked in and went in search of a café where we might find other tourists we could ask about getting to Phongsali. We were in luck: at the only place in town with an English menu, we met a British couple in their 60s – and they had just come from Phongsali!

"Don't take a boat any further north," the man warned. They had done it, but to get to the next stretch of the river, they had to bypass one of the massive new dams; they'd spent two hours in the back of a *songthaew* (a modified pickup truck) on a rough road, hanging on for dear life. The road was packed with heavy trucks

> loaded with building materials.

"We kept getting hit with gravel coming off the trucks," the woman explained. "Once you get to the other side of the dam, there's no guarantee a boat will be waiting to take you the rest of the way. If there isn't, you're sleeping on the side of the river."

Instead, they said, we should take the eight-hour bus trip from Muang Khua to Phongsali. That definitely sounded better.

The next morning, we

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awoke to the sound of a tinny loudspeaker. It was blaring an authoritative female voice speaking in Lao and some really jarring marching music. We learned later that it was a daily update from the central government.

We got to the tourist office at 8am on the nose. A dapper middle-aged man arrived and unlocked the door. Luckily for us, he spoke English. "Good morning!" I said with a hopeful smile. "What time is the bus to Phongsali?"

He looked at his watch. "It left at 7.30," he replied. Jules and I stared at each other, crestfallen. It was the bus from Luang Prabang, the man explained (the 15-hour journey we had earlier decided not to take). It came just once a day.

Now what? "Time to call Sivongxay," Jules said, referring to the trekking guide we were hoping to meet up with in Phongsali. "Maybe he knows another option."

Sivongxay paused after Jules explained where we were. "I think there's a bus that starts in Vietnam and goes through there," he said. "It comes up here a few times a week. I don't know if there's one today. If there is, it's maybe at noon? Or 2pm? You have to flag it down."

Full of doubt, but with nothing better to do, we walked to Muang Khua's main street. Sivongxay had told us to look for a bus with a sign that said 'Phongsali' on the front. (Would 'Phongsali' be in English letters, Vietnamese characters or Lao script? And would the 'bus' be a full-size coach, a minibus or a songthaew? We had no idea what to watch for.)

It was only 8.30am so we had hours to wait, maybe for nothing. We explored the town on foot, and later that morning we found a spot on the main street with some shade and two plastic stools, complete with a litter of newborn puppies and their mother underneath. To pass the time, we read our books and drank strong Lao coffee. We negotiated with a woman who lived nearby to use her outdoor bathroom – let's just say it was rudimentary – in exchange for a few kip (a little over one cent Australian).

But mainly, as the sun moved across the sky, we kept an eye to the east – the direction of the Vietnamese border some 70 kilometres away – watching for buses. There were plenty of shapes and sizes, most with Lao script on the front. As noon approached, Jules started jumping up to stop buses as they barrelled into town stirring up dust.

"Lodme Phongsali?" he asked the drivers, using the Lao word for bus. Each time, the driver shook his head and sped off.

We were pretty much resigned to staying on the plastic stools for the rest of the afternoon, knowing that the bus might not come and we'd be back in the concrete bunker that

READER'S DIGEST

night. We grabbed a snack for lunch from a nearby vendor and settled in. Then things changed – fast.

Looking up as yet another bus approached, we couldn't believe our eyes: the sign in the front window read 'PHONGSALI'. But it was flying past us. We grabbed our packs and scrambled behind the bus, waving frantically in its dust. You can't imagine our relief when it slowed to a stop.

"Lodme Phongsali?" we asked the driver in unison.

"Yes, each 40,000 kip," he said – about A\$5.67. After paying, we were waved onto the minibus packed with sacks of rice, construction materials and other goods from Vietnam.

It was the start of another journey into the unknown.

What followed felt like a visit to another planet. We arrived in Phongsali that evening, and the next day we met Zheng, a guide Sivongxay had hired for us. To start our trek to the Akha hill tribes' region, Zheng (who spoke Lao, English and the Akha language) shepherded us onto a minibus for a half-hour ride to the edge of the Nam Ou River. Yes, we were returning to the same river that had taken us from Nong Khiaw to Muang Khua.

A longboat took us further north, and we were dropped off after an hour or so at a muddy landing point. Then, with small packs on our backs, up, up we climbed in the sweltering heat through a forested mountainside



An Akha mother wearing a beaded headdress

towards the clouds and the cooler air of the Akha villages, where views over the green hills are misty.

Over the next three days, we saw no other foreigners. As arranged by Zheng, we stayed with local families in the villages we visited and learned about the traditional existence of the Akha – one in which the men hunt for food with slingshots while the women do just about everything else. That includes growing cotton, turning it into thread, then using the thread to make fabric. After dying the fabric indigo, they make a long, embroidered jacket that, along with leggings and an elaborate headdress, they wear on their wedding day - and every day after that.

The women's tasks also include

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collecting water in huge bamboo pipes, which they lug on their backs up the steep hills.

Bathing took place in the centre of each village, with designated hours for women and men to give everyone a measure of privacy. At least that was the theory. Neither Jules nor I was able to wash without drawing a crowd. We did our best to cover ourselves with towels.

Meals, which we ate at people's homes, consisted of rice, foraged greens and whatever meat was available – often chicken, but we had squirrel soup for dinner once.

Seated on short stools on a dirt floor, pigs and chickens hovered nearby, waiting for scraps. Jules was thankful for their services when a squirrel skull ended up on his spoon; he quietly deposited it on the floor behind him.

To an outsider like me, the lives of the Akha people look difficult. Yet they are managing to keep their culture alive in the quiet hills, up in the clouds, and avoid being assimilated into mainstream Lao, Chinese or Vietnamese society. Fortunately, in many villages the local chief has a motorbike, giving them access to markets and emergency healthcare when necessary.

I'm thankful to have travelled a lot in my life, and whenever I am asked about memorable trips, I always mention this one-of-a-kind, never-to-be-repeated experience. I am so thankful there was no railway, high-speed or otherwise, to northern Laos back then. Our snap decision to abandon our original plan for one that literally had no road map added a layer to life I didn't realise I'd enjoy so much.

In the end, the journey was as rich as the destination. By willingly plunging into the unknown, I discovered what truly makes you feel alive: the surprises waiting around the next bend on a river less travelled.

Century-old Race Revived

Hordes of Parisian waiters hurtled down the streets of the capital in March carrying trays laden with a cup, croissant and glass of water, as thousands of spectators gathered to watch the 'Course des Cafés', the newly revived version of a century-old race. More than 200 servers traversed a two-kilometre loop, suited up in traditional crisp white shirts, black trousers, neatly tied aprons and bow ties. The goal of the race is to cross the finish line as quickly as possible without running, spilling the water or using two hands on the tray. NPR.ORG



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AMOTHER'SCONVICTION

After all four of Kathleen Folbigg's children died in infancy, a court found her guilty of murder.

> Twenty years later, science finally uncovered the truth

> > BY Sarah Treleaven

DR CAROLA VINUESA

was in her office at the John Curtin School of Medical Research in Canberra one afternoon in August 2018 when she received a call that both changed her life and saved another. As a professor of immunology, Vinuesa immersed herself in the fascinating and complex world of genetics.

The call was from David Wallace, a former student at John Curtin. He presented Vinuesa with a scenario that was equal parts shocking, intriguing and devastating: a woman named Kathleen Folbigg had been sentenced to decades in prison for murdering her four children, all infants, over a period of ten years. The case had captivated the nation. Many were abhorred by Folbigg's crimes; others questioned the veracity of her guilt.

Given the paucity of evidence used to convict Folbigg, asked Wallace, could Vinuesa's research shed light on what actually happened to the children? Over the next five years, Vinuesa and an international team of scientists would dedicate much of their lives to answering this question. Their findings would shake up Australia's judicial system, raise questions about the treatment of mothers accused of killing their children, and shine a light on the misuse of scientific evidence. Folbigg, who was born Kathleen Megan Britton in Balmain, an inner-city suburb of Sydney, on June 14, 1967, was haunted by tragedy, instability and alienation from the very beginning. In December 1968, her father, Thomas Britton, stabbed her mother to death during an argument; he served 15 years in prison before being deported to his native England. Young Kathleen was shipped off to live with her mother's sister in western Sydney.

Any hopes that Kathleen would have a warm and safe childhood were soon dashed. The girl's aunt, known in court records as 'Mrs Platt,' complained to child-welfare authorities in spring 1970 that Kathleen was aggressive, impolite, and unclean and preoccupied with masturbation – and that the strain of caring for her niece was causing her marriage to deteriorate. She no longer wanted the girl. Kathleen was not yet three years old.

Doctors determined that the girl had likely been abused by her father. She was also found to have an unusually low IQ, largely attributed to her withdrawn and restless nature. In September 1970, she was placed into the care of a foster family, Deirdre and Neville Marlborough, who lived in Newcastle, 120 kilometres north of Sydney.

At first she bonded with the family and settled into school. But the legacy of her catastrophic early years took its toll: she was caught shoplifting, left school early and struggled in her relationship with Deirdre. At 17 she left home and moved in with the family of a friend.

A year later she met a 23-year-old forklift driver named Craig Folbigg at a nightclub in Newcastle. Craig was tall with brown hair, a pronounced nose and an easy smile. Charming and chatty, he seemed like Kathleen's rescuer. Together, they could make the home she had always needed. They married in 1987, when Folbigg was just 20, and rented an apartment in Newcastle. Folbigg found a job as a waitress at an Indian restaurant.

AFTER SARAH'S BIRTH, Folbigg became obsessed with the possibility of losing her

Craig was one of eight children and wanted a big family. Soon the couple was expecting. Thrilled, Folbigg became protective of her unborn child: Craig was forbidden from smoking indoors, and Folbigg improved her diet. When Caleb was born in February 1989, Folbigg told people that she felt complete; after so many years of upheaval, she had a husband, a home and a baby.

But on February 20, 1989, tragedy struck. Folbigg found Caleb, just 19 days old, dead in his crib. An autopsy identified the cause of death as sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

Folbigg was devastated but not deterred, and she was soon pregnant again. When Patrick was born in June 1990, he underwent extensive testing, including a sleep study. The results were normal. Still, Folbigg was terrified for Patrick's life.

It turned out that she had reason to be afraid: on October 18, 1990, fourmonth-old Patrick had what was known as an apparent life-threatening event, typically associated with oxygen deprivation. It resulted in brain damage, visual impairment and seizures for which Patrick was repeatedly hospitalised.

Caring for her disabled baby became the focus of Folbigg's life. Few waking moments were spent without Patrick on her mind or in her arms. By February 1991, he was gone, too. The cause of death was listed as asphyxia due to airway obstruction related to his seizures.

Feeling that she was to blame for the deaths of her two children, Folbigg fell into a deep depression. She decided that she and Craig needed to uproot their lives if they were going to beat whatever was plaguing their family. They sold their house and moved to Thornton, just north of Newcastle. Craig got a job selling cars, and Folbigg found work at a baby-product retailer, a job that spoke to her heartbreaking desire for a family. Sarah was born on October 14, 1992. She, too, underwent numerous tests, which didn't find any problems. Sarah appeared to be developing typically, but Folbigg became obsessed with the possibility of losing her. The couple started to feel the strain.

One night, when Sarah was ten months old, Craig saw Folbigg 'growl' at Sarah as she tried to get the baby to fall asleep. She passed Sarah to him, telling him to deal with her. The next day, August 30, 1993, Sarah died. The autopsy concluded that the cause of death was SIDS.

What could possibly explain this terrible misfortune? In the wake of Sarah's death, Craig became severely depressed, beyond the reach of his wife's attempts to help. In a bid to change their luck, they bought a home in Cardiff, west of Newcastle, not far from Craig's family.

The marriage started to crack under the strain. The couple separated repeatedly, but they reunited each time – whether through genuine mutual love or the shared bond of repeated trauma. They moved yet again, this time to the nearby Hunter Valley, and decided to have another baby.

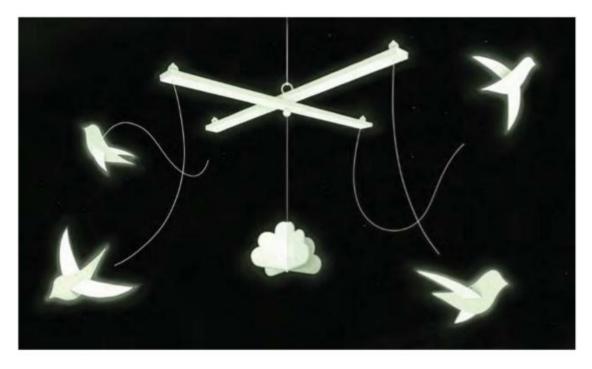
Laura was born on August 7, 1997, almost four years after Sarah's death. She was another healthy baby but was subject to even greater scrutiny, including a full panel of biochemical, blood and metabolic tests. For 12 months, cardiorespiratory monitoring indicated no problems with Laura's breathing and heart function. As Laura's first birthday approached, Folbigg planned a big party. She finally had a healthy baby, and her anxiety eased. The life she had planned for herself was coming to fruition after three heartbreaking false starts.

But the couple was once again falling apart. Folbigg was a devoted mother, but Craig was concerned about her flashes of anger. One night in late February 1999, he noticed the strain between Folbigg and Laura, then almost 18 months old. "Oh, she's got the sh**s with me," Folbigg told him. "It's probably over what I did to her last night. I lost it with her."

At breakfast the next morning, March 1, Folbigg was struggling to feed cereal to Laura. She then pulled her out of the high chair, put her on the ground and told her to "go to your f***ing father." When Craig went to work, Laura was watching television.

Later that morning Folbigg called Craig at work and apologised for losing her temper. She then took Laura to visit him during his morning break. Laura fell asleep in the car on the way home, and Folbigg carried her to bed. Laura died later that day. This time, the autopsy was inconclusive, though it did note that Laura had myocarditis, an inflammation of the heart.

On the afternoon of March 1, 1999, shortly after Laura became the fourth Folbigg child to be pronounced dead in ten years, a police officer met the



couple at the hospital. The sudden deaths of the four Folbigg children, all apparently healthy at birth, suggested something sinister to police: it wasn't a one-in-ten-million unlucky happenstance. Could Folbigg have killed them?

As the police ramped up their investigation – including a search of the Folbiggs' home – the couple's relationship was once again on the rocks. They separated permanently in June 2000, still under police suspicion. On April 19, 2001, Folbigg was arrested and charged with four counts of murder. She pleaded not guilty to all charges.

The jury trial began in spring 2003 at the Supreme Court of New South Wales in Sydney. In photographs taken during the trial, Folbigg looked as if she were sleepwalking – her eyelids heavy, her complexion pale. The prosecution's case laid out a cold take on the children's deaths: Folbigg had asphyxiated each one. The circumstantial evidence seemed overwhelming. Each child was apparently healthy before dying in their own bed, and Folbigg was both the last person to see each one alive and the one who had found them dead.

But the case wasn't just circumstantial. After the couple had separated for good, Craig discovered his wife's diaries. He later told the jury that what he read "made me want to vomit". Crown lawyers used the diaries to allege that Folbigg tended to "become stressed and lose her temper and control with each of her four children." She was accused of frustration, impatience and even cruelty with her children. The prosecutors suggested that more than 200 entries indicated that she didn't love and hadn't bonded with any of her children, and that motherhood left her so stressed and resentful that she was pushed to the darkest of acts.

June 3, 1990: This is the day that Patrick Allen David Folbigg was born. I had mixed feelings this day whether or not I was going to cope as a mother or whether I was going to get stressed out like I did last time. I often regret Caleb and Patrick, only because your life changes so much, and maybe I'm not a person that likes change, but we will see.

November 9, 1997: With Sarah, all I wanted was her to shut up and one day she did.

January 28, 1998: I feel like the worst mother on this earth, scared that [Laura] will leave me now, like Sarah did. I knew I was short tempered and cruel sometimes to her and she left, with a bit of help. I don't want that to ever happen again. I actually seem to have a bond with Laura. It can't happen again. I'm ashamed of myself. I can't tell Craig about it because he'll worry about leaving her with me.

The prosecutors argued that a grieving mother would not write these things. Even if the science surrounding the children's deaths was inconclusive, the diaries were presented as clear evidence that Folbigg was an unfit mother. How far was the leap from unfit to violent?

Folbigg wasn't the first woman convicted of killing her children under similar circumstances. Many of these cases were influenced by Roy Meadow, a British paediatrician who developed a theory that became known as 'Meadow's Law': one sudden infant death in a family is a tragedy, two deaths are suspicious, and three are murder unless proven otherwise. Charles Smith, a Canadian paediatric pathologist and a go-to prosecution expert in criminal trials of people accused of mistreating their children, used a similar approach. Meadow and Smith had inverted the common-law tradition of presumption of innocence.

Both men have since been discredited, and many of the people they helped convict were later exonerated, but the damage was extraordinary. Sally Clark was a British lawyer convicted of murdering her two infant sons in 1999. A later review found that Meadow had misrepresented statistical evidence at her trial, and a pathologist had withheld evidence that pointed towards natural death. Clark's release in 2003 prompted a review of hundreds of cases in the UK, and several other mothers had their convictions overturned.

But the assumption of guilt informed similar cases. On May 21, 2003, Folbigg was found guilty of three counts of murder, one count of manslaughter and one count of inflicting grievous bodily harm. The following October she was sentenced to 40 years in prison, with no chance of parole for 30 years, and was incarcerated at Sydney's Silverwater Women's Correctional Centre. She was 35 years old. On appeal, her sentence was reduced to 30 years with no chance of parole for 25 years.

FOLBIGG HADN'T LOST HER COMPASSION OR DECENCY, EVEN AS **She Struggled With Her Grim Reality**

Tracy Chapman, a childhood friend who had largely drifted out of Folbigg's life, was galvanised by her arrest. Chapman became convinced that Folbigg would be found not guilty. Shortly after the conviction, she reached out to Folbigg. She called the lawyers and read through transcripts, desperately trying to figure out how her friend could be exonerated.

She and Folbigg mostly communicated through long letters, in which Folbigg detailed her day-to-day life in prison. Most strikingly, Folbigg – whom Chapman describes as an animal lover with a terrific sense of humour – hadn't lost her compassion or decency, even as she struggled with her grim reality.

"She's got a strong moral compass," says Chapman. "And I supported

her to not allow the system to eat that up."

Other people also started to question Folbigg's guilt. One of the earliest dissenting voices came from Emma Cunliffe, an Australian working on her PhD in law at the University of British Columbia. She approached the Folbigg case through a feminist lens, part of an emerging consensus among some scholars that investigators and prosecutors were prone to discriminatory reasoning against women – particularly with mothers accused of harming or killing children.

As Cunliffe reviewed the trial records, she was disturbed that so many people involved in the case were certain of her guilt even though there was no evidence of homicide. She also found the use of Folbigg's diaries to be both highly prejudicial and misleading.

"The Crown's case was that the unexplained deaths of four children within the same family, coupled with the diary entries and evidence about Kathleen Folbigg's tendency to become frustrated, were sufficient to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that Kathleen Folbigg had killed each of her children," Cunliffe wrote in the *Australian Feminist Law Journal* in 2007.

In 2011, an academic journal asked Stephen Cordner to review *Murder, Medicine and Motherhood,* Cunliffe's book about the case. Cordner, a forensic pathologist in Melbourne,

Immunologist Professor Carola Vinuesa helped uncover the truth behind the Folbigg case

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had been following a similar case from 2007 in Victoria.

Carol Matthey, a 27-year-old mother from Geelong, was charged with murdering her four children. The crown alleged that each one was deliberately suffocated and that Matthey had "little regard" for her children, using them as pawns in her relationship with her partner. Charges were ultimately dropped due to insufficient evidence.

As Cordner reviewed Cunliffe's findings, he was struck by the similarities to Matthey's case – and the sense that something was deeply off about Folbigg's conviction. He told the University of Newcastle Legal Centre, which had taken on Folbigg's case pro bono, that he wanted to look into the conviction. In his 100-page report, Cordner wrote that the pathology reports offered no evidence to support the conclusion that the children had been murdered.

He also pointed out that the prosecution had used Folbigg's diaries to portray her as a bitter mother who was prone to lashing out uncontrollably, but the children had no physical injuries. Laura's teeth, for example, should have left a mark on the inside of her mouth under the pressure of suffocation. How could a mother act so violently yet kill her children so gently?

As the years passed, more medical and legal experts raised doubts about Folbigg's conviction. The campaign to exonerate her took a crucial turn in 2018, when Carola Vinuesa entered the picture. David Wallace, the former John Curtin School of Medicine student who had become a commercial litigator, had been following the case with increasing unease about the lack of evidence to support the conviction. He called Vinuesa and asked: was it possible that whole-genome sequencing, the process of determining an individual's full DNA profile, might shed light on the deaths of the Folbigg children?

Vinuesa agreed to look into it. First, she had a colleague visit Folbigg in prison and do a cheek swab. When Vinuesa sequenced Folbigg's DNA, she discovered that she had an extremely rare mutation of the CALM2-G114R gene, associated with cardiac arrhythmias and cardiac death. Had Folbigg passed this potentially deadly mutation on to her children?

To get a fuller picture of the children's genetic history, she wanted to sequence Craig Folbigg's DNA. He refused to provide a sample, maintaining that his now ex-wife was guilty and declining to be part of efforts to free her.

Folbigg's lawyer presented the findings of Cunliffe, Cordner and Vinuesa to Mark Speakman, the New South Wales attorney general, and in August 2018, he announced an inquiry. The next year, Reginald Blanch, a former chief justice of the District Court, produced a report of more than 500 pages, poring over the details of Folbigg's life and the arguments and evidence presented at her trial. Folbigg's supporters were stunned by its conclusion: "I find no error or procedural irregularity in the trial process that causes me to have a reasonable doubt as to Ms Folbigg's guilt," Blanch wrote.

Folbigg, who had been in prison for 16 years at this point, had always maintained her innocence. It was unclear what, if anything, could clear her name. The report "looked like that was slamming the door," says Cordner.

THE MEDIA NOW PORTRAYED HER INCARCERATION AS A GRIM MISCARRIAGE OF JUSTICE

Pressing on, Vinuesa contacted renowned geneticist Peter Schwartz at the Auxological Institute in Milan, Italy. In a remarkable coincidence, he had recently written about a similar case involving two siblings who carried the same mutation as Kathleen Folbigg had, on one of the other CALM genes. One child had died, and the other went into cardiac arrest but survived.

Schwartz reached out to colleagues in Denmark. Mette Nyegaard, professor of biomedicine at Aarhus University, and Michael Toft Overgaard, professor of bioscience at Aalborg University, had made a similar discovery seven years earlier: members of a Swedish family with a history of sudden cardiac deaths carried an extremely rare mutation in another member of the CALM gene group associated with sudden death in childhood. Both cases bolstered the theory that the deaths of the Folbigg children were not necessarily the result of sinister acts.

Vinuesa realised that investigators had concluded that the Folbigg children must have been murdered because the odds of them dying of natural causes were astronomical. But when these deaths are linked with a genetic factor, the picture shifts dramatically. "Then it's a one-in-16 probability, not one in 73 million," Vinuesa says.

She set about gathering the DNA of Caleb, Patrick, Sarah and Laura, drawing from decades-old samples collected either when the children were born or during their autopsies. Her analysis found that the CALM2 mutation had been passed along to Sarah and Laura. Caleb and Patrick, meanwhile, shared another exceedingly rare mutation in a gene known as BSN, which has been linked to lethal epileptic seizures.

As word spread of the growing evidence that all four Folbigg children had died natural deaths, 90 eminent scientists from around the world, including Nobel Prize winners and the president of the Australian Academy of Science, signed a petition in 2021 demanding a new inquiry into Folbigg's conviction.

Meanwhile, Peter Yates, a former investment banker who served on the boards of some of the country's most important institutions, heard Vinuesa talk about the Folbigg case and was an immediate convert to the cause. He became what he calls "the de facto chairman of Team Folbigg," lobbying politicians and bringing in a public-relations firm to shift the public's perception of Folbigg from serial killer to wrongly incarcerated mother.

Media coverage reached a fever pitch. Headlines had once called Folbigg 'Australia's worst female serial killer'; now her incarceration was portrayed as a grim miscarriage of justice.

In May 2022, following enormous pressure from the public and the scientific community, Governor of New South Wales Margaret Beazley ordered a second inquiry on the advice of NSW Attorney General Michael Daley. Just over a year later, the head of the inquiry, retired judge Thomas Bathurst, concluded that there was reasonable doubt that Folbigg was guilty. The governor signed a full pardon for Folbigg and ordered that she be freed.

On June 5, 2023, Folbigg was released. She was 55 years old and had been incarcerated for 20 years.

She spent her first night of freedom at Chapman's farm in northern New

South Wales, eating pizza and drinking Kahlua and Coke. "We didn't actually say very much," says Chapman. "There was a kind of profoundness in the silence." For so many years, the friendship had been dominated by a single, exhausting goal: getting Folbigg out of prison. Now they could finally rest.

In November 2023, the final report of the second inquiry recommended that Folbigg's convictions be overturned, and the following month the NSW Court of Criminal Appeal formally quashed them.

For many of Folbigg's supporters, her wrongful conviction has raised questions about how many other innocent women might be languishing in prison due to faulty science and mischaracterisation of their actions.

"We've got a long way to go," says Cordner, who recently published a new book, Wrongful Convictions in Australia: Addressing Issues in the Criminal Justice System. Legal experts have called on the Australian government to appoint an independent body to review wrongful convictions – similar to ones in England and New Zealand.

"I hope that no one else will ever have to suffer what I've suffered," Folbigg, wiping away tears, told the media after her convictions were overturned.

"My children are here with me today, and they will be close to my heart for the rest of my life."

READER'S DIGEST



Challenge yourself by solving these puzzles and mind stretchers, then check your answers on page 154.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
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ACROSS

- 9 Inverted slow-mover (5)
- **10** Hyped too high (9)
- **11** Carton containing other cartons (5)
- 12 Exciting experience (9)
- 13 Teetotal (3)
- **14** Flower associated with new beginnings and rebirth (5)
- 15 House of worship (9)
- 17 Explode (5)
- **19** No_____ without fire (5)

- **22** Construction sites with slipways (9)
- 24 Informal greeting (3,2)
- **26** Temporary home for critical-care patients (1-1,1)
- **27** Most employees think this of themselves (9)
- **29** From where minerals are extracted (5)
- **30** Lofty (9)
- 31 Military subdivisions (5)

Crossword

Test your general knowledge.

DOWN

- 1 Dates (7)
- 2 Backpackers' stopover (6)
- **3** Neither you nor me but the other guy (5,5)
- 4 Sudden attacks (6)
- 5 Portions (8)
- 6 Broad smile (4)
- 7 Conflict (8)
- 8 Hold fast (7)
- 16 Pleasant mood (4,6)
- **17** Beneficiary of a Biblical miracle (5,3)
- **18** Spanish word for bullfighter (8)
- **20** Making milder or less severe (7)
- **21** Hold (7)
- **23** The *Ice Age*'s ground sloth (6)
- **25** Advantageous to both sides (3-3)
- 28 Past tense of 'ride' (4)



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	2		6			9		

Sudoku

HOW TO PLAY: To win, you have to put a number from 1 to 9 in each outlined section so that:

• Every horizontal row and vertical column contains all nine numerals (1-9) without repeating any of them;

• Each of the outlined sections has all nine numerals, none repeated.

IF YOU SOLVE IT WITHIN:

15 minutes, you're a true expert

30 minutes, you're no slouch

60 minutes or more, maybe numbers aren't your thing

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<mark>"Write, Erase, Rewrite"</mark>

READER'S DIGEST





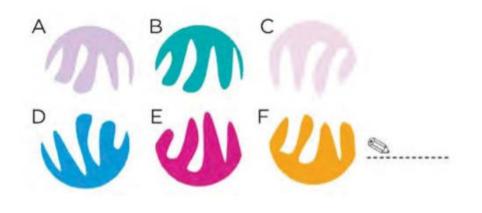
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Perfect Fit

Can you find the three perfect circles that can be made by matching these spindly shapes?



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READER'S DIGEST



Test Your General Knowledge

1. What word describes a set of rules that a machine can follow to learn how to do a task? 1 point 2. What type of 'novel' food source did the European Union recently approve as safe to eat? 1 point **3.** What celebration device has been around since as early as 200 BCE in China, when it was accidentally discovered that the noise it makes scares off intruders? 1 point 4. Guy Pearce played a drag queen in a 1994 Australian film journeying across the Australian Outback. What was the name of the film? 2 points **5.** The name of which primate meaning 'Man of the Forest' is derived from Malay? 2 points 13. What Asian country named **6.** Which space telescope was the Siamese launched into low Earth orbit fighting fish in 1990 and still remains in also known as operation? 2 points the betta – as its 7. On which planet in our national aquatic solar system would you find animal in 2019 the Great Red Spot, a storm due to its cultural that has been raging for at significance in the least 300 years and has a nation? 2 points

diameter larger than Earth? *2 points* **8.** Per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are also known as 'forever chemicals', based on their tendency to hang around in the human body. They are sometimes used in the oil-resistant coating of what household items? *2 points*

9. Whose birthday is celebrated as a national public holiday in Malaysia in June? *1 point*

10. What name is given to the small bones which form the spinal column? *1 point*

11. American psychologists G. Stanley Hall and Arthur Allin coined the terms 'knismesis' and 'gargalesis' in 1897. To which physical human experience do these words refer? *2 points*12. What New Zealand City is a UNESCO City of Literature? *1 point*

16-20 Gold medal 11-15 Silver medal 6-10 Bronze medal 0-5 Wooden spoon

Auswers: 1. Algorithm. 2. Insects, specifically house crickets and mealworm larvae. 3. Firecracker.
4. The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert. 5. Orangutang. 6. The Hubble Space Telescope.
7. Jupiter. 8. Some non-stick pans. 9. The King's (Yang di-Pertuan Agong) birthday. 10. Vertebrae.
11. Tickling. Knismesis is light tickling and gargalesis is intense, laughter-inducing tickling.
12. Dunedin. 13. Thailand.

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READER'S DIGEST



From Page 148

Crossword

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Sudoku

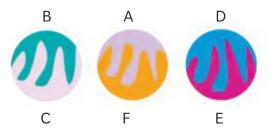
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7	4	5	2	9	1	3	6	8
6	3	9	7	4	8	2	5	1
1	2	8	6	5	3	9	7	4

Spot The Difference



Perfect Fit

Can you find the three perfect circles that can be made by matching these spindly shapes?



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House And Home

The design of buildings and cities affects us all in myriad ways. How well do you know construction terms?

BY Samantha Rideout

 blue space – A: high-income neighbourhood. B: undeveloped land. C: place with visible water.
 keystone – A: piece at the top of an arch. B: structure that reinforces a wall. C: paving design.

3. egress – A: exit. B: land lost to rising sea levels. C: prominent landmark.

4. minaret – A: cross-shaped church. B: outermost part of a Hindu temple. C: tall tower on a mosque.

5. blobitecture – building design that is A: inexpensive, with little regard for beauty. B: impossible to create in real life. C: round and organic-looking.

6. artery – A: major road or railway. B: site offering an essential service.

C: hallway with rooms on either side.

7. eaves – A: abandoned settlement.B: lower part of a roof that overhangs the walls. C: plaster ceiling.

8. gable – A: small shelter in a park or garden. B: triangular section of wall under two roof slopes.
C: farming community. **9. heat island** – A: naturally lit room. B: urban area that is hotter than its surroundings. C: well-insulated building in a cold climate.

10. arcade – A: place suitable for docking boats. B: balcony at a theatre. C: passageway between a series of arches and a wall.

11. brutalism – architecture thatA: incorporates regional materials.B: is inspired by forms from theanimal kingdom. C: uses roughmaterials and blocky shapes.

12. cantilevered – A: supported at only one end. B: capable of pivoting. C: designed for good musical acoustics.

13. party wall – Wall that A: is made of ceramic tiles. B: is shared by two adjoining properties. C: reduces traffic and other noise.

14. veneer – A: thin material covering another one. B: general colour scheme. C: accessibility feature.
15. genius loci – A: celebrated architect. B: spirit of a place.
C: central point.

READER'S DIGEST

Answers

1. blue space – C: place with visible water. Blue spaces, such as lakes and canals, are good for locals' mental health.

2. keystone – A: piece at the top of an arch. A keystone with a lion's-head carving locked the rest of the arch in place.

3. egress – A: exit. The fire marshal wasn't satisfied with the theatre's narrow egress.

4. minaret – C: tall tower on a mosque. A call to prayer sounded out from atop a nearby minaret.

5. blobitecture – C: building design that is round and organic-looking. The Galaxy Soho in Beijing, China, was designed by famous architect Zaha Hadid and is an iconic example of blobitecture.

6. artery – A: major road or railway. The city's main artery was closed for repairs, to the chagrin of commuters.

7. eaves – B: lower part of a roof that overhangs the walls. Standing under the eaves next to the old house somewhat sheltered us from the rain.

8. gable – B: triangular section of wall under two roof slopes. Daphne's room was in the gable, making it tricky to place furniture.

9. heat island – B: urban area that is hotter than its surroundings. Heat islands are partly caused by roads and buildings absorbing the sun's light.

10. arcade – C: passageway between a series of arches and a wall. Tourists strolled through the arcade enclosing the monastery's garden.

11. brutalism – C: architecture that uses rough materials and blocky shapes. Unlike his friends, Ross found brutalism more beautiful than depressing.

12. cantilevered – A: supported at only one end. Ablavi wondered about the stability of her cantilevered balcony.

13. party wall – Wall that B: is shared by two adjoining properties. Two buildings were made into one by knocking holes into the party wall.

14. veneer – A: thin material covering another one. The cottage had stone-veneer siding.

15. genius loci – B: spirit of a place. Chey's hometown had a lively genius loci, thanks to its pedestrian-only roads and appealing outdoor cafés.

VOCABULARY RATINGS 5–9: Fair 10–12: Good 13–15: Word Power Wizard



Trusted Brands Winners Special Supplement

100% voted by consumers. View all results at www.trustedbrands.com.au 157

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2024 TRUSTED BRANDS SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT



A Milestone Is Reached

Reader's Digest Trusted Brands celebrates its Silver Anniversary in Australia

or 25 years, the Reader's Digest Trusted Brands Trustmark has been helping consumers identify the brands in the marketplace that are value-for-money, reliable and worthy of their business.

As a brand, Reader's Digest has celebrated many milestones globally, not least the magazine turning 100 in 2022. So the Trusted Brands survey celebrating its 25th anniversary in Australia is a particularly special moment in the company's local history.

Trust plays an important role in every decision the consumer

makes: from deciding where to buy groceries, especially during this time of rising food prices and shrinkflation, to what life insurance to purchase to protect their family's future needs.

The Trusted Brands Awards serve as a guide for consumers, helping them see beyond the surface shine of marketing glitz.

This year's winners have shown an unwavering commitment to delivering the very best. While their products and services may vary, they all share a common trait; consistency and reliability in a fastpaced world.



A difficult year for business

No amount of New Year's fireworks could hide the reality that 2024 would be another tough year for individuals and businesses alike. Commentary over the rising cost of living, inflation and wage stagnation have dominated the news for over a year.

This year's winners have done what many brands never manage to do. They are a constant that consumers know they can depend on, no matter how financially challenging the market may seem.

What does it take to become a trusted brand?

Earning a coveted Trusted Brand Award is no easy feat. It's not about money nor market share. Even some of the most successful companies haven't earned the right to flaunt the Trustmark.

That's because the best businesses aren't always the ones that chase profits. Rather, they leave a positive impact on the world, whether that's through nurturing human connections, encouraging sustainable practices, or fostering

diverse workplaces that have excellent customer service.

The methodology behind the award is simple: we ask consumers which brands they trust most. What results is a catalogue of companies that go the extra mile and contribute to the communities they serve.

What does trust mean in 2024?

Defining 'trust' has becoming increasingly difficult in the digital age.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has rapidly entered the spotlight, inspiring chaos and excitement in equal measure. AI has facilitated advances in science, medicine and education. It has also threatened jobs, triggered strikes and forced businesses to adapt overnight. Even the most tech-savvy find themselves falling for scams, as it gets harder to discern what is 'real' online.

In this fraught landscape, it is more important than ever to know which companies you can trust with your private details.

Customers expect more than the mere promise that they will get what they pay for. Consumers of 2024 also rely on brands to do everything from implementing environmentally sustainable practices to upholding ethical standards.

Earning trust has never been more challenging. Companies can no

longer depend on the quality of their products and services alone. They must also act as responsible corporate citizens, going above and beyond to uplift, innovate and inspire.

Only the businesses with the tenacity and grit to do so have been awarded a coveted place on Reader's Digest's list of Trusted Brands for 2024.

ТОР	20 WINNERS*
1	Dettol
2	Band-Aid
3	Cadbury
4	Bunnings
5	Dulux
6	Cancer Council (sunscreen)
7	Bridgestone
8	Panadol
9	Toyota
10	Bega
11	Weber
12	Royal Flying Doctor Service
13	Dairy Farmers
14	Glen 20
15	Selleys
16	Sanitarium Weet-Bix
17	Woolworths
18	Lipton
19	Finish
20	Yates

* Of all brands surveyed



A TRUSTED METHODOLOGY

For 25 years, the Reader's Digest Trusted Brands Trustmark has been helping consumers identify the brands in the marketplace that are value-for-money, reliable and worthy of their business. This is especially relevant in today's e-commerce environment where 'trust signals' are used ever more frequently to provide customers with insights and confidence to determine whether investing their trust in a brand is worthwhile.

Not all trust signals are created equally, however. Reader's Digest is proud of the consistency with which the Trusted Brands survey has been conducted over the past 25 years, with the survey upholding the highest level of independence and honesty to ensure the accuracy of the results. These awards for the Most Trusted Brands are based on the genuine opinions of everyday Australians. It is not a reader survey.

We commissioned Catalyst Research, experts in marketing research, to independently survey a representative sample of consumers across Australia to discover their views on products and services in 68 categories across a broad range of thriving industries. The purchasing opinions of around 4300 individuals were collected. Each of these 4300 participants completed an online questionnaire that first required them to name the brands that they trust for each category. This was an unprompted question to ensure the rating of top brands in each of the 68 categories, as selected by Australians, was without prejudice. The participants were then asked to rate which was their most trusted brand in each category, and explain why.

In each category, one overall Winner was awarded, along with two Highly Commended brands. These brands scored higher in their respective categories than the other brands polled.

The Reader's Digest Trusted Brands survey and its Trustmark logo are valuable achievements for businesses of all sizes and industries. Being awarded a Trusted Brand in a category helps to boost an organisation's reputation; it sets these brands apart from the majority. It also gives the workforce an immediate boost in confidence, knowing that their hard work, focus and dedication to customers hasn't gone unnoticed.

2024 TRUSTED BRANDS WINNERS

CATEGORY	WINNER
» Australian Iconic Brand	Bunnings Warehouse
» Bank of the Year	Commonwealth Bank
>> Aged Care & Retirement Villages	Anglicare
» Air Conditioner	Daikin
» Air Freshener	Glen 20
» Airlines	Singapore Airlines
» Australian Wine Club/Subscription	Cellarmasters
» Barbecues	Weber
» Breakfast Food	Sanitarium Weet-Bix
» Car Rental	Budget
» Cars	Toyota
» Charity	Royal Flying Doctor Service
» Cheese	Bega Cheese
» Coffee Machines	Breville
» Confectionery	Cadbury
» Cruise Operators	P&O Cruises
» Dishwashers	Bosch
» Dishwashing Tablets	Finish
» DIY Power Tools	Bosch
» Electricity Provider	Origin
» Fabric Softener/Conditioner	Cuddly
» First Aid	Dettol
» Fridges	Samsung
» Funeral Insurance	Suncorp
» Garden Power Tools (excl. Lawn Mowers)	STIHL
Sardening Products	Yates
» Gas Suppliers	Origin
» Glues & Construction Adhesives	Selleys
» Health Insurance	Bupa
>> Hearing Services	Hearing Australia
>> Home & Contents Insurance	ААМІ
>> Home Care NSW/ACT	Uniting NSW.ACT
» Home Care QLD	BlueCare
>> Home Care SA/NT	RDNS

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100% voted by consumers. View all results at www.trustedbrands.com.au

HIGHLY COMMENDED

Bupa Aged Care	Uniting
Fujitsu	Samsung
Air Wick	Ambi Pur
Emirates	Air New Zealand
Naked Wines	Australian Wine Club
Matador	Jumbuck
Uncle Tobys Oats	Kellogg's Corn Flakes
Hertz	Avis
Mazda	Mercedes-Benz
RSPCA	Guide Dogs
Mainland	Devondale
De'Longhi	Smeg
Lindt	Nestlé
Royal Caribbean	Princess Cruises
Fisher & Paykel	Samsung
Morning Fresh	Fairy
Ryobi	Makita
EnergyAustralia	AGL
Comfort	Fluffy
Band-Aid	Elastoplast
Westinghouse	LG
Australian Seniors	Apia
Ryobi	Bosch
Seasol	Brunnings
EnergyAustralia	AGL
Gorilla	Bostik
HCF	MediBank
Specsavers Audiology	Amplifon
Allianz	Budget Direct
RSL LifeCare	Australian Unity
Anglicare Southern Queensland	Ozcare
AnglicareSA	Resthaven

Reade

2024 TRUSTED BRANDS WINNERS

CATEGORY	WINNER		
>> Home Care VIC/TAS	Australian Unity		
» Home Care WA	Silverchain		
» Honey	Manuka Health		
» Household Cleaning Products	Dettol		
» Humidifiers & Vaporisers	Vicks		
» Incontinence Products	Poise		
» Jewellers	Michael Hill		
» Laundry Appliances	Bosch		
» Laundry Detergents	ОМО		
» Lawn Mowers	Victa		
» Life Insurance	AAMI		
» Milk	Dairy Farmers		
» Optometrists	Specsavers		
» Ovens	Bosch		
» Pain Relief	Panadol		
» Paint	Dulux		
>> Pet Care (excl. Food)	NexGard		
» Pet Insurance	RSPCA Pet Insurance		
» Plasters & Adhesive Bandages	Band-Aid		
>> Property Developers	Stockland		
» Real Estate Agencies	Ray White		
>> Retailers (excl. Supermarkets)	Bunnings Warehouse		
» Sealants & Fillers	Selleys		
» Skin Care (Anti-Ageing)	Nivea		
» Stain Removers	Vanish		
» Sugar Substitutes	Equal		
» Sunscreen	Cancer Council		
» Superannuation	AustralianSuper		
» Supermarkets	Woolworths		
» Tea	Lipton		
» Tyres	Bridgestone		
» Vegetarian/Vegan Food	Vegie Delights		
>> Vitamins & Supplements	Swisse		

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HIGHLY COMMENDED

HIGHLY COMMENDED	"eader's
Baptcare	Mercy Health
Bethanie	Brightwater
Capilano	Beechworth
Pine O Cleen	Ajax
Philips	Breville
Tena	Depend
Prouds	Pandora
LG	Samsung
Cold Power	Dynamo
STIHL	Ryobi
Allianz	Suncorp
Devondale	Pauls
OPSM	Optical Superstore
Westinghouse	Samsung
Nurofen	Panamax
Taubmans	Wattyl
Frontline	Advantage (Bayer)
Woolworths Pet Insurance	Coles Pet Insurance
Elastoplast	Smith & Nephew
AVJennings	G.J. Gardner
LJ Hooker	Century 21
Kmart	JB Hi-Fi
Bostik	Poly
QV	Dove
White King	Sard Wonder
Splenda	Natvia
Nivea	Banana Boat
Rest	Hostplus
Coles	Aldi
Twinings	Dilmah
Goodyear	Michelin
Yumi's	Nature's Kitchen
Blackmores	Nature's Way



Bunnings Warehouse

WINNER AUSTRALIAN ICONIC BRAND

Going the extra mile every day to deliver the best customer experience

t is no mean feat to win the Australian Iconic Brand award, but to win it for four consecutive years is resounding affirmation that for many of us, Bunnings Warehouse is a local institution.

This year, Bunnings Warehouse will celebrate its 30th anniversary. Over those three decades, Bunnings has become a part of the national fabric, with Australians everywhere making a trip to Bunnings part of their weekend ritual. Far from sitting on its laurels, one thing the business will never lose sight of is recognising that its team makes it all happen.

"Our team members are the heart and soul of our business," said Mike Schneider, Bunnings Warehouse Managing Director. "We're so proud of the incredible work they do every day, and this award is great recognition of their passion and commitment to our customers."

With more than 53,000 team members, many with qualified trade backgrounds, keeping a family feel and having fun helps retain and develop the best team, providing a unique and great customer experience.

"The trust and satisfaction our customers feel shopping with us comes down to the extra mile our team goes, and I want to say a very big thank you to them," said Mr Schneider. "We're also incredibly grateful to our loyal customers and we won't stop working to earn their trust every day."

With Australians prioritising value, range and a great experience more than ever, Bunnings Warehouse remains committed to providing the best possible experience, continuing to have the lowest prices every day, and having the widest range of products, available and suitable to meet customer needs. It also participates meaningfully in local communities in many ways, from running free D.I.Y. workshops and events, to supporting local grassroots groups and causes through fundraising opportunities and hands-on support.

THANK YOU

We're building the best...Our team makes it happen



2024 TRUSTED BRANDS SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT



WINNER AGED CARE & RETIREMENT VILLAGES ARE Southern Queensland

66

Caring and reliable.

FEMALE, 70+, QLD

The treatment is phenomenal.

FEMALE, 30-39, NSW/ACT

No. of Concession, Name

Quality, longserving brand with a good reputation.

MALE, 50-59, QLD

My friend is well looked after there.

MALE, 60-69, QLD



WITH A LONG HISTORY IN nursing and clinical care, Anglicare Southern Queensland's residential aged care facilities



deliver an exceptional standard of service to 900 residents and their families every year.

The holistic care provided by Anglicare Southern Queensland responds to the diverse needs and choices of each of their residents. Their personcentred philosophy supports autonomy and dignity, and encourages residents to form and strengthen partnerships of care.

Anglicare Southern Queensland is proud to offer Specialist Dementia Care through the Commonwealth-approved programme, which provides a dedicated, dementia-friendly environment and specialised care for people living with dementia who are impacted by severe behaviours.

For more than 150 years, Anglicare Southern Queensland has supported Queenslanders with services including aged care, youth support, housing and homelessness support, counselling, children and parenting programmes, and foster care.

"We recognise our resident's individual stories and are enriched by having them in our lives," said an Anglicare Southern Queensland Residential Aged Care Staff Member. • Visit www.anglicaresq.org.au



Australians trust Anglicare SQ. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au



Most trusted in Residential Aged Care Backed by over 150 years experience

anglicaresq.org.au | 1300 610 610

2024 TRUSTED BRANDS SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT



winner air conditioner Daikin

66

Best value and reliable. MALE, 50-59, SA/NT

MALE, 50-59, SA/NI

High performing products. Great service history.

FEMALE, 40-49, VIC/ TAS

Superior quality.

MALE, 60-69, VIC/TAS

Well made, long lasting, consistent performance.

MALE, 18-29, VIC/TAS



OPERATING IN AUSTRALIA for more than 50 years, Daikin understands the extremes of the Australian climate. As air conditioning specialists,



Daikin continually strives to offer cutting-edge heating and cooling solutions, and designs, develops and manufactures a broad range of products here in Australia to benefit communities right across the country. "Our commitment in delivering high-quality products go hand-in-hand with environmental sustainability," says Raj Singh, GM Product & Marketing.

"Daikin was first to launch R-32 residential-use air conditioners, which have a lower global-warming potential and zero ozone depletion potential," said Mr Singh. Daikin was also the first to introduce VRV air-conditioning systems, the world's first use of variable refrigerant flow control.

Given that most people spend around 90% of their lives indoors, indoor air quality is an area of focus for Daikin. Its flagship residential air conditioning split systems and air purifiers, endorsed by the National Asthma Council, include the brand's innovative signature Streamer Technology to provide continuous comfort and superior indoor air quality to the occupants. • Visit www.daikin.com.au



Australians trust Daikin. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au



Perfecting the Air

Introducing the NEW Alira X



5.5 Energy Rating Efficiency



Whisper Quiet Operations at 19dBA



99% Air Purification with Streamer Technology



Air Conditioner

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HIGHLY COMMENDED AIR CONDITIONER Fujitsu General

66

Long lasting product.

FEMALE, 40-49, NSW/ACT

Concession in which the

Address of the local division of the local d

10

A brand I have used a number of times and am happy with.

FEMALE, 30-39, QLD

A stand out brand.

MALE, 18-29, SA/NT

Reliable, durable, outstanding performance.

FEMALE, 50-59, SA/NT



SINCE 1936, WHEN FUJITSU GENERAL LIMITED was founded (originally established as Yaou Shoten Ltd), research and innovation



has been at the heart of the company's ethos. Still to this day, Fujitsu General's continuous pursuit in delivering excellence relies on supportive people and services, as well as their strong Japanese heritage of innovative research, manufacturing and product development.

"Here at Fujitsu General Australia (established in 1974), we strive to consistently provide high quality, energy efficient products accompanied by superior customer service," said Zdenka Micallef, Head of Marketing and Communication ANZ. "To be 'Australia's Favourite Air®' means to be the best air conditioning company to deal with not just a leading air conditioning brand."

This year, Fujitsu General marks 50 years of excellence in Australia. The brand recently launched its new Lifestyle Next range. Boasting smart climate control features like Climate React and Geofencing, it allows the user to enjoy greater control of their comfort in their home. • www.fujitsugeneral.com.au

Australians trust Fujitsu General. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au





Control your air from anywhere

The Lifestyle Next range of models comes with the **anywAiR® technology Wi-Fi adaptor II** that allows you to effortlessly adjust and optimise your air conditioner from anywhere by smartphone or tablet using the myanywAiR® Next app.

For more information regarding the full suite of smart control features, visit **fujitsugeneral.com.au**.





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2024 TRUSTED BRANDS SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT



HIGHLY COMMENDED AIR CONDITIONER Samsung

66

The brand I trust the most.

FEMALE, 50-59, SA/NT

-

1

Latest tech. Versatile to use at home.

FEMALE, 50-59, VIC/TAS

Very happy with our Samsung air conditioner.

MALE, 70 +, SA/NT

Energy efficient, competitively priced.

MALE, 40-49, NSW/ACT



AUSTRALIANS ARE NO STRANGERS to extreme

climates, and that's where Samsung has our backs. Samsung offers Air Solutions that maintain performance



and reliability with mind to the current economic climate. "Consumers are purchasing products that don't use too much energy, which can drive up household costs," said Mike Lilly, Head of Air Conditioning. "They are also looking for smart technology to adjust and monitor the temperature remotely. New Samsung products incorporate both: technology to assist with energy efficiency and smart features that maximise convenience while purification supports clean air."

Samsung air conditioners integrate innovative software and hardware to offer consumers incredible comfort and control in their homes. For example, Samsung's SmartThings app allows you to monitor your energy consumption virtually anytime, anywhere from your compatible smartphone. "We're proud to offer products that meet consumers' ever-changing needs and strive to bring meaningful innovation to Australian households."

• Visit www.samsung.com/au/



-

Australians trust Samsung. Visit **www.trustedbrands.com.au**

SAMSUNG

Control your air conditioner and monitor energy usage from anywhere, at anytime using the Samsung SmartThings App.¹

Enjoy year round heating, cooling and air purification, thanks to Samsung Air Solutions.

Image simulated for illustrative purposes. "Requires a compatible GEO WindFree!" Air Conditioner and the SmartThings App. Available on Android and iOS devices. A Wi-Fi connection and a Samsung account are required.

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Cellarmasters

WINNER AUSTRALIAN WINE CLUB/SUBSCRIPTION

66

Amazing service. MALE, 18-29.

MALE, 18-29 NSW/ACT

They offer the best variety of wines at fair prices.

MALE, 60-69, SA/NT



FEMALE, 30-39, VIC/TAS

Brand has a lot of experience.

MALE, 50-59, WA





CELLARMASTERS

FAMOUS FOR QUALITY

WINES, value for money and customer service since 1982, Cellarmasters has been one of Australia's biggest selling wine subscriptions. When Cellarmasters joined forces with Australia's biggest and most loved liquor retailer, Dan Murphy's, it gave the brand further opportunity



to expand its subscription service and expertise. Continuing the Cellarmasters legacy and combining the best of both worlds, Dan Picked subscriptions now offer the perfect wine boxes to suit your needs. From value-conscious 12 bottle Big Boxes, to 6 pack exploration via the Discovery range, there's a box just right for you.

Dan Picked's other advantages include having access to a wide range of wines from the best winemakers in the country, with wine experts hand selecting each wine showcased in the subscription boxes. Plus free delivery straight to your front door.

Dan Picked subscriptions are exclusive to My Dan's members, recognised as one of the best loyalty programmes within the liquor industry. Members enjoy access to exclusive offers, exciting invitationonly events and insider knowledge on the latest releases across the Dan Murphy's range.

• www.danmurphys.com.au/subscriptions

176

Australians trust Cellarmasters. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au



Handpicked wine subscriptions with free delivery every time.



WINNER – WINE SUBSCRIPTIONS

'Australia's Most Trusted Brand 2024'

Scan the QR code to see our range of award-winning wine subscription boxes, or call our dedicated phone team on 1800 505 605 (Mon to Fri 10 am – 2 pm AEST) to find out about our latest offers, and find the wine subscription that's right for you.









WINNER BARBECUES

Weber

66

Fantastic BBQs, cooks great, easy to use, great accessories. FEMALE, 18-29, SA/NT

I and most of my family own a Weber and it never lets us down.

FEMALE, 18-29, VIC/TAS

Alternation of the local division of the loc

A trusted, reliable brand delivering quality results every time.

MALE, 30-39, NSW/ACT



CREATING INCREDIBLE

(AND DELICIOUS) outdoor cooking moments is central to everything Weber does. A beloved feature of Australian backyards for over 45 years, Weber has helped create millions of memorable meals.



Last year, Weber launched its all-new Weber Q range which was designed with Australian consumers in mind. Consumer feedback was central to the design process. "We want Aussie consumers to have the best possible cooking experience the very first time they cook on their Weber barbecue, so we build comprehensive recipe and user guides tailored to each range," said Nicole Parker, Director of Marketing & eCommerce at Weber Barbecues ANZ.

"Our brand is built around flavour and our bestin-class customer service. We know that food tastes better when cooked on a Weber, and to help consumers choose the Weber best suited to them, we have a fully functioning kitchen in every one of our Weber stores, so consumers can 'grab the tongs' with a team member and see, smell and taste the flavour of a Weber barbecue for themselves."

This year, Weber is introducing new cooking styles and methods via a range of new products that will allow consumers to cook a range of exciting meals in ways that hasn't been possible before.

• Visit https://www.weber.com/AU/en/weber-storeau/weber-246558.html

Australians trust Weber. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au



For every year there has been an award for barbecues, Weber has been voted by Australians as the Most Trusted Barbecue brand. So, thank you Australia.

www.weber.com



WINNER BREAKFAST FOOD Weet-Bix

66

Amazing products with great health benefits.

FEMALE, 50-59, VIC/TAS

14

Weet-Bix has been a favourite since I was a kid.

MALE, 60+, VIC/TAS

They are part of Australian culture.

FEMALE, 18-29, WA

Supports Australian farmers and athletes.

FEMALE, 50-59, QLD



FOR THE 12th YEAR IN

A ROW, Australians have declared Sanitarium **Weet-Bix**[™] their Most Trusted



Breakfast Food. Australians young and old have long been proud to call themselves **Weet-Bix** kids. In fact, more than 90 years after Sanitarium launched its nowiconic wholegrain cereal, you'll find **Weet-Bix** in almost half of all Australian homes – and it still represents simple, honest nutrition that the whole family will love. Alongside the classic 'two with milk' approach, Aussies love finding new and delicious ways to enjoy **Weet-Bix** – with banana and honey, yoghurt and berries, or overnight **Weet-Bix** with peanut butter.

In response to changing tastes and health needs, there's now a wide range of **Weet-Bix** options including **Weet-Bix** Bites, **Weet-Bix** Gluten Free, **Weet-Bix** Flavours, **Weet-Bix** Little Kids Essentials and **Weet-Bix** Cholesterol Lowering, containing clinically proven plant sterols to help reduce LDL cholesterol by up to 9% within four weeks as part of a healthy diet low in saturated fat.

Weet-Bix remains Australian owned and made, but perhaps what makes it quintessential to the Australian cultural experience is its passion to inspire confidence and belonging with authentic goodness. Whether it's combating food and nutrition insecurity through nationwide support of school breakfast programmes, fostering physical activity through AO Tennis Holiday Programmes or inspiring self-belief through sports ambassadors, **Weet-Bix** has always been about much more than breakfast. • **Visit www.weetbix.com.au**



Australians trust Weet-Bix. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au

THANKS AUSTRALIA



LOW sugar

*serving suggestion



Australia

Breakfast Food

How do you do yours?



WINNER CAR RENTAL

Budget

66

Their customer service is great. I've never had any issues. FEMALE, 70+, VIC/TAS

Very pleased with the price and quality of cars. Easy to book.

FEMALE, 70+, VIC/TAS

It is our goto car rental company. Excellent service, products and prices.

MALE, 50-59, VIC/TAS





BUDGET KNOWS THERE IS an exciting world waiting for its customers to explore. So, it focuses on helping them 'Get to the Good Stuff'.

"We know our customers are excited about their journey, and we help them create fun by making their experience as easy as possible – whether it be a week-long road trip to the countryside or a beach weekender," said Thomas Mooney, Regional Managing Director – Asia Pacific, Avis Budget Group.

"People just want to get on the road with as little fuss as possible, so that's what we provide."

Budget's range, fleet and services make car rental effortless, affordable and reliable, and options like Fastbreak, Photoproofed and Pre-Check get customers on the road to their adventures ahead of the rest. "We make it easy for our customers to have unforgettable experiences at exciting destinations."

Budget is proud of being voted winner of the Reader's Digest Most Trusted Brand in the Car Rentals category. "It shows that we're delivering on our promise to make car rental easy and help our customers 'Get to the Good Stuff'." • Visit www.budget.com.au



Australians trust Budget. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au

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Our range, customer service and locations make car rental effortless, affordable and reliable all at the same time. Get to the good stuff sooner by booking at **budget.com.au**



LESS HASSLES More Good Stuff



WINNER CHARITY **Royal Flying Doctor Service**

66

Great service to outback Australia. Reliable, honest, caring. MALE, 70+, SA/NT

The work they do is life changing.

FEMALE, 18-29, VIC/TAS

True group of heroes.

MALE, 30-39, VIC/TAS



FORMED BY THE REVEREND JOHN FLYNN IN 1928

with the aim of extending the 'mantle of safety' to those who live, work and travel in the bush, the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) has been there for people in rural and remote



Australia ever since, because it believes that where you live should not determine your health status and life expectancy. By providing ongoing primary health and emergency medical services to those who live in the outback for the past 96 years, the RFDS has been reducing this disparity in health outcomes.

As a national health charity, the RFDS works closely with local communities to tailor health services, such as GP and nurse clinics, dental services, telehealth for chronic-disease management, mental health services, allied health services and emergency medical care, and has contact with more than 900 patients a day. With a fleet of 81 aircraft and 294 roadservice vehicles, the RFDS delivers services across 7.69 million square kilometres. As part of Australia's national health service, the RFDS works to reduce the disparity in health service access by bringing primary health and emergency medical services to those areas without access. • Visit www.flyingdoctor.org.au

184 Australians trust Royal Flying Doctor Service. Visit **www.trustedbrands.com.au**

Overcoming barriers to healthcare

Royal Flying Doctor

U

Keep the Flying Doctor flying. Learn how you can support us. www.flyingdoctor.org.au





HIGHLY COMMENDED CHARITY RSPCA

66

disease in the

Established, trustworthy, caring. FEMALE, 40-49, WA

Admire what they do for animals.

FEMALE, 40-49, QLD

They really care about animals.

MALE, 60-69, WA

1

I'm a volunteer so I see all their hard work.

FEMALE, 50-59, SA/NT



"WE'RE DELIGHTED TO BE HONOURED WITH Highly Commended once again among Reader's Digest's most Trusted Brands for 2024," says Richard Mussell, CEO of RSPCA Australia.

"Every day, we're reminded just how crucial the community's trust is for our work. Australians trust us to care for animals, to investigate animal cruelty when it occurs, to provide advice on how to care for our pets, and to push for laws and practices that better protect animals.

"And we know that we have to work tirelessly to maintain that trust – including by ensuring that our animal care, prevention, education and advocacy efforts are firmly backed by science and evidence," says Mr Mussell.



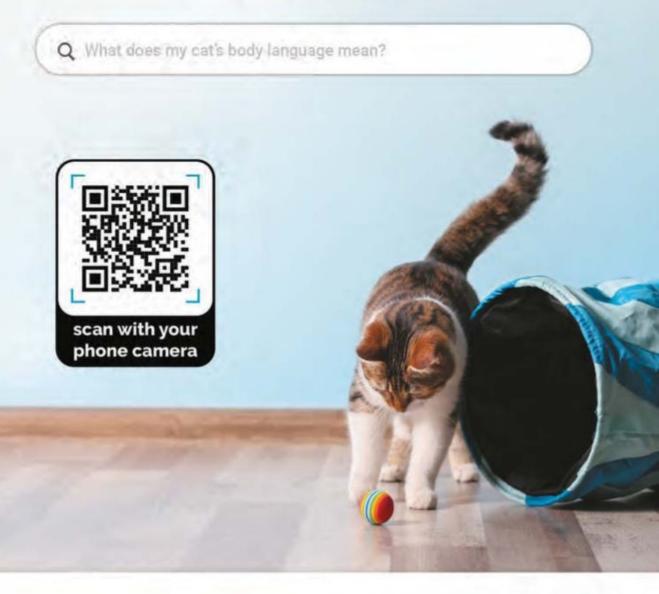
The RSPCA cares for over 87,000 animals every year (including over 18,000 dogs and 33,000 cats), and investigates over 58,000 cases of animal cruelty. Across the country, the RSPCA also educates the

community on animal welfare and responsible pet ownership, and advocates for changes in policy and practice that improve the welfare of animals. • Visit www.rspca.org.au

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Australians trust RSPCA. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au

Find the answers at kb.rspca.org.au







HIGHLY COMMENDED CHARITY **Guide Dogs**

66

I admire what **Guide Doas** do for the community.

FEMALE, 60-69, QLD

They offer an essential service for the blind and vision impaired.

FEMALE, 40-49, QLD

Transparent and honest.

MALE, 70+, VIC/TAS

Guide Dogs.

AT THE AGE OF **FIVE**, Melaine received a diagnosis of partial nerve deafness. a condition she has managed with two hearing aids. Over the years, her vision began to



decline, leading to an ongoing gradual loss of sight. The combination of these challenges led to her being diagnosed with Usher Syndrome – a rare genetic disease that affects both hearing and vision.

Despite her diagnosis, Melaine accumulated over three decades of professional experience within a reputable animal welfare organisation. Her diverse roles included Veterinary Nurse, Veterinary Administrator, Operations Manager and Community Outreach Coordinator. In 2021, at age 50, Melaine began looking for another job. In 2022, she joined the Guide Dogs Victoria team as a Relationships Coordinator, which coincided with her four-year anniversary as a Guide Dog handler.

Her beloved Guide Dog, Dessau, has given Melaine back her independence and their journey has been characterised by resilience, adaptability, and a determination to break down barriers.

Funding for Guide Dogs, 75 per cent of which comes from the community, allows the charity to support clients like Melaine to live a life without limits.

Visit www.guidedogs.com.au

188

Australians trust Guide Dogs. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au



The power of trust.

For over 60 years, Guide Dogs Australia has been transforming the lives of people with low vision or blindness. To achieve this, trust must be at the heart of everything we do; from the trust our Clients place in us to provide the support and care they need, to the trust between a Guide Dog Handler and their Guide Dog. This trust also extends to the community whose generosity and faith in the work we do is helping to transforming lives every day. We are proud to be one of Australia's Highly Commended Charity Brands.





Cadbury

66

Delicious, quality ingredients.

FEMALE, 60-69, SA/NT

Can be trusted due to consistent high quality.

MALE, 30-39, NSW/ACT

Good range of products.

MALE, 40-49, VIC/TAS

Long trusted brand.

MALE, 50-59, NSW/ACT



CADBURY'S FOUNDER John

Cadbury believed chocolate could make the world a better place and built his company on its generous and pioneering values. Today, Cadbury continues to embrace these values and has a proud history supporting communities through national sporting



partnerships, environmental and conservation efforts.

In 2024, Cadbury continues to put generosity at the heart of the 'A Cheer & A Half' campaign by encouraging Australians to celebrate volunteers, the unsung heroes of sport, and by supporting grassroots sporting communities via donations. Through a limited-edition packtivation featuring inspiring reallife stories from athletes showcasing the significant impact volunteers have made in their personal and professional lives, Cadbury continues to highlight moments of generosity in sport. Our ambassadors Patty Mills, Emma McKeon, Madison de Rozario, Robert de Castella, the Commbank Matildas and Wallabies were chosen because they embody the spirit of generosity both on and off the field. "We believe that generosity is at the heart of communities, and the unifying power of sports brings people together. By shining a light on the impact of volunteers, we hope to encourage Aussies to get involved in their sporting community and recognise moments of generosity," says Mondelez International ANZ Vice President of Marketing, Ben Wicks. • www.cadbury.com.au



Australians trust Cadbury. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au







FOR VOTING US Confectioners READER'S DIGEST MOST TRUSTED CONFECTIONERY BRAND

THE EQUIVALENT OF A GLASS AND A HALF OF FULL CREAM MILK IN EVERY 200g OF CADBURY DAIRY MILK CHOCOLATE. DAIRY MILK, THE GLASS AND A HALF DEVICE AND THE COLOUR PURPLE ARE TRADE MARKS USED UNDER LICENCE.

2024 TRUSTED BRANDS SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT



WINNER CRUISE OPERATORS **P&O Cruises**

66

High quality service and value for money. FEMALE, 30-39, QLD

Of all our cruises, they have been the best.

MALE, 70+, VIC/TAS

Recommended by friends.

FEMALE, 60-69, VIC/TAS

125

and the owner where the party is not the party of the par

Been around for decades.

MALE, 50-59, SA/NT



AUSTRALIA'S FAVOURITE CRUISE

LINE, P&O Cruises, is home-grown and proud of it. It has been taking Aussies on cruising holidays for over 90 years, pioneering Pacific Island cruising and



offering itineraries to a wide variety of the region's ports. And they don't just visit them, they make sure the communities they visit benefit as much as the guests.

P&O Cruises strive to create unique, authentic holidays that bring Australians together. "Millions of Australians have enjoyed memorable holidays at sea on a P&O cruise. Our heritage as a cruise holiday pioneer allows us to stand proudly as Australia's favourite cruise brand," says Peter Little, Senior Vice President, P&O Cruises Australia.

Earlier this year, P&O Cruises launched its new brand positioning – Brings Us *All Together™* – which aligns with what really matters to Australians; authentic human connections. "When P&O first set sail, the original motto was *quis nos separabit*, or 'who shall separate us'. Nine decades later, the new tagline shows how that powerful, authentic sense of connection is still alive and well on every P&O cruise."

The cruise line is committed to ensuring its branding is prevalent in meaningful ways through its onboard experiences and every destination it visits.

Visit www.pocruises.com.au

192

Australians trust P&O Cruises. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au

The BEST GETAWAYS aren't from EACH OTHER





BOOK NOW AT POCRUISES.COM.AU | 13 24 94| CONTACT YOUR TRAVEL AGENT



HIGHLY COMMENDED CRUISE OPERATORS Royal Caribbean

66

Loved every minute of our cruise. Well taken care of.

FEMALE, 60-69, VIC/TAS

10

No.

1

Great entertainment.

MALE, 40-49, NSW/ACT

Great destinations.

FEMALE, 18-29, VIC/TAS

l love this cruise line. Staff are very helpful.

FEMALE, 60-69, NSW/ACT



ROYAL CARIBBEAN has delivered memorable holidays for more than 50 years. The cruise line's game-changing ships have revolutionised the holiday industry with innovations and an all-encompassing combination of experiences – from thrills to dining and entertainment – for every type of holidaymaker. This year, Royal Caribbean is launching two new ships, *Icon of the Seas* and *Utopia of the Seas*, featuring recordbreaking experiences and homeporting in Florida.

Royal Caribbean is committed to bringing world-class, innovative ships to Australian shores with Quantum of the Seas sailing from Brisbane and Ovation of the Seas sailing from Sydney in summer



2024–2025. Guests can explore New Zealand, enjoy the natural beauty of the Australian East Coast or soak in the picture-perfect islands of the South Pacific.

Travellers can take adrenaline to an all-time high on the North Star – the all-glass observation capsule and highest viewing deck on a cruise ship – and the RipCord by iFly skydiving experience, to name a few.

Adults can also enjoy the Vitality Spa or the adultsonly Solarium while the kids take on the award-winning Adventure Ocean youth programme and teens can simply kick back. When you sail with Royal Caribbean, you're not just booking a cruise, you're booking a memory-maxing, value-packed holiday for the whole family. • Visit www.RoyalCaribbean.com.au

194

Australians trust Royal Caribbean. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au

SHOW-STOPPING MEMORIES



RoyalCaribbean

🔍 Royal Caribbean

Visit your local travel advisor

ON

1800 754 500

2025-2026 ADVENTURES FROM AUSTRALIA ON SALE NOW



HIGHLY COMMENDED CRUISE OPERATORS Princess Cruises[®]



Consistent, great value. FEMALE, 50-59,

SA/NT

67 57

Food and entertainment are unparalleled. MALE, 70+, WA

BEST for caring about all their passengers.

MALE, 50-59, QLD

Very friendly and helpful.

FEMALE, 40-49, QLD





WHAT BEGAN AS ONE SHIP AND A MAIDEN VOYAGE

to Mexico in 1965 has sailed into the history books as an award-winning cruise operator with 16 vessels that take guests to more than 330 ports around the world.

Past guests agree, there's so much to love about a Princess[®] cruise, starting with the Princess MedallionClass[®] experience. Designed to make your holiday personalised and effortless, guests can enjoy food and drinks delivered on demand, keyless stateroom entry, reserve dining tables and activities, and Medallion Net[®] WiFi.

Guests are also provided with a dazzling array of world-class cuisine by award-winning chefs, live Broadway-style production shows, and a true Princess original experience – Movies Under the Stars: Hollywood films poolside.

Princess will be welcoming two new ships with Sun Princess[®] sailing the Mediterranean early 2024 and Star Princess[®] sailing in 2025.

Princess, come feel the love. • www.princess.com

196

Australians trust Princess Cruises. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au



Introducing Sun Princess®

Sun Princess, our largest-ever ship is innovative and luxurious, cruising now for an inaugural season in the Mediterranean.









BOOK NOW | Visit your travel agent | 1300 159 654 | princess.com Scan to view full details or visit princess.com/sunprincess



WINNER DISHWASHERS

Bosch

66

I admire and respect Bosch. Their products are innovative while their customer service is fantastic. They go out of the way to resolve any issue.

FEMALE, 50-59, VIC/TAS

Bosch makes outstanding dishwashers that perform admirably every time.

MALE, 30-39, NSW/ACT

100000



RENOWNED FOR TRUST

AND QUALITY, Bosch upholds its tradition of precision engineering with its range of dishwashers. Each Bosch dishwasher undergoes rigorous testing to meet the highest standards of performance. From tough stains to



delicate glassware, Bosch dishwashers are built with quality, performance and sustainability in mind. Using from as little as 11 litres of water per wash cycle, Bosch German-made Series 6 dishwashers can help you save water around the house[#].

Ranked the world's No.1 brand in dishwashers*, Bosch's unique EcoSilence Drive technology delivers powerful yet quiet performance, conserving energy and minimising noise. Convenience is key with features like the Extra Space 3rd Basket and VarioDrawer cutlery tray, offering versatility for all kitchen needs. The Extra Clean Zone feature, available in select Series 6 & 8 models, delivers impeccable cleanliness with 3x more water saturation in the upper basket, effectively tackling even the toughest messes on those hard-to-wash items. When it comes to washing dishes, leave the tough work to Bosch.

www.bosch-home.com.au

#Save up to 180L of water a week with a dishwasher compared to handwashing. Based on 132 items, 4 times a week; dishwasher on Eco cycle. *Source: Euromonitor International Limited, volume sales 2023. Disclaimer: Features vary by model; refer to individual product specifications for details.



Australians trust Bosch. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au



Invented for life

Dish is how you do it. #LikeABosch



*Source Euromonitor International Limited; volume sales 2023 Overseas model shown. Refer to product specifications for Australian features.



Bosch



Amazing quality and long lasting.

FEMALE, 40-49, VIC/TAS

Premium brand, reliable products.

FEMALE, 30-39, WA

Best value and a good variety of products.

MALE, 40-49, SA/NT

Efficient and long lasting.

MALE, 60-69, VIC/TAS





BOSCH HAS A LONG HISTORY OF INNOVATION

inspired by improving people's lives – whether that be a simple home repair or a major local development of a sustainable wastewater system that saves 165 tonnes of industrial waste every year.

As a trusted brand for DIY Power Tools for 12 consecutive years, Bosch is committed to providing DIYers with high-quality tools that empower them to finish the projects they set their minds to.

Bosch DIY Power Tools are German engineered and are among the most popular Power Tools in the world. Many of the Bosch Power Tools sold in Australia are manufactured in Europe, reinforcing the brand's commitment to exceptional quality, precision, innovation and reliability. You can also guarantee that a Bosch Power Tool will have a long lifetime.

Bosch values responsibility and sustainability and carries that through the products it manufactures by offering a three-year extended warranty. "At Bosch, we deliver on what we promise!" said Scott Stevens, Sales & Marketing Manager. • www.bosch-diy.com/au/en



Australians trust Bosch. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au



Invented for life

YEARS XO

C-

Celebrating 20 years of Bosch's iconic IXO cordless screwdriver



D/Y Power Tools





OSCH





Comfort HIGHLY COMMENDED FABRIC SOFTENER/CONDITIONER

66

Great quality. My favourite.

MALE, 70+, WA

Keeps the clothes fresh and soft.

FEMALE, 30-39, NSW/ACT

Smells amazing.

-

10

FEMALE, 18-29, WA

Good for sensitive skin.

FEMALE, 18-29, QLD



WANT YOUR CLOTHES

to look newer for longer and to enjoy long lasting fragrance beyond the wash? Comfort has got you covered, helping you elevate your laundry routine.

Including a fabric



conditioner in your routine 'adds back' softness to your clothing, making your clothes, sheets and towels soft and gentle to touch. Recommended by leading washing machine manufacturers, Comfort reduces wrinkles in clothes when they dry and helps the iron glide over them.

When searching for advanced garment care and to extend the life of your clothes, try **Comfort's Ultra Care** collection, which provides the ultimate in clothing care. With patented Fibre Protect technology, it smooths fibres and keeps colours brighter for longer. For long lasting scents, try **Comfort's Fragrance** collection, created by world-renowned fragrance houses, giving your clothes an exquisite all-day scent. Experience scents designed to uplift your mood, such as Amber & Rose, Rainforest Fresh and Vanilla Orchid.

For added fragrance, try **Comfort's In-wash Scent Booster** beads. Designed with scent-lock technology and botanical extracts, they infuse clothes with luxurious fragrance for up to 12 weeks. Available in four scents, they are suitable for all washing machines and every fabric, including active wear, eliminating unpleasant odours. • www.unilever.com.au

202

Australians trust Comfort. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au









Samsung



An innovative brand with a solid reputation.

FEMALE, 40-49, SA/NT

Good designs and prices.

MALE, 60-69, VIC/TAS

Great quality products that work well for years.

FEMALE, 60-69, WA

My Samsung fridge works great and is energy efficient.

FEMALE, 18-29, SA/NT

SAMSUNG

SAMSUNG IS COMMITTED TO DEVELOPING

innovative technology that seamlessly blends innovation with design



aesthetics to simplify consumers' everyday lives. Samsung's Cooking Report, conducted by Nature market research, found that nine in ten Australians are interested in technology in their kitchen that helps with meal planning and deciding on what to cook and buy. This year, Australians will have their aspirations realised when Samsung launches the new AI Family Hub[™]. The brand new feature 'AI Vision Inside' uses an internal camera and can identify up to 33 fresh food items as they enter and leave the fridge. It recognises food items based on an on-device smart food management system which combines food detection and classification models to help identify food items*. Working with the SmartThings app, consumers can manage expiry dates, check what you already have when grocery shopping, and receive personalised recipes based on your preferences and existing ingredients. Samsung technology offers connected living experiences, essentially allowing you to communicate seamlessly from a compatible smartphone to fridge – ultimately making life easier. www.samsung.com/au/refrigerators/family-hub/

*Learning models may be updated periodically to help improve accuracy.

Australians trust Samsung. Visit **www.trustedbrands.com.au**

SAMSUNG

Al Family Hub™

Enjoy a smart way to manage your food with AI Vision Inside¹

Store, Use & Buy Food

With Al Vision Inside', you can view

your food list and manage expiry

dates. It even recommends recipes

based on your preferences and

ingredients in the fridge.

Works with Samsung SmartThings

Scan, identify and manage your food list



The Heart of your Home

With the Al Family Hub^w, you can control compatible smart devices, play music or share photos & videos.¹ You can even type or hand-write notes and share schedules.

Beautiful Outside, Ice & Water Inside

We've hidden the water dispenser inside the door for a seamless, flat door design and created the Beverage Centre". Additionally, the Dual Auto ice Maker is located

iotes and share schedules. In the freezer to free up space in the fridge.

A function of a species species shall combine that become full adjustment to be completely been to be completely adjusted and adjustment to be provide a second of the species adjustment of the species



HIGHLY COMMENDED FUNERAL INSURANCE Australian Seniors

66

Fully informative, good follow up.

FEMALE, 60-69, NSW/ACT

.

Concession of the local division of the loca

Transparent, popular, widely respected.

MALE, 50-59, SA/NT

Trusted brand, good reputation.

FEMALE, 60-69, QLD

They understand seniors' needs.

MALE, 40-49, QLD



LAUNCHED IN

1998 to meet the needs of the often neglected over 50s market, Australian Seniors have since helped countless Australians protect the most important things in life – whether it's their



family's future, valuable assets, or their long-planned retirement activities.

Australian Seniors pride themselves on carefully selecting underwriters that share their vision of providing insurance that's simple, easy to understand and cost-effective. They also offer exclusive discounts to Australians over 50, providing added value and a sense of community. Australian Seniors are always thinking of ways they can support the over 50s.

With Australian Seniors, you know you're in good hands. With their quality life, funeral, health, car, home, landlords, pet and travel insurance products, and award-winning customer service team, they continue to be recognised by clients and throughout the insurance industry. Their policies help the seniors market (from hard-working over 50s, self-funded retirees, to pensioners) take control of what matters most to them. Australian Seniors are committed to providing the older Australian community with cover for years to come.

• Call 1300 248 703 or visit seniors.com.au

206

Australians trust Australian Seniors. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au

Are your funeral costs sorted?

Cover your funeral costs with Seniors Funeral Insurance

- Quick payout to your family¹
- Cover amount from \$3,000 up to \$15,000
- Australian residents aged 40–79 are guaranteed acceptance
- At age 85:
 - 25% Bonus Cover
 - No more premiums to pay
 - Early Cash Out option at 75% of cover amount²



Call 1300 248 703 or visit seniors.com.au



¹Claims usually paid within one business day of receiving completed documentation.

² If you choose the Early Cash Out Option, you'll no longer be eligible to claim as this option will cancel your policy.

This is general information only. Please consider the Product Disclosure Statement and Target Market Determination available at seniors.com.au to ensure this product suits your needs. Seniors Funeral Insurance is promoted and distributed by Greenstone Financial Services Pty Ltd ABN 53 128 692 884, AFSL 343079, and issued by Hannover Life Re of Australasia Ltd ABN 37 062 395 464, AFSL 530811. Terms and conditions apply H0796_Q424



WINNER GARDEN POWER TOOLS **STIHL**

66

Excellent quality products and services.

FEMALE, 40-49, VIC/TAS

10

Great range, good price, long lasting, robust, good dealership network.

MALE, 70+, SA/NT

Reliable brand, lots of accessible outlets, affordable.

MALE, 60-69, QLD





RENOWNED FOR QUALITY and reliability, STIHL is committed to pushing the boundaries of innovation year after year. Using revolutionary technology, STIHL tools are built to last, providing Australian gardeners and professionals alike with peace of mind that their STIHL tools – whether that be a mower, hedge trimmer or blower – are ready to take on diverse garden challenges.

Sold exclusively through a 600-strong network of independently owned STIHL dealers nationwide, Australians can rest assured that the customer service they receive is equal to STIHL's state-of-the-art products.

A global market leader backed by over 98 years of German engineering excellence, and the No.1 chainsaw selling brand worldwide, STIHL is renowned for a broad array of quality products across their petrol and battery ranges.

Visit www.stihl.com.au

208

100

Australians trust STIHL. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au





GET YOUR GARDEN READY

2024 TRUSTED BRANDS SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT



WINNER GLUE & CONSTRUCTION ADHESIVES Selleys®

66

Good, trusted, effective products.

FEMALE, 40-49, VIC/TAS

11 11

Industry leader, good products.

MALE, 60-69, SA/NT

A reputable brand, highquality products.

FEMALE, 50-59, VIC/TAS

1

Long-standing Australian brand.

MALE, 40-49, QLD



FOR MORE THAN 80 YEARS,

SELLEYS[®] has been providing innovative, world-leading glues and construction adhesive products - such as Sellevs No More Gaps[®], Power Grip[®], Aquadhere[®], Liquid Nails[®], Araldite[®], Kwik Grip[®] – that help Australians achieve lasting results and deliver pride and satisfaction in a job well done. Selleys is proud of its heritage, innovation and commitment to excellence. Today, this passion also extends to living sustainably. Not only does Selleys provide glues and adhesives that enable consumers to repair, re-purpose and re-use; it inspires and educates



consumers by showcasing inspirational projects and creating educational 'how-to' videos.

A market-leading brand with world-class quality and product innovation, Selleys' reach sees it now placed in markets around the globe, with major trade extending into New Zealand and Asia.

Selleys continuously launches new products that support consumer needs and provide a more seamless experience by ensuring it lives its brand promise: 'If It's Selleys It Works'.

• Visit www.selleys.com.au



Australians trust Selleys. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au

POWER GRIP^{*} SAVE THE THINGS THAT MATTER







WINNER HEARING SERVICES

Hearing Australia

66

The company my GP recommends.

FEMALE, 70+, NSW/ACT

the second s

I have used this company my whole life.

FEMALE, 30-39, QLD

Excellent service and advice.

MALE, 70+, VIC-TAS

1

Hearing Australia

HEARING AUSTRALIA HAS BEEN PROVIDING EXPERT

hearing care to Australians for over 75 years. Since first starting in the 1940s, Hearing Australia and its research arm, the National Acoustic Laboratories, have helped over two million children and adults across Australia.

Last year alone more than 280,000 Australians were helped on their hearing journey. This includes over 14,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children through Hearing Australia's HAPEE programme, as part of its commitment to improving the hearing health of First Nations children.

"Our dedication to providing the best hearing care for our clients has remained unchanged throughout the decades, and we are happy to see this reflected by winning Most Trusted Hearing Services Brand for four years in a row – the only provider who has won in this category," said Stephen Jean, Hearing Australia Chief Customer Officer.

"Now, more than ever, good hearing is important to keep in touch with loved ones and the world around you. With more than 500 audiologists, we offer services through tele-health, online, in home and at

over 180 centres Australia-wide. Our goal is to keep you connected to the people and life you love."

Hearing Australia customer Rob Kneale said: "I felt that Hearing Australia were professional and my experience with them has been excellent."

Visit www.hearing.com.au



212

Australians trust Hearing Australia. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au

Hearing Australia

Australia's #1 Trusted Hearing Services Provider



Free 15-minute hearing checks for adults, search (hearing.com.au (9) today

Conditions apply under the Australian Government Hearing Services Program



HIGHLY COMMENDED HEARING SERVICES Specsavers Audiology

66

Convenient and reliable.

FEMALE, 40-49, VIC/TAS

Good service, accurate and helpful outcome.

MALE, 40-49, WA

They have great products and friendly staff.

FEMALE, 70+, SA/NT



YOUR EARS ARE IN GOOD HANDS.

Since launching Audiology almost seven years ago, Specsavers has completed over 3 million hearing screenings on Aussies.

Specsavers believes that



everyone has the right to access the highest quality hearing services and encourages Australians to have their hearing checked every two years.

"It's normal for hearing to deteriorate over time, sometimes so slowly it can creep up on you," says Nick Taylor, Specsavers Chief Audiologist.

In store, you'll find Audiology Professionals dedicated to your hearing care, with tailored solutions, ongoing support, and outstanding value.

Specsavers offers the latest technology hearing aids with a range of styles and options available. They are fitted and adjusted to each individual, making it possible to hear comfortably and clearly in the moments that matter most.

Transparent, everyday low prices on latest technology hearing aids are available on the website or instore helping customers in their efforts to shop around. Specsavers: changing lives through better sight and hearing.

• Visit www.specsavers.com.au/hearing

Australians trust Specsavers. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au



When it comes to customers, we're all ears



Thank you for trusting us with your hearing care

More Newspaper and Magazines Telegram Channel join Search https://t.me/Magazines_8890050582 (@Magazines_8890050582



WINNER HOME CARE NSW/ACT Uniting NSW.ACT

66

disease in the

My nan got great care with them.

FEMALE, 40-44, NSW

Cares about its people.

FEMALE, 50-54, NSW

Great service and good care. FEMALE, 45-49, NSW

My mother was looked after by Uniting for the last seven years of her life.

MALE, 75+, NSW



UNITING IS ONE OF THE LARGEST and most trusted not-for-profit aged care providers in NSW and the ACT, with a long history of supporting seniors to stay safe and independent in their own homes and communities. Uniting's Home and Community Care team is committed to helping people continue to live life in the ways they choose, with high-quality services tailored to each client's unique needs, circumstances,

and budget.

Building a close home care relationship means that Uniting can proactively support clients through their changing needs as they grow older, giving them continuity



of care and peace of mind.

"We really focus on getting to know you – it's our foundation for truly personalised care," said Mary Ducusin, Uniting Seniors Services. "It's wonderful to be awarded the Most Trusted Home Care Provider for 2024, because it shows that our clients value our carers and the services they receive, just as much as we value our care team. They're genuinely dedicated to making sure people can live at home, longer and stronger, with smiles, friendship and cups of tea along the way." • Visit www.uniting.org/homecare

216

Australians trust Uniting NSW.ACT. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au

Uniting Home Care. It's personal.



We get to know you, so you get the home care you need.

Nursing support
 Personal care
 Respite care
 Companionship

Get in touch 1800 864 846

ask@uniting.org uniting.org/homecare Transport
 Allied health
 Help with housework
 Extra Care for complex needs





HIGHLY COMMENDED HOME CARE NSW/ACT Australian Unity

66

They are nothing short of brilliant. They make sure my parents have everything they need to be able to stay at home together.

FEMALE, 50-59, NSW

Reliable and true to their word.

FEMALE, 60-69, NSW

I'm a user and satisfied with the service.

FEMALE, 70+, NSW



AUSTRALIAN UNITY, the nation's first member-owned wellbeing company, is dedicated to providing 'Real Wellbeing' for all Australians. With a rich history of delivering various health, wealth, and care services since 1840, Australian Unity is now providing quality support and clinical services in the home to approximately 50,000 customers.

For older Australians who aspire to age at home, Australian Unity offers a range of tailored services, from home maintenance to personal care. The company understands that Real Wellbeing encompasses more than just physical health; it encompasses standards of living, feeling secure in one's home, personal relationships, and being connected to the community.

Prue Bowden, Chief Executive Officer for Home Health, explains, "We provide comprehensive support to our customers, right from the beginning when we work with them to identify their health and wellbeing goals, so that we can design a tailored healthcare plan.

"Our team of healthcare professionals keeps track of how customers are progressing against their goals so that we can recommend adjustments or additional support as required. And because we have one of the largest healthcare teams in the country, we're well placed to support our customers to live well at home as they continue their health and ageing journey."

With a commitment to Real Wellbeing and a track record of delivering exceptional care services, Australian Unity is the trusted choice for older Australians who wish to age well. • **To learn more visit www.australianunity.com.au/homecare**

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Australians trust Australian Unity. Visit **www.trustedbrands.com.au**



The Real Wellbeing approach to healthcare

For over 180 years, Australian Unity has been helping improve the wellbeing of Australians. With a wide range of healthcare services, you'll get tailor made support, delivered by a team of highly trained healthcare professionals.

Chat to our friendly team today 1300 160 170 australianunity.com.au/homecare

Services are subject to eligibility and availability. Speak to our friendly team to find out more.



BlueCare

66

Professional and friendly continuous care. FEMALE, 60-69, QLD

Reliable and worked visits around my mum's life.

MALE, 60-69, QLD

125

10

BlueCare staff cared for my husband with compassion and kindness.

FEMALE, 60-69, QLD

An excellent reputation.

MALE, 60-69, QLD



EMPOWERING QUEENSLANDERS TO LIVE LIFE THEIR

WAY is just one thing that has continued to set BlueCare apart from its competitors since 1953.

From its very first home visit, BlueCare has been driven by a genuine desire to serve Queenslanders



and improve the lives of those who need care. Today, BlueCare makes more than 3.5 million visits each year and is one of Queensland's largest and most trusted not-for-profit providers of in-home care, residential aged care and retirement living. But none of this would be possible without the passion of its 8000-strong, big-hearted BlueCare team – the state's largest network of aged care workers – who provide a continuum of care in homes, on the road and in BlueCare centres.

Through simple and trusted advice and guidance, BlueCare makes the options clearer, decisions easier and outcomes better-suited to individuals, so the whole community knows it's in good hands.

With one vision and wearing one colour, the BlueCare team is here to help you live life, your way. • Visit www.bluecare.org.au

220

Australians trust BlueCare. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au

Home care delivered with heart.

Live Life Your Way

Whether it's help with everyday tasks or more complex care with our allied health or specialist nursing team, BlueCare can help you live life your way.

Thank you for voting BlueCare as Australia's Most Trusted Brand for Home Care in Queensland.







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() BlueCare



HIGHLY COMMENDED HOME CARE QLD HOME CARE QLD HOME CARE QLD

66

Genuinely caring. My mother has never had any problems.

FEMALE, 35-39, QLD

Just wonderful.

FEMALE, 60-69, QLD

They helped me with home repairs that I couldn't do.

MALE, 70+, QLD

They've been around for a long time and have a strong ethical core.

MALE, 60-69, QLD



ANGLICARE SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND

provides over 30,000 Queenslanders with a range of supportat-home services, including cleaning, personal care and hygiene, nursing and allied health,



palliative care, social support, health and wellbeing programmes, home maintenance and modifications, respite care, and spiritual and pastoral care.

Supporting Queenslanders for more than 150 years, Anglicare Southern Queensland is recognised as one of the state's most experienced and trusted providers, with services in aged care, foster care, youth support, housing and homelessness support, and counselling.

Anglicare's person-centric philosophy ensures best-practice care across all its aged care services. Staff focus on every individual's specific needs, goals, interests and passions to ensure a high standard of care and respect is received by every client.

The organisation actively seeks feedback from clients to better understand and continuously improve the quality of services and support provided. This promotes a culture of improvement, enhances clinical governance, and ensures that they consistently deliver exceptional client outcomes and experiences.

Visit www.anglicaresq.org.au

1

Australians trust Anglicare SQ. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au



Trusted in Home Care

Supporting older Queenslanders to maintain their independence at home

anglicaresq.org.au | 1300 610 610



HIGHLY COMMENDED HOME CARE SA/NT

AnglicareSA

66

l feel comfortable and respected.

ALAN, NURSING ASSESSMENT CUSTOMER

Excellent service from staff who visited our home, very professional.

IAN, PHYSIOTHERAPY SERVICES CUSTOMER

77 3

My support worker is wonderful and great at what she does.

GLEN, HOME SERVICE CUSTOMER



FOR MORE THAN 160 YEARS,

AnglicareSA has taken care of South Australians in need. That tradition continues today with services delivered with compassion, respect, and clinical



excellence to older South Australians, enabling them to live with dignity and maintain independence.

"The importance of trust in the provision of essential care and support services has never been more important," says AnglicareSA Head of Community Aged Care, Sam Laubsch. "Our service to others with compassion and dignity is an important part of how we work every day." As one of the state's most trusted home care providers, AnglicareSA provides a broad range of in-home care and allied health services alongside its six residential aged care homes and independent living units across Adelaide.

AnglicareSA has close to 300 Home Care employees supporting over 2100 people to remain living at home. "Building and maintaining solid, trusted connections with the people we serve is critically important," says AnglicareSA Chief Executive Officer, Grant Reubenicht. "I personally am so proud of our Home Care employees and generous volunteers for their continued commitment and dedication to the health and wellbeing of our customers."

• Visit www.anglicaresa.com.au

Australians trust AnglicareSA. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au



For all your aged care needs Start with AnglicareSA

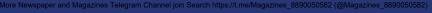
Your needs are unique, so our services are tailored to suit you. From personal care, domestic assistance, gardening and social activities to transport, nursing and allied health services, we can provide the support you need to continue to live the life you choose....at home and in your community.

With our help, you can do more of what you love.

Call 1800 317 009 today to find out more.



ANGLICARESA anglicaresa.com.au





HIGHLY COMMENDED HOME CARE SA/NT Resthaven



Well organised and very trusted.

MALE, 70+, SA

They do a wonderful job and are very helpful.

MALE, 70+, SA



the second s

1

Good service and friendly.

FEMALE, 40-49, SA

Excellent quality care.

MALE, 70+, SA



SINCE 1935, RESTHAVEN

has been enriching the lives of older people. One of a select few providers with offerings in Retirement Living, Wellness Services, Help at Home and Residential Aged Care, Resthaven's core values of trust, dignity and choice are on display throughout South Australia.



Today, the not-for-profit charity is governed by a dedicated Board that ensures the brand's longterm success by providing a solid moral compass that shapes all organisational decisions, continually directing the focus back to its values and the purpose of providing outstanding care and support to older Australians and their careers.

Resthaven is proud of its heritage and looks forward to a strong future, celebrating 90 years of service in 2025. To remain in this enviable position, Resthaven listens to feedback from both customers and their communities – from social group outings with Resthaven Community Services, to menu items at Resthaven's aged care homes and everything in between – to continually improve its care and support. Whether you need a little care at home or 24/7 residential aged care and accommodation, when you need aged care, ask Resthaven.

• Visit www.resthaven.asn.au





Trust Dignity Choice

From home help or social support to respite and clinical aged care, our trusted, friendly staff will give you as much or as little help as you need, so you can stay in your home longer. **Visit resthaven.asn.au**

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WINNER HOME CARE VIC/TAS **Australian Unity**

66

They are proven and have a great reputation.

MALE, 50-59, VIC/TAS

Always had positive experiences. Trusted. Reputable.

MALE, 50-59, VIC/TAS

the second s

I have had family members using the brand and they have received really good care.

FEMALE, 40-49, VIC/TAS



AUSTRALIAN UNITY, the nation's first member-owned wellbeing company, is dedicated to providing 'Real Wellbeing' for all Australians. With a rich history of delivering various health, wealth, and care services since 1840, Australian Unity is now providing quality support and clinical services in the home to approximately 50,000 customers.

For older Australians who aspire to age at home, Australian Unity offers a range of tailored services, from home maintenance to personal care. The company understands that Real Wellbeing encompasses more than just physical health; it encompasses standards of living, feeling secure in one's home, personal relationships, and being connected to the community.

Prue Bowden, Chief Executive Officer for Home Health, explains, "We provide comprehensive support to our customers, right from the beginning when we work with them to identify their health and wellbeing goals, so that we can design a tailored healthcare plan.

"Our team of healthcare professionals keeps track of how customers are progressing against their goals so that we can recommend adjustments or additional support as required. And because we have one of the largest healthcare teams in the country, we're well placed to support our customers to live well at home as they continue their health and ageing journey."

With a commitment to Real Wellbeing and a track record of delivering exceptional care services, Australian Unity is the trusted choice for older Australians who wish to age well. • **To learn more visit www.australianunity.com.au/homecare**

228

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Australians trust Australian Unity. Visit **www.trustedbrands.com.au**



The Real Wellbeing approach to healthcare

For over 180 years, Australian Unity has been helping improve the wellbeing of Australians. With a wide range of healthcare services, you'll get tailor made support, delivered by a team of highly trained healthcare professionals.





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HIGHLY COMMENDED HOME CARE VIC/TAS **Mercy Health**



They provide high quality care.

MALE, 50-59, VIC

Their quality of care is very good.

MALE, 70+, VIC

They are fantastic with home care and aged care.

FEMALE, 60-69, VIC

0

They are trustworthy.

MALE, 40-49, VIC



MERCY HEALTH – WHERE GOD'S MERCY MEETS COMPASSIONATE CARE.

For over a decade, the Sisters of Mercy have been the heart of healthcare and advocacy in Victoria, exemplifying a mission to bring God's mercy to those in need. As a national and growing organisation, Mercy Health is a respected brand dedicated to delivering exceptional aged and home care services to Australians.

Mercy Health Home Care provides community care and disability services that enable individuals to lead happy, healthy and independent lives in the comfort of their own homes. Navigating the complex aged care system can be overwhelming, but Mercy Health's Care Advisory Service offers a free service designed to guide people through the intricacies of the government portal My Aged Care, how to access government support and navigate eligibility requirements seamlessly.

Mercy Health Home Care prides itself in the values of respect and hospitality. By taking the time to understand a client's individual story, Mercy Health builds a support team that aligns with each client's unique needs, ensuring a personalised and compassionate approach to their care.

A trusted home care partner, Mercy Health combines expertise, compassion and a legacy that spans over a decade to accompany you on your journey and enhance your quality of life.

• Visit www.mercyhealth.com.au



Australians trust Mercy Health. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au



Your trusted home care partner



At the heart of Mercy Health Home Care is a deep-seated commitment to compassion. We believe in being there for others in their time of need.

Our compassionate home care workers bring a wealth of knowledge to your doorstep, and with Mercy Health, you're not just a client — you're family.

Join the thousands of people who trust Mercy Health to support them with their home care services.





Call us today **1300 478 776** mercyhealth.com.au/homecare

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WINNER HONEY Mānuka Health

66

Amazing health benefits. Delicious.

FEMALE, 18-29, VIC/TAS

21

Healthiest, high quality honey.

FEMALE, 18-29, QLD

Trusted brand from a trusted source.

FEMALE, 30-39, NSW/ACT

1

Reputable in the honey industry.

MALE, 50-59, SA/NT

🚯 Mānuka Health

MĀNUKA HEALTH DOESN'T HURRY

the honey-making process. In fact, it takes up to two years to create its deliciously consistent, potent Mānuka honey – from hive to jar.

Established in New Zealand in 2006, Mānuka Health is committed to crafting the world's finest

Mānuka honey while safeguarding the wellbeing of people, bees and the environment.

Mānuka Health creams its honey at low temperatures to preserve its goodness and ensure a consistent, rich and smooth texture. It also stores it at ambient temperatures to allow it to age as nature intended.

Mānuka Health spent years discovering the extraordinary properties of Mānuka honey and pioneered MGO testing after a ground-breaking discovery found it to be the exclusive 'magic ingredient' that gives Mānuka honey its myriad of benefits. Mānuka Health honey has dual ratings of MGO and UMF to ensure the potency of its products.

The brand recently conducted consumer research to verify that ingesting a daily teaspoon of Mānuka Health MGO 400+ Mānuka honey or higher every morning for at least 28 days can impact the skin, with amazing results. • Visit www.manukahealth.co.nz



232

10

Australians trust Mānuka Health. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au

Taste the extraordinary Mānuka Health difference.

SCAN ME!



Unique QR-code to verify authenticity



- 🗸 100 % from New Zealand 🤇
- Certified natural MGO content
- Quality and purity guaranteed
- Protected and traceable back to the beekeeper

Mānuka Health

MANUKA

HONEY



WINNER HOUSEHOLD CLEANING PRODUCTS

66

Been using it for 60 years, never let me down.

MALE, 70+, NSW/ACT

High quality. Great prices.

FEMALE, 30-39, QLD

Trusted brand, kills germs, fresh fragrance.

FEMALE, 30-39, QLD

Effective and reliable.

MALE, 30-39, VIC/TAS



SINCE ITS HUMBLE BEGINNINGS in

1935, when Dettol Antiseptic Liquid was used as a postsurgery antiseptic skin wash in hospitals, Dettol has evolved to become



the trusted brand in germ protection around the home.

Since then Dettol's germ protection heritage has expanded across a growing portfolio of antibacterial hand wash, household cleaning and hand sanitiser products, to laundry sanitisers.

This year, Dettol will continue to focus on the expansion of its range in areas where germ protection is important and relevant, such as in the laundry or protection from germs when you are out of the house.

Dettol has also made a sustainability pledge* which includes making 100% of its packaging recyclable or reusable and to include at least 25% recycled plastic content in its packaging by 2025 where safety and regulations allow.

So far it has made significant steps by launching its first biodegradable and compostable[^] wipes in its household cleaning range.

Always read the label. Follow directions for use.

Visit www.dettol.com.au

*Full pledge details, visit www.rb.com/responsibility/plastics-packagingand-waste/ ^ Biodegradable in accelerated active landfill conditions within 60 days and home compost conditions within 12 months under success criteria AS 5810 measured under ISO 14855 (EN13432).

Australians trust Dettol. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au





Voted Australia's Most Trusted Cleaning Brand since 2016[†]





Trust Dettol Visit www.dettol.com.au to find out more

* E. Coli, Salmonella, S. aureus. †Reader's Digest Trusted Brands survey 2016-2024.



WINNER LAUNDRY APPLIANCES

Bosch

66

Have had a great run with my Bosch appliances. Strong and hardworking. Has a good reputation. FEMALE, 60-69, QLD

Products perform well time after time.

-

11

FEMALE, 40-49, VIC/TAS

They just work. Simple as that.

MALE, 40-49, QLD



BOSCH CONTINUES TO SET THE STANDARD for

laundry excellence with the latest on-trend graphitegrey matching appliance range. Designed to make laundry effortless and efficient, the new offerings feature the latest technology tailored to meet the diverse needs of modern households.

Laundry appliances from Bosch incorporate a range of features aimed at simplifying your laundry routine. From the i-DOS automatic detergent



dispensing system, that ensures precise detergent and water usage, to the Quick Wash 15-minute program for rapid results, Bosch's goal is to make laundry a breeze.

"Our economical heat pump dryers boast AutoDry technology, which senses moisture levels to achieve your preferred dryness level while protecting your garments from high temperatures and over-drying," said Jessica Deuscher, Head of Brand. "With the Self-Cleaning Condenser technology, maintenance is hassle-free, while new innovations, such as reverse tumble drying for bed sheets and a new half-load drying program, provide increased flexibility."

Visit www.bosch-home.com.au

Disclaimer: Features vary by model; refer to individual product specifications for details.

Australians trust Bosch. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au

We love what lasts long. #LikeABosch



Quality and Performance Precision engineering and manufacturing of quality laundry appliances since 1958.



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*T&Cs apply



WINNER LAUNDRY DETERGENTS

66

Have been using OMO for years and is the one I find most reliable for all skin types. FEMALE, 60-69, WA

It always works well and removes stains on the first wash.

MALE, 30-39, NSW/ACT

-

So dependable and trustworthy.

FEMALE, 30-39, SA/NT



OMO BELIEVES THAT EVERY STAIN HAS A STORY, and that every stain is a proud



mark of a life fully lived. However the game goes, OMO makes sure you're ready to get dirty, fearlessly every day and PLAY ON.

For over 65 years, OMO has provided laundry detergents that deliver amazing stain removal every time. OMO offers a wide variety of products: **OMO Ultimate**, with its ability to treat 48-hour dried in stains; **OMO Sensitive**, which is tough on stains but gentle on skin; and **OMO 3-in-1 Capsules**, which provide a deep clean and fabric care with a long-lasting fragrance. Recommended by leading machine manufacturers, the capsules have been designed to be thrown directly into the machine drum and work on all machine types.

Because OMO recognises that doing the laundry can have a big impact on the environment, it has provided a Sustainable Living Plan on its website to help all Australians change their laundry habits and reduce their impact on the environment, without compromising on a high-performance wash. And with OMO Dilute at Home Refill, you can be tough on stains but help the environment by reducing your plastic use.

Visit www.omo.com/au

238

(1)

Australians trust OMO. Visit **www.trustedbrands.com.au**





WINNER LAWN MOWERS

Victa

66

Has never let me down.

MALE, 60-69, NSW/ACT

1

Trusted them for over 40 years.

MALE, 50-59, SA/NT

A high-quality, trusted Australian brand.

FEMALE, 50-59, SA/NT

One of the most trusted brands.

FEMALE, 30-39, SA/NT



IN THE VAST TAPESTRY

of Australian history, few names shine as brightly as Victa, an icon that has been synonymous with quality, innovation, and the Australian way of life for seven remarkable decades.

From its humble origins in Mervyn Victor Richardson's Sydney garage, where scraps of metal, billy cart wheels, and a peach tin coalesced

into the first prototype lawn mower, Victa has been a unwavering companion to Australian gardeners, aiding them in their quest to maintain pristine lawns and vibrant gardens.

Through the years, Victa has not only provided the tools but has fostered a deep appreciation for outdoor spaces, encouraging Australians to rediscover the joys of their lawns and gardens.

At the heart of Victa's success lies its unwavering commitment to innovation and quality. The brand's Australian Design Centre stands as a beacon of progress, continuously pushing the boundaries of technology to develop petrol and lithium-powered mowers tailored for Australian conditions.

Victa's legacy is not merely measured in years but in the countless lawns mowed, gardens tended and memories created. • Visit www.victa.com.au



240

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Australians trust Victa. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au

AUSTRALIA'S FAVOURITE MOWER

Thank you Australia for voting Victa your Most Trusted Brand.



VICTA.COM.AU

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HIGHLY COMMENDED LAWN MOWERS STIHL



I have used many STIHL products and never been disappointed. MALE, 70+, VIC/TAS

Still the best and toughest brand.

FEMALE, 18-29, WA

The only brand I've used and I can't fault it.

MALE, 18-29, NSW/ACT

1

Concession of the local division of the loca

Trustworthy. Good quality.

FEMALE, 40-49, VIC/TAS





FOR MORE THAN 98 YEARS, STIHL has offered some of the highest quality outdoor power equipment on the market to home and professional gardeners. A global market leader, and the No.1 chainsaw selling brand worldwide, STIHL is renowned for a broad array of quality products across their petrol and battery ranges.

In the 52 years that STIHL has been sold in Australia, we have grown to trust and rely on the brand for their personal and ongoing service across their wide-stretching 600-strong network of privately owned STIHL dealerships. These smaller individual and family-owned businesses are able to build close local connections with customers who can turn to the specialists for advice, service, care and maintenance of their trusted STIHL lawn mowers and outdoor power equipment.

In the business of innovating and developing industryleading firsts, STIHL's mission is to continuously enhance the customer experience. From their iMOW robotic mower range to their ever-expanding battery range and the incredibly handy GTA 26 garden pruner, STIHL takes pride in continuing to provide the ultimate in outdoor power equipment. • Visit www.stihl.com.au

242

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Australians trust STIHL. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au



AWARDED BATTERY MOWERS

and the

and





Lawn Mower



Specsavers

66 Provides great prices on their

glasses and services.

MALE, 50-59, SA/NT

Professional service, latest technology and value for money.

FEMALE, 60-69, QLD

time and

They are experts in the industry.

MALE, 50-59, WA





THIS YEAR, SPECSAVERS CELEBRATES its 16th year in Australia, and 40 years since the first Specsavers store first opened in the UK. Throughout this time Specsavers has always focused on providing care that is affordable and accessible to all its customers.

Specsavers is proud to be a healthcare provider that Australians can trust. And that trust is built through great customer service and the commitment to go the extra mile – for example with every customer receiving an OCT 3D eye scan at no extra cost as part of their eye test. Specsavers is genuinely determined to change lives through better sight and hearing and see it as its personal mission to do all it can to stop patients from encountering avoidable vision loss.

As well as offering industry-leading care, Specsavers focuses on delivering great products and provides a huge range of value-for-money frames, lenses and contact lenses. It has also introduced new designer brands to its frames collection.

• Visit www.specsavers.com.au

244

Australians trust Specsavers. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au



Most trusted brand for optometrists 5 years running



Thank you for trusting us with your care

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WINNER OVENS

Bosch

66

Ten years on and still working perfectly.

FEMALE, 60-69, QLD

Bosch is always the best of the bunch – reliable and easy to use. FEMALE, 60-69, QLD

10.000

Known for producing quality products that are reliable, well made and durable.

MALE, 50-59, VIC/TAS



SYNONYMOUS WITH RELIABILITY AND INNOVATION,

Bosch ovens continue to earn the trust of customers through ground-breaking features and unwavering commitment to making your time in the kitchen more enjoyable. The newly released Series 8 oven range is designed to revolutionise the cooking experience while meeting the evolving needs of customers.

The Air Fry function – available on all accent|line and Series 8 full size ovens – is ready to use without pre-heating



your oven, while Steam Function Plus steams more efficiently than ever before at 120°C, cooking faster while preserving essential nutrients.

Top of the range models feature the TFT Touch Display Pro for intuitive navigation, incorporating a large full-surface, high-resolution, TFT touchscreen. Its clear, vivid images and texts offer complete control over your cooking experience. Further convenience is found with Pyrolytic Cleaning, and the ingenious Bosch Assist function that simplifies cooking with automated settings tailored to your dish.

Visit www.bosch-home.com.au

Disclaimer: Features vary by model; refer to individual product specifications for details.



Australians trust Bosch. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au



Invented for life

* DE IN GER SOF IN GER

Series | 8 and accent|line ovens



Now with AirFry Function^{*}, without the need to pre-heat.

*Available on full size ovens

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Panadol

AUSTRALIA'S MOST TRUSTED PAIN RELIEF BRAND*



*Reader's Digest Trusted Brand Survey 2024 Panadol Brand. Trade marks are owned by or licensed to the Haleon Group of Companies © 2024 Haleon Group of Companies or its licensor. PM-AU-PAN-24-00111.

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HALEON



Always read the label and follow directions for use. Incorrect use could be harmful.



WINNER PAINT

Dulux

66

Experts in paint technology. Respected amongst professionals.

FEMALE, 30-39, SA/NT

Concession of the local division of the loca

1

No.

Best quality products.

MALE, 50-59, QLD

Well-known brand.

FEMALE, 18-29, VIC/TAS

A consistent finish.

MALE, 40-49, NSW/ACT



DULUXGROUP'S ORIGINS DATE BACK TO 1918, with

its heritage in decorative paint. Today, DuluxGroup is a leading marketer and manufacturer of premium paints that



protect, maintain and enhance the spaces and places in which we live and work.

As leaders in colour, Dulux knows how overwhelming it can be for consumers looking for the perfect white. That's why the Dulux website has lots of educational tools to help you find the right cool, warm or neutral white for your project, along with a list of the most popular whites.

This year, Dulux is bringing a product innovation to market that is designed to keep your walls looking fresher for longer. Dulux[®] Wash&Wear[®] +PLUS Anti-Scuff is a new market-leading technology designed to help walls resist scuffs before they even happen. The hard-wearing surface formed by Wash&Wear's exclusive 101[®] Barrier Technology is strengthened with added Scuffshield Technology to create the ultimate resistance against scuffs and marks.

Particularly ideal for high traffic areas, such as hallways or living rooms, this technology will keep your walls looking freshly painted for years.

Worth doing, worth Dulux.

Visit www.dulux.com.au



Australians trust Dulux. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au



CREATE THE PERFECT TRANSFORMATION IN YOUR HOME



Paint

Get started today with Australia's most trusted paint brand – 12 years running^{*}

Dulux

Wash Wear



^{*}Dulux and Worth doing, Worth Dulux are registered trade marks of DuluxGroup (Australia) Pty Ltd. 'As voted by Australians in the 2013-2024 Reader's Digest, Most Trusted Brands Survey.

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2024 TRUSTED BRANDS SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT



WINNER PET CARE NexGard®

66

Easy to use. Dogs like the chews.

FEMALE, 40-49, VIC/TAS

11

Good quality and recommended by my vet.

MALE, 40-49, QLD

I have used it for years and find it has the best coverage.

FEMALE, 40-49, QLD

Recommended by my vet who I trust a lot.

FEMALE, 30-39, SA/NT

No.



THE LAUNCH OF

NEXGARD® marked a pivotal moment for parasite control in dogs. The first of a new generation of products in Australia, and the world's first chewable monthly

paralysis tick-prevention product, NexGard for Dogs provides pet owners with longlasting control of fleas, ticks and mites, while NexGard SPECTRA for Dogs protects against these, in addition to heartworm and intestinal worms. Research has shown that since the introduction of new generation parasite control products like NexGard, cases of potentially fatal tick paralysis in Australian dogs have dramatically decreased, highlighting the significant health benefits NexGard brings. Parasite control has never been so easy for dog owners, or as tasty for their dogs!

NexGard SPECTRA is a proud national partner of Guide Dogs Australia and provides all Guide Dogs with NexGard SPECTRA for year-round parasite protection, from their eight-week-old pups to their working dogs.

In 2023, the brand extended its portfolio with the launch of NexGard SPECTRA Spot-On for Cats, providing Australia's first and only all-in-one parasite solution for cats. Saving cat owners from the difficulty of administering a worming tablet to their cat, NexGard SPECTRA Spot-On for Cats provides protection against fleas, ticks, mites, heartworm, lungworm and intestinal worms (including tapeworm). Featuring a unique syringe style applicator, parasite protection has never been easier for Australian cat owners. • www.nexgard.com.au



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Australians trust NexGard[®]. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au

Australia's #1 parasite protection range for dogs.* Trusted protection in a tasty chew.



Pet Care



See product label for full claim details and directions for use. *Based on sales data, CEESA International Sales Services MAT 03 2023. Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health Australia Pty Ltd. Level 1, 78 Waterloo Road, North Ryde NSW 2113. ABN 53 071 187 285. ®NexGard and NexGard SPECTRA are registered trademarks of the Boehringer Ingelheim Group. PET-0011-2024

FLEAS TICKS MITES

Nex Gard Develte

FLEAS TIČKS MITES HEARTWORM® @WORMS

exGarc



WINNER PET INSURANCE **RSPCA Pet Insurance**



1

-

Affordable. Give to RSPCA charity.

FEMALE, 60-69, NSW/ ACT

Great value for money. Easy to comunicate with.

MALE, 18-29, QLD

Quality service and great support.

MALE, 40-49, VIC/TAS

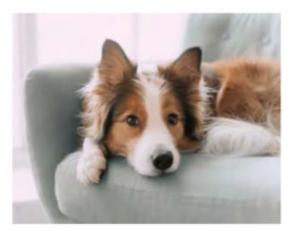
Reliable, effective, trustworthy.

FEMALE, 40-49, WA



RECOGNISED AS AUSTRALIA'S MOST TRUSTED PET

insurance brand for the fourth year, RSPCA Pet Insurance aims to provide financial protection for pet owners with the option of four levels of cover, giving



them peace of mind knowing their furry friends will receive the care they deserve, should they need it. RSPCA Pet Insurance is flexible and allows you to claim up to 80 per cent of your eligible vet bills to a maximum of \$20,000 per year^, with no excess to pay and the freedom to use any registered vet in Australia. Plus, a portion of first-year premiums help support the RSPCA.

The Australian-based team makes sure every interaction is honest, fair, transparent and respectful. Winning multiple awards for quality service and trust, the RSPCA Pet Insurance team is always looking for ways to elevate customer's experience.

• For more information about award-winning RSPCA Pet Insurance visit www.rspcapetinsurance.org.au or call 1300 683 091.

^Pre-existing conditions and certain illnesses are excluded. Terms, conditions, exclusions, benefit limits and sub-limits apply. Benefit percentage and claimable limit varies based on the level of cover.

254

Australians trust RSPCA Pet Insurance. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au



Buy now and get one month FREE

Be prepared for the unexpected & enjoy that RSPCA Pet Insurance feeling!

- Four levels of cover to choose from
- 🔹 Claim up to \$20,000 a year
- Get back up to 80% of eligible vet bills²
- So excess to pay
- A portion of first-year premiums help support the RSPCA



SCAN FOR A QUICK QUOTE \$1300 683 091 rspcapetinsurance.org.au

¹Offer commences 2 March 2024. For full terms and conditions visit rspcapetinsurance.org.au/promotions ² Pre-existing conditions and certain illnesses are excluded. Terms, conditions, exclusions, benefit limits, sub-limits and annual condition limits may apply. Eligible vet bills only, claim for reimbursement. Benefit percentage varies based on the level of cover selected. RSPCA Pet Insurance is issued by The Hollard Insurance Company Pty Ltd ABN 78 090 584 473, AFSL 241436, it is distributed and promoted by Greenstone Financial Services Pty Ltd (GFS) ABN 53 128 692 884, AFSL 343079 and by its Authorised Representative (AR) RSPCA Australia ABN 99 668 654 249, AR 296287 and is arranged and administered through PetSure (Australia) Pty Ltd ABN 95 075 949 923, AFSL 420183. Any advice provided is general only and does not take into account your individual objectives, financial situation or needs. Please consider the Product Disclosure Statement (PDS) to ensure this product meets your needs before purchasing. PDS and Target Market Determination available at rspcapetinsurance.org.au H8654_05/24



WINNER SEALANTS & FILLERS

Selleys

66

Been a great sealer for many years.

MALE, 70+, QLD

10

1

Works on a wide range of surfaces.

FEMALE, 30-39, SA/NT

Very reliable and trustworthy.

MALE, 60-69, VIC/TAS

Well established company. Large selection of products.

MALE, 70+, NSW/ACT



ABSOLUTE CUSTOMER

satisfaction is what drives Selleys forward and is what ensures that 'If It's Selleys It Works'.

That 'can do' spirit and commitment to quality that Selleys embodies today are the hallmark of the company's founder, Martin Selley, who immigrated to Australia from Germany in 1939. Setting up a factory in Sydney, he quickly gained a reputation for making superior quality putty and adhesives. Today, Selleys is the leading choice for Australian consumers and tradespeople when it comes to adhesives, sealants, fillers and paint preparation products.



"We are proud of our heritage, innovation and commitment to excellence," said Mark Friesen, Selleys Global Marketing Director. "We create products in collaboration with our customers to ensure we have the right solution to meet their needs, and have a dedicated team of research and development experts in Australia and globally that are committed to finding solutions for sticky problems.

"We're honoured to be recognised for the sixth year in a row as the Trusted Brand for Sealants & Fillers."

• Visit www.selleys.com.au

256

Australians trust Selleys. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au







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HIGHLY COMMENDED SEALANTS & FILLERS

Poly

Easy to apply. Wellrespected brand.

MALE, 50-59, SA/NT

Good and reputable.

Concession of the local division of the loca

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diameter (

MALE, 30-39, NSW/ACT

Good experience over decades.

MALE, 60-69, VIC/TAS

It is the only brand I use.

FEMALE, 60-69, VIC/TAS



WHEN INTRODUCED ONTO THE AUSTRALIAN market

in the late 1960s, Poly was considered revolutionary, because unlike the spackle-based fillers available at the time, the Polyfilla Cellulose Filler didn't crack or shrink.

Over the years, many Poly products have been launched in Australia, some of which can still be bought today, including Polyfilla and Polystrippa.

Poly is a well-respected and trusted brand of choice for DIY enthusiasts and trade professionals for preparing decorative surfaces. Poly's premium quality, tailored range makes it easy to select the best product for the job at hand to ensure outstanding results.

With a continued focus on innovation that makes paint preparation simple and easy, you can rely on Poly to help achieve the perfect finish every time.

Visit www.poly.com.au



258

Australians trust Poly. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au

START YOUR PAINT PREP WITH

ß

2024 Reader's Dife

Sealants & Fillers









WINNER STAIN REMOVERS

Vanish

66

Great results in cold water. Cost effective.

FEMALE, 40-49, VIC/TAS

1

(2000)

Always performs with great results.

MALE, 50-59, QLD

One brand I could not do without.

MALE, 50-59, NSW/ACT

Works every time.

FEMALE, 30-39, WA



VANISH KEEPS THE

CONSUMER at the heart of the brand's values by constantly innovating and improving its stain-removal formula to help address some of the biggest laundry frustrations and pain points. So it's hardly surprising that Vanish has won the Trusted



Brands Stain Remover category for ten years in a row. Whether food, starch, greasy or outdoor stains, Vanish combined with its trusted Oxi Action formula helps lift and break down tough stains from your most loved clothes. The range is safe for everyday fabrics (cotton and polycotton), free from chlorine bleach, and provides a deep clean.

Over the past two years, Vanish has also launched a campaign to help tackle textile waste and drive more sustainable clothing behaviours. The campaign #MakeTextileWasteVanish encouraged people to extend the life of their clothes and avoid discarding them with the help of Vanish. As of December 2023, Vanish achieved its goal of helping divert 1 million clothing items from landfill.*

This year the brand looks to continue evolving and driving best-in-class stain removal, even in cold temperatures and short cycles.

Visit www.vanishstains.com.au

*Calculated by the average (based on UPPAREL research) number of items per kilogram of textiles redeemed through UPPAREL's consumer recycling program via the Vanish promotion from 2022 to 2023. Assuming each redemption weighs average 10kg. Total 9,259 redemptions.



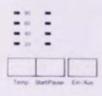
Australians trust Vanish. Visit **www.trustedbrands.com.au**

AUSTRALIA'S #1 Stain Remover Brand*









*Claim based on NIQ ScanTrack for the Fabric Care category for the 52-week period ending 7 November 2023 in Total Australia Grocer and New Zealand Supermarket channels Copyright © 2023. NielsenIQ.

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WINNER SUGAR SUBSTITUTES

Equal

66

We use it at work, people ask for it specifically by brand name. FEMALE, 18-29, WA

The main sugar substitute recommended by dieticians for diabetics.

FEMALE, 70 +, SA/NT

Best tasting. Quality can be relied on.

MALE, 40-49, QLD



CELEBRATING 12 CONSECUTIVE YEARS OF TRUST

WITH EQUAL For over four

decades, Equal has been the ally for those aiming to reduce sugar intake without sacrificing sweetness. "The continued trust from our consumers fuels our commitment," said Manan Ohri, Brand Manager.



DITCH SUGAR. SWITCH TO Equal

"Our core mission revolves around empowering individuals in their pursuit of health and weight management, while ensuring they can still enjoy life's simple joys, like the iconic sweetness of Equal. This dedication has solidified our position as the nation's top sugar replacement for 12 consecutive years."

The beloved Equal Spoonful now comes in a glass jar, promoting reusability and significantly reducing plastic consumption by 69%, while Equal Tablets are packaged with 80% recycled materials, and are accompanied with a reusable dispenser and costeffective refill packs. Further showing the brand's commitment to recycling is the Equal Sachets box, which is made from 70% recycled materials.

Embrace a sweeter future with Equal, the brand you have trusted for over four decades.

• Visit www.equalchoice.com.au or find Equal on Facebook www.facebook.com/EqualAustralia

262

1

Australians trust Equal. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au



Most Trusted Brand 12 years in a row



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WINNER SUNSCREEN Cancer Council

66

Always recommended by health professionals. FEMALE, 18-29, SA/NT

Good product, supports cancer research.

FEMALE, 60-69, QLD

Sunscreen that works and is affordable.

FEMALE, 18-29, SA/NT

Good quality. MALE, 18-29, WA



CANCER COUNCIL CONTINUALLY ENCOURAGES us to protect ourselves from the harsh Australian sun by following its



well-known 'slip, slop, slap, seek and slide'¹ measures. Offering formulas to suit a range of lifestyles, Cancer Council sunscreen is the number one selling sunscreen in Australia, and provides very high, broadspectrum protection from harmful UV rays.

Cancer Council sunscreens are proudly Australian made, TGA (Therapeutic Goods Administration) listed and have been voted Most Trusted Sunscreen for eight consecutive years.

The Cancer Council's key message this year is to Protect Your People. You should protect your loved ones from harmful UV rays when UV levels reach three and above – which is year-round in most states – regardless if it is cloudy. To access live UV information for your location, download the SunSmart app. And remember, every time you purchase a Cancer Council product, you're helping support the charity with its lifesaving cancer research and services.

Visit www.cancercouncilshop.org.au

Always read the label. Follow the directions for use. Sunscreen is only one component of sun protection. Reapply every two hours and avoid prolonged sun exposure. 1. Slip on protective clothing, slop on SPF30 or higher sunscreen, slap on a hat, seek shade and slide on sunglasses.



Australians trust Cancer Council. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au



PROTECT YOUR PEOPLE

Every purchase goes towards cancer research and services

Always read the label and follow the directions for use. Reapply every two hours and avoid prolonged sun exposure. Sunscreens are only one part of sun protection.

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HIGHLY COMMENDED SUNSCREEN Banana Boat

66

Best nongreasy sunscreen. MALE, 70+, VIC/TAS

Great sunscreen brand.

1

(a)

FEMALE, 30-39, NSW/ ACT

Extremely reliable and effective.

MALE, 18-29, SA/NT

The one my family and friends use.

MALE, 60-69, VIC/TAS



A HOUSEHOLD NAME IN SUN PROTECTION for more than four

decades, Banana Boat allows Aussie families to have fun in the sun while staying protected from its harsh UV rays. Uniquely formulated for



the Australian climate, Banana Boat SPF50+ formulas provide the highest level of sun protection so you can say 'yes' to time spent outdoors all year round. Banana Boat believes fun in the sun is vital to family life, that's why it delivers long-lasting protection that stands up to any outdoor activity. Whether spray, lotion or rollon, the easy-to-apply products are designed to help you and your family enjoy every moment outdoors.

The brand recently launched Banana Boat[®] Ultra Light Face Fluid, formulated with Hyaluronic Acid and Jojoba Oil to provide 12-hour moisture and a soft matte finish. Perfect for daily use, this fast absorbing, ultra-lightweight formula is fragrance free, non-comedogenic and offers very high UVA/UVB protection from the sun.

Banana Boat is also committed to kids' sun safety education and has developed the 'Sun Safe Schools Program'. • Visit www.bananaboat.com.au

Always read the label and follow the directions for use. Wear protective clothing, a hat and sunglasses in addition to sunscreen. Reapply frequently. Avoid prolonged high-risk sun exposure.

266

Australians trust Banana Boat. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au

PROTEGT PROTEGT FIG FIG



NEW

ACE FLUID

FACE FLUID

BANANA BOAT ULTRA LIGHT FACE FLUID SUNSCREEN LOTION SPF50+

- 12 hour moisture with Hyaluronic Acid and Jojoba Oil
- Non-greasy with a soft matte finish
- Fragrance-free

Always read the label and follow the directions for use. Wear protective clothing, a hat and sunglasses in addition to sunscreen. Reapply frequently. Avoid prolonged high-risk sun exposure.

Reader's

Sunscreen

2024 TRUSTED BRANDS SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT



WINNER SUPERANNUATION AustralianSuper

66

Been around a long time, trustworthy, reliable, Australian.

FEMALE, 60-69 , VIC/TAS.

A reputable brand with a long history of good returns.

MALE, 50-59, QLD

Terrific group, good returns, helpful staff, can talk to real people.

FEMALE, 60-69, VIC/TAS



IN ITS 35-YEAR HISTORY, AustralianSuper – one of Australia's first superannuation funds – has never wavered in its resolve to work in the best interests of members. "Today, AustralianSuper's story is the story of over 3.3 million members¹. One in seven working Australians is a member with us² and we manage over \$316 billion of members' retirement savings¹. Our ambition is that all Australians live well in retirement and everything we do is to help members achieve their best financial position in retirement," said Rose Kerlin, Chief Member Officer.

AustralianSuper understands that everyone's financial journey is unique. As one of the top 20 pension funds in the world³, it uses its size, collective capability and global reach to help access investment opportunities for the benefit of members.

"As a profit-for-member fund, and a fund for all Australians, our brand reflects our enduring focus on doing what's best for members. AustralianSuper makes meaningful differences to members, their families, businesses, our partners, the community and the Australian economy," said Ms Kerlin.

Visit www.australiansuper.com

 As at 31 December 2023; 2. Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (Labour force) December 2023 and AustralianSuper Member Data;
 Thinking Ahead Institute, Global top 300 pension funds, September 2023. AustralianSuper ranked 18th out of 300 global funds. Before making a decision about AustralianSuper, you should think about your financial requirements and refer to the relevant Product Disclosure Statement available at australiansuper.com/pds or by calling 1300 300 273. A Target Market Determination (TMD) is a document that outlines the target market a product has been designed for. Find the TMDs at australiansuper.com/tmd. Sponsored by AustralianSuper Pty Ltd, ABN 94 006 457 987, AFSL 233788, Trustee of AustralianSuper ABN 65 714 394 898

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Reader's Digest Most Trusted Brands – Superannuation winner 2013–2024. Awards and ratings are only one factor to be taken into account when choosing a super fund. AustralianSuper Pty Ltd ABN 94 006 457 987, AFSL 233788, Trustee of AustralianSuper ABN 65 714 394 898. Read the PDS and TMD at **australiansuper.com**

2024 TRUSTED BRANDS SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT



Bridgestone

66

2

Excellent reputation and performance.

FEMALE, 60-69, QLD

Good value for money.

MALE, 60-69, QLD

l've always had great experiences.

MALE, 60-69, QLD

Very reliable, tough and affordable.

MALE, 40-49, WA

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BRIDGESTONE

270

CONTINUED CONFIDENCE: Bridgestone remains

the most trusted tyre brand across Australia and New Zealand, retaining the coveted title for an unprecedented 11th time in Australia, and eighth straight year in NZ.

According to Bridgestone ANZ Managing Director, Heath Barclay, the Reader's Digest Most Trusted Brand accolade showcases the continued priority the company places on safe and quality products.

"Bridgestone was founded on a mission of serving society with superior quality, and that's something that is unchanged. We continue to develop and provide safe, reliable and quality tyres, supported with transparent and expert service, and have earned the trust and respect of motorists across Australia and New Zealand," said Mr Barclay.



The leading tyre brand continues to introduce innovative products to meet the ever-evolving needs of motorists. This year has seen the addition of the Dueler all-terrain A/T 002, a versatile and comfortable 4x4 tyre, and Turanza 6 for SUVs, featuring the latest ENLITEN technology – which realises Bridgestone's global focus towards more sustainable products. Bridgestone continues to contribute to road safety through the RYDA education programme, and is the global naming-rights partner of the Bridgestone World Solar Challenge. **Visit www.bridgestone.com.au**

Australians trust Bridgestone. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au

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ELEVEN

Tyres

Bridgestone celebrates 11 years as Australia's most trusted tyre brand.

You're in safe hands with Bridgestone.





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Vegie DelightsTM



Tried and found it tasty, healthy and a fair price.

FEMALE, 18-29, QLD

Such yummy food and quite affordable.

FEMALE, 30-39, QLD

No.

No.

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Australian and good ingredients.

FEMALE, 40-49, VIC/TAS

Surprisingly yummy.

MALE, 40 -49, NSW/ACT



AT THE HEART OF THE VEGIE DELIGHTS™

brand is a simple premise: deliciously easy plant-based eating every day. **Vegie Delights** is proudly



Australian owned. Sanitarium Health Food Company has been making plant-based meals in Australia since 1908, with products like Nutolene and Nutmeat, which are still available today.

Vegie Delights is the only plant-based brand you will find in the fridge, freezer and canned meals section of the supermarket, with over 15 product lines. Vegie Delights are a compromise-free way to include plant-based alternatives into easy weekday meals. The range formats are simple to prepare and provide a source of protein and iron.

With consumers looking to actively reduce their animal meat intake, more consumers are choosing to Make Tonight a Vegie Delight[™] so they can continue to serve their mealtime favourites at their table. "We believe that enjoying more plant-based meals can have a positive impact on overall wellbeing, and we're dedicated to genuinely making a positive, meaningful difference to the communities we collaborate with and serve," says Jessica Manihera, Head of Marketing ANZ.

Sanitarium Health Food Company employs over 65 staff at its purpose-built meals manufacturing facility on the NSW Central Coast.

Visit www.vegiedelights.com.au
 @vegiedelights
 @vegiedelights



Australians trust Vegie Delights™. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au

Make tonight a Vegie Delight



Thanks Australia







Make tonight a Vegie Delight

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2024 TRUSTED BRANDS SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT



WINNER VITAMINS & SUPPLEMENTS

Swisse

66

They provide a huge range of vitamins and are leaders in the industry. MALE, 60-69, QLD

I like their product range and the consistency of their products.

MALE, 40-49, VIC

Transparent and reliable.

FEMALE, 30-39, NSW/ACT

-

Variety and value for money.

FEMALE, 60-69, NSW/ACT



SWISSE HAS A LONG

and established heritage in vitamins, minerals and supplements, founded upon a desire to create premium products that support wellbeing and general health. More



recently, Swisse has taken its wellness expertise and extended it to offer skincare and sports nutrition.

"It's hard to believe that the Swisse story started over 50 years ago in a little bakery in Collingwood, Victoria," says Kerrie Wade, Marketing Director ANZ. "Our founder, Kevin Ring, set off on a journey to explore the world in search of rich ingredients from nature that inspired the first Swisse products."

From those humble beginnings, Swisse has evolved into a global business, bringing premium wellness options to millions in over 12 countries. Along the way, Swisse has maintained an unwavering commitment to sourcing premium ingredients and continues to prioritise innovation, with more than 200 products currently making up the Swisse range.

Proudly part of the H&H Group – a global health, nutrition and personal care company – Swisse has always stayed true to its mission to help people become healthier and happier. "This has never changed throughout our evolution as a business, and we continue to feel inspired daily to support and promote healthier communities." • www.swisse.com.au

Always read the label and follow the directions for use. Swisse Ultiboost Calm + Sleep Gummies: Passionflower traditionally used in Western herbal medicine to calm nerves and reduce restless sleep. Swisse Ultibiotic Daily Digestive Probiotic: Probiotics support digestive system health. Swisse Beauty Bright Skin Booster: Vitamin C supports collagen formation. Swisse Ultiboost Magnesium: Magnesium supports muscle health.



Australians trust Swisse. Visit www.trustedbrands.com.au

TAKE AUSTRALIA'S MOST TRUSTED VITAMIN AND SUPPLEMENT BRAND DAILY Tamins & Supplem Swisse Swisse FILM COATED TABLET ONE-A-DAY

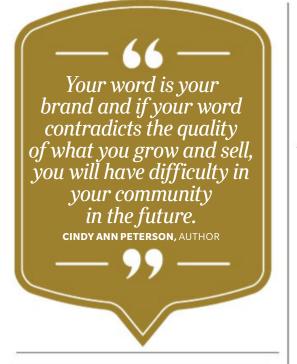
SLEEP. EAT. Swisse REPEAT.

Always read the label and follow the directions for use. More Newspaper and Magazines Telegram Channel join Search https://t.me/Magazines_8890050582 (@Magazines_8890050582) **2024 TRUSTED BRANDS SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT**



The Value Of Trust

66 Quality is remembered LONG AFTER THE PRICE IS FORGOTTEN. GUCCI FAMILY SLOGAN



"AT WORK OR IN RELATIONSHIPS, TRUST IS KEY IN THE IMPACT IT MAKES AND HOW IT INFLUENCES AN ORGANISATION. IT IS PRETTY AMAZING, AND CONTAGIOUS. LEARN TO TRUST AND EARN TRUST."

PRIYA MENON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, 3M INDIA

66
A brand is a promise.
A good brand is a promise kept."

MUHTAR KENT, COCA-COLA COMPANY CEO

BRANDS ARE BUILT FROM WITHIN ... [THEY] HAVE VERY LITTLE TO DO WITH PROMISES MADE THROUGH ADVERTISING. THEY'RE ALL ABOUT PROMISES MET BY EMPLOYEES.

> IAN P BUCKINGHAM, AUTHOR OF BRAND CHAMPIONS

Loyalty cannot be blueprinted. It cannot be produced on an assembly line. In fact, it cannot be manufactured at all. It is a force which leaps into being only when conditions are exactly right for it – and it is a force very sensitive to betrayal." MAURICE FRANKS, AUTHOR

276 100% voted by consumers. View results at www.trustedbrands.com.au

A DAIKIN AIR PURIFIER WITH STREAMER TECHNOLOGY Valued at \$649.00



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removes more than 99.99% of harmful airborne contaminants, including Coronavirus (HCoV-229E) and Influenza A (H1N1), in just 30 minutes. These air purifiers capture and break down pollutants such as mould, pollen, allergens, odours, formaldehyde, traffic pollution, and dust.

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*Full terms and conditions can be found online. Entries close 17th July 2024.

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