

Active Recreation

Physical or “active” recreation is a physical activity that a person voluntarily undertakes in their leisure time for the purpose of mental and/or physical satisfaction. It is often associated with fun and play.¹

Physical recreation is different from sport. The primary focus of sport is physical exertion, skill and/or hand-eye coordination. Sport also involves elements of competition where rules and patterns of behaviour governing the activity exist formally through organisations.² Note that it is often not possible to classify activities as either sport or recreation as many activities can be undertaken as either.

People are more likely to be physically active if it provides them with personal satisfaction. Physical recreation therefore has an important role in increasing the physical activity levels of Western Australians.

POPULAR RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Recreation covers a range of physical activities, ranging from low to high intensity activity.

Popular activities for Western Australians aged 18 years and over³

In 2006, walking for recreation was the most popular physical activity for Western Australians aged 18 years and over. Other popular recreational activities included swimming/ surfing and aerobics. Note that the participation rates below may comprise participation for sport as well as recreation unless the activity is stated as recreation.

Participation in popular physical recreation activities: Western Australians aged 18 years and over – 2006

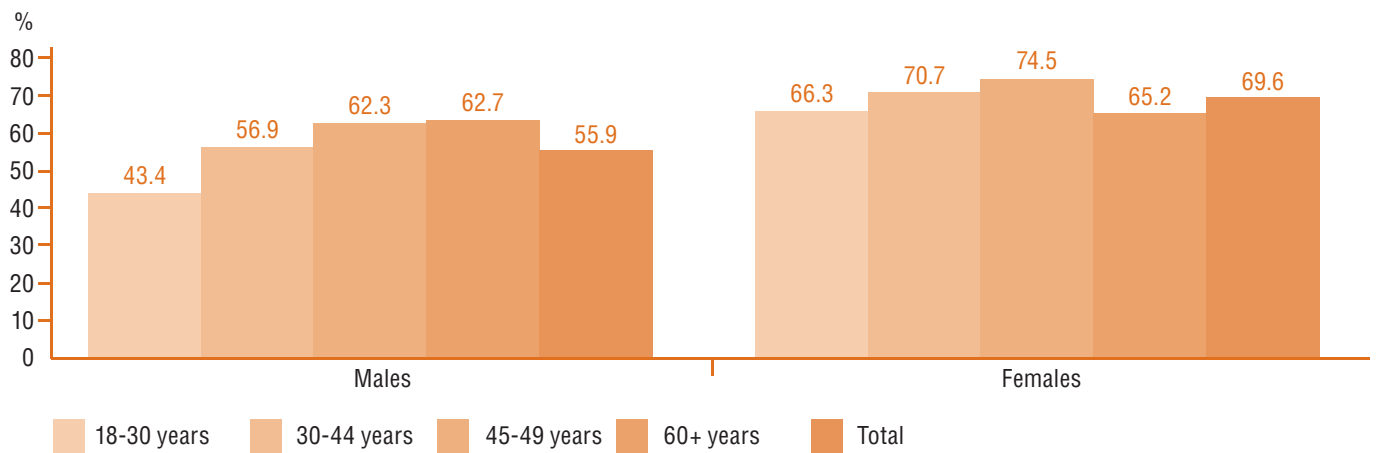
Activity	Males (%)	Females (%)
Walking for recreation	55.9	69.6
Swimming/surfing	13.2	14.9
Aerobics	7.8	17.6
Jogging/running	12.5	9.5
Cycling for recreation	11.2	7.5
Golf	9.4	2.6
Weights	11.8	4.9
Tennis	3.9	3.1

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Walking and cycling for recreation⁴

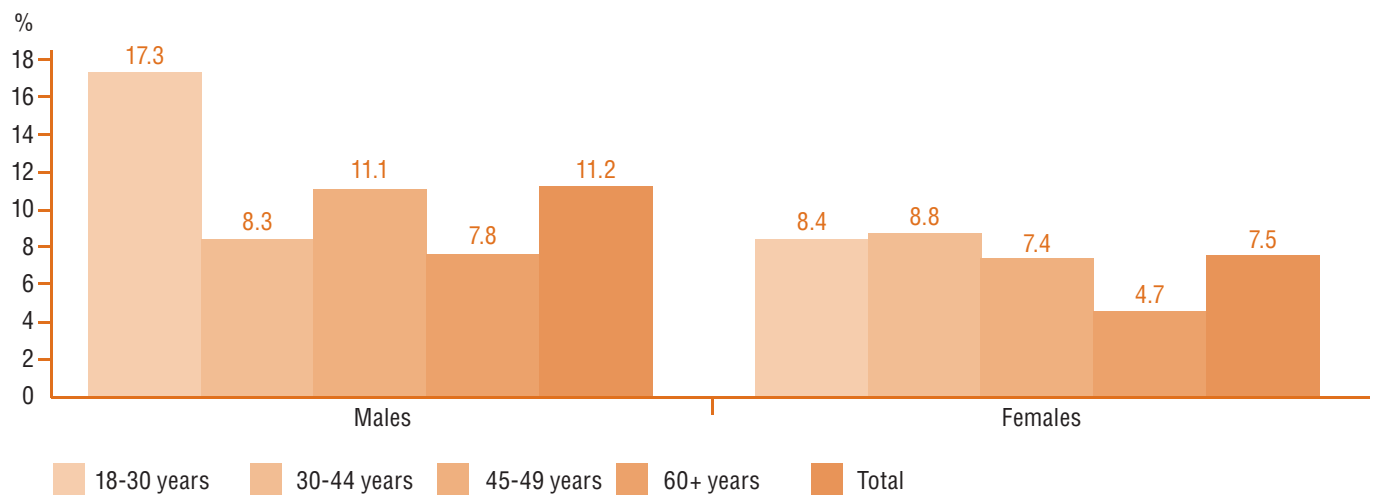
In 2006 participation in walking for recreation was higher for females than males. Rates of participation generally increased with advancing age, with the exception of women aged 60 years and over.

Participation in walking for recreation by age and sex: Western Australia – 2006



Participation in cycling for recreation was generally higher for males than females.

Participation in cycling for recreation by age and sex: Western Australia – 2006



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Facilities used for physical activity⁵

Physical recreation can be undertaken in a variety of places. In 2006, streets/ footpaths were the most popular places for both men and women aged 18 years and over to be physically active.

Women were more likely than men to use cycle/ walk paths (26.6% compared to 22.7%) while men were more likely to exercise at the beach (13.3% compared to 9.6% of women).

Facilities used for physical activity: Western Australians aged 18 years and over – 2006

Facility	Males (%)	Females (%)
Street/footpath	48.1	49.1
Home	45.1	50.2
Cycle/walk path	22.7	26.6
Gym	19.1	24.8
Public park	18.6	17.5
Beach	13.3	9.6

Popular activities for Western Australians aged 15 years and over⁶

In 2006, popular recreational activities for Western Australians aged 15 years and over included aerobics/ fitness, swimming and golf. Note that the participation rates below include a combination of sport and recreation.

Participation in popular physical recreation activities: Western Australians aged 15 years and over – 2006^(a)

Activity	Number of people	Proportion (%)
Aerobics/fitness	222,800	14.3
Swimming	155,100	9.9
Cycling	133,600	8.6
Golf	97,300	6.2
Bushwalking	38,500	2.5
Surf sports	30,900	2.0
Fishing	28,000	1.8
Yoga	27,400	1.8
Dancing	22,800	1.5
Sailing	14,500	0.9

(a) People who participated in the 12 months to survey

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Employment in recreation⁷

In 2006, the most popular recreation occupation was fitness instructor.

Employment in recreation, selected occupations: Western Australia –2006

Occupation	Number (WA)	Number (Australia)
Fitness instructor	1,395	13,799
Lifeguard	327	2,595
Recreation officer	207	2,061
Fitness centre manager	176	1,665
Outdoor adventure instructor	65	834
Diving instructor (open water)	55	541

Children’s participation in physical recreation⁸

Popular recreation activities for children aged 5 to 14 years include bike-riding, skateboarding and rollerblading.

In 2006, the proportions of children aged 5 to 14 years in Western Australia who participated in bike riding and skateboarding or rollerblading were higher for males than females.

Participation in physical recreation activities, children aged 5 to 14 years by sex: Western Australia – 2006^(a)

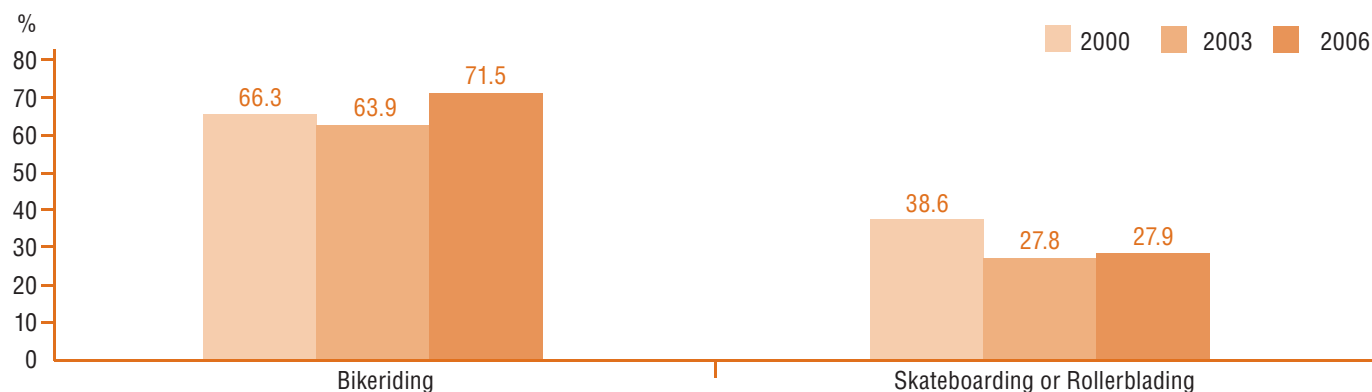
Activity	Males (%)	Females (%)	Total (%)
Bike riding	78.8	63.9	71.5
Skateboarding or rollerblading	35.3	20.1	27.9

(a) Proportion who participated in the 12 months to survey

Children’s participation over time^{9,10, 11}

From 2000 to 2006, the participation rate for bike riding increased while for skateboarding or rollerblading it decreased.

Participation in physical recreation activities for children aged 5 to 14 years: Western Australia – 2000, 2003, 2006



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Endnotes

- ¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2008). Discussion paper: defining sport and exercise, a conceptual model. (Cat. no. 4149.0). Canberra, Australian Capital Territory. p7-10.
- ² Ibid.
- ³ Milligan, R., McCormack, G. R., Rosenberg, M. (2007). Physical Activity Levels of Western Australian Adults 2006. Results from the Adult Physical Activity Survey. Perth, Western Australia: Western Australian Government. p33.
- ⁴ Ibid. p33.
- ⁵ Ibid. p34.
- ⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2007). Participation in Sports and Physical Recreation. (Cat. no. 4177.0). Canberra, Australian Capital Territory. p28.
- ⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2008). Employment in sport, Australia. (Cat. no. 4148.0). data cube: Excel spreadsheet. Viewed 28/04/2008. <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/4148.0Aug%202006?OpenDocument>
- ⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2006). Children's participation in cultural and leisure activities. (Cat. no. 4901.0), 'State Table 1 – Summary of Activities - By States or territories– 2006', data cube: Excel spreadsheet. Viewed 10/03/2008. [http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/ausstats/subscriber.nsf/0/738B8C563531F5ACCA257260001112C7/\\$File/49010_state_table1.xls](http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/ausstats/subscriber.nsf/0/738B8C563531F5ACCA257260001112C7/$File/49010_state_table1.xls)
- ⁹ Ibid.
- ¹⁰ Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2003). Children's participation in cultural and leisure activities. (Cat. no. 4901.0). Canberra, Australian Capital Territory. p30.
- ¹¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2000). Children's participation in cultural and leisure activities. (Cat. no. 4901.0). Canberra, Australian Capital Territory. p29.