



Bill Paying Survey

February 2014



Research Summary

This survey was conducted by telephone over the period February 21-23 2014 among a national sample of 1,201 people aged 18 years and over. The results have been post-weighted to Australian Bureau of Statistics data to reflect the population distribution for age, sex, area and highest level of schooling completed. Results based on the total sample have a maximum margin of error of plus or minus 3 per cent.

Responsibility for paying bills

Most people aged 18 years and over have responsibility for paying some type of household or personal bills. Bill paying responsibility is slightly more prevalent among women (88%) than men (83%).

“Thinking now about bills you receive and payments you make. Are you personally responsible for paying any household bills or personal bills?”

Based on all aged 18+	TOTAL	MALES	FEMALES
n=	1201	602	599
	%	%	%
Yes \ am	85	83	88
No	14	16	12
Don't know	*	1	0

● ● Significantly higher/lower than others

Frequency pay bills late

Half of all bill payers say they pay bills late, even if only rarely. A small group of about one-in-ten say they are regularly late.

People over the age of 65 are the most diligent in paying bills on time, while paying bills late is most common among people aged 35 to 49, and people from middle to higher income households.

About Fox Symes

Fox Symes is the premier debt relief company in Australia. It is a wholly owned subsidiary of FSA Group Limited, a public company listed on the Australian Stock Exchange. Fox Symes helps people manage their debt by restructuring their current situation. It is not a bank, financial institution or law firm. Since 2000 Fox Symes has helped thousands of Australians work their way through debt.

The small group of *regular* late payers is evident across all age groups under 65, and all household income groups.

“How often, if ever, do you pay bills late – that is, pay them after the due date? Would it be...?”

Based on bill payers	TOTAL	AGE			
		18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
n=	1043	187	310	258	288
	%	%	%	%	%
Regularly	7	10	10	6	1
Occasionally	18	17	26	20	5
Rarely	26	28	30	29	15
Total ever pay late	51	55	66	55	22
Or, are you never late paying your bills	49	45	34	44	78

Based on bill payers	TOTAL	HOUSEHOLD INCOME		
		<\$50k	\$50K-\$89K	\$90K+
n=	1043	296	220	374
	%	%	%	%
Regularly	7	10	10	5
Occasionally	18	17	18	20
Rarely	26	18	30	32
Total ever pay late	51	45	58	57
Or, are you never late paying your bills	49	55	42	43

● ● Significantly higher/lower than others

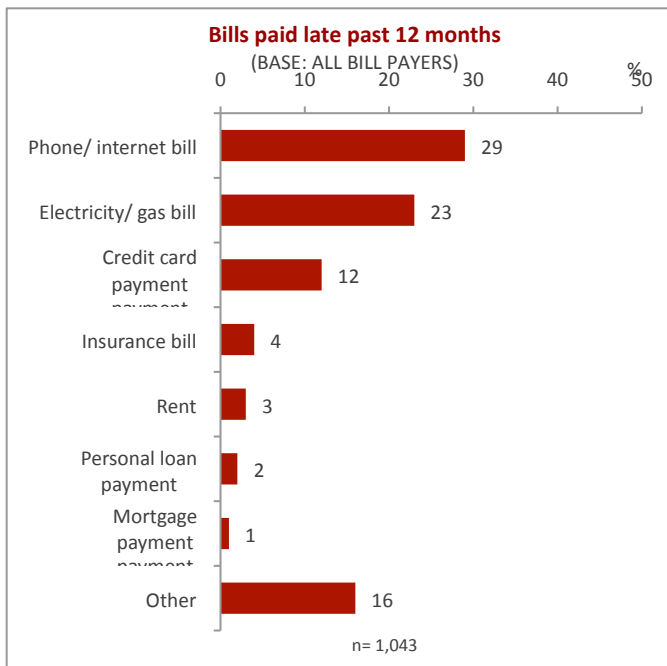
● ● Significantly higher/lower than others

Types of bills paid late in past 12 months

The types of bills most commonly reported as being paid late over the past 12 months are phone or internet bills (29%) along with electricity or gas bills (23%). About one-in-ten of all bill payers also say they have been late with a credit card payment.

Late payment of telecommunications bills is most common among people under the age of 50.

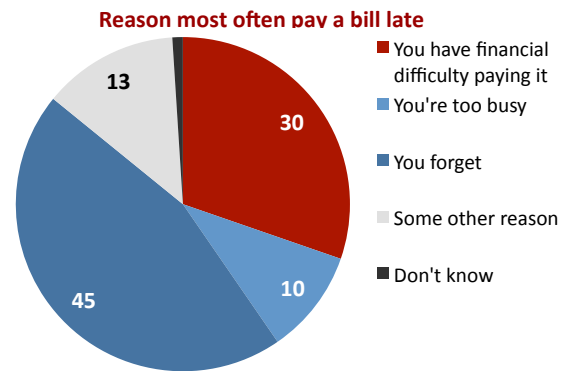
“In the past 12 months, which of the following types of bills have you paid late? Firstly, have you been late paying...?”



Main reason pay bills late

About a third of late payers cite financial difficulty as the most common reason for their lateness, while another 55% say it is usually because they have been too busy or have simply forgotten. Financial difficulties are more prevalent among late payers from middle to lower income households (under \$90,000).

“For which one of the following reasons do you most often pay a bill late? Is it most often because...?”



Based on those pay bills late	TOTAL	HOUSEHOLD INCOME	
		<\$90k	\$90K+
<i>n=</i>	518	246	214
	%	%	%
You have financial difficulty paying it	30	47	12
You're too busy	10	6	16
You forget	45	35	57
Or, is it generally some other reason	13	11	13
None / don't know	1	1	2

● ● Significantly higher/lower than others

Based on bill payers	TOTAL	AGE			
		18-34	35-49	50-64	65+
<i>n=</i>	1043	187	310	258	288
	%	%	%	%	%
Any sort of phone or internet bill	29	38	38	26	8
An electricity or gas bill	23	24	30	25	8
A credit card payment	12	6	20	16	5
An insurance bill	4	4	5	6	1
Rent	3	5	3	1	0
A payment on a personal loan	2	5	3	1	0
A mortgage payment	1	1	2	1	0
Or, late paying some other type of bill	16	13	25	20	6

Ordering credit reports

Relatively few people, 8%, say they have ever ordered a copy of their credit report, though the incidence is a little higher among people aged 35 to 49 and among those from higher income households.

“Now thinking about credit reports, which indicate if you are a good credit risk or bad credit risk, and can be obtained from an independent credit reporting agency. Have you personally ever ordered a copy of your own credit report from a credit reporting agency?”

	TOTAL	AGE		
<i>Based on all aged 18+</i>		18-34	35-49	50+
<i>n=</i>	1201	245	354	602
	%	%	%	%
Yes \ have	8	7	13	5
No	91	92	86	94
Don't know	1	1	1	1

	TOTAL	HOUSEHOLD INCOME		
<i>Based on all aged 18+</i>		<\$50k	\$50K-\$89K	\$90K+
<i>n=</i>	1201	324	244	438
	%	%	%	%
Yes \ have	8	6	7	11
No	91	93	93	89
Don't know	1	1	*	*

● ● Significantly higher/lower than others