

Pink Tax: A Study of Gendered Price Discrimination in Australia

Interim Report November 2025

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Executive Summary

This is the first significant research study on Pink Tax to be undertaken in Australia.

It is the first study globally to give an insider analysis into the marketing tactics that businesses use to build Pink Tax into the sale and promotion of their products—**via messaging, design and choice architecture**—in the both the physical and online retail environment.

This research may also be a global first by examining Pink Tax in the context of the broader **external environments** that affect and influence marketing decisions—the political/legal environment, economic, and social/cultural environments.

This release of this interim report in 2025 **marks the 30th anniversary** of the first legislation to prohibit gendered pricing as a form of discrimination. The Gender Tax Repeal Act of California (1995) banned gendered pricing on paid services and gave rise to the term “Pink Tax”.

The full report will be completed in 2026, which marks the **35th anniversary of the first legislation** to be enacted against gendered pricing on both products and services under Deceptive Trade Practices Law, by the small West Pacific Island of Guam.

While Australia has anti-discrimination and human rights laws, as well as consumer protection and fair-trading laws, **Pink Tax legislation has not been introduced in Australia.**

This lack of legislation to specifically prohibit discriminatory gendered pricing, partnered with a lack of public, media and academic interest in Pink Tax, has allowed discriminatory pricing practices to proliferate largely unnoticed and undeterred.

This research investigates the prevalence of Pink Tax in Australia in 2025-2026 via a study of the top **20+ national retailers, 20+ major brands and 100+ of their everyday consumer products.**

For the first time, this research puts a **current Australian dollar estimate** on the financial cost of Pink Tax for Australian women. Based on the latest available US benchmark and adjusting for the Australian dollar and inflation:

Australian women typically pay \$4,300 more per year than men for equivalent goods and services—amounting to \$360,000 over the average woman’s lifetime.

While this figure does not include the additional financial losses and burdens experienced by Australian women, these additional factors are identified in this report.

This report also outlines a set of recommendations for tackling Pink Tax and putting a stop to this unacceptable and possibly unlawful form of gender discrimination.

Version History

Content and updates are being added to this Interim Report by the researcher on a regular basis until publication of the pending final report of the same name by the same researcher in 2026.

The Version History below and Contents to Date on the following page are updated accordingly.

Updated versions of this Interim Report are available to download as a free pdf document via <https://karenbijkersma.com.au/pink-tax-campaign>

The current version history is also included in a footnote on each page of this report.

12 Feb 2026 Version 3 Interim Report

11 Dec 2025 Version 2 Interim Report

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Acknowledgements

I acknowledge the elders past and present of [Naarm](#), the land on which this report was researched and written. I acknowledge the [Boon Wurrung and Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung peoples](#) of the Kulin Nation as traditional custodians, recognizing their unceded sovereignty, enduring culture, and connection to the land and waterways. First Nations sovereignty of this land was never ceded.

I would like to thank and acknowledge all the women who before me, have researched and reported on Pink Tax and gendered marketing in academic papers, books, media articles, podcasts, social media and any other format.

Special recognition goes to Frances Cerra Whittelsey, author of “Why Women Pay More: How to Avoid Marketplace Perils” and “Why Women Pay More and How to Stop It” 1993, United States, and researcher and co-author Marcia Carroll. I would also like to thank their colleagues Ralph Nader from The Centre for Study of Responsive Law and Nancy Easton, author of “Women Take Charge: Asserting Your Rights in The Marketplace”. I am still trying to locate a copy of Easton’s book but judging by the title, I love it already.

Thank you all from the Study of Responsive Law for your responsiveness in recognising and tackling gender discrimination in 1993 by advancing awareness of discriminatory gendered marketing and resourcing women with the legal and consumer rights tools to tackle this problem. I lament that we’ve barely moved the dial since 1993 but we will never stop working on improving equality and fairness for women.

I would like to acknowledge and thank former Prime Minister of Australia Julia Gillard and former Premier of Victoria Joan Kirner for breaking through the glass walls of Parliament House in Canberra and Melbourne and for the advances you have made and continue to make for women in Australia.

I particularly thank and acknowledge Julia Gillard for the “[Not Now, Not Ever](#)” speech in Parliament in 2012, which is revolutionary for women and showed women and girls the world over how to stand up against misogyny.

My daughter, Yasmine Lester, by whom I am deeply and profoundly inspired. Thank you for sharing your incredible understanding and insights into women’s rights, human rights and animal rights—and by your innate kindness and care for all living creatures and our environment. You are the living embodiment of what this world needs to recover and progress and be a better place for everyone.

I am so grateful for you in some many ways, not least of all for your support and encouragement with my work as a feminist and humanist. I am so proud of the person you are and are yet to become. You give me hope for the future.

Citations

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1. Quoting, referencing, sharing and distributing this report in part or in full is encouraged by the researcher and author in the interests of raising awareness and advocating for the elimination of Pink Tax and Gendered Discrimination against women (ie, girls and women and those who identify and/or present as girls and women); and
2. Quoting, referencing sharing and distribution of this report in part or in full is particularly encouraged for individual, groups and organisations who are:
women’s advocates and allies, consumer advocates, human rights advocates, aspiring good corporate citizens and their associates, legal advocates, members of the legal profession, government and legislature, government agencies, elected representatives, academics, teachers, students and community leaders

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The book version of this report “Pink Tax in Australia” by Karen Bijkersma is due to be published as a physical book and ebook in late 2026.

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Summary of Fieldwork Results

Pink Tax by Retailer

Number of Pink Tax products found for sale by the top 20+ retailers in Australia with both a physical and online store:

	Retailer/Pink Tax products	None 0	A few 1-5	Some 5-10	Many 10+
1	Aldi (Aldi Süd)	✓			
2	Apple (Apple)	✓			
3	Big W (Woolworths Group)				✓
4	Bunnings (Wesfarmers)		✓		
5	Chemist Warehouse (Sigma Healthcare)				✓
6	Coles (Coles Group)				✓
7	Costco (Costco Wholesale)		✓		
8	Harvey Norman (Harvey Norman Holdings)	✓			
9	IGA (Metcash Trading Limited)		✓		
10	JB HiFi (JB Hi fi Limited)	✓			
11	Kmart (Wesfarmers)		✓		
12	Officeworks (Wesfarmers)		✓		
13	Priceline (Wesfarmers)		✓		
14	Spotlight (Spotlight Group Holdings)		✓		
16	Target (Wesfarmers)		✓		
17	The Reject Shop (Dollarama)	✓			
18	Woolworths (Woolworths Group)				✓
	Other retailers include:				
19	Alliance Pharmacy		✓		
20	Bonds	✓			
21	House of Uniforms		✓		
22	LEGO				✓
23	Noone Imagewear			✓	

Pink Tax Product Categories

Product categories with Pink Tax included in this research:

	Product Category	Pink Tax
1	Baby products including nappies	
2	Clothing	
3	Costumes	
4	Crafting products	
5	Electronics	
6	Footwear	
7	Funeral urns & caskets	
8	Garden tools	
9	Haircare	
10	Healthcare products (over the counter)	
11	Incontinence products	
12	Maternity products	
13	Menopause	
14	Mobile phones & accessories	
15	Personal grooming products (hair, shaving, deodorant, facial moisturiser etc)	
16	Period pain products	
17	Petcare & toys	
18	School uniforms	
19	Sporting goods	
20	Stationery	
21	Toys	
22	Computers and IT products	
23	Vitamin Supplements	
24	Work uniforms	

Pink Tax Products by Popular Brand

Popular brands with Pink Tax included in this research:

	Brand	Pink Tax
1	Apple	
2	Bic	
3	Bisley	
4	Bonds	
5	Cenovis	
6	Deep Heat	
7	Dencorub	
8	Depends	
9	Disney	
10	Fiskars	
11	Gillette	
12	Head & Shoulders	
13	Jean Paul Gaultier	
14	LEGO	
15	L'Oreal	
16	Naprogesic	
17	Nivea	
18	Palmolive	
19	Ponstan	
20	Noone Imagewear	
21	Rexona	
22	Rubies	
23	Samsung	
24	Schick	
25	Tena	
26	Tough Hands	

See Appendices A, B and C for detailed findings and case studies.

Retailer Report cards [in progress]

Pink Tax Report Card: successes



Pink Tax Report Card: Could Do Better



Pink Tax Report Card: fails



The third group has an abundance of Pink Tax, both instore and online.

Cost of Pink Tax for Australian Women

Until now, there have been no accurate and current dollar figures put on Pink Tax in Australia. The figures in this report on page [tba] are the first.

Researchers and media reporters in Australia and elsewhere in the world are still relying on and estimates of the cost of Pink Tax in the United States, in US dollars, from 1995.

The current Pink Tax estimate

The figure most widely quoted in Australia, the United States and beyond is the 1994/1995 figure of \$1351 US. It commonly appears in the Australian media as “\$1351”, “around \$1350” or “around \$1300”, without being converted to Australian dollars.

Not only is this one-third less than the Australian rate of conversion from US dollars (currently \$1.41), the static figure of \$1351 not include inflation since 1994/95—either within the US or Australia.

Also, using US cost estimates does not account for price differences between the US and Australian marketplace. A calculation based on US prices does not factor in the higher retail prices that we pay in Australia, which is especially the case in rural areas. To give an extreme example, in September 2023, the price for a whole watermelon in the Northern Territory was \$35. More typically, a basket of basic essential food items can [cost double](#) in some remote areas compared to Australian major capital cities, especially in remote Indigenous communities.

The figure of \$1,351, which is in US dollars, comes from the “[Gender Discrimination in the Pricing and Availability of Products and Services](#)” Senate Committee hearing that lead to the introduction of the California Gender Repeal Act, 1994.

This figure was quoted in the 2015 report, “[From Cradle to Cane: The Cost of Being a Female Consumer, A Study of Gender Pricing in New York City](#)”, which is a New York City Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) study into Pink Tax.

“From Cradle to Cane” soon becomes very familiar to any researcher of Pink Tax in the US, Australia or elsewhere in the world, as it is the most cited source of the \$1351 figure (and it’s rounded down versions).

Because this report was published in 2015, the majority of reports and media articles across all media formats who wish to put a date to the \$1351 figure commonly cite 2015, as though the timing has somehow been “refreshed” by the DCA report’s 2015 publication.

However, “From Cradle to Cane” clearly states in the text that the figure is from 1995 and provides the details in a footnote directly below. Online, this footnote links directly to the source: the California State Senate Committee hearing “[Gender Discrimination in the Pricing and Availability of Products and Services](#)” 1994.

This figure is still quoted in the US, Australia and other countries more than thirty-five years after it was circulated. A survey of Pink Tax in the Australian Media on page [tba] in this report shows the number of articles that cite this figure as a being from 1995, 2015, or with no year or timeframe at all.

The most recent available estimate of the cost of Pink Tax for women is the 2020 estimate (calculated in 2019 and cited in February 2020) included in the Background Paper for the California Senate Select Committee on Women, Work & Families and Legislative Women’s Caucus, “[The ‘Pink Tax’: How Gender-Based Pricing Discrimination Undermines Women's Economic Opportunity and What to Do About It](#)”.

How the updated estimate in the California Senate Select Committee was arrived at is explained as follows: “Evidence from many sources—government, academic, and media—suggests that the pink tax is no trifle. Studies have shown that, year after year, a typical California woman pays about \$2,381 more for the same goods and services than her male counterpart. If that estimate is accurate, then the average California woman pays pink tax of approximately \$188,000 over the course of her lifetimes and, in aggregate, the pink tax penalizes women across California to the tune of roughly \$47 billion each year.”

However, the footnote to this figure and the paper itself tells us that this estimate from the California State Senates is simply adjusted from the 1994 California figure of \$1,351.

The 2020 background paper explains, “The figure cited in the analysis refers to evidence presented at a 1994 interim hearing on gender discrimination in the pricing of products and services conducted by the Assembly Consumer Protection, Governmental Efficiency & Economic Development Committee, California. That figure was \$1,351 annually in 1994, or \$2,381 adjusted for inflation, based on the current female life expectancy in the United States of 79 years.

The 1995 US cost estimate, summarily updated in 2020, is the most current indicator of the cost of Pink Tax that we have available to government, the legal profession, researchers, the media, women’s advocates, consumer advocates, human rights advocates and other interested parties in Australia, as no significant Pink Tax price survey has ever been conducted in Australia.

Pink Tax figures quoted in the Australian Media [in progress]

As stated above, the Australian media relies on the 1994 Pink Tax estimate of US \$1351 (or around \$1350 or around \$1300) and does not always provide the relevant date for this figure—be it 1994, 1995, 2015 or the omission of a date altogether.

Without interviewing the authors of these media articles, stories, podcasts etc, and receiving a truthfully unabashed answer, we cannot know whether this promulgation of misinformation is due to laziness, apathy, professional embarrassment or circular reading.

It is interesting to note that while this cost is a gross underestimation which does a disservice to women by underestimating the cost and therefore the impact of Pink Tax on Australian women, it is a figure that still shocks and convinces both reporters and their audiences.

Examples of Pink Tax reports in the Australian media [in progress]

Australian expat Georgia King, copywriter and former podcaster of “She’s On The Money” used the \$1351 US figure from 1994 in the 23 September 2020 episode “The Pink Tax” saying, “Hypothetically, if I took my thirteen hundred dollars each and every single year that I was paying on pink products, I would actually have, over the next thirty years, guess what—\$236,000 [after it having being] invested for thirty years.”¹

Financial Columnist Money Columnist and retired financial adviser Victoria Devine, who has taken over as host of the “She’s On The Money” podcast, referenced the 2020 US figure in 2024 in her Sydney Morning Herald opinion piece of 29 September, “ACCC, while you’re at it, why do pink razors cost more than blue ones?”²

“In 2020, a California senate committee investigating the issue estimated the pink tax will cost the average [Australian] woman around \$270,000 across her lifetime.” This appears to be a direct conversion to Australian dollars, which Devine does not explain, but at least the effort to make the figure relevant has been made. This article is a rare example of a media reporter making that conversion from US to AUD.

Devine adds, “Bear in mind, that’s just the mark-ups we’ll have to pay on products [and services] that both men and women use—it does not include what we shell out for gender-specific items such as sanitary products or bras.” While not providing an estimate for these biologically necessary products, it is helpful that Devine pointed out that there is more to Pink Tax than the extra charge at the checkout on pink-taxed products.

See also Evaluating the cost of Pink Tax—other contributing factors on page [tba].

The third piece is written by three finance lawyers, By Alyssa Whiffin, Michelle Tan, and Leah Ahokav for Lawyers Weekly on 20 May 2024. Their article, “Pink Tax: Why is gender-based pricing discrimination legal?”³ provides an excellent summary of the current legal status of Pink Tax in Australia, the steps have been taken to address it, and the next steps towards the introduction of legal protections.

However, while the legal aspects of this article are very well considered and presented, the three lawyers do not take the same care with the cost of Pink Tax for Australian women. This article, published in 2024 uses the US \$1300 figure from 1994-1995, not the updated US figure from 2020, with no attempt to convert to Australian dollars.

This article does not provide a source, link or footnote for the figure—the source is simply delivered as “one estimate”, which is insufficient for an article that is otherwise much more substantial.

Quoting outdated and unconverted figures is commonplace in the lightweight “fluff pieces” on Pink Tax that form the majority of online articles. These short fluff pieces use vague references to sources, such as “one estimate” or “studies show”. Apparently this is acceptable in “women’s media”, although the opinion of readers is not known and is outside the focus of this research.

It is notable to this researcher at least, that the podcaster, the opinion piece writer and the three lawyers who wrote these three Australian media pieces that are above the usual standard of Pink Tax reporting, all five are women.

However, while they have a professional interest as financial advisers and lawyers in being diligent in their presentation of accurate figures, unfortunately all three of these articles—which are the best of the articles that this researcher found in Australia—underestimated and misrepresented the actual cost of Pink Tax in Australia in 2025 or in recent years.

None of the three articles reviewed above provide a current Australian figure, as they did not include all of the following factors: the most recent available US figure, conversion from US to Australian dollars, longer lifespan by five years for Australian women compared to American women, inflation, and/or compound interest on investment when estimating a return on investment.

See Media Coverage on page [tba] for more research and analysis on the media coverage of Pink Tax.

Introducing a current and accurate Australian dollar estimate

This Pink Tax research study focuses on Pink Tax applied to everyday products and services that are widely available from the major brands and retailers in Australia and that are relevant to the daily lives of most Australian women.

One of the most common defences of Pink Tax is to point to women who “choose to spend more than men”, especially when it comes to high-end fashion labels on items such as clothing, accessories, cosmetics, fragrances and beauty products and services.

However, this claim, along with the claim that women pay more because they care more, has not been published in a research study of substance. It may exist in the small focus group studies and market research surveys undertaken by specific brands—which becomes hearsay in the community after being promoted in advertisements and the media.

This research studies Pink Tax added to everyday products from broadly popular brands available from the top twenty-plus retailers in Australia. The retailers included in this study are lower to mid-priced retailers, and the products in this survey are in the low- to mid-price range.

See also Disclaimers on page [tba] for exclusions in this Pink Tax research and its accompanying cost estimate.

To fully understand the extent of Pink Tax in Australia, it would be extremely helpful to have a current and accurate Australian dollar amount based on extensive, high-quality Australian research.

It is woefully insufficient for Australian researchers and advocates to have to rely on US figures, which as previously stated, stem from the research undertaken in one major US city in 1994. No US estimate on the cost of Pink Tax for Australian women can factor in the market conditions and other environmental marketing factors that affect prices and the value of the dollar in Australia.

However, as the 2020 \$2381 US figure based on the 1994-1995 \$1351 US figure is still the most accurate starting point currently available to Australian researchers and reporters.

While it is sub-optimal, this pre-existing US figure can be significantly improved upon by using it as the starting point for additional calculations that include all of the relevant factors that are usually omitted, as previously stated. These include:

1. conversion from US to Australian dollars
2. annual inflation
3. longer lifespan for Australian women compared to American women

These three factors are included in the researcher's best efforts to calculate a current, more accurate Australian figure as following.

Note: this adjusted figure does not include future inflation, loss of potential interest or returns on savings or investments. These come with too many variables to provide an accurate figure.

Nor does it include the cost of period products, bras and other products and services that are specific to women. See additional exclusions under Evaluating the cost of Pink Tax—other contributing factors on page [tba].

1. Conversion to Australian dollars

The average conversion rate from USD to AUD for the period 1994 to 2025 was \$1.54

\$2,381 US to \$AUD @ conversion rate of \$1.54 = \$3,660 AUD

2. Annual inflation from 1995 to present.

As it is not known what the rate of inflation has been applied to the US figure of \$1351 in 1994-1995 to arrive at the 2019 figure of \$2381 US, it is not possible to recalculate this at an Australian rate of inflation. Therefore the calculation of inflation is split as follows:

US average annual inflation from 1995 to 2019 included in the starting figure of \$2381 US
Australian average annual inflation from 2020 to 2025 applied to the converted \$3660 AUD

With Australian inflation added from 2019 to 2025 (compounded at the average rate of 3.21%pa), this figure increases to \$4,299.

\$3660 + 5 years compounded inflation @ 3.21% pa = \$4299

Pink Tax costs Australian women around \$4300 per year.

This updated Australian figure of \$4299 rounded to \$4300 can now be used for a range of calculations including the following:

$\$4300 \div 365 \text{ days pa} = \11.77 per day

Pink Tax costs Australian women around \$12 per day.

Based on the current female life expectancy in Australia of 84 years, which is five years more than the US life expectancy, this amounts to \$361,200 (without compound interest or return on investments)

$\$4300 \times 84 = \$361,200$

Pink Tax costs Australian women \$360,000 on average over their lifetime.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the female population in Australia in 2025 is approximately 13.6 million—50.4% or just over half of the total population. Each year, women are paying \$58.48 billion a year more than men for the same, equivalent or lesser products.

$13.6 \text{ million} \times \$4300 = \$58.48 \text{ billion}$

Pink Tax costs Australian women around \$60 billion per year.

Cost of Pink Tax in Australia 2025

Pink Tax costs Australian women around \$4300 per year.

Pink Tax costs Australian women around \$12 per day.

Pink Tax costs Australian women \$360,000 on average over their lifetime.

Pink Tax costs Australian women around \$60 billion per year.

Calculated by Karen Bijkersma "Pink Tax: A Study of Gendered Price Discrimination in Australia" 2025. Based on the \$2381 US 2020 cost of Pink Tax in the US calculated in 2019, that was based on the \$1351 US 1995 cost calculated in 1994 by the California State Senate, plus Australian inflation from 1995 to 2025 <https://karenbijkersma.com.au/pink-tax-campaign>

Evaluating the cost of Pink Tax—other contributing factors

A true annual and lifetime calculation of the cost of Pink Tax to women would require a calculation of the cost of the following financial barriers for women, which is beyond the scope of this research:

- Pink Tax paid on products and services
- cost of products and services specific to women (ie, biological cost of puberty, contraception, pregnancy, breastfeeding, menopause including peri- and post-menopause)
- higher usage and costs of healthcare
- future inflation on those costs
- loss of potential interest on savings on that money
- loss of potential investments from that money
- gender pay gap
- effect on superannuation
- cost of caring roles

- cost of unpaid labour
- lower rate of home ownership than men
- cost of five extra years of longevity compared to men
- intergenerational wealth gap (less funds to bequeath to the next generation)

Additionally, some women experience:

- intergenerational wealth gap (inheritance laws and traditions that benefit sons at the expense of daughters)
- domestic violence including financial abuse
- elder abuse including financial abuse
- slavery

At the current snail's pace, according to the World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Index, this will take a minimum of around 150 years to equalize. The United Nations Gender Snapshot 2022 put this figure at 300 years.

As the 2020 California Senate Select Committee briefing paper points out, it must also be noted that Pink Tax has intersectional and compound effects that further penalise women.

“Combined with other forms of financial discrimination—such as the pay gap—the pink tax helps to form a set of insidious and systematic barriers against equal economic opportunity for women, barriers that are even higher for women of color.”

When we consider the physical and mental toll that these financial barriers have on women, the costs are even more incalculable and complex, and increasingly difficult to separate from Poverty Tax.

Recommendations

“The solution is not to change consumer behaviour—it is to change business practices.”

Karen Bijkersma, November 2025

It will take a highly strategic, well-coordinated and sustained effort to combat Pink Tax, especially as efforts to eradicate it will be met with strong resistance from well-resourced companies and their business community—including their best cashed-up lawyers—who have the advantage of having fine-tuned their tactics and defences over the last three decades since Pink Tax was recognised as a problem.

This independent research report provides a solid background and base to start from, but at the time of release in November 2025 it is limited by resources, including human resources. Expanding on the research in this report, which is highly recommended by this researcher, will require significant additional resources and expertise, including legal expertise.

So the first recommendation in this study is that a full-scale, in-depth, national research study be made into the current state of Pink Tax in Australia, how we got here and how we get past this problem.

This research will be essential because tackling Pink Tax will require a well-informed, in-depth knowledge and understanding of business and marketing practices, strategies and tactics, consumer demographics and media usage, and business and consumer law.

Then, because changing the behaviour of business to behave ethically cannot be left to the good conscience of “Good Corporate Citizens”, who are fiercely competitive and highly motivated—and possibly only motivated by profit—this report highlights the need for legal oversight. A lack of oversight and the tied hands of the legal profession and consumer advocates is what got us into this situation in the first place.

That a legal strategy be developed to prohibit Pink Tax in Australia—whether it is visible or hidden—to deter and enforce punishment for what is an unfair, unjustifiable, wrongly lawful but deeply entrenched business practice that continues to exploit women without consequences and almost without comment.

Precisely because business and marketing success entails strategic thinking, a competitive streak and sometimes, nerves of steel, it will take a highly strategic, well-coordinated and well executed plan to reverse, monitor and oversee discriminatory marketing in Australia—not just to end Pink Tax but also as an ongoing commitment to prevent the reemergence of discriminatory marketing practices in the Australian retail environment.

We cannot allow price discrimination to emerge in a new, even more devious ways—ways that are stronger than ever because marketers and their lawyers, accountants and creative talent are very good at putting their heads together and finding strategic and legal loopholes.

A major Pink Tax public education campaign is required to inform consumers, especially the girls and women who are targeted for price discrimination, about the existence of Pink Tax in Australia's retail environment, the strategies and tactics devised to insert it into products and services sold in Australia, and how to look for devious, underhanded tactics that marketers have developed in "the fine art of separating fools from their money", to coin an old adage from the meeting rooms of advertising agencies.

A full-scale consumer education campaign, which also needs to reach into schools, should not only highlight the problem and its methods of execution, but must also inform the community of the ways in which they can take back their power and be instrumental in self-advocating and helping to end to Pink Tax.

Consumer education is only ever part of the equation. This must be supported by strategic action from multiple, united fronts—those powers with the ability and expertise to reform the Australian business community and effect significant lasting change. This is the responsibility of government, legislative and legal reform bodies, consumer advocates and women's advocates—with support from the media.

The pressure on business needs to come from all possible sides and must be legal and financial to be effective. The competitive environment and community desire for social change are not enough to deter unscrupulous businesses from discriminatory, misleading and exploitative practices. This research shows that they are at ease in taking the message of Good Corporate Citizenship and using it as a blatant cover for unacceptable behaviour towards their own customers.

Based on the research in this report, which is undertaken by an insider from the advertising and marketing industry, the following nationwide action is strongly recommended:

- **a major national study** with recommendations for specific legislation
- **a class action in the court system** to establish an effective precedent
- an ACCC investigation under the **Australian Competition and Consumer Act 2010**
- a CHOICE investigation and Designated "Super Complaint"
- greater consumer **awareness and education**
- outreach for support from consumer and women's advocates
- outreach to consumer organisations to include Pink Tax in their assessment criteria for ethical business and ethical shopping guides
- ongoing media support

What can we do from here?

As a consumer

- don't buy pink or blue — buy gender neutral products and support gender-neutral stores
- be vocal – spread the word
- learn who to boycott and who to support
- look out for examples and photograph them to share on social media and complain to businesses

As an Australian campaigner

- lobby Choice do a study
- write to the ACCC
- write to ASIC for suspicious financial market practices
- write to Ministers and the Ombudsman requesting a full study and demanding action
- consider joining petitions and campaigns (eg GetUp, Share the Dignity)
- a Class Action would be nice...
- share examples and news on social media using hashtags
- share your views and experiences with the media

Slide From “Pink Tax” Presentation at SkeptiCon, Melbourne Australia by Karen Bijkersma
October 2025

Appendix A:

Pink-Taxed Products Found in the Australian Marketplace [in progress]

Pink Tax: A Study of Gendered Price Discrimination in Australia

Interim Report November 2025

Karen Bijkersma

Melbourne-Naarm, Australia

Types of Pink Tax Found in the Marketplace

During this research, as certain patterns in marketing tactics became evident, it is possible to distinguish these terms and categorise products accordingly as follows:

- **Pinkflation** – charging more for a feminised version of identical or near-identical products
- **Shrinkflation/ Pink it & Shrink it** – selling less product at the same price or a higher price
- **Pinkification** – making products unnecessarily feminine via colour, fragrance, packaging, size or shape to “justify” higher prices
- **Pink Tax** – any and all of the above

The first two terms are pre-existing. The term “Pinkification” was developed by this researcher as a way of categorising and describing products that appear to be strategically designed to “justify” a higher sales price.

See also [Summary Findings for Research Questions: Question 3. How is Pink Tax applied to retail products and services in Australia?](#)

1. Pinkflation

“The [men’s and women’s product] differences are often created deliberately with the aim of profiteering, not as a result of legitimate and necessary expenses incurred in producing, distributing and promoting a superior and necessary product. Product differences are often simply due to a colour difference, usually pink.”

“From Cradle to Cane, the Cost of Being a Female Consumer: A study of Gender Pricing in New York City” 2015

“Pinkflation” conflates the words “pink” and “inflation” to create a catchy word that is shorthand for a discriminatory price increase—that is, a Pink Tax—on unnecessarily “feminised” products.

Pinkflation is selling two or more identical or substantially similar products, with one of these being “feminised” (while the other is non-gendered or “masculinised”) with the feminised product being sold at a higher price. For example, when the same bike helmet comes in pink and blue, but the pink helmet costs more.

A “Pinkflated” product usually comes in pink or other stereotypically “feminine” colours such as purple or pastel colours, which may also be shiny or sparkly.

Pinkflation is usually too obvious and offensive for today's more aware consumer so there are not many examples of this blatant type of Pink Tax left in Australia.

This researcher's first discovery of a Pink Tax product in the field was in Bunnings with Fiskars "Special Edition" pink pruners (see the first example below). This is an example of the same brand, product being made from the same or very similar materials, with same measurements. The only real difference is the colour. Welcome to the Pink Tax.

It is interesting to note that Fiskars is not an Australian brand.

Pinkflation Examples



Bunnings
\$24.95 Fiskars Pruner Bypass
\$29.95 Fiskars "Special Edition" Pruner Bypass

\$5 Pink Tax



Spotlight
\$40 Fiskars Large Rotary Cutter in white or grey
\$45 Fiskars Large Rotary Cutter in "Ultra Lilac"

\$5 Pink Tax

Noone Imagewear
\$35.95 Skort
\$24.50 Rugby Shorts

\$11.45 Pink Tax



Not only are school uniforms compulsory and expensive, they also incur Pink Tax.

By filling a shopping cart with a basic set of school uniform items for a boy at a typical secondary college and a shopping cart with the equivalent set of school uniform items for a girl at the same school, research shows school uniforms come with Pink Tax.



Noone Imagewear
\$902 Boy's basic set of Secondary College uniform items
\$1076 Girl's basic set of Secondary College uniform items
\$84 Pink Tax

House of Uniforms
\$64.90 Bisley The Stretch Cotton Drill Cargo Cuffed Pant Men's (1)
\$57.20 Bisley The Stretch Cotton Drill Work Pant Men's (2)
\$66.00 Bisley The Mid Rise Stretch Cotton Pant Ladies

\$1.10 Pink Tax (1)

\$8.80 Pink Tax (2)

All three pants are cotton blend and lycra spandex.

House of Uniforms
\$84.70 Bisley The Flex and Move Stretch Short Men's

\$89.10 Bisley The Flex and Move Cargo Short Ladies

\$4.40 Pink Tax|

Officeworks

\$147 Otto Kronborg Ergonomic Chair Blue

\$199 Otto Kronborg Ergonomic Chair Pink

\$52 Pink Tax

Officeworks

\$9.93 Otto Avocado Ceramic Pen Cup

\$10 Otto Unicorn Ceramic Pen Cup

\$0.7 Pink Tax



Alliance Pharmacy

\$17.99 Aero Tape Kinesiology Pro Sports Tape black 5cm x 5m

\$21.99 Rock Tape black 5cm x 5m

\$4.00 Pink Tax

While these sports tapes are two different brands, they are the sports tapes on offer from Alliance Pharmacy. The tapes are the same size and colour and without opening the packages, the products appear to be the same. So it seems that the only difference is the packaging design and the price.

The cheaper product for men is predominantly black with blue with a masculine male, while the more expensive product for women is predominantly white, red and pink with an athletic female. The \$4 price discrepancy can only be explained by and described as Pink Tax.



Big W

\$4 Gloo Power PVA Gloo (blue)

\$6 Gloo Fabric Glue (pink)

\$2 Pink Tax

Gloo from Big W is an example of a pair of identical products being unnecessarily gendered for profit. Both back labels state the contents as 100% PVA glue. The bottle, nozzle and size are the same, but the label colour and messaging are different.

One is pink with features and benefits— described in a traditional, stereotypical way— intended to appeal to women, and the other is blue, with features and benefits intended to appeal to men.

Gloo defies the categories in this report, as it falls somewhere between Pinkflation and the third category, Pinkification.

Period Pain Products

This Pink Tax research does not cover period products, as there are not usually equivalent men's products, and the literal GST on period products was removed in 2019 after many years

of campaigning by women in Australia. Also, Period Tax and Period are very important, far-ranging subjects beyond the scope of this research.

However, marketers have found a way to use periods as a means of extracting Pink Tax. The following products are marketed as being specifically for period pain and have “top of mind awareness” as period pain products. These brands have managed to convey or give the impression that other products that have similar pharmacological effects are not effective or not as effective as these products sold as being specifically for period pain.

Further research into the development of these products and the ways in which they have been packaged, advertised and promoted is beyond the current scope of this project, but would be a valuable exercise.



According to the information on pack, Naprogesic and Ponstan are both Nonsteroidal Anti-inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs)⁴.

NSAIDs include:

Naproxen as in Naprogesic,

Mefenamic acid as in Ponstan

Diclofenac as in Voltarin and any ibuprofen and aspirin

Chemist Warehouse

\$9.99 (\$0.83 ea) Naprogesic 12 tab

\$10.49 (\$0.52 ea) Ponstan 20 cap

Comparison of Period Pain NSAIDs with the cheapest generic alternatives:

\$1.55 (\$0.06 ea) Coles/Woolworths Ibuprofen 24 tab

\$0.95 (\$0.04 ea) Coles/Woolworths Aspirin 24 tab

\$10.49 (\$0.48 ea) or 1200% Pink Tax on Naprogesic

\$9.99 (\$0.46 ea) or 767% Pink Tax on Ponstan

While some consumers may be advised by a medical practitioner to take Naprogesic or Ponstan and not take an alternative, some women may be able to take a cheaper, generic alternative such as ibuprofen or aspirin. This report does not include medical advice. Please consult your medical professionals for advice about medications including over the counter medications.

2. Shrinkflation or “Pink it & Shrink it”

“Pink it or shrink it”—where women pay more for less.

Marketers have worked out that an easy way to “maximise profit margins” is to “diversify” what are essentially the same products by adjusting the quantity (and quality) or volume of women’s products.

By adjusting pack and/or product sizes, businesses can sell women less product by size, number, weight or volume compared to the men’s equivalent—at the same price or at an even higher price.

This is “justified” by the brand companies by the outdated and stereotypical claims that women’s hands are smaller than men’s, which is sometimes but not always true, and/or that women prefer lighter, slimmer, more elegant and “dainty” products. By the same token, men prefer bulkier packs and are presumed to be more motivated by value for money, despite women making 70% of retail purchases.⁵

Identifying Pink Tax products in the Australian retail market requires not taking packaging claims and shelf position at face value, especially when the product is marketed toward women.

Marketers have worked out that an easy way to “maximise profit margins” on a “new product innovation” or “diversification” is to Pink it & Shrink it. By changing the product size, as per the heat patch and ice/heat packs below, they can sell women a same-sized or smaller product than the men’s equivalent to women at the same, or at an even higher price.

Unequal Product sizes

While there may be little difference in the price of purchase between men’s and women’s products, such as \$0.50 difference between the two Gillette and three Schick shaving foam and gel products from Big W below, unit price can make the difference—in other words, the Pink Tax—more obvious.



- \$7.50 (\$3.06 per 100g) Gillette Foam Sensitive Men's 245g (1)
- \$7.50 (\$3.78 per 100g) Schick Hydro Sensitive Shave Gel Men's 198g (2)
- \$7.50 (\$2.25 per 100g) Gillette Foamy Men's 333g (3)

- \$8.00 (\$4.10 per 100g) Schick Silk Shave Gel Sensitive Women's 198g
- \$8.00 (\$4.10 per 100g) Gillette Satin Care Sensitive Women's 195g

(198g and 195g are almost equivalent and are the same price per 100g.)

Pink Tax

- \$0.50 (\$1.04 per 100g) Pink Tax (1)**
- \$0.50 (\$0.32 per 100g) Pink Tax (2)**
- \$0.50 (\$1.85 per 100g) Pink Tax (3)**



Big W

- \$7.50 (\$3.75 per 100 ml) Nad's for Men Hair Removal Cream 200 ml
- \$10.00 (\$6.67 per 100 ml) Nad's Sensitive Hair Removal Cream 150 ml

\$2.50 (\$2.92 per 100ml) Pink Tax



Chemist Warehouse

\$109.99 (\$88.00 per 100 ml) Jean Paul Gaultier Le Male Eau de Toilette 125 ml + shower gel

\$119.99 (\$119.99 per 100 ml) Jean Paul Gaultier Classique for Women 100 ml + body lotion

\$10.00 (\$31.99 per 100ml) Pink Tax

According to the Recommended Retail Price on the price ticket, the price difference in other stores is \$75.01 off RRP and \$110.01 off RRP, making the Pink Tax even higher:

\$185 (\$148 per 100 ml) Jean Paul Gaultier Le Male Eau de Toilette 125 ml + shower gel

\$230 (\$230 per 100 ml) Jean Paul Gaultier Classique for Women 100 ml + body lotion

\$45 (\$82 per 100ml) Pink Tax



Chemist Warehouse

\$8.99 (\$1.49 ea) Back Pain 2 pack (cut to same size as Period Pain product = 6 pack) (1)

\$11.24 (\$0.93 ea) Back Pain 6 pack (cut to same size as Period Pain product = 12 pack) (2)

\$8.99 (\$2.99 ea) Period Pain 3 pack heat patches for period pain

\$1.50 Pink Tax (1) is double the price per unit/100% mark up

\$2.06 Pink Tax (2) is three and a half times the price/150% mark up

Bubba Bump's product range includes an Ice and Heat Pack 2-pack for Breastfeeding women.

Women pay a premium for the pastel product and packaging and square shape, which are very similar to the cheaper, non-gendered blue Ice and heat packs from Relax and Recover. The shape may be more convenient than a rectangle, but these differences do not seem to account for a 20-30% mark up.

Chemist Warehouse

\$42.00 (\$10.50 ea) Relax and Recover Blue Ice & Heat Packs 4 pack (1)

\$30.00 (\$15.00 ea) Relax and Recover Blue Ice & Heat Packs 2 pack (2)

\$35.99 (\$17.99 ea) Bubba Bump Ice and Heat Pack for Breasts 2 pack

\$7.49 ea) Pink Tax (1) 29% mark up

(\$2.99 ea) Pink Tax (2) or 20 % mark up

Unequal Pack Sizes

A common Pink Tax tactic that may be difficult to calculate, especially on the spot, is a difference in quantities or pack sizes. When a value pack or bulk pack is offered on a gendered product, it seems that it is usually the men's product that has the cheaper bulk or added value option while the women's product does not.

This "Pink it & Shrink it" tactic is even more profitable for businesses because it doesn't require changes to the product at all. It just requires new packaging...

...With Schick Xtreme Sensitive disposable razors, the men's version comes in a 12 pack while the women's closest equivalent product comes in a 4 pack, so in this case, women are paying a 120% mark up on each razor, which seems pretty Xtreme.



Kmart

\$4.50 (\$1.12 ea) Schick Xtreme 3 Sensitive Men's Disposable Razors 3 blades 4 pack

\$5.00 (\$1.25 ea) Schick Silk 3 Women Sensitive Disposable Razors 3 blades 4 pack

\$1.00 (\$0.13 ea) Pink Tax



Chemist Warehouse

\$10.99 (\$0.91 ea) Schick Xtreme 3 Sensitive Men's Disposable Razors 3 blades 12 pack

\$5.99 (\$1.99 ea) Schick Silk 3 Women Sensitive Disposable Razors 3 blades 4 pack

\$5.00 (\$1.08 ea) Pink Tax per razor/around 120% mark up per razor

Apart from the use of the word “sensitive”, Schick Xtreme Sensitive is very Kiki name that is intended to be overtly masculine and edgy. The language is direct and “no nonsense”. “Flex to your contours” is a very flattering way of describing a man's face and a feature of the product.

The colour choices are very strong and bold, and it may be a coincidence, but in Australia, green and gold together is both sporty and patriotic. Lines and blocks of colour are hard-edged, and the pack shape is rectangle with hard edges. Altogether, very Kiki.

Silk 3 Sensitive is a very Bouba name. There is a very strong emphasis on curved flowing shapes. In fact there is only one tiny straight edge on the whole pack, located in the background of the “3 blades” circle as a pink strip.

“Flex to your curves” is a very womanly, complimentary way to describe a product feature of flexible razor head, and the typography is set on a curved line.

Pink and white are very traditional colour choices for women, and the new pack has even more pink. There is no mistaking that this pack is intended for women while the Schick Xtreme product is intended for men, attracting a \$1.70 Pink Tax for purely cosmetic design differences* and the addition of vitamin e.

Marketers describe the subtle differences in men’s and women’s shavers as being specifically designed for the differences in men’s and women’s face shapes, hair thickness, hand size and grip and other physiological differences, but are yet to provide independent, scientific evidence of this.



Chemist Warehouse

\$11.99 (\$7.99 per 100g) Tough Scrub Remove Grime, Grease & Odour 150g

\$11.99 (\$7.99 per 100g) Tough Hands Intensive Skin Repair 150g

\$9.99 (\$13.32 per 100g) Tough Hands for Her Intensive Skin Repair 75g

\$2.00 (\$3.33 per 100g) Pink Tax

The price at the register is \$2.00 less for the women’s Tough Hands cream, but at half the size the Pink Tax is \$3.33 per 100grams. The justification may be that women’s hands are half the size of men’s hands, which of course is not true.

The men's products are bright yellow with blue, black, red and white, while the women's product is a pearlescent white with a dark magenta colour. The black and white photos of the hands are uniform across the range but the men's hands are posed in a masculine way—on the skin repair product it is actually a clenched fist—while the women's hand has manicured nails and is in a delicate pose.



Coles

New introductory prices for Tena ProSkin Pants

\$43 (\$3.07 ea) Blue Tena ProSkin Plus Pants 14 pack

\$45 (\$4.50 ea) Pink New Tena ProSkin Maxi Pants 10 pack

\$2.00 (\$1.43 ea) Pink Tax

An extra \$2 for what appears at first glance to be a bigger pack of Tena ProSkin Pants seems legitimate. However on closer inspection, there are 14 pants small pants in the blue pack, and 10 medium pants in the pink pack—making the size and number of pants difficult to compare, but on a total product size in terms of materials, it seems fair that they would be the same price or there may be a very minimal price difference.

Instead, the higher cost of the pink version increases the Pink Tax to \$1.43 per pair of pants.

On even closer inspection, or with enough time spent standing in the aisle looking for more information, it may become apparent this pair of products is suitable for all genders. We are so well trained as consumers that we make automatic assumptions about colours, especially pink and blue, and pay more for pink. This shade of pink has possibly been deliberately chosen to allow for a loophole of “plausible deniability”. Because it is a slightly mauve shade of pink, a marketing executive may defend this design by saying that it’s mauve, not pink.

The pink is slightly stronger in intensity than the blue, and stands out more from the aqua background, drawing the eye to the more expensive pink product.

At a glance, an extra \$2 for what looks like a bigger pack of Tena ProSkin Pants seems legitimate. However, on closer inspection there are 14 pants in the blue pack, and 10 pants in the pink pack, which increases the Pink Tax to \$1.43 per pair of pants.

On even closer inspection, or with enough time spent looking for more information, in this pair of products, both are gender neutral. We are so well trained as consumers that we make automatic assumptions about colours, especially pink and blue, and pay more for pink.

It is obviously designed to be difficult to spot, because it is just another pair of small white shapes among numerous, very similar small white shapes reversed out of a plain background, and if we don't already know about it we won't see it, but there is a pair of symbols for both men and women on the product, under the much more eye-catching liquid drop shapes, informing consumers that both these products are unisex. These are well and truly hidden in plain sight but in a court of law, Tena can assert that the symbols are there, right on the front, with no overlapping graphics.

Marketers know that customers will follow the pink and blue—and that customers will assume there must be some helpful product differences for the different genders based on physiology.

Given the brief time spent standing in the aisle making product comparisons and choices, with the information that has to be absorbed about pack size, product size, level of absorbency and price, which may be rushed due to what some customers might find to be an embarrassing product display to stand in front of, it would be interesting to survey shoppers to find out how many say that the blue pack is for men and the pink pack is for women.

Choice architecture also plays a role in creating understanding or assumptions about which products are designed for men, and which are designed for women. While incontinence pants for both men and women are usually found together in the supermarket aisle, they will be organised on the shelves according to brand and gender. There is no clear “section” of the incontinence products display that is for unisex products.

There is also the context of the type of products that are displayed on either side of the men's and women's incontinence pants and products. In this researcher's supermarket, the women's incontinence pants are next to the period products, which creates a broader “women's context”, while the men's are next to first aid products.

When the unisex pants are displayed among the two halves—the men's side and women's side, or the blue pack is positioned with the men's pants and the pink pack is displayed with the women's pants—shoppers will automatically assume that the product with the pink panel is specifically designed for women and the pack with the blue panel is specifically designed for men.

Additionally, choice architecture can be used to further push this assumption by arranging the products in such a way that the blue pack is positioned with incontinence products that really

are specifically designed for men, such as the Tena Protective Shield that is inserted down the front of men's pants for incontinence protection, much like a groin guard for sports.

Product bundling

Another Pink It & Shrink It or shrinkflation tactic is to bundle two or three products into one for men and not for women, leaving women with the need to purchase multiple products.



\$7.50 (\$1.67 100mL) Palmolive Men's Body Wash Shower Gel 3 in 1 Eucalyptus & Cedar 450mL (1)
 \$7.00 (\$1.71 100mL) Palmolive 3 in 1 Kids Shampoo, Conditioner & Body Wash 700mL (2)

\$12.00 Palmolive Body Wash Shower Gel, Luminous Oils Frangipani Coco 750mL
 \$7.00 Palmolive Luminous Oils Frangipani and Coconut Shampoo 350mL
 \$7.00 Palmolive Luminous Oils Frangipani and Coconut Conditioner 350mL

\$26.00 for 3 Palmolive women's products (when not at sale prices) =

\$18.50 Pink Tax compared to men's 3 in 1 (1)

\$19.00 Pink Tax compared to kids' 3 in 1 (2)

A three-in-one shampoo, conditioner & bodywash seems to be reserved for men and children. In this example of Palmolive 3-in-1 products from a Woolworths store, when a woman wants to use a shampoo, conditioner and body wash, this requires the purchase of three separate products—unless she wants to smell like a sweet berry or a pinecone.

She ends up with nearly almost one-and-a-half litres of product from three bottles, which she may not want to have cluttering up the shower.

These Palmolive examples are all pretty gender-neutral looking, colour-wise, but the choice of words is certainly Kiki and Bouba for the men's and women's products.

The men's copy, "Palmolive Men", "3 in 1", "Eucalyptus & Cedar", "Relax" is matter of fact. The product has a traditionally masculine woody fragrance and a black bottle and a dark green

label, which is masculine and resonant of a dark forest, and a sculpted top section of the bottle that resembles a pinecone.

The women's shower gel has feminine curves and even the pump is sleek and curvy compared to the men's pump. The Palmolive Palmolive Body Wash Shower Gel, Luminous Oils Frangipani Coco bottle has some curves that resemble a woman's vulva, which is Uber Bouba.

The language for women is also very Bouba: Luminous Oils Frangipani or Luminous Oils, Rosewood & Jasmine. Restore and renew. Nourish and glow. Such evocative, feminine words and notions.



\$8.49 Loreal Pure Carbon Total Clean 5 in 1 XXL 400 ml

\$15.99 Loreal Pure Carbon Total Clean 5 in 1XXXL 1000 ml

Loreal Men Expert Pure Carbon Total Clean Carbon Shower Body wash XXL includes:

1. Shampoo
2. Conditioner
3. Face wash
4. Body wash
5. Moisturising wash

L'Oréal Paris® Men Expert® Pure Carbon Shower Gel enriched with carbon and a 5 in 1 total action for face, body, hair, shaving and moisturising. According to the L'Oréal website, the “carbon acts as a super-magnet” to absorb sweat and odours.

According to healthline.com, “While there’s little evidence to support their claims, some skin care companies say the absorbing power of activated charcoal can remove dirt and other impurities from the skin’s pores, “detox” or “purify” skin when used as a soap or facial cleanser and help clear up acne,” however, “Drugstore products with activated charcoal may not be ‘activated’ enough to be effective”.¹

As there is no 5 in 1, 3 in 1 or 2 in 1 Loreal product for women, women are required to purchase five separate products for face, body, hair, shaving and moisturising, plus a seventh product with carbon or charcoal.

As Loreal does not provide a women’s version for all of these, women have to find suitable substitutes from among other brands. Where possible, Loreal women’s products were included in this research for the most direct comparisons.

It took this researcher two hours to find substantially similar products among other brands to ensure the same or similar ingredients and promoted benefits. It is important to note that this search was carried out online at home, using online research to compare ingredients and their benefits.

It is also important to note that the most similar products from other brands are not as prestigious as Loreal. To find an equally prestigious brand with the same ingredients and benefits would take further research and would be more costly.

It would be unreasonably and overwhelmingly difficult to conduct the same research on the spot in store. These products come from a range of sub-categories in separate aisles, and there are hundreds of products to choose from.





- \$6.39 Loreal Elvive Hyaluron Plump Shampoo 340ml
- \$6.39 Loreal Elvive Hyaluron Plump Conditioner 340ml
- \$17.99 Loreal Revitalift Smoothing Cleanser Hyaluronic Acid 150ml
- \$50.99 Loreal Revitalift Filler Plumping Water Cream Hyaluronic Acid 50ml
- \$12.99 Aveeno Daily Moisturising Body Wash 1L
- \$4.24 Pure Gillette Venus Shave Cream with Shea Butter 174g
- \$17.99 Garnier Pure Active Deep Charcoal Cleanser 250ml

\$116.98 - \$8.49 =

\$108.49 Pink Tax or 1178% plus 2 hours + research



Chemist Warehouse

\$18.99 Nivea Men Anti-age Hyaluron Moisturising Cream 50ml

\$18.99 Nivea Lift Expert Cellular Advanced Anti-age Day Cream 50ml, plus

\$18.99 Nivea Lift Expert Cellular Advanced Anti-age Night Cream 50ml

\$18.99 Pink Tax

These two women's Nivea products are the closest available product to the Nivea Men's product, although it is hard to make direct comparisons when ingredients vary. At first glance, the products are equally priced for the same volume.

The women's products are marketed as "day" and "night" creams, while the men's product is not. This suggests that it is necessary for women to purchase both creams, at a total of \$36.00 compared to the men's \$18.00. This purchase gives women double the product quantity, but the price at the register is doubled, creating a Pink Tax of \$18.00.

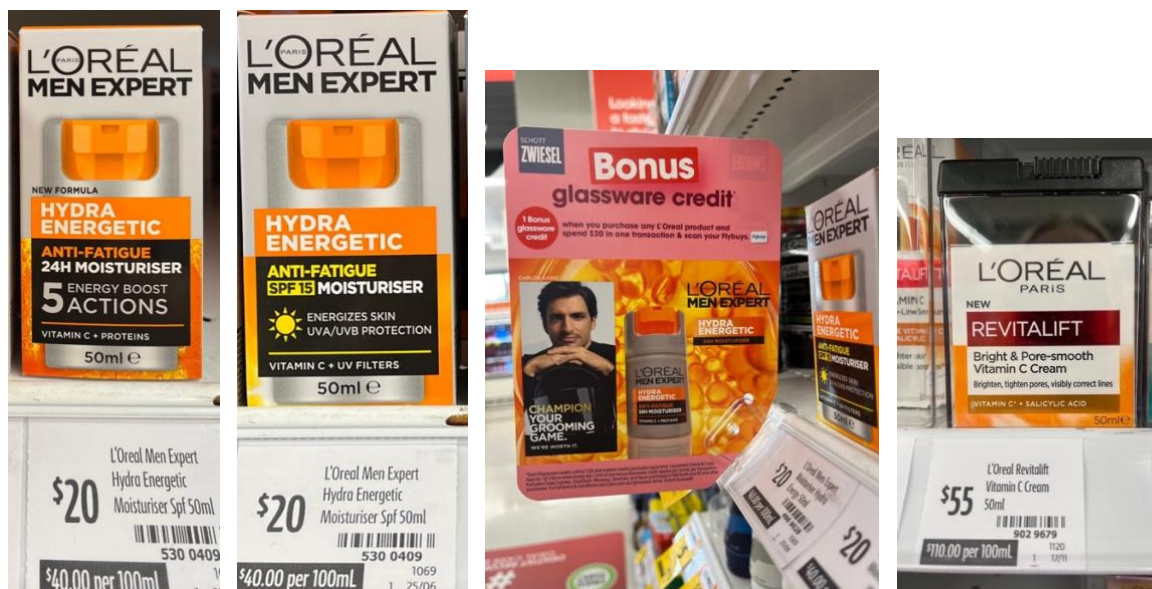
Both products contain hyaluronic acid, although the men's product has hyaluron pro-retinol and the women's product has micro and macro hyaluronic acid, plus pure bakuchiol. Both pro-retinol and bakuchiol are milder alternatives to retinol, which can increase photosensitivity and therefore risk of skin cancer. Some retinols are banned for use in cosmetics in the European Union,⁶ while still in use in Australia, which is the skin cancer capital of the world.⁷

The women's night product does not contain sunscreen, which makes it unsuitable for daytime use. However, the daytime product only contains SPF 15 for sun protection which is not because it is not adequate for sun protection, so both products require the addition of sunscreen⁸. Also, this does not explain why a night product is marketed to women and not men. None of the Nivea Men's products are marked as day or night products, while nearly all the Nivea products for women are marketed for day and night usage.

Creating day and night versions of a product is an advance on the well-known marketing trick of adding "rinse and repeat" to the instructions on the back of shampoo bottles. Its only real effectiveness is in selling twice as much of the product.



This day and night tactic for women applies even when women's products are labelled as 24-hour hydrating creams, which does not add up unless you can fit 48 hours into twenty-four.



Coles \$20 L'Oréal Men Expert Hydra Energetic Anti Fatigue 24 Hour Moisturiser 50ml OR
 \$20 L'Oréal Men Expert Hydra Energetic Anti Fatigue SPF 15 24 Hour Moisturiser 50ml
 \$55 L'Oréal Paris Revitalift Bright & Pore-smooth Vitamin C Cream 50ml

\$35 Pink Tax

The women's equivalent vitamin C product is \$35 more than the men's product, plus men receive a glassware credit during the Bonus Glassware Credit promotion.



Coles

\$24 (\$48 per 100 ml) Loreal Men Expert Power Age X3 Actions Revitalising 24H moisturiser 50ml

\$55 (\$110 per 100 ml) Loreal Revitalift Laser Triple Action Anti-Ageing Cream Day 50ml

\$31 (\$62 per 100 ml) Pink Tax

PLUS \$55 Loreal Revitalift Laser Triple Action Anti-Ageing Cream Night 50ml =

\$81 Pink Tax

Both these men's and women's Loreal anti-ageing products contain hyaluronic acid for firmness, hydration and smoothing. However, the men's moisturiser is a 24-hour product while the women's product is a day cream, which suggests that women also need to purchase a night cream, bringing women's equivalent purchase to \$110 or almost four and a half times the cost.

The benefits stated on the front of the box suggest that the women's day and night creams serve different, special purposes: the day cream is to smooth wrinkles, firm and brighten and the night cream is to smooth wrinkles, re-texturise and restore. However, the "main" ingredients in both women's products are the same (hyaluronic acid, pro-retinol and vitamin C), with the day product also containing argireline peptide.

While the men's and women's products contain some different ingredients, both the men's and women's products are promoted as Triple Action products. Both contain Adenosine, which is marketed as an active anti-ageing ingredient that smooths wrinkles and supports the skin's appearance. And does the addition of vitamin C and argireline peptide justify a 129% increase in purchase price?



On the side of the box for the L'Oréal Revitalift Laser Triple Action Anti-ageing day cream, L'Oréal recommends that for a complete regimen, women purchase and apply 4 L'Oréal Revitalift products daily. The box for the men's product does not include this recommendation.

Loreal Revitalift Hydrating Cream Eye is not available in Coles, necessitating a trip to Chemist Warehouse.

\$24 (\$48 per 100 ml) Loreal Men Expert Power Age X3 Actions Revitalising 24H moisturiser 50ml

\$55 (\$110 per 100 ml) Loreal Revitalift Laser Triple Action Anti-Ageing Cream Day 50ml

\$55 (\$110 per 100 ml) Loreal Revitalift Laser Triple Action Anti-Ageing Cream Night 50ml

\$45 (\$150 per 100 ml) Loreal Revitalift Peptides Wrinkle & Firming Serum 30ml

\$33.99 (\$226.60 per 100 ml) Loreal Revitalift Hydrating Cream Eye 15ml

\$188.99 total for the women's daily regimen =

\$164.99 (688%) Pink Tax

3. Pinkification

The term Pink Tax covers all three categories identified in this research: Pinkflation and Shrinkflation/Pink it & Shrink it and a third, even more underhand and harder to spot category that can be described as “Pinkification”.

Pinkification is the term coined during this research to describe the deliberate “feminisation” or “differentiation” of products by marketers for the purpose of concealing an added Pink Tax.

It differs from Pinkflation, which is selling two or more identical or substantially similar products, with the feminised or pink version sold at a higher price than the other product—for example, bubble bath that comes in pink and blue but is otherwise the same, with the pink bubble bath costing more.



\$8.39 Schick Quattro 4 Titanium (& Diamond Coated) Blades Men’s Refill Razor Blades 4pk

\$11.99 Schick Silk 4 Quatro Women’s Blade 4pk

\$1 Pink Tax (and no diamonds)

Note that the Silk 4 pack has a razor pictured on the front of the packaging, which could be taken to mean that a razor is included in this pack of 4 blades.

Men’s pack design: Quattro 4 is almost literal (quattro is Italian for four). It is very straightforward and has no connotations. It literally means Four 4. The inclusion of 4 in numerical form is intended to appeal to men, who are presumed to enjoy numbers and their directness. The product name is catchy, with a good sharp Kiki sound.

The lines, “new pack design” and “long lasting sharpness” are straight-forward and direct messages using direct language. There is no hesitation to use the words “sharp” and “blades”.

Adjectives “long lasting” and “titanium and diamond coated-” are purely descriptive, referring only to product features and benefits, while suggesting strength and endurance.

The line, “protects even after 2400 strokes” is specific and numerical, presumably because men like numerical data. It speaks to (product) endurance, which is an appeal to masculinity.

The word “protection” seems like it’s embarrassed and reluctant to be there—lest wanting protection is perceived as a male weakness—because it is carefully “balanced” or buried by

the rest of the line with a much stronger sounding message about 2400 strokes. Making 2400 strokes in bold puts the focus of the line on the number and distracts from the word “protection”.

Titanium and diamond coated blades are hard and strong materials. The hard lines and edges in the design and the use of the colours of white, orange, yellow and black are very strong and striking, and the use of bright orange and yellow together is particularly dynamic.

While the inclusion of the blade with the green strip does not look attractive from a design perspective, this clash is not considered to be important. Extra graphic elements tend to be square. Very Kiki language, colours, shapes and typography, with a cool image of a hipster dude as an added bonus.

Women’s pack design: Silk 4 matches Quattro 4, which probably came first. In Kiki-Bouba terms it is fairly neutral, but silk is a soft, flowing, cool and sleek feeling fabric, which is very feminine.

The line “new look” is a soft way to describe a new pack design. However, it is loaded with connotations. As a reference to “fashion looks” or outfit ensembles, it is designed to appeal to women but it also contains a message about women being “well put together” right down to the removal of body hair, which far more nuanced messaging than the straight-forward men’s description of “new pack design”.

The pastel mint green is quite “knocked back” with an underlying warm blue tone to be soft and soothing, clean and fresh—but not too bright, or cold and “minty fresh”.

The “new look” pack has less pastel mint green and more pink, and the addition of pink flowers, despite the existing pack already being designed to look very soft and feminine (very mindful, very demure).

In contrast to the men’s pack, there are almost no straight or hard-edged lines (and a minimal mention of blades). Shapes and edges are soft and flowing. The overall design, with the flowing white lines could be interpreted as a path through a park or other grassy area, perhaps for “skipping” along, which suggests a carefree sense of playfulness, provided by the line, “a shave so smoooooth you can skip a day”, which is exceedingly girly and playful. The multiple “o” is super Bouba and soooo relatable to the language of texting and social media.

The inclusion of aloe & vitamin e, and the appearance of these names on the front of the pack are deliberate choices. They may have actual benefits in terms of comfortable shaving, but these soft and soothing ingredients also contribute to the overall sense of soft femininity, in contrast with the hard words and materials of the men’s pack.

There is and there is no discomfort about “soft” words or concepts and there is a distinct focus on feelings. Data is limited. There are no numbers for women beyond the number 4.

The box is square, which is a practical choice for stacking into boxes rather than a design choice (women’s razor packaging is often curvy with minimal hard edges). However, the arched shape on the top of the pack for hanging purposes is rounder than the men’s version. Additional graphic elements are rounded or circular.

Very Bouda language, pastel colours, focus on feelings and wider social references, soft curvy shapes and typography—and soon to be available with even more pink and pretty pink flowers.

For some reason, women are paying an extra dollar per pack for this.

LEGO has introduced dedicated stores along with its inclusion in many department stores, including Kmart, Target and Big W. It also has LEGOLANDs around the world, including in Australia.



\$22 LEGO Retro Camera (black with film accessories) 261 blocks

\$32 LEGO Retro Telephone (pastel blue with pad and pencil accessories) 383 blocks

\$42 LEGO Retro Typewriter (pastel pink and with flower accessories) 363 blocks

\$7 Pink Tax on Blue Telephone with pad and pencil

\$20 Pink Tax on Pink Typewriter with flowers

The Creator Range for age 8+ has multiple products with a similar box size and similar number of LEGO blocks. For this report, sample products include a Retro Camera (predominantly black with film accessories), a Retro Telephone (predominantly pastel or powder blue with pad and pencil accessories) and a Retro Typewriter (predominantly pastel or powder pink and with flower accessories).

If we consider that the LEGO telephone and the typewriter are the girl's versions, the most Pinkified of the two products is the pink typewriter with flowers. It is also the most expensive. While the telephone has 20 more blocks than the typewriter, the typewriter has big colourful flowers, that are much bigger, colourful that stand up in the typewriter, and have a lot more personality than the LEGO pad and pencil that are shown to lie alongside the phone.

The pink colour and larger flowers may or may not justify the added price, depending on the shopper's opinion. However, it was a deliberate choice by LEGO to create a pink product with flowers as the most expensive product in the Creator Retro range.



\$39 LEGO Friends Heartlake City Candy Store 376 pieces 8+

\$34 LEGO City Pitstop & Pit Crew with Ferrari Car 322 pieces 8+

\$5 Pink Tax

LEGO Friends are a divisive product for parents. According to social media groups, posts and comments, along with anecdotal comments from this researcher's friends and acquaintances, parents (usually mothers) love them or hate them precisely because the City and Friends products are very gendered in very traditional, stereotypical ways.

The range is very much developed along stereotypical boy and girl lines in terms of subjects, themes and colours, with the Friends series being very stereotypically "girlish" as well as more expensive. Even the shelf strip for displaying the prices come in gendered colours to match the packaging: a dynamic yellow and a passive purple.

The design on the box for Lego City Formula One is super dynamic, with a blurred background to emphasis speed, action and excitement. The figures are very focussed and busy working on the car to get it back on the racing track as fast as they can. Red is the main colour. There is a saying in marketing, "Red cars go faster".

The Friends Heartlake City Candy Store scene, is passive and static. It is busy but has no sense of movement. This is very much a social scene, with the main figure—complete with pink hair—engaging a group of friends, either as a shopper or a shopkeeper. The only action is browsing and shopping and the interaction between people, pets and product characters with happy faces.

This researcher had two "mystery shopper" discussions with members of staff looking for "boys" and "girl's" sets in a LEGO shop. Both staff members asked how old the children are (around 8) and directed this researcher to City for boys and Friends for girls.

A discussion ensued about stereotyped toys for boys and girls, and how according to their website, LEGO promotes the brand and its products along the lines of themed play, but some of those themes—and the products within the themed product ranges—are traditionally gendered.

When this researcher asked the staff member about the differences between City and Friends, the staff member explained that they are both for real world role play, but Friends is about

emotional and social life and activities like shopping and playing with animals, and City is about transport and action and adventure.

Researcher looking at Friends range: “Wow They really are very stereotypical, aren’t they?”

Staff member: “Yes, but LEGO has been doing this for many years and they know exactly what they’re doing.”



Sizes in the above image may not be proportionate

LEGO STORE

Lego \$149.99 LEGO Harry Potter Hogwarts Castle: Hospital Wing 907 pieces age 9+

\$199.99 LEGO Disney Princess Castle & Royal Pets 787 pieces age 6+

\$50.00 Pink Tax



Kmart

\$129.99 LEGO Harry Potter Hogwarts Castle: Flying Lessons 651 pieces age 9+

\$149 LEGO Disney Princess Castle & Royal Pets 787 pieces age 6+

\$19.01 Pink Tax

See also Appendix



In 2012, Bic introduced a series of pens they called the "Bic for Her". This range was the same as the men's pen but especially designed for women with pastel colours and a smaller, cushioned grip.

\$4.97 Bic for Her Retractable Ball Pen, Medium Point, (1.0mm), Black Ink 2 pack

\$2.47 Bic Atlantis Original Retractable Ball Pen, Medium Point, (1.0mm), Black Ink 2 pack

\$2.50 (\$1.25 ea) Pink Tax

Bic For Her was pilloried online with memes and sarcastic reviews on Amazon. It was also mocked by several comedians including Ellen Degeneris. Despite years of being mocked from day one, Bic persisted with its Bic for Her range and brought it out in various permutations.

In 2017 Bic for Her took its rightful place in the Museum of Failure, along with Heinz purple ketchup and Lifesavers holes.

 Erica Conroy

★★★★☆ **Four Stars**

Reviewed in the United States on November 30, 2015

The lady pen writes beautifully. My only complaint is that once a month it leaks out some ink

593 people found this helpful

Helpful

Report abuse

 Dr.Tanne

★★★★☆ **Caution**

Reviewed in the United States on August 30, 2016

Color: Blue Ink | **Verified Purchase**

Careful, these are not safe for lesbians and could straighten you out. They come with retractable balls and easy-glide technology!

331 people found this helpful

Helpful

Report abuse

 Jenny

★★★★☆ **Thanks God - a pen just for me!**

Reviewed in the United States on March 27, 2014

Verified Purchase

Thank the Good Lord for Lady BICs. Before there was a pen just for me, I had a lot of trouble writing all the things a girl needs to write down, like my initials + the boy I like's initials and doodles of hearts and flowers. Man pens stubbornly insisted on writing things like legal briefs and other boring man stuff, which caused me to become a lawyer - entirely forgetting my proper place in society.

336 people found this helpful

Helpful

Report abuse

Now in 2025, it is interesting to see, what did they learn over at Bic?



\$3.50 Bic 4 Colours “Original” Ballpoint Pen 1 pack with matte blue base

\$4.50 Bic 4 Colours “Shine” Ballpoint Pen 1 pack with shiny pink base

\$1.00 per pack/pen Pink Tax

\$10.00 (\$3.33 ea) Bic 4 Colours “Original” Ballpoint Pen 3 pack with matte blue base

\$11.50 (\$3.83 ea) Bic 4 Colours “Shine” Ballpoint Pen 3 pack with shiny blue, pink, silver base

\$1.50 per pack (\$0.50 ea) Pink Tax

These products and prices are from 2025 and are ubiquitous across stores. Bic has found a way to call them “Bic for Her” without calling them “Bic for Her”.



Woolworths

\$7.50 Bic Flex 4 Men’s Titanium Sensitive Razors 4 blades 3 pack

\$8.70 Bic Soleil Comfort Scented Razors 4 blades 3 pack

\$6.80 Bic Soleil Sensitive Women’s Razors 3 blades 3 pack

\$ Pink Tax Bic Soleil Comfort Scented Razors 4 blades 3 pack

\$ Pink Tax Bic Sensitive Women’s Razors (with 1 less blade)

Bic Flex4 Men’s Titanium Sensitive Razors: Packaging and product colours are white, black, green and grey. The graphics on the pack are hard-edged and sharp, with an angled slash separating solid black and white. The use of green is a traditional choice for men’s razors. It is fresh green, almost lime (which is usually treated as more “feminine” as per the Soleil product), but the black and white keeps it within the overall masculine range. This hue of green is leaning towards a more gender-neutral choice of colour.

In the case of Bic Flex 4, some of the packaging details and descriptions of product features have moved away from strictly and ruggedly masculine to being somewhat more gender neutral. The shape of the packaging, which is reminiscent of the classic “hour-glass figure” shape of the ideal woman, is more curved than the usual hard-edged men’s razor packaging.

This shape is usually reserved for women's razor packaging. (The Soleil range comes in rounded packs with no hard edges, but it is a fuller shape than is typically designed for women, which is more progressive than usual.)

Flex 4 product feature and benefits on the Bic website are described in terms that are less traditionally masculine than that of the leading brands, Gillette and Schick, with a hybrid of traditionally "masculine" and "feminine" language:

Designed for sensitive skin, this razor features a lubricating strip enriched with aloe and vitamin E for enhanced glide.

A pivoting head and ergonomic handle with soft anti-slip grip for improved control while shaving.

Bic Comfort 3 Advance for men has also been given a hybrid voice on the Bic website. Some of the copy is matter of fact, usually reserved for men's products, and one that is softer and more evocative, and therefore traditionally "feminine", which is typically applied to women's razors.

This razor features an ergonomic, textured handle and pivoting head for added control.

A lubricating strip enriched with Vitamin E and aloe vera for added comfort."

This combination of traditionally masculine and feminine possibly indicates that Bic is making some effort to be gender-neutral, but the result is an odd mixture rather than a clear and distinctly gender-neutral voice.

However, the Bic Soleil razor range is specifically targeted to women with Pinkification. The scented razor is extremely cheery, and the floral scent is a distinctly "feminine" feature. The word "comfort" in the name doesn't quite fit the tropical theme though. It seems to belong more to the next product, the Soleil Sensitive razor, with its emphasis on words and colours of comfort and relaxation, as the copy from the Bic website emphasises as follows:

Bic Soleil Comfort Scented Razors:

Available in 3 bright cheery colours, and the feminine handle releases a lovely floral scent.

Bic Soleil Sensitive Women's razors:

The 3 flexible blades individually adjust to all your curves while the ergonomic, rubber-grip handle provides ultimate comfort for this sensitive skin razor.



Cenovis Women’s Multi + Energy Boost Once Daily Multivitamin “supports energy levels, supports physical stamina or endurance”. The energy boosting ingredient is not specified anywhere on the packaging. However, an analysis of the ingredients in the women’s product shows that they are Korean Ginseng and Evening Primrose Oil, which are not scientifically proven to be effective and are even risky in some circumstances.⁹

To be fair about the price difference, the equivalent Cenovis men’s product, Men’s Multi+ Performance Multivitamin 100 pack is also \$37 for 100 tablets, but as it was not stocked or not in stock, this particular comparison is made with the closest men’s product available, which was sitting alongside the pink product. The men’s product is \$30 per 100 tablets, which is \$7 less than the women’s product, and also “supports energy” production.

Table 1: Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDAs) for Vitamin B6

Age	Male	Female	Pregnancy	Lactation
Birth to 6 months	0.1 mg*	0.1 mg*		
7–12 months	0.3 mg*	0.3 mg*		
1–3 years	0.5 mg	0.5 mg		
4–8 years	0.6 mg	0.6 mg		
9–13 years	1.0 mg	1.0 mg		
14–18 years	1.3 mg	1.2 mg	1.9 mg	2.0 mg
19–50 years	1.3 mg	1.3 mg	1.9 mg	2.0 mg
51+ years	1.7 mg	1.5 mg		

Source: National Institutes of Health United States

Cenovis Women’s Multi + Energy Boost Once Daily Multivitamin also contains 100mg Vitamin B6 for energy benefits, at **over 7500% or 77 times the recommended daily intake.**

The US National Institutes of Health¹⁰ states that the body absorbs large pharmacological doses of vitamin B6 well, and it quickly eliminates most of the vitamin in the urine, although this is not included on the label and is not found in Australian literature, which generally has higher product safety standards than the US.

The added herbal “energy” benefits are potentially harmful in several circumstances including pregnancy. Also, women may be paying an extra \$7 more for men (depending on available stock) and unknowingly ingesting 77 times the RDI of Vitamin B6, most of which is passed

through the body as urine, which is not an acceptable way to measure ingredients for consumers.

The added ingredients are provided on the back of the product label as:

Pyridoxine Hydrochloride (Vitamin B6) 100mg

Panax ginseng dry root extract 120mg from 600mg dry root (Korean Ginseng)

Selenium (from Selen methionine) 60 micrograms

Update 3 December 2025:

The Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA), Australia's drug administrator has ordered that vitamin supplements containing high levels of vitamin B6 be taken off the shelves and put behind the counter at after receiving 250 reports of nerve damage due to toxic build up from long-term use.¹¹

From womb to tomb

To finish, here is an example of a pair of products, one of which has been Pinkified to “justify” an added Pink Tax. This pair of products is an exception to the research methodology, which includes products from retailers with both a physical and online store. These urns come in a range of colours of styles that are designed to be appealing for men and women, with the more “feminine” colours having added decorative elements, making them more expensive. These are massed produced products that are widely imported and available via multiple websites.

Some cremation product websites also offer memorial jewellery and pet urns. The jewellery range includes traditionally feminine heart, butterfly and angel wing pendant designs at \$59.95 and \$69.95, while the simpler or more “masculine” pendants are \$49.95.

\$59.95 “Sapphire” Heart Cremation Pendant

\$49.95 Trio Band Cremation Pendant

\$10.00 Pink Tax

\$199.95 Adult Majestic Cremation Urn (black with brass trim)

\$269.95 Adult Pink Polished Nickel leaf border Cremation Urn (pink with decorative nickel trim)

\$70 Pink Tax

Product Category Exemptions



\$33.80

Rubies Supergirl
Pet Costume L



\$33.80

Rubies Superman
Pet Costume M



\$33.80

Rubies Wonder Woman
Deluxe Pet Costume L

\$33.80 Rubies Supergirl Pet Costume Large

\$33.80 Rubies Superman Deluxe Pet Costume Medium

\$33.80 Rubies Wonder Woman Pet Costume Large

\$0.00 Pink Tax

See also Rubies Costumes on page x and Appendix C: Case Study Rubies [in progress]

When it comes to Pink Tax, it appears that dogs are treated with more respect than women.

There seems to have been a decision made in Australia to not impose Pink Tax on baby and pet products. This researcher could not find a single example of Pink Tax for those markets, which shows that it can be done. With additional research, it may be possible to identify when and how this shift came about.

The success of non-Pink Taxed industries is important to research, as it may provide valuable information about tackling Pink Tax on girl's and women's products in Australia today.



From Bunnings, examples of gender-neutral, inclusive products for kids above.

See Appendix D: Case Study Good Corporate Citizens [in progress] for a list of successful and ethical gender-neutral retail brands in Australia who are Pink-Tax-free, and a study into one of the leading brands in the category of Good Corporate Citizens.

Appendix B: Case Study Gillette [in progress]

Pink Tax: A Study of Gendered Price Discrimination in Australia

Interim Report November 2025

Karen Bijkersma

Melbourne-Naarm, Australia

Appendix B: Case Study LEGO [in progress]

Appendix C: Case Study Rubies [in progress]

Appendix D: Case Study Good Corporate Citizens [in progress]

Endnotes [in progress]

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Full Report out in 2026

Check for regular updates and download a free up-to-date Pink Tax Australia Interim Report via <https://karenbijkersma.com.au/pink-tax-campaign>