Australian Listings Report 2025

LJ Hooker

Contents

The Unusual Paradox: fewer sellers plus more demand equals the perfect time to list

In a market where buyer activity is strong, but listings are low, now is a good time to sell.

Despite strong population growth, an increase in the total numbers of dwellings and rising property prices, listings in Australia's residential property market continue to lag. The total number of homes listed for sale was just above 470,000, a 2.6% drop year-on-year and 6.3% below the 10-year average, according to data from Cotality.

This decline is not isolated to one city or region. Most markets, across both capital cities and regional areas, recorded listings well below historical benchmarks, with only Sydney and Melbourne nearing or exceeding their decade-long averages.

This disconnect, between growing demand and shrinking supply, is one of the key forces currently supporting property prices, and it creates a prime opportunity for prospective vendors.

Population growth outpaces property listings

Australia's population has grown by over four million people in the past decade, from 23 million in 2015 to 27 million in 2025, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).
To accommodate this growth, the number of dwellings has also increased from around 9.5 million in 2015 to 11.3 million in 2025.

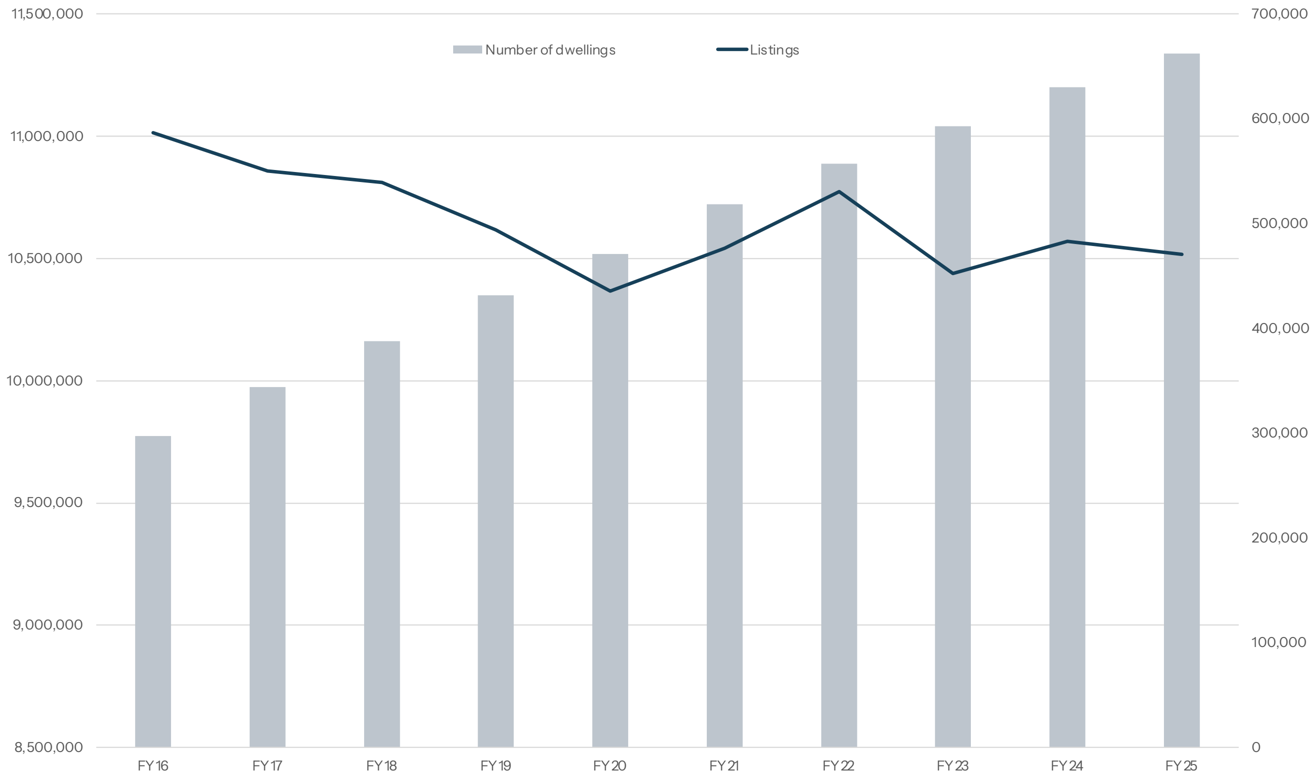
This means we now have:

- More people
- More households
- More properties

And yet, we have fewer properties being listed on the market for sale than we did 10 years ago. For context, in FY2016, more than 580,000 residential properties were listed for sale nationally.

In FY2025, that number was just above 470,000, nearly 20% fewer listings despite a significantly larger population base.

Total dwellings vs Total listings



Source: ABS & Cotality.

A shrinking share of a growing market

To truly understand how significant this shift is, we need to look at listings as a proportion of total dwellings.

Listings as a proportion of total dwellings

	Number of dwellings	Listings	Dwellings listed %
FY16	9,774,500	586,404	6.0%
FY20	10,518,300	435,535	4.1%
FY25	11,338,500*	470,287	4.1%

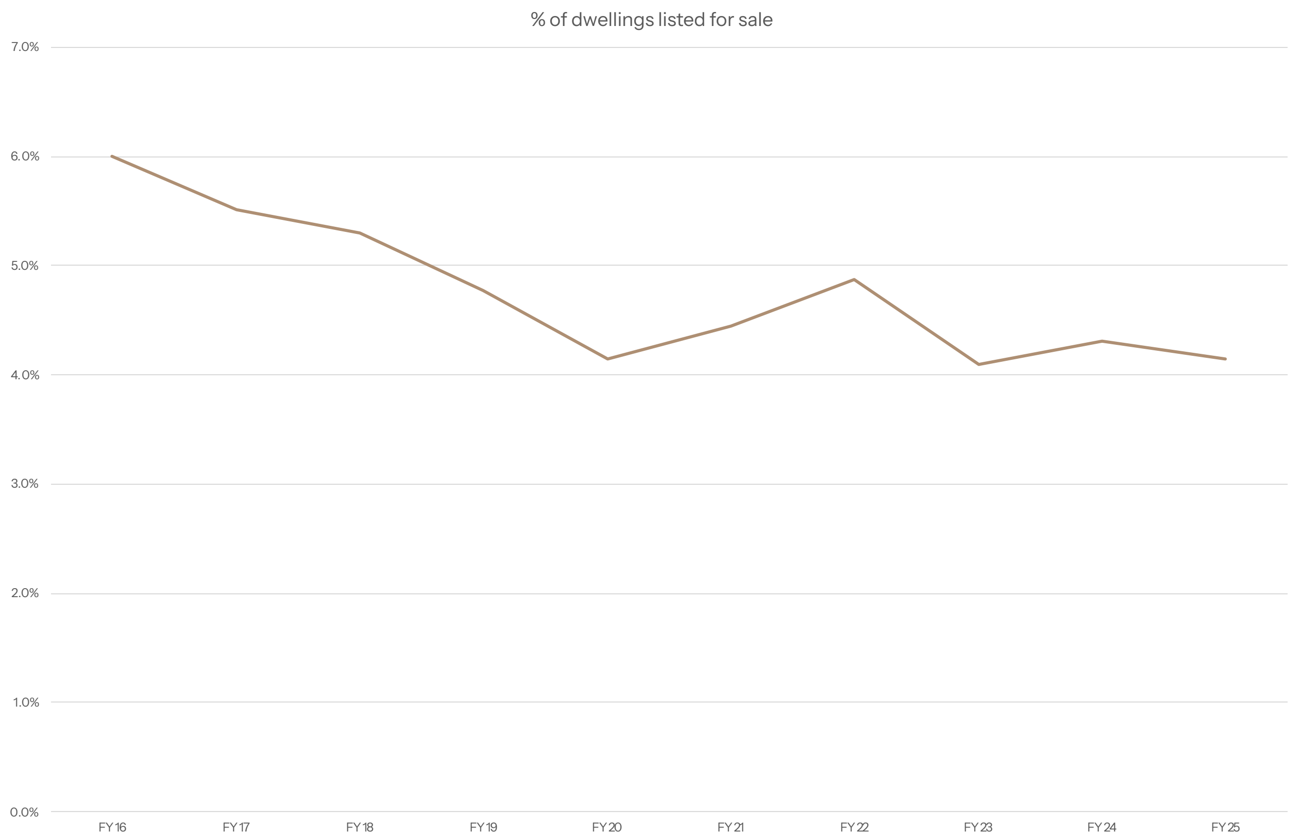
Source: ABS & Cotality.
*March 2025 ABS figure.

Even though the total housing stock has grown by 1.56 million dwellings since FY16, the proportion of those homes being listed for sale has dropped by a third, from 6.0% to just 4.1%. In other words, more homes exist, but a smaller share of owners is choosing to sell.

This is not a temporary dip caused by external shocks or seasonality. It's a sustained trend that has unfolded over the past decade. Here's how the ratio has tracked:

- FY16: 6.0% of dwellings were listed for sale.
- FY19: 4.8%.
- FY22: brief recovery to 4.9%.
- FY25: just 4.1%, one of the lowest levels in 10 years.

If the same share of properties was listed in FY25 as in FY16, we would have seen nearly 680,000 listings, or more than 200,000 extra homes on the market. Instead, buyers are being forced to compete over a smaller pool of stock, driving prices higher.



Source: LJ Hooker Group & Cotality

National trends in listings

Annual listings volume

Financial Year	New listings	YoY % change
FY16	586,404	–
FY17	550,143	-6.20%
FY18	538,936	-2.00%
FY19	493,700	-8.40%
FY20	435,535	-11.80%
FY21	476,591	9.40%
FY22	530,744	11.40%
FY23	452,448	-14.70%
FY24	482,890	6.70%
FY25	470,287	-2.60%

Source: LJ Hooker Group & Cotality

Over the past decade, new listing volumes have generally trended lower, with only brief periods of recovery in FY21 and FY22. These short-lived rebounds were driven by post-lockdown momentum and pandemic-related lifestyle shifts, as homeowners reassessed their living arrangements. However, the underlying trend has remained downward. Listing activity fell again in both FY23 and FY25, with the most recent year showing a -2.6% annual decline and total listings now sitting nearly 20% below FY16 levels.

Even after accounting for COVID-19 disruptions and broader economic uncertainty, the data points to a structural shift in seller behaviour, with more owners opting to hold rather than list. This is reducing market turnover and tightening supply, increasing competition among buyers and reinforcing upward pressure on prices.

Listings compared to the 10-Year Average

Region	FY25 listings	10-Yr average	Avg vs %
Australia	470,287	501,768	-6.30%
Sydney	81,506	79,972	1.90%
Melbourne	92,965	93,058	-0.10%
Brisbane	48,053	53,661	-10.50%
Adelaide	19,597	23,402	-16.30%
Perth	47,862	50,378	-5.00%
Hobart	3,665	4,388	-16.50%
ACT	6,598	7,516	-12.20%
Darwin	1,957	2,093	-6.50%
Regional NSW	51,497	54,754	-5.90%
Regional QLD	56,181	66,762	-15.80%
Regional VIC	34,217	35,670	-4.10%
Regional WA	12,890	14,604	-11.70%

Source: LJ Hooker Group & Cotality

Another way to assess current listing conditions is by comparing each market's performance against its 10-year average. This approach helps filter out short-term seasonal shifts and provides a clearer picture of whether the current numbers reflect a genuine change in behaviour or just normal market fluctuations. In FY25, the data reveals that most markets were well below their decade-long norms, reinforcing that Australia is experiencing a deeper, more persistent listings shortage, not just a temporary slump.

Looking across the regions, listing activity in FY25 remained below the 10-year average in nearly every market. The most pronounced shortfalls were seen in Adelaide (-16.3%), Hobart (-16.5%), and Brisbane (-10.5%): all cities where buyer demand and prices have been strong. Regional markets also recorded steep declines, with regional Queensland (-15.8%) and regional Western Australia (-11.7%) standing out. These figures suggest that the low level of listings is not simply a seasonal dip but a broader reluctance among sellers, even in markets where conditions are clearly in their favour.

Only Melbourne (-0.1%) and Sydney (+1.9%) came close to their long-term averages. Sydney's small increase may reflect a bounce in vendor confidence driven by early price growth and strong auction clearance rates, but this is the exception, not the rule.

Listings remain low to start 2025

Looking at the tail end of the financial year and the start of the 2025 calendar year, it's clear that listing volumes remained subdued across almost every region and month.

While Sydney provided a glimmer of hope early in the year, with listings sitting above the 10-year average in January, February and March, this momentum didn't last. By April, Sydney listings had dropped back below average and, like most other markets, continued to decline through May and June.

- Each month of 2025 so far has seen listings fall in most areas, often by double digits.
- The national average was down every month, reaching a low point in June (-18.2%).

Regional markets were hit hardest, particularly in Queensland, South Australia and Tasmania, where listings dropped more than 25% in several months in those three areas.

This ongoing lack of new listings means competition between sellers remains low, giving those who do list a clear advantage in today's market.

Calendar year 2025 monthly listings: Difference from 10-Year average (%)

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Australia	-1.74%	-9.58%	-12.71%	-9.81%	-10.12%	-18.21%
Sydney	11.11%	0.37%	2.69%	-8.51%	-1.72%	-11.42%
Melbourne	4.74%	-6.78%	-5.08%	-5.65%	-2.72%	-8.58%
Brisbane	-5.19%	-9.07%	-25.63%	-14.48%	-17.36%	-23.17%
Adelaide	-13.37%	-16.52%	-17.45%	-19.86%	-22.88%	-23.37%
Perth	-7.07%	-11.69%	-10.96%	-8.03%	-7.44%	-21.30%
ACT	0.14%	-15.69%	-14.13%	-18.62%	-11.79%	-21.69%
Darwin	-5.45%	-9.79%	-1.43%	-14.98%	-13.57%	-24.69%
Hobart	-5.65%	-12.79%	-27.86%	-20.61%	-25.34%	-31.89%
Regional NSW	2.19%	-6.39%	-12.38%	-8.12%	-16.52%	-19.34%
Regional VIC	-4.00%	-8.19%	-11.68%	-1.07%	-1.22%	-14.34%
Regional QLD	-8.50%	-20.97%	-29.57%	-15.19%	-18.50%	-25.29%
Regional SA	-22.94%	-25.92%	-26.35%	-13.87%	-16.68%	-31.80%
Regional WA	-16.74%	-20.55%	-16.48%	-8.96%	-17.93%	-28.16%
Regional NT	-1.59%	-12.20%	-10.99%	-14.37%	17.18%	-33.22%
Regional TAS	4.52%	-7.47%	-15.71%	-10.07%	-14.18%	-26.43%

Source: LJ Hooker Group & Cotality

What's behind the drop in listings?

Despite strong market fundamentals — population growth, rising rents and solid price growth — new listings remain constrained across Australia. This decline is broad-based and persistent, suggesting structural rather than seasonal drivers.

Here are some of the key reasons:

1. **Limited upsizing and downsizing activity**

- Many homeowners are choosing to stay put due to a lack of suitable alternatives.
- Downsizers are struggling to find the right next home, while upsizers are hesitant to trade into a more expensive mortgage environment.
- A tight rental market and low investor turnover further restrict housing mobility.

2. **High interest rates = cautious sellers**

- While rate cuts have begun to occur, the recent high-rate environment discouraged potential sellers, especially those who would need to borrow to upgrade.
- Some owners are locked into cheap loans and are reluctant to give up their current interest rate for a more expensive one.

3. **Construction pipeline bottlenecks**

- Although the number of dwellings has increased over the past decade, new housing completions have slowed significantly.
- Builders continue to face labour shortages, cost blowouts and lengthy planning delays, limiting the flow of new homes to the market.

4. **The wait-and-see effect**

- Many owners are waiting for clearer signs of economic stability, such as rate cuts or stronger consumer confidence, before listing their homes.
- This has created a frozen market effect, where even owners with strong equity are sitting on the sidelines.

5. **Off-market sales and non-traditional selling channels**

- Not all homes are being marketed through traditional channels. The rise of off-market sales means some stock is being transacted without a public listing.
- Others are being promoted through social media, agent databases and buyer groups rather than portals, reducing the visibility of total listings.
- Additionally, some newly built homes, particularly in smaller projects, enter the market without a public campaign or are pre-sold before reaching open listing channels.

Rising prices despite falling listings

Despite a persistent shortage of new listings, buyer demand has stayed firm across most markets, pushing prices higher.

According to Cotality's Home Value Index, national dwelling values rose 0.7% in August, the strongest monthly gain since May last year, lifting annual growth to 4.1%.
This momentum has built since the February rate cut as low stock, improving confidence and stronger borrowing capacity outweigh affordability concerns.

Auction clearance rates reached about 70% in late August, the highest since February last year.

Why now is a great time to list

Australia's housing market is seeing a rare alignment of conditions that strongly favour sellers. Listings are low, buyer demand remains high and prices continue to rise, creating an ideal environment for homeowners thinking about making a move. As we head into spring, those who act early are likely to benefit from limited competition and strong buyer interest.

Across most capital cities, the signs are clear:

- Auction clearance rates are holding above 65%, showing buyers are competing hard for available stock.
- Days on market are falling, particularly in tightly held areas.
- Discounting is minimal, with many vendors achieving close to asking price.

At the same time, underlying demand remains strong:

- Net overseas migration is high, adding to housing pressure.
- Employment conditions are stable, supporting buyer confidence.
- Rents are still rising, pushing more renters toward purchasing.

Yet, despite all these demand drivers, listing volumes remain historically low.
That imbalance gives sellers the upper hand.

If you're considering selling this spring, the case is compelling:

- Less competition from other vendors means more attention on your property.
- Rising prices are being supported by limited supply.
- Motivated, ready-to-act buyers are actively searching.
- Further rate cuts are expected, likely boosting buyer borrowing capacity.

We're seeing an unusual paradox: more people, more dwellings, but fewer homes for sale. That's why sellers who list now are being rewarded with strong enquiry, faster sales and premium results. In short, this spring presents one of the best listing opportunities we've seen in years.

Outlook for listings in FY26

While listing volumes may pick up modestly during the spring selling season, a sharp rebound remains unlikely without one or more of the following:

- Significant interest rate cuts
- A lift in new housing completions
- Policy or incentive changes to encourage selling activity

In the meantime, tight stock levels are expected to persist, supporting continued price growth and maintaining favourable selling conditions well into FY26.

The outlook for listings in FY26 is cautiously optimistic. Volumes are still well below average, but there are early signs of a slow recovery. The February, May and August rate cuts have helped stabilise market conditions, yet many potential sellers remain on the sidelines, waiting for greater certainty around price growth and buyer activity.

This spring, improved buyer enquiry and the expectation of further rate cuts may entice more vendors to act. That said, any lift in supply is likely to be gradual rather than dramatic, and the market is expected to remain firmly in seller's territory for the foreseeable future.

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