

Roll over, Fido: Half of pet owners say dogs co-sleep in their beds

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Forget buying a dog bed. New research shows that nearly half of pet

parents say their pooches co-sleep in their owner's bed.

More than 1,000 Australian dog owners participated in the study conducted by Canisius College in Buffalo, N.Y.

About 49% of participants, who ranged in age from 18 to 78, said their dog sleeps in their bed. Another 20% said their dog sleeps in the same bedroom, though not in the bed. The remaining 31% said their dog sleeps outside the bedroom.

"Studies of humans' relationships with their [companion animals](#) have almost exclusively focused on the ways people engage with their pets during their waking hours, yet people commonly spend their sleeping hours with pets in their beds or bedrooms," said study author Christy Hoffman, associate professor of animal behavior.

"This study presents one of the few comprehensive investigations into the practice of human-dog co-sleeping, and supports previous claims that dog owners commonly choose to sleep with their [dogs](#) in their beds or bedrooms," she said in a university news release.

Using heat map images, the researchers determined that when two people were in the double-, queen- or king-sized bed, the dog tended to sleep at their feet or in the middle of the bed. When one person and one dog shared a bed, the dogs mostly slept at human chest level, in the space where a human partner might have slept.

For individuals with a single bed, the dogs most often slept on the floor beside the bed, though some slept on the bed at human chest level.

Nearly one-third of dogs slept under the covers, the study found.

"Older participants were more likely to bed share with their dogs, as

were singles and individuals who had small dogs rather than medium- or large-sized dogs," Hoffman said. "Bed size also impacted the likelihood of bed sharing."

Nearly two-thirds of participants said their dogs rarely or never disturbed their sleep. These findings supported prior research in which Hoffman used activity trackers to determine women's nighttime movements when they shared a bed with a dog.

That study found women were three times as likely to transition from an inactive to an active state if their dog moved during the preceding minute. The women didn't recall their dogs disturbing their sleep in the majority of instances.

"Given how little participants recalled dog-related sleep disruptions in relation to how much dog movement we observed across nights, it seems that humans are not consciously associating their nights of poor sleep with their dogs' nighttime activities," Hoffman noted.

"This discrepancy suggests that despite the disturbances canine bed partners create, they may be fulfilling a psychological need for feeling safe and secure during [sleep](#) periods," she added.

The findings were recently published in *Human-Animal Interaction*, a bulletin of the American Psychological Association.

More information: See what the American Kennel Club has to say about [co-sleeping with dogs](#).

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