

Consumer Price Index (CPI) Conversion Factors to Convert to 2010 Dollars Using the CPI-U-RS series, an experimental CPI measure

(can be used when exact comparisons are needed between years during the period starting 1947; see below)

To convert dollars of a year to 2010 dollars, **DIVIDE** the dollar amount of that year by the conversion factor (CF) for that year. **Note:** see the important limits discussed below.

Example: \$1000 dollars of 1948 = \$7634 dollars of 2009 (\$1000 / 0.131). Suggest **ROUNDING** to no more than three significant digits (in this example, \$7630).

Note: To **reverse** the process, that is, to determine what a 2009-dollar figure would be in the dollars of another year, simply **multiply** the 2009 figure by the conversion factor of that year, e.g., \$1000 2009 dollars would equal about \$122 in 1947 (\$1000 x

Year	CF	Year	CF	Year	CF	Year	CF	Year	CF
1947	0.120	1960	0.159	1973	0.233	1986	0.527	1999	0.764
1948	0.129	1961	0.161	1974	0.256	1987	0.545	2000	0.790
1949	0.128	1962	0.162	1975	0.278	1988	0.565	2001	0.812
1950	0.129	1963	0.164	1976	0.294	1989	0.589	2002	0.825
1951	0.140	1964	0.166	1977	0.312	1990	0.618	2003	0.844
1952	0.142	1965	0.169	1978	0.326	1991	0.641	2004	0.866
1953	0.143	1966	0.174	1979	0.357	1992	0.657	2005	0.895
1954	0.144	1967	0.179	1980	0.397	1993	0.673	2006	0.925
1955	0.144	1968	0.186	1981	0.435	1994	0.687	2007	0.951
1956	0.146	1969	0.195	1982	0.461	1995	0.704	2008	0.988
1957	0.151	1970	0.204	1983	0.481	1996	0.723	2009	0.984
1958	0.155	1971	0.213	1984	0.500	1997	0.738	2010	1.000
1959	0.156	1972	0.220	1985	0.517	1998	0.749		

Inflation assumptions: Inflation conversion factors for 2011 and later years assume 1.45% in 2011, 1.55% in 2012, 1.75% in 2013, 1.90% in 2014, 2.05% in 2015, 2.15% in 2016, 2.25% in 2017, and 2.20% in 2018-2021. These are averages of OMB and CBO inflation estimates as of January-February 2011.

Revised June 28, 2011, using final 2010 CPI (CPI = 2.18056) and OMB and CBO inflation estimates for 2011-2021 as of January-February 2011. For inflation assumptions for 2011 and later years, see the shaded box above.

The Census Bureau uses the Bureau of Labor Statistics' experimental Consumer Price Index (CPI-U-RS) starting 1977. The Census Bureau derived the CPI-U-RS for years before 1977 by applying the 1977 CPI-U-RS-to-CPI-U ratio to the 1947 to 1976 CPI-U. This is available at <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/income07/cpiurs.html>. Additional sources of information about the CPI-U-RS are available from the BLS at <http://www.bls.gov/cpi/cpirsdc.htm>.

See also the important notes on the reverse side about the limits of the CPI-U-RS. Because of the method of extrapolation of the CPI-U-RS for the years before 1978, CPI-U-RS conversion factors for those years must be used with special caution .

The address of the inflation conversion factor web page is <http://oregonstate.edu/cla/polisci/faculty-research/sahr/sahr.htm>.

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The Bureau of Labor Statistics' Statement on the Use of the CPI-U-RS

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) has made numerous improvements to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) over the past quarter.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) has made numerous improvements to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) over the past quarter-century. While these improvements make the present and future CPI more accurate, historical price index series are not adjusted to reflect the improvements. Many researchers, however, expressed an interest in having a historical series that was measured consistently over the entire period. Accordingly, the Consumer Price Index research series using current methods (CPI-U-RS) presents an estimate of the CPI for all Urban Consumers (CPI-U) from 1978 to present that incorporates most of the improvements made over that time span into the entire series.

The CPI-U-RS is in some ways an extension of the CPI-U-X1, an experimental series that shows what the inflation rate in the CPI-U might have been, if the current rental-equivalence method of measuring the cost of homeownership had been in place prior to 1983.

The CPI-U-RS has some limitations. First, most estimates are based on BLS research covering a short period of time and extrapolated to a longer period. Therefore, there is considerable uncertainty surrounding the magnitude of the adjustments. Second, there have been several improvements in the CPI not incorporated into the CPI-U-RS, either because they do not represent changes in methodology, because they had negligible impacts on the CPI's growth rate, or because it was impossible to systematically estimate the impacts of the new methods in past years.

Nonetheless, the CPI-U-RS can serve as a valuable proxy for researchers needing a historical estimate of inflation using current methods. The direct adjustment of individual CPI index series makes this the most detailed and systematic estimate available of a consistent CPI series.

April 5, 2004

From <http://www.bls.gov/cpi/cpiurstx.htm> [note: no longer posted online]