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CONSUMER PRICE INDEX FOR MAY 1959

Consumer prices in United States cities increased 0.1 percent between April and May 1959, according to the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. Most of the increase was the result of advances in costs of housing, apparel, medical care, and personal care, although all major groups of goods and services were higher. Prices of commodities were unchanged on the average, but services rose 0.3 percent. The Consumer Price Index at 124.0 percent of the 1947-49 average reached a new record high, 0.3 percent above the May 1958 level.

HOUSING

A rise of 0.1 percent in housing costs reflected advances in prices of home repair and maintenance items, increased bills for gas and electricity, and higher rates for insurance on houses. Residential rents were unchanged on the average for the first time since February 1957. Higher charges for painting and repair services were mainly responsible for the rise in home maintenance costs, although there were some increases reported for paint, plumbing supplies, and lumber. The solid fuels and fuel oil group index dropped 2.5 percent; prices of both coal and fuel oil were seasonally lower. Housefurnishings prices declined 0.1 percent as traditional white sale prices for household textiles more than offset higher prices for some furniture and appliances. Household operation averaged unchanged with reductions in prices of laundry soaps and detergents and some scattered advances in rates for laundry and dry cleaning services.

APPAREL

Prices of all classes of apparel were higher in May, led by an advance of 0.3 percent for footwear, especially men's and children's shoes. Prices of men's suits advanced, following earlier sales, and there were scattered increases reported for summer suits, slacks, work shirts, and work gloves. Higher prices were reported for women's and girls' cotton dresses and nylon hose, but prices of women's underwear and rayon dresses were lower.

FOOD

Average food prices, which had declined in eight of the past nine months, increased 0.1 percent in May because of higher prices of restaurant meals as well as seasonally higher prices for fresh fruits and vegetables which largely offset reductions in egg and coffee prices. The food index at 117.7 was 3.2 percent lower than a year ago and 3.3 percent below the July 1958 peak.

Fruit and vegetable prices rose 1.6 percent over the month, with prices of fresh fruits and vegetables up 2.5 percent. Fresh fruits advanced 2.8 percent as prices of oranges, bananas, grapefruit, and apples averaged 3 to 5 percent higher. Strawberry prices, responding to more plentiful supplies, declined 14.0 percent. Fresh vegetable prices advanced 2.1 percent with potatoes up 13.1 percent, as supplies of last year's crop dwindled and a smaller new crop began to reach the market. Prices of tomatoes and celery averaged about 6½ percent higher. However, onion, lettuce, and green bean prices were down 15.9 percent, 6.2 percent, and 6.0 percent, respectively. Canned fruit and vegetable prices rose, largely because of continued increases in prices of canned orange juice. All frozen fruits and vegetables registered decreases.

Prices of meats, poultry, and fish increased 0.1 percent as moderate increases for most cuts of meat more than offset slightly lower prices of chickens and fish.

Prices of cereals and bakery products increased 0.3 percent as bread prices were up 0.3 percent and cookies 0.5 percent.

Restaurant meal prices rose 0.3 percent.

Egg prices, decreasing for the eighth consecutive month, dropped 6.4 percent, much more than their usual seasonal decline, as supplies continued plentiful. Coffee prices, declining for the 16th consecutive month, were down 2.9 percent. Dairy products declined 0.3 percent as prices of most items were lower.

OTHER COMMODITIES
AND SERVICES The medical care group index rose 0.4 percent, primarily because of increased fees for services of physicians. There were also some increases in prices of prescriptions and drugs and in rates for hospital services.

Transportation costs were up 0.1 percent, with higher prices for used cars, auto repairs, and auto insurance. Prices were lower for gasoline, tires, and new cars.

A rise of 0.5 percent in personal care was due mainly to higher prices for men's haircuts in several cities.

Higher prices for newspapers in Cleveland were largely responsible for an increase of 0.1 percent for reading and recreation. Movie admission charges were slightly lower. Other goods and services increased partly because of an additional increase in cigarette taxes in New York City.

TABLE 1: Consumer Price Index—United States city average
Major group, subgroup, and special group indexes, May 1959
and percent changes from selected dates

(1947-49=100 unless otherwise specified)

Group	Indexes		Percent change to May 1959 from —			
	May 1959	April 1959	April 1959	February 1959	May 1958	Year 1959
All items	124.0	123.9	0.1	0.2	0.3	108.8
Food	117.7	117.6	.1	-.4	-3.2	149.9
Food at home	115.2	115.3	-.1	-.8	-4.4	144.6
Cereals and bakery products	134.5	134.1	.3	.5	1.3	135.1
Meats, poultry, and fish	111.6	111.5	.1	-.9	-4.3	168.3
Dairy products	112.6	112.9	-.3	-1.2	.7	126.1
Fruits and vegetables	125.6	123.6	1.6	3.6	-8.6	171.3
Other foods at home	102.8	104.7	-1.8	-4.9	-7.8	112.4
Food away from home (Jan. 1953=100)	115.2	114.8	.3	1.0	2.7	(1/)
Housing 2/	128.8	128.7	.1	.2	.8	69.3
Rent	139.3	139.3	0	.2	1.3	60.9
Gas and electricity	118.7	118.2	.4	.2	1.9	13.2
Solid fuels and fuel oil	135.3	138.7	-2.5	-3.4	2.8	139.9
Housefurnishings	103.7	103.8	-.1	-.1	-.3	94.2
Household operation	133.8	133.8	0	.5	2.2	95.6
Apparel	107.3	107.0	.3	.6	.6	104.4
Men's and boys'	108.2	108.0	.2	.4	-.6	113.0
Women's and girls'	99.0	98.9	.1	.2	.6	81.7
Footwear	133.5	132.4	.8	1.7	2.9	165.4
Other apparel	92.1	91.9	.2	.4	0	126.8
Transportation	145.4	145.3	.1	.8	4.8	107.1
Private	134.5	134.4	.1	.9	5.1	105.3
Public	192.7	192.6	.1	.5	3.5	137.0
Medical care	150.2	149.6	.4	.8	4.5	106.9
Personal care	130.7	130.0	.5	.7	1.7	119.3
Reading and recreation	117.8	117.7	.1	.6	1.0	87.0
Other goods and services	128.4	128.2	.2	.8	.9	81.9
Special groups:						
All items less food	127.3	127.1	.2	.5	1.8	84.2
All items less shelter	121.6	121.5	.1	.2	.2	119.5
Commodities	115.9	115.9	0	-.1	-.6	124.6
Nondurables	117.4	117.4	0	-.2	-1.5	128.4
Food	117.7	117.6	.1	-.4	-3.2	149.9
Nondurables less food	117.5	117.5	0	.3	.9	100.2
Apparel	107.2	107.0	.2	.5	.5	105.8
Nondurables less food and apparel	126.3	126.6	-.2	.2	.9	91.7
Durables	112.7	112.6	.1	.4	2.7	96.7
New cars	138.9	139.0	-.1	-.8	6.2	143.7
Used cars (Jan. 1953=100)	92.3	91.8	.5	3.5	13.5	(1/)
Durables less cars	103.4	103.3	.1	.2	-.2	80.5
Commodities less food	114.5	114.5	0	.3	1.4	92.8
Services	145.2	144.8	.3	.7	2.0	80.6
Rent	139.3	139.3	0	.2	1.3	60.9
Services less rent	146.9	146.4	.3	.8	2.2	99.9
Household operation services, gas, and electricity	134.1	133.9	.1	.6	2.4	54.1
Transportation services	179.7	179.1	.3	.8	3.5	124.3
Medical care services	155.8	155.2	.4	1.2	5.1	121.0
Other services 3/	131.2	130.6	.5	.9	.8	125.0
Purchasing power of the consumer dollar (1947-49=\$1.00)	\$.806	\$.807	-.1	-.2	-.4	-52.1

1/ Not available.

2/ Includes house purchase, interest, taxes, insurance, and upkeep, not shown separately.

3/ Includes house purchase, interest, taxes, insurance, and upkeep services; shoe repairs, television repairs, barber and beauty shop services, and movies.

TABLE 2: Consumer Price Index—All items indexes and percent changes, selected dates
U.S. city average and 20 large cities

City	Indexes (1947-49=100)				Percent change to current month from --		
	May 1959	Feb. 1959	May 1958	Year 1939	Feb. 1959	May 1958	Year 1939
United States city average	124.0	123.7	123.6	59.4	0.2	0.3	108.8
Cities priced monthly 1/							
Chicago	127.4	127.1	127.0	58.6	.2	.3	117.4
Detroit	123.4	123.3	124.3	59.0	.1	-.7	109.2
Los Angeles	126.8	126.7	125.2	60.4	.1	1.3	109.9
New York	122.1	121.7	121.1	60.1	.3	.8	103.2
Philadelphia	123.2	123.3	122.9	59.2	-.1	.2	108.1
Cities priced in February, May, August, November 2/							
	May 1959	Feb. 1959	May 1958	Year 1939	Feb. 1959	May 1958	Year 1939
Cleveland	125.3	124.8	125.0	59.2	.4	.2	111.7
Houston	124.1	124.1	123.7	59.5	0	.3	108.6
Scranton	120.0	120.3	120.7	58.5	-.2	-.6	105.1
Seattle	127.9	126.9	126.1	59.2	.8	1.4	116.0
Washington, D.C.	121.8	121.3	121.3	60.4	.4	.4	101.7
Cities priced in January, April, July, October 2/							
	Apr. 1959	Jan. 1959	Apr. 1958	Year 1939	Jan. 1959	Apr. 1958	Year 1939
Boston	125.1	125.4	124.5	61.0	-.2	.5	105.1
Kansas City	125.5	124.5	123.7	61.7	.8	1.5	103.4
Minneapolis	125.1	125.3	124.1	60.7	-.2	.8	106.1
Pittsburgh	124.5	124.4	123.8	58.1	.1	.6	114.3
Portland, Oregon	125.3	124.2	125.0	58.3	.9	.2	114.9
Cities priced in March, June, September, December 2/							
	Mar. 1959	Dec. 1958	Mar. 1958	Year 1939	Dec. 1958	Mar. 1958	Year 1939
Atlanta	124.3	124.4	124.9	58.3	-.1	-.5	113.2
Baltimore	126.4	125.5	124.1	57.9	.7	1.9	118.3
Cincinnati	122.2	122.4	122.3	58.4	-.2	-.1	109.2
St. Louis	126.0	125.7	124.5	59.3	.2	1.2	112.5
San Francisco	129.0	127.9	126.7	58.6	.9	1.8	120.1

1/ Rents priced bimonthly.

2/ Foods, fuels, and a few other items priced monthly; rents and other commodities and services priced quarterly.

TABLE 3: Consumer Price Index—Percent changes from April 1959 to May 1959
U.S. city average and five cities priced monthly
All items and commodity groups

City	All items	Food	Housing	Apparel	Transportation	Medical care	Personal care	Reading and recreation	Other goods & services
United States city average	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.4	0.5	0.1	0.2
Chicago	0	0	-.2	.5	-.3	.1	3.6	0	-.2
Detroit	-.1	-.3	-.1	.1	-.4	0	.2	.1	0
Los Angeles	.2	-.2	.4	.4	.4	.1	.1	-1.1	.1
New York	.1	-.3	.1	0	-.1	1.7	.2	-.2	1.2
Philadelphia	-.3	-.7	-.2	-.3	.9	0	.2	-2.4	-.2

TABLE 4: Consumer Price Index—All items and commodity groups
 May 1959 indexes and percent changes, February 1959 to May 1959
 U.S. city average and 10 cities priced in May 1959

Group	U.S. City Average	Chicago	Cleveland	Detroit	Houston	Los Angeles	New York	Philadelphia	Scranton	Seattle	Washington, D. C.
Indexes (1947-49=100)											
All items -----	124.0	127.4	125.3	123.4	124.1	126.8	122.1	123.2	120.0	127.9	121.8
Food -----	117.7	115.2	114.1	116.9	114.6	122.9	119.2	119.3	114.8	120.7	118.5
Food at home -----	115.2	112.5	111.6	114.3	112.2	118.2	116.4	116.2	113.9	118.8	115.8
Cereals and bakery products --	134.5	130.1	128.9	124.6	125.5	146.2	142.5	138.2	135.9	146.8	132.1
Meats, poultry, and fish -----	111.6	104.6	105.7	108.0	106.9	112.1	114.4	111.8	111.9	114.2	110.5
Dairy products -----	112.6	113.3	110.2	107.6	113.2	111.1	114.0	116.2	110.4	117.3	117.5
Fruits and vegetables -----	125.6	122.2	118.7	134.3	124.1	131.1	120.9	124.3	121.3	130.2	123.3
Other foods at home -----	102.8	107.5	104.8	102.7	101.6	105.5	102.5	100.8	99.0	102.5	104.6
Housing -----	128.8	138.7	130.1	127.2	130.0	135.8	126.0	122.5	122.9	133.0	121.2
Rent -----	139.3	165.0	159.8	—	139.4	147.0	—	128.5	131.4	148.0	129.2
Gas and electricity -----	118.7	129.3	116.1	117.5	116.6	131.1	115.5	105.3	120.7	86.7	134.8
Solid fuels and fuel oil -----	135.3	139.8	135.2	126.9	—	—	140.4	126.3	136.9	142.7	139.3
Housefurnishings -----	103.7	100.7	100.0	108.7	101.3	101.7	104.1	108.1	100.0	104.9	100.1
Household operation -----	133.8	136.7	125.1	122.9	142.3	123.3	132.3	136.0	117.6	138.6	132.9
Apparel -----	107.3	109.9	109.6	104.9	112.1	108.7	106.0	104.9	110.0	109.0	104.8
Men's and boys' -----	108.2	113.4	113.5	108.2	106.0	110.7	108.1	108.1	110.1	111.9	108.1
Women's and girls' -----	99.0	99.0	100.6	95.0	108.3	100.4	96.1	94.3	102.6	99.5	96.8
Footwear -----	133.5	136.6	129.8	129.5	140.1	135.3	134.3	134.0	137.7	138.0	128.2
Other apparel -----	92.1	95.9	95.2	85.4	91.4	84.8	95.8	92.5	93.7	86.9	89.8
Transportation -----	145.4	154.3	139.7	137.8	143.8	142.0	145.9	152.6	144.9	148.8	143.7
Private -----	134.5	136.1	130.5	133.8	137.4	138.2	127.0	132.4	131.3	137.5	135.9
Public -----	192.7	196.9	181.9	157.3	188.0	162.1	191.4	193.4	191.9	180.1	172.4
Medical care -----	150.2	158.6	167.2	157.8	135.5	146.5	139.9	152.2	127.9	149.6	149.9
Personal care -----	130.7	136.2	128.0	133.9	137.4	134.2	123.0	135.2	136.5	141.4	125.9
Reading and recreation -----	117.8	122.4	130.1	114.1	116.6	102.1	119.9	119.9	145.8	119.3	121.0
Other goods and services -----	128.4	120.9	130.0	135.7	129.3	124.2	131.7	128.0	119.6	138.1	136.3
Percent change from February 1959 to May 1959											
All items -----	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.1	0	0.1	0.3	- 0.1	- 0.2	0.8	0.4
Food -----	- .4	0	- .2	- .7	- 1.2	- .7	- .6	- 1.2	- .9	.7	- .3
Food at home -----	- .8	- .1	- .3	- .8	- 1.8	- 1.3	- 1.0	- 1.6	- 1.2	.4	- .4
Cereals and bakery products --	.5	5.7	- .2	- .4	- .5	.2	0	- .4	.2	.9	0
Meats, poultry, and fish -----	- .9	- .6	- .4	- .1	- 1.5	- .7	- .6	- 1.8	- 1.5	.6	- 1.9
Dairy products -----	- 1.2	.4	- .1	- 1.3	- .4	.5	- 3.4	- 2.4	- 2.6	1.6	- .1
Fruits and vegetables -----	3.6	2.2	6.6	3.5	- .6	- 1.2	2.6	2.5	4.8	3.2	5.8
Other foods at home -----	- 4.9	- 5.1	- 5.4	- 5.3	- 4.9	- 4.2	- 3.5	- 5.1	- 5.4	- 3.3	- 3.9
Housing -----	.2	.1	- .1	.3	.2	.2	.4	.2	- .3	.8	.2
Rent -----	.2	1/ 0	.1	—	- .1	1/ .2	—	1/ .3	.2	.3	.6
Gas and electricity -----	.2	.2	0	.7	0	.3	- .1	1.8	2.5	0	3.2
Solid fuels and fuel oil -----	- 3.4	- 3.5	- 4.6	0	—	—	- 5.0	- 9.7	- 7.0	3.0	- 6.9
Housefurnishings -----	- .1	- .1	- 1.6	- .7	1.8	- .4	- .1	- .3	- .7	.3	.2
Household operation -----	.5	1.9	2.2	1.7	- .1	- .2	- .1	1.7	.5	- .1	1.0
Apparel -----	.6	0	.5	.3	- .4	.6	.1	.1	- .1	1.3	1.0
Men's and boys' -----	.4	.2	.2	0	1.3	- .1	- .1	0	0	.7	.3
Women's and girls' -----	.2	- .8	.3	.3	- 2.3	.8	- .4	- .4	- .8	1.2	1.3
Footwear -----	1.7	1.3	1.3	.9	1.1	1.7	1.8	1.4	1.3	2.5	1.7
Other apparel -----	.4	0	.4	0	2.8	.4	0	.1	1.7	.9	.6
Transportation -----	.8	0	.1	1.5	1.3	.8	1.0	1.7	.6	.3	- .1
Private -----	.9	- .1	.2	1.9	1.5	.9	1.3	1.5	.7	.3	- .1
Public -----	.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	2.4	0	0	0
Medical care -----	.8	1.8	.7	- .3	1.4	.3	1.9	1.8	.1	.1	1.2
Personal care -----	.7	4.8	- .2	0	.8	.8	.1	- .4	2.7	6.0	.5
Reading and recreation -----	.6	- .6	4.1	.4	- .1	- .1	- .2	- .1	1.2	.7	2.9
Other goods and services -----	.8	- .2	2.0	.1	.1	.2	3.8	- .4	.1	1.7	.1

1/ Change from March 1959 to May 1959.

TABLE 5: Consumer Price Index -- Food and its subgroups
 May 1959 indexes and percent changes, April 1959 to May 1959
 U.S. city average and 20 large cities
 [1947-49=100]

City	Total food		Total food at home		Cereals and bakery products		Meats, poultry, and fish		Dairy products		Fruits and vegetables		Other foods at home	
	Index	Percent change	Index	Percent change	Index	Percent change	Index	Percent change	Index	Percent change	Index	Percent change	Index	Percent change
U.S. city average ---	117.7	0.1	115.2	-0.1	134.5	0.3	111.6	0.1	112.6	-0.3	125.6	1.6	102.8	-1.8
Atlanta -----	115.6	-.1	113.8	-.3	126.0	.4	113.8	-.6	113.8	0	127.7	1.6	97.9	-1.8
Baltimore -----	117.0	-.3	113.6	-.3	128.8	.2	110.3	-1.3	117.1	.2	120.2	3.1	101.1	-2.2
Boston -----	117.5	.2	114.2	.3	132.2	-.2	112.9	.2	109.5	-1.3	122.8	4.2	99.6	-1.4
Chicago -----	115.2	0	112.5	0	130.1	.5	104.6	-.2	113.3	-.1	122.2	1.0	107.5	-1.2
Cincinnati -----	117.7	-.3	114.8	-.5	133.3	-.1	110.6	0	112.0	-.4	125.6	1.2	104.8	-3.0
Cleveland -----	114.1	-.2	111.6	-.2	128.9	0	105.7	.1	110.2	-.1	118.7	2.9	104.8	-3.0
Detroit -----	116.9	-.3	114.3	-.3	124.6	-.5	108.0	.4	107.6	-.5	131.3	.4	102.7	-1.6
Houston -----	114.6	-.1	112.2	-.4	125.5	-.2	106.9	.2	113.2	-.3	121.1	-1.4	101.6	-.8
Kansas City -----	111.5	-.1	108.6	-.1	127.4	.2	106.3	.9	107.9	0	115.1	-.3	95.9	-1.3
Los Angeles -----	122.9	-.2	118.2	-.4	146.2	.1	112.1	.9	111.1	.2	131.1	-1.9	105.5	-1.0
Minneapolis -----	117.5	-.5	114.3	-.6	134.6	.1	107.6	0	104.7	-.1	129.6	-2.0	109.0	-1.2
New York -----	119.2	-.3	116.4	-.3	142.5	.6	114.4	.5	114.0	-1.0	120.9	.2	102.5	-2.5
Philadelphia -----	119.3	-.7	116.2	-.9	138.2	-.4	111.8	-1.8	116.2	0	124.3	.6	100.8	-2.2
Pittsburgh -----	119.4	.6	117.6	.6	132.6	-.2	110.9	.3	114.4	-.1	129.3	6.6	111.4	-2.6
Portland, Oreg. -----	120.0	.7	117.7	.7	140.4	0	114.7	.3	117.2	-.1	123.4	3.5	106.1	-.2
St. Louis -----	118.7	0	113.9	-.1	124.7	.2	105.8	-.6	105.7	.1	133.8	1.3	110.2	-1.2
San Francisco -----	122.3	.1	120.0	-.1	147.0	-.1	116.8	.5	115.4	0	133.4	.8	103.6	-1.6
Scranton -----	114.8	.3	113.9	.2	135.9	0	111.9	-.6	110.4	-.1	121.3	5.4	99.0	-2.4
Seattle -----	120.7	.4	118.8	.3	146.8	.1	114.2	.4	117.3	1.1	130.2	1.4	102.5	-1.2
Washington, D.C. -----	118.5	0	115.8	0	132.1	-.1	110.5	-1.5	117.5	0	123.3	3.4	104.6	-.9

TABLE 6: Consumer Price Index -- Average retail prices of selected foods
 U.S. city average

Food and unit	May 1959	April 1959	Food and unit	May 1959	April 1959
Cereals and bakery products:	Cents	Cents	Fresh--Continued	Cents	Cents
Flour, wheat ----- 5 lb.	54.9	54.9	Peaches * ----- lb.		
Biscuit mix ----- 20 oz.	26.9	26.8	Strawberries * ----- pt.	29.8	34.7
Corn meal ----- 1b.	13.0	12.9	Grapes, seedless * ----- 1b.		
Rice ----- 1b.	18.6	18.5	Watermelons * ----- 1b.		
Rolled oats ----- 18 oz.	20.4	20.4	Potatoes ----- 10 lb.	63.1	55.8
Corn flakes ----- 12 oz.	25.6	25.5	Sweetpotatoes ----- 1b.	14.2	14.1
Bread, white ----- 1b.	19.7	19.6	Onions ----- 1b.	14.2	16.9
Soda crackers ----- 1b.	29.2	29.2	Carrots ----- 1b.	14.1	14.1
Vanilla cookies ----- 7 oz.	24.5	24.4	Lettuce ----- head	14.6	15.5
Meats, poultry, and fish:			Celery ----- 1b.	13.1	12.3
Round steak ----- 1b.	107.7	107.7	Cabbage ----- 1b.	9.1	8.9
Chuck roast ----- 1b.	65.7	64.8	Tomatoes ----- 1b.	34.4	32.3
Rib roast ----- 1b.	83.1	82.9	Beans, green ----- 1b.	28.0	29.8
Hamburger ----- 1b.	55.3	55.0	Canned:		
Veal cutlets ----- 1b.	143.0	141.5	Orange juice ----- 48-oz. can	49.0	47.9
Pork chops, center cut ----- 1b.	85.5	84.0	Peaches ----- #2 1/2 can	36.3	36.4
Bacon, sliced ----- 1b.	68.8	68.4	Pineapple ----- #2 can	36.1	36.1
Ham, whole ----- 1b.	62.7	63.1	Fruit cocktail ----- #303 can	27.9	27.9
Lamb, leg ----- 1b.	76.5	75.2	Corn, cream style ----- #303 can	19.5	19.4
Frankfurters ----- 1b.	64.2	64.8	Peas, green ----- #303 can	20.7	20.8
Luncheon meat, canned ----- 12 oz.	51.3	51.5	Tomatoes ----- #303 can	15.7	15.6
Frying chickens, ready-to-cook ----- 1b.	42.1	42.7	Baby foods ----- 4 1/2 to 5 oz.	10.1	10.1
Ocean perch, fillet, frozen ----- 1b.	47.5	47.9	Dried:		
Haddock, fillet, frozen ----- 1b.	59.2	60.6	Prunes ----- 1b.	40.0	39.9
Salmon, pink, canned ----- 16 oz.	61.2	61.1	Beans ----- 1b.	17.3	17.3
Tuna fish, canned ----- 6 to 8 1/2 oz.	33.4	33.5	Other foods at home:		
Dairy products:			Tomato soup ----- 10 1/2 to 11-oz. can	12.5	12.6
Milk, fresh, (grocery) ----- qt.	23.6	23.7	Beans with pork ----- 16-oz. can	15.1	15.1
Milk, fresh, (delivered) ----- qt.	24.8	24.9	Pickles, sliced ----- 15 oz.	26.5	26.6
Ice cream ----- pt.	29.7	29.7	Catsup, tomato ----- 14 oz.	22.6	22.7
Butter ----- 1b.	74.1	74.4	Coffee ----- 1b. can	77.2	78.1
Cheese, American process ----- 1b.	58.1	58.0	Coffee ----- 1b. bag	57.9	61.5
Milk, evaporated ----- 14 1/2-oz. can	15.2	15.2	Tea bags ----- pkg. of 16	24.2	24.1
Fruits and vegetables:			Cola drink, carton ----- 36 oz.	29.4	29.4
Frozen:			Shortening, hydrogenated ----- 3 lb.	88.0	88.8
Strawberries ----- 10 oz.	25.7	26.1	Margarine, colored ----- 1b.	27.8	28.0
Orange juice concentrate ----- 6 oz.	24.7	24.8	Lard ----- 1b.	20.1	20.4
Peas, green ----- 10 oz.	19.8	20.0	Salad dressing ----- pt.	37.8	37.9
Beans, green ----- 9 oz.	22.7	22.8	Peanut butter ----- 1b.	55.8	55.9
Fresh:			Sugar ----- 5 lb.	56.6	56.7
Apples ----- 1b.	15.4	14.9	Corn syrup ----- 24 oz.	25.4	26.4
Bananas ----- 1b.	17.0	16.3	Grape jelly ----- 12 oz.	28.2	28.3
Oranges, size 200 ----- doz.	65.2	62.1	Chocolate bar ----- 1 oz.	5.1	5.1
Lemons ----- 1b.	18.4	18.7	Eggs, Grade A, large ----- doz.	45.0	48.0
Grapefruit * ----- each	12.3	11.8	Gelatin, flavored ----- 3 to 4 oz.	9.3	9.2

* Priced only in season.

Brief Explanation of the CPI

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) measures average changes in prices of goods and services usually bought by city families of wage earners and clerical workers. It is based on prices of about 300 items which were selected so that their price changes would represent the movement of prices of all goods and services purchased by wage and clerical families; they include all of the important items in family spending. Prices for these items are obtained in 46 cities which were chosen to represent all urban places in the United States; they are collected from grocery and department stores, hospitals, filling stations, and other types of stores and service establishments which wage-earner and clerical-worker families patronize.

Prices of foods, fuels, and a few other items are obtained every month in all 46 cities. Prices of most other commodities and services are collected every month in the 5 largest cities and every 3 months in other cities. Almost all prices are obtained by personal visits of the Bureau's trained representatives.

In calculating the index, price changes for the various items in each city are averaged together with weights which represent their importance in family spending. City data are then combined in the total index with weights based on the 1950 populations of cities they represent. Index numbers are computed on the base 1947-49=100.

The national index (the United States city average) includes prices from the 20 large cities for which separate indexes are published in this report, as well as from the following 26 medium-sized and small cities:

Anna, Illinois	Huntington, W. Virginia	Pulaski, Virginia
Camden, Arkansas	Laconia, New Hampshire	Ravenna, Ohio
Canton, Ohio	Lodi, California	Rawlins, Wyoming
Charleston, W. Virginia	Lynchburg, Virginia	San Jose, California
Evansville, Indiana	Madill, Oklahoma	Sandpoint, Idaho
Garrett, Indiana	Madison, Wisconsin	Shawnee, Oklahoma
Glendale, Arizona	Middlesboro, Kentucky	Shenandoah, Iowa
Grand Forks, N. Dakota	Middletown, Connecticut	Youngstown, Ohio
Grand Island, Nebraska	Newark, Ohio	

Comparisons of city indexes show only that prices in one city changed more or less than in another. The city indexes cannot be used to measure differences in price levels or in living costs between cities.

A description of the index is contained in BLS Bulletin 1140, "The Consumer Price Index: A Layman's Guide," which may be purchased for 20 cents at any Bureau of Labor Statistics regional office (addresses below) or from the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C. A more technical description of the index appears in BLS Bulletin 1168, "Techniques of Preparing Major BLS Statistical Series." Reprints of chapter 9, pertaining to the CPI, are available on request to the Bureau of Labor Statistics in Washington or at any of its regional offices.

Historical series of index numbers for the United States city average and for 20 large cities are available upon request. These series include index numbers for All Items, Food, Apparel, and Rent for periods from 1913 to date; and for other groups of goods and services from 1935 to date.

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