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Consumer Price Index: 2020 in review

JANUARY 15, 2021

From 2019 to 2020, consumer prices for all items rose 1.4 percent. Over that period, food prices increased 3.9 percent, a larger percentage increase than the 12-month increase of 1.8 percent in 2019. Food at home prices increased 3.9 percent in 2020, the largest over-the-year increase since 2011.

CHART IMAGE | CHART DATA

Chart Image

12-month percent change in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers, selected items, not seasonally adjusted



Click legend items to change data display. Hover over chart to view data.
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.



Chart Data

12-month percent change in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers, selected items, not seasonally adjusted

Item	Dec. 2019 to Dec. 2020	Dec. 2018 to Dec. 2019	Dec. 2017 to Dec. 2018	Dec. 2016 to Dec. 2017
All items	1.4%	2.3%	1.9%	2.1%
Used cars and trucks	10.0	-0.7	1.4	-1.0
Tobacco and smoking products	5.1	5.5	3.4	6.5
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	4.6	2.3	-0.4	2.8
Dairy and related products	4.4	2.4	-0.1	-0.5

Item	Dec. 2019 to Dec. 2020	Dec. 2018 to Dec. 2019	Dec. 2017 to Dec. 2018	Dec. 2016 to Dec. 2017
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials	4.4	1.0	1.4	0.0
Utility (piped) gas service	4.1	-3.5	2.3	4.7
Food away from home	3.9	3.1	2.8	2.5
Food	3.9	1.8	1.6	1.6
Food at home	3.9	0.7	0.6	0.9
Other food at home	3.9	0.3	0.2	0.5
Household furnishings and operations	3.2	1.0	2.1	-0.8
Cereals and bakery products	3.2	0.3	1.7	-0.6
Fruits and vegetables	3.2	-1.3	1.6	1.5
Hospital services	3.0	3.0	3.7	5.1
Alcoholic beverages	2.8	0.5	1.8	1.4
Communication	2.4	0.7	-1.8	-4.9
Electricity	2.2	-0.4	1.1	2.6
New vehicles	2.0	0.1	-0.3	-0.5
Medical care	1.8	4.6	2.0	1.8
Shelter	1.8	3.2	3.2	3.2
Personal care	1.8	1.5	1.8	0.9
Physicians' services	1.7	1.4	0.6	-1.8
All items less food and energy	1.6	2.3	2.2	1.8
Education	1.4	2.1	2.6	2.0
Recreation	0.9	1.5	1.2	1.5
Prescription drugs	-2.4	3.0	-0.6	2.8
Apparel	-3.9	-1.2	-0.1	-1.6
Motor vehicle insurance	-4.8	0.0	4.6	7.9
Energy	-7.0	3.4	-0.3	6.9
Gasoline	-15.2	7.9	-2.1	10.7
Airline fares	-18.4	1.7	-2.6	-4.0

Prices for all six of the major grocery store food groups increased from 2019 to 2020. Prices for meats, poultry, fish, and eggs rose 4.6 percent from 2019 to 2020, double the 2.3-percent increase of the prior year. Prices for dairy and related products rose 4.4 percent from 2019 to 2020 after rising 2.4 percent from 2018 to 2019. Prices for nonalcoholic beverages also rose 4.4 percent in from 2019 to 2020, a larger increase than the 1.0-percent advance from 2018 to 2019. Prices for the other food at home group rose 3.9 percent in 2020. Prices for fruits and vegetables rose 3.2 percent in 2020 after declining in 2019; prices for cereals and bakery products also increased 3.2 percent in 2020.

Energy prices declined 7.0 percent in 2020 following a 3.4-percent increase in 2019. Gasoline prices fell 15.2 percent in 2020 after rising 7.9 percent the prior year. Natural gas prices, however rose 4.1 percent in 2020 after falling 3.5 percent in 2019, and the price of electricity increased 2.2 percent from 2019 to 2020 after falling 0.4 percent from 2018 to 2019.

Medical care prices rose 1.8 percent in 2020, a smaller increase than the 4.6-percent advance in 2019. Prescription drug prices fell 2.4 percent in 2020 after rising 3.0 percent in 2019. Prices for hospital services rose 3.0 percent from 2019 to 2020, the same increase as the prior year, while prices for physicians' services increased 1.7 percent.

These data are from the [Consumer Price Index](#) program and are not seasonally adjusted. For more information, see "[Consumer Price Index — December 2020](#)." We also have [more charts on consumer prices](#).

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SUGGESTED CITATION

Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *The Economics Daily*, Consumer Price Index: 2020 in review at <https://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2021/consumer-price-index-2020-in-review.htm> (visited November 15, 2021).

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