

NEWS RELEASE



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USUAL WEEKLY EARNINGS OF WAGE AND SALARY WORKERS THIRD QUARTER 2011

Median weekly earnings of the nation's 101.4 million full-time wage and salary workers were \$753 in the third quarter of 2011 (not seasonally adjusted), the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. This was 1.8 percent higher than a year earlier, compared with a gain of 3.8 percent in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) over the same period.

Data on usual weekly earnings are collected as part of the Current Population Survey, a nationwide sample survey of households in which respondents are asked, among other things, how much each wage and salary worker usually earns. (See the Technical Note.) Data shown in this release are not seasonally adjusted unless otherwise specified. Highlights from the third-quarter data are:

- **Seasonally adjusted median weekly earnings** were \$758 in the third quarter of 2011, little changed from the previous quarter (\$756). (See table 1.)
- On a not seasonally adjusted basis, **median weekly earnings** were \$753 in the third quarter of 2011. **Women** who usually worked full time had median weekly earnings of \$673, or 81.4 percent of the \$827 median for **men**. (See table 2.)
- The **female-to-male earnings ratio** varied by race and ethnicity. White women earned 82.5 percent as much as their male counterparts, compared with black (90.2 percent), Asian (70.1 percent), and Hispanic women (92.9 percent). (See table 2.)
- Among the major **race and ethnicity groups**, median weekly earnings for black men working at full-time jobs were \$661 per week, or 78.0 percent of the median for white men (\$847). The difference was less among women, as black women's median earnings (\$596) were 85.3 percent of those for white women (\$699). Overall, median earnings of Hispanics who worked full time (\$545) were lower than those of blacks (\$616), whites (\$772), and Asians (\$869). (See table 2.)
- Usual weekly earnings of full-time workers varied by **age**. Among men, those age 45 to 54 and 55 to 64 had the highest median weekly earnings, \$983 and \$985, respectively. Usual weekly earnings were highest for women age 35 to 64; weekly earnings were \$728 for women age 35 to 44, \$741 for women age 45 to 54, and \$748 for women age 55 to 64. Workers age 16 to 24 had the lowest median weekly earnings, at \$432. (See table 3.)

- Among the major **occupational groups**, persons employed full time in management, professional, and related occupations had the highest median weekly earnings—\$1,267 for men and \$946 for women. Men and women employed in service jobs earned the least, \$528 and \$427, respectively. (See table 4.)
- By educational attainment, full-time workers age 25 and over without a high school diploma had median weekly earnings of \$459, compared with \$636 for high school graduates (no college) and \$1,152 for those holding at least a bachelor's degree. Among college graduates with advanced degrees (professional or master's degree and above), the highest earning 10 percent of male workers made \$3,131 or more per week, compared with \$2,311 or more for their female counterparts. (See table 5.)

Revision of Seasonally Adjusted Usual Weekly Earnings Data

The Usual Weekly Earnings news release for the fourth quarter of 2011 will incorporate annual revisions to seasonally adjusted data for the number of full-time wage and salary workers and median weekly earnings in current dollars. (See table 1.) Estimates for constant (1982-84) dollar median weekly earnings also will be affected by revisions to the current dollar series. Seasonally adjusted estimates back to the first quarter of 2007 will be subject to revision.

Technical Note

The estimates in this release were obtained from the Current Population Survey (CPS), which provides basic information on the labor force, employment, and unemployment. The survey is conducted monthly for the Bureau of Labor Statistics by the U.S. Census Bureau from a scientifically selected national sample of about 60,000 households, with coverage in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The earnings data are collected from one-quarter of the CPS monthly sample and are limited to wage and salary workers (both incorporated and unincorporated self-employed are excluded). The data, therefore, exclude self-employment income.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Reliability

Statistics based on the CPS are subject to both sampling and nonsampling error. When a sample rather than the entire population is surveyed, there is a chance that the sample estimates may differ from the "true" population values they represent. The exact difference, or *sampling error*, varies depending on the particular sample selected, and this variability is measured by the standard error of the estimate. There is about a 90-percent chance, or level of confidence, that an estimate based on a sample will differ by no more than 1.6 standard errors from the "true" population value because of sampling error. BLS analyses are generally conducted at the 90-percent level of confidence.

The CPS data also are affected by *nonsampling error*. Nonsampling errors can occur for many reasons, including the failure to sample a segment of the population, inability to obtain information for all respondents in the sample, inability or unwillingness of respondents to provide correct information on a timely basis, mistakes made by respondents, and errors made in the collection or processing of the data.

A full discussion of the reliability of data from the Current Population Survey and information on estimating standard errors is available on the BLS Web site at www.bls.gov/cps/documentation.htm#reliability.

Definitions

The principal definitions used in connection with the earnings series are described briefly below.

Usual weekly earnings. Data represent earnings before taxes and other deductions and include any overtime pay, commissions, or tips usually received (at the main job in the case of multiple jobholders). Prior to 1994, respondents were asked how much they usually earned per week. Since January 1994, respondents have been asked to identify the easiest way for them to report earnings (hourly, weekly, biweekly, twice monthly, monthly, annually, other) and how much they usually earn in the reported time period.

Earnings reported on a basis other than weekly are converted to a weekly equivalent. The term "usual" is as perceived by the respondent. If the respondent asks for a definition of usual, interviewers are instructed to define the term as more than half the weeks worked during the past 4 or 5 months.

Medians (and other quantiles) of weekly earnings. The median (or upper limit of the second quartile) is the amount which divides a given earnings distribution into two equal groups, one having earnings above the median and the other having earnings below the median. Ten percent of a given distribution have earnings below the upper limit of the first decile (90 percent have higher earnings); 25 percent have earnings below the upper limit of the first quartile (75 percent have higher earnings); 75 percent have earnings below the upper limit of the third quartile (25 percent have higher earnings); and 90 percent have earnings below the upper limit of the ninth decile (10 percent have higher earnings).

The estimation procedure places each reported or calculated weekly earnings value into \$50-wide intervals which are centered around multiples of \$50. The actual value is estimated through the linear interpolation of the interval in which the quantile boundary lies.

Over-the-year changes in the medians (and other quantile boundaries) for specific groups may not necessarily be consistent with the movements estimated for the overall quantile boundary. The most common reasons for this possible anomaly are: (1) There could be a change in the relative weights of the subgroups. For example, the medians of both 16-to-24 year olds and those 25 years and over may rise; but if the lower-earning 16-to-24 group accounts for a greatly increased share of the total, the overall median could actually fall. (2) There could be a large change in the shape of the distribution of reported earnings, particularly near a quantile boundary. This could be caused by survey observations that are clustered at

rounded values, such as \$250, \$300, or \$400. An estimate lying in a \$50-wide centered interval containing such a cluster or "spike" tends to change more slowly than one in other intervals.

Wage and salary workers. Workers who receive wages, salaries, commissions, tips, payment in kind, or piece rates. The group includes employees in both the private and public sectors but, for the purposes of the earnings series, excludes all self-employed persons, regardless of whether or not their businesses are incorporated.

Full-time workers. Workers who usually work 35 hours or more per week at their sole or principal job.

Part-time workers. Workers who usually work fewer than 35 hours per week at their sole or principal job.

Constant dollars. The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) is used to convert current dollars to constant (1982-84) dollars.

Hispanic or Latino ethnicity. Refers to persons who identified themselves in the enumeration process as being Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino. Persons whose ethnicity is

identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race.

Seasonal adjustment

Over the course of a year, the size of the nation's labor force and other measures of labor market activity undergo regularly occurring fluctuations. These recurring events include seasonal changes in weather, major holidays, and the opening and closing of schools. The effect of such seasonal variations can be very large.

Because seasonal events follow a more or less regular pattern each year, their influence on the level of a series can be tempered by adjusting for regular seasonal variation. These adjustments make nonseasonal developments easier to spot. The seasonally adjusted figures provide a more useful tool with which to analyze changes in quarter-to-quarter activity.

At the end of each calendar year, the seasonally adjusted data are revised for the past 5 years when the seasonal adjustment factors are updated. More information on seasonal adjustment is available on the BLS Web site at www.bls.gov/cps/documentation.htm#sa.

Table 1. Median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers by sex, quarterly averages, seasonally adjusted

	Number of workers (in thousands)			Median weekly earnings						
Year and quarter				In current dollars In constant (1982-84) dollar						
	Total	Men	Women	Total \$	Men \$	Women \$	Total \$	Men \$	Women \$	
2002										
3rd Quarter	100,183	56,390	43,793	608	679	531	337	376	294	
4th Quarter	99,895	56,224	43,670	610	683	540	336	376	298	
2003										
1st Quarter	100,136	56,079	44,057	615	689	546	335	376	297	
2nd Quarter	100,255	56,013	44,242	619	692	551	338	378	301	
3rd Quarter	100,139	56,178	43,961	621	697	554	337	378	300	
4th Quarter	100,628	56,607	44,021	623	702	560	337	379	302	
2004										
1st Quarter	100,905	56,848	44,057	629	705	562	337	378	301	
2nd Quarter.	101,135	56,914	44,221	642	715	576	341	380	306	
3rd Quarter	101,148	56,931	44,217	635	712	574	335	376	303	
4th Quarter	101,658	57,289	44,369	646	720	577	337	376	302	
2005										
1st Quarter	102,091	57,710	44,381	647	723	580	336	376	302	
2nd Quarter	103,201	58,099	45,101	647	714	584	334	369	301	
3rd Quarter	104,310	58,843	45,467	651	723	588	331	368	299	
4th Quarter	104,605	58,967	45,638	658	730	588	332	368	296	
2006	,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,	,								
1st Quarter	104,708	58,960	45,748	662	737	594	332	370	298	
2nd Quarter	105,798	59,831	45,966	663	732	597	329	364	296	
3rd Quarter	107,041	60,060	46,981	678	755	603	334	372	297	
4th Quarter	106,847	60,140	46,707	681	748	607	337	370	300	
2007	100,011									
1st Quarter	107,134	60,063	47,072	687	751	609	336	368	298	
2nd Quarter	106,819	60,346	46,473	693	765	610	335	370	295	
3rd Quarter	107,156	60,220	46,936	698	774	620	336	372	298	
4th Quarter	108,251	60,571	47,680	700	774	614	332	368	292	
2008		00,07	,000		'''		002			
2006 1st Quarter	107.740	60,328	47,412	712	782	633	335	368	297	
2nd Quarter.	107,740	59,588	47,472	723	801	637	335	372	296	
3rd Quarter	106.088	59,246	46,841	723 724	803	636	331	367	291	
4th Quarter	,	58,601	47,109	727	807	646	340	378	302	
	100,711	00,001	17,100	, -,	007	0.0	0.10	0,0	002	
2009 1st Quarter	101 610	E6 001	4E 201	721	014	645	244	202	304	
2nd Quarter	101,612	56,231 55,246	45,381 44,787	731 737	814 817	645 655	344 345	383 383	304	
3rd Quarter	98,949	54,425	44,787	737 742	820	663	345	381	307	
4th Quarter	98,702	54,534	44,168	742	825	665	345	380	307	
	30,702	34,304	44,100	, 4,	023	005	043	000	007	
2010	00.071	E4.006	44.044	747	004	660	040	200	204	
1st Quarter	98,071 99,674	54,026 55,062	44,044	747 744	834 813	662 674	343	383 374	304 310	
2nd Quarter	100,242	55,062	44,612 44,718	744 745	822	668	342 342	374	306	
4th Quarter	100,242	55,620	44,718	745 751	829	675	342	377	306	
	100,102	33,020	77,512	, , , ,	023	0,3	042	5/6	307	
2011	00.600	EE 010	44 005	740	900	670	207	360	206	
1st Quarter	99,698	55,312 55,845	44,385	749 756	820 828	679 689	337 337	369 369	306 307	
2nd Quarter	100,397	55,845	44,552 44,347	756 758	828	681	337	369	307	
JIU QUAITEI	100,263	33,910	44,347	/56	033	001	333	309	301	

NOTE: Updated population controls are introduced annually with the release of January data.

Table 2. Median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers by selected characteristics,

quarterly averages, not seasonally adjusted

		of workers usands)	Median weekly earnings				
Characteristic	3rd 2010	3rd 2011	In current dollars		In constant (1982-84) dollars		
			3rd 2010	3rd 2011	3rd 2010	3rd 2011	
SEX AND AGE							
Total, 16 years and over	101,385	101,447	\$740	\$ 753	\$339	\$332	
Men, 16 years and over	56,473	56,900	813	827	373	365	
16 to 24 years	5,454	5,433	424	440	194	195	
25 years and over	51,019	51,466	869	888	398	392	
Women, 16 years and over	44,912	44,548	662	673	304	297	
16 to 24 years	4,172	3,957	419	422	192	186	
25 years and over	40,741	40,591	702	713	322	315	
RACE, HISPANIC OR LATINO ETHNICITY, AND SEX							
White	82,280	82,357	759	772	348	341	
Men	47,013	47,275	839	847	384	374	
Women	35,267	35,082	677	699	310	308	
Black or African American	11,761	11,633	611	616	280	272	
Men	5,398	5,420	634	661	290	292	
Women	6,363	6,213	590	596	270	263	
Asian	5,000	5,116	854	869	391	384	
Men	2,737	2,895	963	1,015	441	448	
Women	2,263	2,221	773	712	354	315	
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	15,067	15,324	522	545	239	241	
Men	9,433	9,627	539	562	247	248	
Women	5,634	5,697	503	522	230	231	

NOTE: Estimates for the above race groups (white, black or African American, and Asian) do not sum to totals because data are not presented for all races. Persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race. Updated population controls are introduced annually with the release of January data.

Table 3. Median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers by age, race, Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, and sex, 3rd quarter 2011 averages, not seasonally adjusted

	To	otal	Men		Women	
Age, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	Number of workers (in thousands)	Median weekly earnings	Number of workers (in thousands)	Median weekly earnings	Number of workers (in thousands)	Median weekly earnings
TOTAL						
16 years and over	101,447	\$753	56,900	\$ 827	44,548	\$673
16 to 24 years	9,390	432	5,433	440	3,957	422
16 to 19 years	1,182	356	682	370	500	338
20 to 24 years	8,208	448	4,751	458	3,457	436
25 years and over	92,057	798	51,466	888	40,591	713
25 to 54 years	73,332	785	41,233	869	32,099	707
25 to 34 years	24,618	693	14,083	719	10,534	659
35 to 44 years	23,698	832	13,573	940	10,126	728
45 to 54 years	25,016	867	13,577	983	11,439	741
55 years and over	18,725	849	10,233	964	8,492	737
55 to 64 years	15,804	867	8,513	985	7,291	748
65 years and over	2,921	758	1,719	839	1,201	643
White						
16 years and over	82,357	772	47,275	847	35,082	699
16 to 24 years	7,761	435	4,607	443	3,154	426
25 years and over	74,596	824	42,668	907	31,928	737
25 to 54 years	58,821	811	33,922	888	24,899	730
55 years and over	15,775	876	8,745	985	7,030	761
Black or African American						
16 years and over	11,633	616	5,420	661	6,213	596
16 to 24 years	1,041	404	517	418	524	384
25 years and over	10,592	640	4,903	691	5,689	611
25 to 54 years	8,758	642	4,061	685	4,697	615
55 years and over	1,834	630	842	754	992	587
Asian						
16 years and over	5,116	869	2,895	1,015	2,221	712
16 to 24 years	294	496	147	465	148	542
25 years and over	4,822	904	2,749	1,058	2,073	731
25 to 54 years	4,025	919	2,298	1,101	1,727	752
55 years and over	797	817	450	980	347	626
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity						
16 years and over	15,324	545	9,627	562	5,697	522
16 to 24 years	1,958	414	1,321	408	637	441
25 years and over	13,367	579	8,306	598	5,060	545
25 to 54 years	11,774	578	7,358	596	4,416	547
55 years and over	1,593	584	948	612	645	523

NOTE: Estimates for the above race groups (white, black or African American, and Asian) do not sum to totals because data are not presented for all races. Persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race. Updated population controls are introduced annually with the release of January data.

Table 4. Median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers by occupation and sex, quarterly averages, not seasonally adjusted

		of workers usands)	Median weekly earnings		
Occupation and sex	3rd 2010	3rd 2011	3rd 2010	3rd 2011	
TOTAL					
Management, professional, and related occupations	. 39,301	40,029	\$1,062	\$1,092	
Management, business, and financial operations occupations	. 15,830	16,429	1,149	1,174	
Professional and related occupations	. 23,471	23,600	1,010	1,032	
Service occupations	. 14,774	14,776	466	474	
Sales and office occupations		23,051	637	625	
Sales and related occupations	. 9,306	9,376	667	658	
Office and administrative support occupations.	. 14,168	13,675	624	616	
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	. 10,445	10,342	713	722	
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations		869	436	437	
Construction and extraction occupations		5,224	710	715	
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations		4,249	797	787	
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations		13,250	594	611	
Production occupations		6,867	596	609	
Transportation and material moving occupations	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	6,383	591	614	
Men	, , , , , ,	,,,,,,			
Management, professional, and related occupations	. 19,220	19,507	1,255	1,267	
Management, business, and financial operations occupations		8,745	1,308	1,372	
Professional and related occupations.		10,762	1,218	1,199	
Service occupations	1 '	7,535	511	528	
Sales and office occupations.	· 1	9,253	746	737	
Sales and related occupations		5,295	803	835	
Office and administrative support occupations.		3,958	687	677	
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations		9,927	720	730	
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations		685	465	463	
Construction and extraction occupations		5,132	709	717	
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations.		4,110	803	786	
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations		10,678	624	645	
Production occupations		5,048	656	672	
Transportation and material moving occupations.		5,631	607	624	
	. 0,001	0,001	007	024	
Women Management, professional, and related occupations	. 20,081	20,522	921	946	
Management, business, and financial operations occupations		7,684	983	980	
Professional and related occupations.		12,838	893	927	
Service occupations	· 1	7,241	425	427	
•	. 14,370	13,798	596	592	
Sales and office occupations.			519	521	
Sales and related occupations.		4,081			
Office and administrative support occupations.		9,717	610	606	
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations		415	486	503	
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations.		184	393	362	
Construction and extraction occupations.		92	739	574	
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations		139	628	865	
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations		2,571	476	491	
Production occupations.		1,819	488	489	
Transportation and material moving occupations	. 804	752	413	498	

NOTE: Updated population controls are introduced annually with the release of January data.

Table 5. Quartiles and selected deciles of usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers by selected characteristics, 3rd quarter 2011 averages, not seasonally adjusted

Characteristic	Number of	Upper limit of:					
	workers (in thousands)	First decile	First quartile	Second quartile (median)	Third quartile	Ninth decile	
SEX, RACE, AND HISPANIC OR LATINO ETHNICITY							
Total, 16 years and over	101,447	\$357	\$ 497	\$ 753	\$1,175	\$1,814	
Men	56,900	378	523	827	1,312	1,939	
Women	44,548	337	466	673	1,025	1,525	
White	82,357	363	505	772	1,206	1,850	
Men	47,275	381	536	847	1,337	1,979	
Women	35,082	342	478	699	1,050	1,547	
Black or African American	11,633	329	435	616	942	1,405	
Men	5,420	344	474	661	1,004	1,457	
Women	6,213	317	412	596	870	1,308	
Asian	5,116	382	522	869	1,426	2,096	
Men	2,895	404	619	1,015	1,735	2,324	
Women	2,221	353	474	712	1,138	1,741	
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	15,324	310	392	545	832	1,237	
Men	9,627	314	400	562	875	1,290	
Women	5,697	302	377	522	776	1,145	
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT							
Total, 25 years and over	92,057	382	525	798	1,233	1,876	
Less than a high school diploma	7,029	292	350	459	624	887	
High school graduates, no college ¹	25,298	353	468	636	921	1,278	
Some college or associate degree	25,143	383	511	731	1,070	1,479	
Bachelor's degree and higher ²	34,588	566	789	1,152	1,753	2,466	
Bachelor's degree only	21,750	518	727	1,047	1,565	2,125	
Advanced degree	12,838	656	937	1,354	1,978	2,892	
Men, 25 years and over	51,466	402	582	888	1,372	2,018	
Less than a high school diploma	4,818	301	369	489	684	973	
High school graduates, no college ¹	14,959	391	516	720	1,030	1,424	
Some college or associate degree	13,366	416	586	839	1,203	1,643	
Bachelor's degree and higher ²	18,323	597	894	1,331	1,919	2,875	
Bachelor's degree only	11,486	574	814	1,198	1,817	2,417	
Advanced degree	6,837	697	1,066	1,578	2,294	3,131	
Women, 25 years and over	40,591	357	491	713	1,067	1,565	
Less than a high school diploma	2,211	278	323	404	539	727	
High school graduates, no college ¹	10,339	320	405	545	743	1,039	
Some college or associate degree	11,776	354	472	625	902	1,235	
Bachelor's degree and higher ²	16,265	529	726	993	1,445	1,985	
Bachelor's degree only	10,265	497	657	931	1,297	1,806	
Advanced degree	6,001	632	855	1,154	1,683	2,311	

¹ Includes persons with a high school diploma or equivalent.

NOTE: Ten percent of all full-time wage and salary workers earn less than the upper limit of the first decile; 25 percent earn less than the upper limit of the first quartile; 50 percent earn less than the upper limit of the second quartile, or median; 75 percent earn less than the upper limit of the third quartile; and 90 percent earn less than the upper limit of the ninth decile. Estimates for the above race groups (white, black or African American, and Asian) do not sum to totals because data are not presented for all races. Persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race. Updated population controls are introduced annually with the release of January data.

² Includes persons with bachelor's, master's, professional, and doctoral degrees.

Table 6. Median usual weekly earnings of part-time wage and salary workers by selected characteristics, quarterly averages, not seasonally adjusted

Chara stariatia		of workers usands)	Median weekly earnings		
Characteristic	3rd 2010	3rd 2011	3rd 2010	3rd 2011	
SEX AND AGE					
otal, 16 years and over	23,405	24,103	\$234	\$237	
Men, 16 years and over	8,005	8,463	226	233	
16 to 24 years	3,286	3,598	181	186	
25 years and over	4,719	4,865	269	294	
Women, 16 years and over	15,400	15,641	239	239	
16 to 24 years	4,402	4,476	176	181	
25 years and over	10,998	11,165	276	275	
RACE, HISPANIC OR LATINO ETHNICITY, AND SEX					
White	19,506	19,858	234	238	
Men	6,406	6,763	225	235	
Women	13,100	13,095	239	240	
Black or African American	2,402	2,585	230	220	
Men	1,007	1,036	226	214	
Women	1,396	1,549	232	224	
Asian	914	950	253	271	
Men	375	383	238	274	
Women	539	567	264	269	
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	3,267	3,484	228	239	
Men	1,324	1,412	234	246	
Women	1,943	2,072	224	236	

NOTE: Estimates for the above race groups (white, black or African American, and Asian) do not sum to totals because data are not presented for all races. Persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race. Updated population controls are introduced annually with the release of January data.