

Real Earnings – December 2009

Every month, the Bureau of Labor Statistics releases data on real earnings for production or nonsupervisory workers in the private sector. Real earnings reflect the value of workers' paychecks adjusted for inflation. They indicate whether or not wage increases have actually translated into an improved standard of living.

Real Earnings Stats at a Glance - December

Year	Private Sector		Manufacturing	
	Average Hourly Earnings	Earnings Adjusted for Inflation <i>(Dec. 2009 dollars)</i>	Average Hourly Earnings	Earnings Adjusted for Inflation <i>(Dec. 2009 dollars)</i>
2004	15.87	18.07	16.35	18.62
2005	16.37	18.01	16.68	18.35
2006	17.07	18.33	17.00	18.26
2007	17.71	18.21	17.42	17.92
2008	18.40	19.05	17.96	18.60
2009	18.80		18.40	

- Both real average hourly and weekly earnings were flat in December in the private sector.
- On a year-over-year basis, real average hourly earnings were down 25 cents (1.3 percent) in the private sector and 20 cents (1 percent) in manufacturing.
- Average weekly earnings were \$624.16 in December. After adjusting for inflation, weekly earnings were down 1.6 percent from December 2008, as the continuing recession pushed both real hourly earnings and hours worked lower.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics report can be found at:

<http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/realer.pdf>

Next release: February 19, 2010

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