



FURNITURE INSIGHTS®

Smith Leonard PLLC's Industry Newsletter

December 2025



HIGHLIGHTS – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

New orders were down 8% compared to the prior month of September 2025 (following the 15% increase from August 2025). New orders were also down 1% in October 2025 compared to October 2024. However, year to date through October 2025, new orders remain flat compared to 2024.

Shipments were up 2% compared to the prior month of September 2025 and up 4% compared to October 2024. Year to date through October 2025, shipments have now pulled even compared to 2024.

October 2025 backlogs were down 2% compared to October 2024, and down 3% from September 2025.

Receivable levels were up 4% from September 2025, but down 2% from October 2024.

Inventories were up 1% from September 2025 and up 4% from October 2024.

Payrolls were up 3% compared to September 2025 and up 5% compared to October 2024, which are materially in line with shipments.

Employee levels are again materially in line with recent months and the prior year.

Due to the prior US Government shutdown, certain monthly economic data normally presented in this report is still not available. For reference, we have left the last available month's data in the report, but the text is highlighted in light blue.



Mark Laferriere (right) with James Harmon, Assurance Partner

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, CONT.

National

Consumer Confidence

The Conference Board **Consumer Confidence Index®** declined by 3.8 points in December to 89.1 (1985=100), from 92.9 in November. This includes an upward revision to November's reading, as responses collected after the end of the federal government shutdown (which spanned October 1 to November 12) were more positive than those collected during the impasse.

The **Present Situation Index**—based on consumers' assessment of current business and labor market conditions—plummeted by 9.5 points to 116.8 in December.

The **Expectations Index**—based on consumers' short-term outlook for income, business, and labor market conditions—held steady at 70.7. The Expectations Index has now tracked under 80 for 11 consecutive months, the threshold below which the gauge signals recession ahead.

"Despite an upward revision in November related to the end of the shutdown, consumer confidence fell again in December and remained well below this year's January peak. Four of five components of the overall index fell, while one was at a level signaling notable weakness," said Dana M Peterson, Chief Economist, The Conference Board.

Peterson added: "Consumers' write-in responses on factors affecting the economy continued to be led by references to prices and inflation, tariffs and trade, and politics. However, December saw increases in mentions of immigration, war, and topics related to personal finances—including interest rates, taxes and income, banks, and insurance. The responses continued to skew pessimistic but less so than November, potentially due to fewer negative comments about prices and inflation, politics, as well as a rebound in positive responses about interest rates. Notably, the Federal Reserve Board cut monetary policy rates on December 10 for a third time in 2025, which landed in the second half of the survey sample interval."

Consumers appeared more cautious about plans for buying big-ticket items over the next six months. Homebuying expectations also ticked downward. Plans to buy household appliances all dipped, as did purchasing plans for PCs and laptops, as well as video game consoles. By contrast, future spending plans for smartphones, tablets, and digital cameras continued to trend upward on a six-month moving average basis. Used cars, TVs, and smartphones remained the most popular within their categories for future purchases.

Housing

Existing-home sales increased by 0.5% in November, according to the National Association of REALTORS® Existing-Home Sales Report. The Report provides the real estate ecosystem, including agents and homebuyers and sellers, with data on the level of home sales, price, and inventory.

Month-over-month sales increased in the Northeast and South, showed no change in the West, and fell in the Midwest. Year-over-year sales showed no change in the Northeast and South, and decreased in the Midwest and West.

"Existing-home sales increased for the third straight month due to lower mortgage rates this autumn," said NAR Chief Economist Lawrence Yun. "However, inventory growth is beginning to stall. With distressed property sales at historic lows and housing wealth at an all-time high, homeowners are in no rush to list their properties during the winter months."

"Wage growth is outpacing home price gains, which improves housing affordability. Still, future affordability could be hampered if housing supply fails to keep pace with demand," Yun added. As has been the case throughout the year, single-family home sales outperformed condominium sales in November.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, CONT.

Thoughts

First of all, I would like to recognize and thank Sherry White for her many years of dedication and service to our Furniture Insights program and congratulate her on her upcoming retirement. We will miss you, Sherry!

Monthly new orders for participants in our survey continued to alternate back and forth between increases and decreases compared to the prior year (-1%, +7%, -3%, +13%, +3%, -1%, -9%, +1%, -5%, -3%).

However, year-to-date new orders and shipments through October 2025 are now even with 2024, which while nothing to write home about given calendar 2024 ended up 1% down from 2023 (which was up 5% over 2022), it is at least a positive sign given the many challenges from the first half of the year.

And while retail has been slow, recent industry reporting of certain key retailers shows improvement in recent months and optimism for 2026 based upon these trends and expectations of interest rates and housing for next year.

Here's wishing everyone a happy and prosperous new year.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, CONT.

National, Cont.

Housing, Cont.

Total Existing-Home Sales for November

- 0.5% increase in existing-home sales month-over-month to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 4.13 million.
- 1.0% decrease in sales year over year.

Single-Family-Homes Sales in November

- 0.8% increase in sales month over month to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 3.75 million, down 0.8% from November 2024.
- \$414,300: Median home price in November, up 1.2% from last year.

Condominiums and Co-ops Sales in November

- 2.6% decrease in sales month over month and year over year to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 380,000.
- \$358,600: Median price, up 0.1% from November 2024.

Mortgage Rates

- 6.24%: The average 30-year fixed-rate mortgage in November, according to Freddie Mac, down from 6.25% in October and 6.81% one year ago.

Sales of new single-family houses in August 2025 were at a seasonally-adjusted annual rate of 800,000, according to estimates released jointly by the U.S. Census Bureau and the Department of Housing and Urban Development. This is 20.5% above the July 2025 rate of 664,000, and is 15.4% above the August 2024 rate of 693,000.

Compared to August 2024 on a seasonally-adjusted basis, sales were up 15.4% overall with sales also up 21.0% in the South, up 40.9% in the Northeast, up 20.3% in the Midwest, but down 5.7% in the West.

Other

Real gross domestic product (GDP) increased at an annual rate of 4.3% in the third quarter of 2025 (July, August, and September), according to the initial estimate released by the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. In the second quarter, real GDP increased 3.8%.

The increase in real GDP in the third quarter reflected increases in consumer spending, exports, and government spending that were partly offset by a decrease in investment. Imports, which are a subtraction in the calculation of GDP, decreased.

Compared to the second quarter, the acceleration in real GDP in the third quarter reflected a smaller decrease in investment, an acceleration in consumer spending, and upturns in exports and government spending. Imports decreased less in the third quarter.

Real final sales to private domestic purchasers, the sum of consumer spending and gross private fixed investment, increased 3.0% in the third quarter, compared with an increase of 2.9% in the second quarter.

HIGHLIGHTS – MONTHLY RESULTS

New Orders

According to our latest survey of residential furniture manufacturers and distributors, new orders were down 1% in October 2025 compared to October 2024. Approximately two-thirds of participants reported increases versus decreases in October 2025 compared to a year ago.

New orders were also down 8% compared to the prior month of September 2025.

Year to date through October 2025, new orders remain flat compared to 2024 (same as last month).

Shipments and Backlogs

October 2025 shipments were up 4% compared to October 2024, and up 2% compared to September 2025. Shipments in October 2025 were up for approximately two-thirds of the participants compared to October 2024. Year to date through October 2025, shipments are now flat compared to 2024 (down 1% last month).

October 2025 backlogs were down 2% compared to October 2024, and down 3% from September 2025 as shipments outpaced new orders.

Receivables and Inventories

Receivable levels were up 4% from September 2025, but down 2% from October 2024.

Inventories were up 1% from September 2025 and up 4% from October 2024.

Factory and Warehouse Employees and Payroll

The number of factory and warehouse employees were down 2% from October a year ago (same as last month), but again even with the prior month.

Payroll expense was up 3% in October 2025 compared to September 2025, and up 5% compared to October 2024. Year to date through October 2025, payroll expense was again up 2%.

ESTIMATED BUSINESS ACTIVITY (MILLIONS)			
	2025		
	OCT	SEP	10 MOS
New Orders	2,295	2,469	21,607
Shipments	2,314	2,302	22,050
Backlog	2,389	2,513	
	2024		
	OCT	SEP	10 MOS
New Orders	2,318	2,324	21,779
Shipments	2,209	2,172	22,160
Backlog	2,438	2,452	

MONTHLY RESULTS – DECEMBER 2025

KEY MONTHLY INDICATORS (PERCENT CHANGE)			
	Oct 2025 from Sep 2025	Oct 2025 from Oct 2024	10 Mos 2025 vs 10 Mos 2024
New Orders	-8	-1	-
Shipments	+2	+4	-
Backlog	-3	-2	
Payrolls	+3	+5	+2
Employees	-	-2	
Receivables	+4	-2	
Inventories	+1	+4	

PERCENT INCREASE/DECREASE COMPARED TO PRIOR YEAR				
	New Orders	Shipments	Backlog	Employment
2024				
October	–	-5	-8	-5
November	-9	-1	-10	-5
December	+1	-2	-8	-5
2025				
January	-3	+4	-5	-3
February	-5	-5	-6	-3
March	+1	+1	-6	-4
April	-9	-2	-10	-4
May	-1	-2	-10	-4
June	+3	-4	-8	-4
July	+13	+3	-4	-3
August	-3	-6	-	-3
September	+7	+6	+2	-2
October	-1	+4	-2	-2

A DEEPER DIVE – NATIONAL

Consumer Confidence

The Conference Board **Consumer Confidence Index®** declined by 3.8 points in December to 89.1 (1985=100), from 92.9 in November. This includes an upward revision to November's reading, as responses collected after the end of the federal government shutdown (which spanned October 1 to November 12) were more positive than those collected during the impasse.

The **Present Situation Index**—based on consumers' assessment of current business and labor market conditions—plummeted by 9.5 points to 116.8 in December.

The **Expectations Index**—based on consumers' short-term outlook for income, business, and labor market conditions—held steady at 70.7. The Expectations Index has now tracked under 80 for 11 consecutive months, the threshold below which the gauge signals recession ahead.

"Despite an upward revision in November related to the end of the shutdown, consumer confidence fell again in December and remained well below this year's January peak. Four of five components of the overall index fell, while one was at a level signaling notable weakness," said Dana M Peterson, Chief Economist, The Conference Board.

The **Present Situation Index** declined as net views on current business conditions were negative for the first time since September 2024, a month that included a labor market scare and deadly hurricanes. Perceptions of employment conditions edged lower as the labor market differential—the share of consumers saying jobs are 'plentiful' minus the share saying jobs are 'hard to get'—continued to flag. Two of the three **Expectations Index** components dipped in December. November's nosedive in expectations for business conditions six months from now mostly reversed in December but remained negative. Expectations for labor market conditions were gloomier, and the outlook for household incomes was less positive.

Among demographic groups, on a six-month moving average basis, confidence dipped among all age groups in December, although consumers under 35 continued to be more confident than consumers age 35 and older. There were few generational differences, as confidence among all generations trended downward in the month, with only the Silent Generation becoming more hopeful. Millennials and Gen Z remained the most optimistic of all generations surveyed. By income, confidence on a six-month moving average basis fell for nearly all brackets, except for those earning less than \$15K and more than \$125K. Still, consumers earning less than \$15K remained the least optimistic among all income groups. Confidence continued to fall in December among all political affiliations (Democrats, Republicans, and Independents).

Peterson added: "Consumers' write-in responses on factors affecting the economy continued to be led by references to prices and inflation, tariffs and trade, and politics. However, December saw increases in mentions of immigration, war, and topics related to personal finances—including interest rates, taxes and income, banks, and insurance. The responses continued to skew pessimistic but less so than November, potentially due to fewer negative

NATIONAL UPDATE

Leading Economic Indicators

The Conference Board **Leading Economic Index® (LEI)** for the US declined by 0.3% in September 2025 to 98.3 (2016=100), after also declining by 0.3% in August (upwardly revised from an originally reported 0.5% decline). Overall, the LEI fell by 2.1% over the six months between March and September 2025, a faster rate of decline than its 1.3% contraction over the previous six-month period (September 2024 to March 2025).

"The US LEI fell again in September, marking a second consecutive decline," said Justyna Zabinska-La Monica, Senior Manager, Business Cycle Indicators, at The Conference Board. "Weakening expectations from consumers and businesses led the overall contraction in the Index. Subindexes that contributed negatively to the LEI were consumer expectations and ISM® New Orders Index, followed by manufacturers' new orders of consumer goods & materials, initial claims for unemployment Insurance (inverted), and the yield curve. However, stock prices, the Leading Credit Index, and manufacturers' new orders of nondefense capital goods excl. aircraft did contribute positively to the Index. The LEI suggests slowing economic activity at the end of 2025 and into early 2026, with GDP weakening after strong mid-year consumer spending and Q4 disruptions amid the federal government shutdown. Overall, growth remains fragile and uneven as businesses adjust to tariff changes and softer consumer momentum. The Conference Board expects GDP to expand by 1.8% in 2025, before falling to 1.5% in 2026."

The Conference Board **Coincident Economic Index® (CEI)** for the US rose by 0.1% in September 2025 to 115.1 (2016=100), following no change in August (downwardly revised from a 0.2% gain). The CEI rose by 0.3% between March and September 2025, down from 1.1% over the previous six months. The CEI's four component indicators—payroll employment, personal income less transfer payments, manufacturing and trade sales, and industrial production—are included among the data used to determine recessions in the US. Three components of the coincident index improved slightly in September. Manufacturing and trade sales, which was estimated for August and September, was also positive.

The Conference Board **Lagging Economic Index® (LAG)** for the US inched up by 0.1% to 119.6 (2016=100) in September 2025, after also increasing by 0.1% in August. The LAG grew by 0.5% in the six months between March and September 2025, slightly lower than the 0.6% increase over the previous six months.

A DEEPER DIVE – NATIONAL, CONT.

Consumer Confidence, Cont.

comments about prices and inflation, politics, as well as a rebound in positive responses about interest rates. Notably, the Federal Reserve Board cut monetary policy rates on December 10 for a third time in 2025, which landed in the second half of the survey sample interval.”

Nonetheless, the share of consumers expecting interest rates to rise were on net higher, with a drop in the proportion expecting lower rates. Consumers’ median and average 12-month inflation expectations both retreated in December after an uptick in November. The balance of consumers’ expectations for stock prices twelve months from now—higher minus lower—was the most positive since January 2025.

On net, consumers’ views of their Family’s Current Financial Situation collapsed into negative territory for the first time in nearly four years. However, expectations for their Family’s Future Financial Situation were the most positive since January of this year. Meanwhile, the share of consumers believing a US recession over the next 12 months is “not likely” edged up to about one-fifth of respondents and those saying recession is “very likely” continued to recede. Still, the largest share of consumers—those anticipating that recession is “somewhat likely”—grew again and the small percentage stating that the US is “already in one” crept higher. (These measures are not included in calculating the Consumer Confidence Index®).

Consumers appeared more cautious about plans for buying big-ticket items over the next six months. Consumers who said “yes” to buying big-ticket items ahead edged higher in December. However, the number of those saying “no” increased and “maybe” declined. Overall buying plans for autos dipped again in December. On a six-month moving average basis, expectations for purchasing new cars continued to slip, but plans to buy used cars continued to climb. Homebuying expectations also ticked downward. Plans to buy household appliances all dipped, as did purchasing plans for PCs and laptops, as well as video game consoles. By contrast, future spending plans for smartphones, tablets, and digital cameras continued to trend upward on a six-month moving average basis. Used cars, TVs, and smartphones remained the most popular within their categories for future purchases.

On balance, consumer spending trends in 2025 moved towards cheap thrills and necessary services and away from expensive and highly discretionary activities. In December, consumers’ planned spending on services over the next six months were little changed from November, but those saying “yes” to buying more services remained healthy. Month-over-month, anticipated spending on restaurants, streaming, personal care, and utilities picked up in December, while future purchases of other discretionary services categories softened. The top categories for planned services spending over the next six months still included restaurants, bars, take-out; streaming, internet, mobile services; beauty and personal care; utilities; and healthcare. Vacation intentions continued to spiral downward in December. Plans for domestic travel over the next six months still exceed international vacation plans, but both types fell.

Present Situation

Consumers’ assessments of **current business conditions** turned mildly pessimistic in December.

- 18.7% of consumers said business conditions were “good,” down from 21.0% in November.
- 19.1% said business conditions were “bad,” up from 15.8%.

Consumers’ views of the **labor market** were also weaker in December.

- 26.7% of consumers said jobs were “plentiful,” down from 28.2% in November.
- 20.8% of consumers said jobs were “hard to get,” up from 20.1%.

Expectations Six Months Hence

Consumers were moderately less pessimistic about future **business conditions** in December.

- 18.0% of consumers expected business conditions to improve, down from 18.1% in November.
- However, 21.8% expected business conditions to worsen, down from 25.8%.

Consumers were on net a bit more worried about the **labor market** outlook in December.

- 16.5% of consumers expected more jobs to be available, unchanged from November.
- 27.4% anticipated fewer jobs, up from 26.8%.

Consumers’ outlook for their **income prospects** was slightly less positive in December.

- 18.4% of consumers expected their incomes to increase, up from 17.6% in November.
- Meanwhile, 14.7% expected their incomes to decrease, up from 12.5%.

A DEEPER DIVE – NATIONAL, CONT.

Gross Domestic Product

Real gross domestic product (GDP) increased at an annual rate of 4.3% in the third quarter of 2025 (July, August, and September), according to the initial estimate released by the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. In the second quarter, real GDP increased 3.8%. The increase in real GDP in the third quarter reflected increases in consumer spending, exports, and government spending that were partly offset by a decrease in investment. Imports, which are a subtraction in the calculation of GDP, decreased.

Compared to the second quarter, the acceleration in real GDP in the third quarter reflected a smaller decrease in investment, an acceleration in consumer spending, and upturns in exports and government spending. Imports decreased less in the third quarter.

Real final sales to private domestic purchasers, the sum of consumer spending and gross private fixed investment, increased 3.0% in the third quarter, compared with an increase of 2.9% in the second quarter.

The price index for gross domestic purchases increased 3.4% in the third quarter, compared with an increase of 2.0% in the second quarter. The personal consumption expenditures (PCE) price index increased 2.8%, compared with an increase of 2.1%. Excluding food and energy prices, the PCE price index increased 2.9%, compared with an increase of 2.6%.

Real gross domestic income (GDI) increased 2.4% in the third quarter, compared with an increase of 2.6% (revised) in the second quarter. The average of real GDP and real GDI increased 3.4% in the third quarter, compared with an increase of 3.2% (revised) in the second quarter.

The price index for gross domestic purchases increased 2.0% in the second quarter, revised up 0.2 percentage point from the previous estimate. The personal consumption expenditures (PCE) price index increased 2.1%, revised up 0.1 percentage point. Excluding food and energy prices, the PCE price index increased 2.6%, also revised up 0.1 percentage point.

Real gross domestic income (GDI) increased 3.8% in the second quarter, revised down 1.0 percentage point from the previous estimate. The average of real GDP and real GDI increased 3.8%, revised down 0.2 percentage point.

Profits from current production (corporate profits with inventory valuation and capital consumption adjustments) increased \$166.1 billion in the third quarter, compared with an increase of \$6.8 billion in the second quarter.

A DEEPER DIVE – HOUSING

Existing-Home Sales

Existing-home sales increased by 0.5% in November, according to the National Association of REALTORS® Existing-Home Sales Report. The Report provides the real estate ecosystem, including agents and homebuyers and sellers, with data on the level of home sales, price, and inventory.

Month-over-month sales increased in the Northeast and South, showed no change in the West, and fell in the Midwest. Year-over-year sales showed no change in the Northeast and South, and decreased in the Midwest and West.

"Existing-home sales increased for the third straight month due to lower mortgage rates this autumn," said NAR Chief Economist Lawrence Yun. "However, inventory growth is beginning to stall. With distressed property sales at historic lows and housing wealth at an all-time high, homeowners are in no rush to list their properties during the winter months."

"Wage growth is outpacing home price gains, which improves housing affordability. Still, future affordability could be hampered if housing supply fails to keep pace with demand," Yun added. "As has been the case throughout the year, single-family home sales outperformed condominium sales in November. The typical price of a sold condo was 13.5% lower than the typical price of a single-family home. However, the purchase price does not include the condominium association fees, which are rising and making these purchases more expensive."



A DEEPER DIVE – HOUSING, CONT.

National Snapshot

Total Existing-Home Sales for November

- 0.5% increase in existing-home sales month over month to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 4.13 million.
- 1.0% decrease in sales year over year.

Inventory in November

- 1.43 million units: Total housing inventory, down 5.9% from October and up 7.5% from November 2024 (1.33 million).
- 4.2-month supply of unsold inventory, down from 4.4 months in October and up from 3.8 months in November 2024.

Median Sales Price in November

- \$409,200: Median existing-home price for all housing types, up 1.2% from one year ago (\$404,400) – the 29th consecutive month of year-over-year price increases.

Single-Family-Homes Sales in November

- 0.8% increase in sales month over month to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 3.75 million, down 0.8% from November 2024.
- \$414,300: Median home price in November, up 1.2% from last year.

Condominiums and Co-ops Sales in November

- 2.6% decrease in sales month over month and year over year to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 380,000.
- \$358,600: Median price, up 0.1% from November 2024.

Regional Snapshot for Existing-Home Sales in November

Northeast

- 4.1% increase in sales month over month to an annual rate of 510,000, unchanged year over year.
- \$480,800: Median price, up 1.1% from November 2024.

Midwest

- 2.0% decrease in sales month over month to an annual rate of 970,000, down 3.0% year over year.
- \$319,400: Median price, up 5.8% from November 2024.

South

- 1.1% increase in sales month over month to an annual rate of 1.89 million, unchanged year over year.
- \$361,000: Median price, up 0.8% from November 2024.

West

- No change in sales month over month for an annual rate of 760,000, down 1.3% year over year.
- \$618,900: Median price, down 0.9% from November 2024.

REALTORS® Confidence Index for November

- 34 days: Median time on market for properties, up from 33 days last month and 29 days in October 2024.
- 32% of sales were first-time homebuyers, up from 30% in July and 27% in October 2024.
- 29% of transactions were cash sales, down from 30% a month ago and up from 27% in October 2024.
- 16% of transactions were individual investors or second-home buyers, up from 15% last month and down from 17% in October 2024.
- 2% of sales were distressed sales (foreclosures and short sales), unchanged from a month ago and October 2024.

Mortgage Rates

- 6.25%: The average 30-year fixed-rate mortgage in October, according to Freddie Mac, down from 6.35% in September and 6.43% one year ago.

A DEEPER DIVE – HOUSING, CONT.

New Residential Sales

Sales of new single-family houses in August 2025 were at a seasonally-adjusted annual rate of 800,000, according to estimates released jointly by the U.S. Census Bureau and the Department of Housing and Urban Development. This is 20.5% above the July 2025 rate of 664,000, and is 15.4% above the August 2024 rate of 693,000.

The median sales price of new houses sold in August 2025 was \$413,500. This is 4.7% above the July 2025 price of \$395,100, and is 1.9% above the August 2024 price of \$405,800. The average sales price of new houses sold in August 2025 was \$534,100. This is 11.7% above the July 2025 price of \$478,200, and is 12.3% above the August 2024 price of \$475,600.

The seasonally-adjusted estimate of new houses for sale at the end of August 2025 was 490,000. This is 1.4% below the July 2025 estimate of 497,000, and is 4.0% above the August 2024 estimate of 471,000.

This represents a supply of 7.4 months at the current sales rate. The months' supply is 17.8% below the July 2025 estimate of 9.0 months, and is 9.8% below the August 2024 estimate of 8.2 months.

Compared to August 2024 on a seasonally-adjusted basis, sales were up 15.4% overall with sales also up 21.0% in the South, up 40.9% in the Northeast, up 20.3% in the Midwest, but down 5.7% in the West.

Housing Starts

Privately-owned housing starts in August were at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1,307,000. This is 8.5% below the revised July estimate of 1,429,000 and is 6.0% below the August 2024 rate of 1,391,000.

Single-family housing starts in August were at a rate of 890,000; this is 7.0% below the revised July figure of 957,000.

The August rate for units in buildings with five units or more was 403,000 (470,000 in July).

Single-family starts compared to August 2024, on a seasonally-adjusted basis, were down 11.7% in total, as well as down 11.7% in the South, down 4.3% in the Northeast, down 15.8% in the West, and down 12.9% in the Northeast.

Housing Completions

Privately-owned housing completions in August were at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1,608,000. This is 8.4% above the revised July estimate of 1,483,000, but is 8.4% below the August 2024 rate of 1,755,000.

Single-family housing completions in August were at a rate of 1,090,000; this is 6.7% above the revised July rate of 1,022,000.

The August rate for units in buildings with five units or more was 503,000 (385,000 in July).

Single-family completions compared to August 2024, on a seasonally-adjusted basis, were up 5.6% in total, as well as up 4.1% in the South, up 9.8% in the Northeast, up 9.7% in the West, and up 3.1% in the Midwest.



A DEEPER DIVE – OTHER NATIONAL

Retail Sales

Advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for October 2025, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$732.6 billion, virtually unchanged from the previous month, and up 3.5% from October 2024. Total sales for the August 2025 through October 2025 period were up 4.2% from the same period a year ago. The August 2025 to September 2025 percent change was revised from up 0.2% to up 0.1%.

Retail trade sales were up 0.1% from September 2025, and up 3.4% from last year. Nonstore retailers were up 9.0% from last year, while food service and drinking places were up 4.1% from October 2024.

Sales at furniture and home furnishings stores in October 2025 were up 2.3% compared to September 2025 on a seasonally-adjusted basis, and up 0.5% from October 2024. Year to date on a non-adjusted basis, sales were up 3.8% (4.7% last month).

A DEEPER DIVE – OTHER NATIONAL, CONT.

Consumer Prices

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) increased 0.2% on a seasonally adjusted basis over the 2 months from September 2025 to November 2025, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported. Over the last 12 months, the all-items index increased 2.7% before seasonal adjustment. BLS did not collect survey data for October 2025 due to a lapse in appropriations.

The seasonally adjusted index for all-items less food and energy rose 0.2% over the 2 months ending in November. From September to November, the index for shelter increased 0.2%. The energy index rose 1.1% over the same 2-month period and the food index increased 0.1%. Other indexes which increased over the 2 months ending in November include household furnishings and operations, communication, and personal care. In contrast, the indexes for lodging away from home, recreation, and apparel decreased over the same 2-month period.

The all-items index rose 2.7% for the 12 months ending November, after rising 3.0% over the 12 months ending September. The all-items less food and energy index rose 2.6% over the last 12 months. The energy index increased 4.2% for the 12 months ending November. The food index increased 2.6% over the last year.

Employment

Total nonfarm payroll employment changed little in November (+64,000) and has shown little net change since April, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported. In November, the unemployment rate, at 4.6%, was little changed from September. Employment rose in health care and construction in November, while federal government continued to lose jobs.

In November, both the unemployment rate, at 4.6%, and the number of unemployed people, at 7.8 million, were little changed from September. These measures are higher than last November, when the jobless rate was 4.2%, and the number of unemployed people was 7.1 million. Household survey data for October 2025 were not collected due to the federal government shutdown.

Durable Goods Orders and Factory Shipments

New orders for manufactured durable goods in October, down following two consecutive monthly increases, decreased \$6.8 billion or 2.2% to \$307.4 billion, the U.S. Census Bureau announced. This followed a 0.7% September increase. Excluding transportation, new orders increased 0.2%. Excluding defense, new orders decreased 1.5%. Transportation equipment, also down following two consecutive monthly increases, drove the decrease, \$7.2 billion or 6.5% to \$103.9 billion.

Shipments of manufactured durable goods in October, up ten of the last eleven months, increased \$1.8 billion or 0.6% to \$309.6 billion. This followed a 0.1% September increase. Transportation equipment, up following two consecutive monthly decreases, led the increase, \$1.4 billion or 1.4% to \$102.6 billion.

On a seasonally-adjusted basis, September shipments for furniture and related products were up 0.5% compared to the prior month, while new orders were up 0.1%. On a non-adjusted basis, year to date shipments for furniture and related products were up 0.8% compared to the prior year (0.7% last month), while year to date new orders were up 0.9% (up 0.8% last month).