

CPI – Consumer Price Index

1. **Definition (as of June 2011)¹:** The Consumer Price Index measures quarterly changes in the price of a 'basket' of goods and services which account for a high proportion of expenditure by the CPI population group (i.e. metropolitan households).
2. **Definition Changes:** The CPI index was initially computed as a weighted average of six capital cities until 1964Q3 when Canberra was included so that it became a weighted average of seven capital cities, and then to a weighted average of the eight capital cities from 1982Q2 to date.

Table 1: Definition Change

Period	Definition
1960 Q3 – 1972 Q3	Weighted average of SIX capital cities (Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth and Hobart)
1972 Q4 – 1982 Q2	Weighted average of SEVEN capital cities (all six cities mentioned above plus Canberra)
1982 Q3 – present	Weighted average of EIGHT capital cities (all seven cities mentioned above plus Darwin)

3. **Vintage Date:** The vintage date reflects the quarter in which the publication is released.
4. **Reference Date:** The reference date refers to the date to which the observation is referring to.
5. **First quarterly vintage:** 1960Q3 dating back to 1949Q2.
6. **Earliest observation:** Historical series available dating back to 1948Q3, although not for all vintages.
7. **Seasonality:** Not seasonally adjusted.
8. **Unit of observations:** Index number form.
9. **Base Index Change:** The series is expressed with reference to a period in which the index is set is equal to 100.0. This reference base is changed periodically. See Table 2 for details.

¹ Source: *Consumer Price Index, Australia* (cat. no. 6401.0), March 2011.

Table 2: Base Index Change

Publication Date	Base Index
1960M9 – 1969M1	1952-53=100.0
1969M2 – 1982M2	1966-67=100.0
1982M3 – 1992M1	1980-81=100.0
1992M2 – present	1989-90=100.0

10. **Quarterly Vintage Names:** CPIyyQq, where yy is the year of the vintage, Q refers to Quarter and q the number of the vintage quarter. For example, the column heading CPI75Q1 indicates that this column contains observations available in the first quarter of 1975.
11. **Publication Delay:** The quarterly vintages are obtained from the issue released within the first months of any quarter. The data in these vintages relate to the observation of the respective series in the previous quarter. For example, data for the first quarter is available in the issue released in April. Therefore, there is a one quarter delay in the release of data.

Table 3: Publication Delay

First Observation of	Reference Date in ABS Publication	ABS Publication Date	Vintage Date
Q1	March	April	Q2
Q2	June	July	Q3
Q3	September	October	Q4
Q4	December	January	Q1

12. **Data Sources:** The primary data source is the ABS publication *Consumer Price Index, Australia* (cat. no. 6401.0). Deep-history vintages are obtained from the ABS microfiche publication *Time Series Data* (cat. no. 1311.0 & 1335.0). See Table 4 for details.

Table 4: Sources of Data Series

Publication Date	Reference	Format	Source
1960Q3 – 1972Q3	<i>Consumer Price Index</i> (cat. no. 6401.0)	Micro-fiche	The State Library of Victoria, Melbourne
1972Q4 – 1979Q3	<i>Consumer Price Index</i> (cat. no. 6401.0)	PDF	Online
1979Q4 – 1992Q1	<i>Consumer Price Index</i> (cat. no. 6401.0)	PDF	Online
	<i>Time Series Data</i> (cat. no. 1311.0)	Micro-fiche	The National Library, Canberra
1992Q2 – 1992Q4	<i>Consumer Price Index</i> (cat. no. 6401.0)	PDF	Online
	<i>Time Series Data</i> (cat. no. 1335.0)	Micro-fiche	The National Library, Canberra
1993Q1 – 2005Q3	<i>Consumer Price Index</i> (cat. no. 6401.0)	PDF	Online
2005Q4 – 2006Q1	<i>Consumer Piece Index, Australia</i> (cat. no. 6401.0)	Lotus 123	Online
2006Q2 – present	<i>Consumer Piece Index, Australia</i> (cat. no. 6401.0); Table 1 and 2; Series ID: A2325846C.	Excel Workbook	Online

Special notes:

1. **CPI60Q3 – First not seasonally adjusted CPI measure.** Series is reported as weighted average of six capital cities with a base index of 1952-53 = 100.0.
2. **CPI69Q2 – Base year change.** The series is based on an index of 1966-67 = 100.0.
3. **CPI72Q4 – Definition change.** Series is reported as weighted average of seven capital cities.
4. **CPI73Q2 – Unexpected revision.** Revisions in the index for Sydney, Hobart and Canberra (and hence the weighted average of the six capital cities) between September 1971 and December 1972. This arises due to the revised measure on a health insurance component, 'insurance fund and retained portion'.
5. **CPI82Q3 – Definition change and base change.** Weighted average of eight capital cities. The series is based on an index of 1980-81 = 100.0.
6. **CPI87Q2 – Delay in release.** This delay is due to an industrial dispute in Sydney; the raw data for the reference quarter March 1987 is reported as n.y.a. (not-yet-available).
7. **CPI92Q2 – Base year change.** The series is based on an index of 1989-90 = 100.0.
8. **CPI12Q3 to ... – Base year change.** The series is based on an index of 2011-12 = 100.0