

Measuring Real Earnings over the Long Term—Continued

Historical family budget for family consumption, 1909-98

Year	Type of family budget	Level of living	Budget amount	
			Current \$	2000 dollars ¹
1908-09	Cotton mill worker ² (5 person)	Fair	\$ 713	\$ 12,402 ³
1919	DC federal worker ² (5 person)	Health and decency	2,142	21,321
1947	BLS family budget ⁴ (5 person)	Modest but adequate	3,329	25,706
1947	BLS family budget ⁴ (4 person)	Modest but adequate	2,904	22,425
1951	BLS family budget ⁵ “	Modest but adequate	3,750	24,837
1959	BLS family budget ⁵ “	Modest but adequate	5,180	30,653
1966	BLS family budget ⁵ “	Moderate/Intermediate	7,329	38,952
1973	BLS family budget ⁶ “	Intermediate	9,761	37,857
1979	BLS family budget ⁷ “	Intermediate	15,353	36,416
1979	Revised Watts budget ⁷ “	Median (PFS) ¹¹	16,129	38,256
1981	BLS family budget ⁸ “	Intermediate	18,240	34,554
1984	Revised budget ⁹ “	Median (PFS)	20,531	34,027
1989	Revised budget ¹⁰ “	Median (PFS)	27,143	37,694
1994	Revised budget ¹⁰ “	Median (PFS)	31,817	36,970
1998	Revised budget ¹⁰ “	Median (PFS)	36,528	38,590

¹ Adjusted using Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), 1982-84 =100.

² Adjusted using Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers for 1913 and budget data for 1908-09.

³ Bureau of Labor Statistics, *How American Buying Habits Change* (1959).

⁴ Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Workers' Budgets in the United States: City Families and Single Persons*, Bulletin 927 (1947); 4-person budget for median city (St. Louis); 5-person budget calculated using equivalence scale.

⁵ U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *City Worker's Family Budget for a Moderate Living Standard*, Bulletin 1570-1 (1966).

⁶ Brackett, Jean, "Urban family budgets updated to autumn 1973," *Monthly Labor Review*, August 1974.

⁷ Expert Committee on Family Budget Revisions, "New American Family Budget Standards," Institute for Research on Poverty working paper (1980).

⁸ "Family Budgets," *Monthly Labor Review*, July 1981.

⁹ Rogers, J. "Estimating Family Budget Standards," unpublished BLS manuscript, 1987.

¹⁰ Calculations using 1989, 1994, and 1998 Consumer Expenditure Survey data and share of total budget spent on family consumption items.

¹¹ PFS - Prevailing family standard.

Source: Johnson, David S., John M. Rogers, and Lucilla Tan, "A century of family budgets in the United States," *Monthly Labor Review*, May 2001.