



U.S. Department of Transportation
Office of Public Affairs
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590
www.dot.gov/briefing-room.html

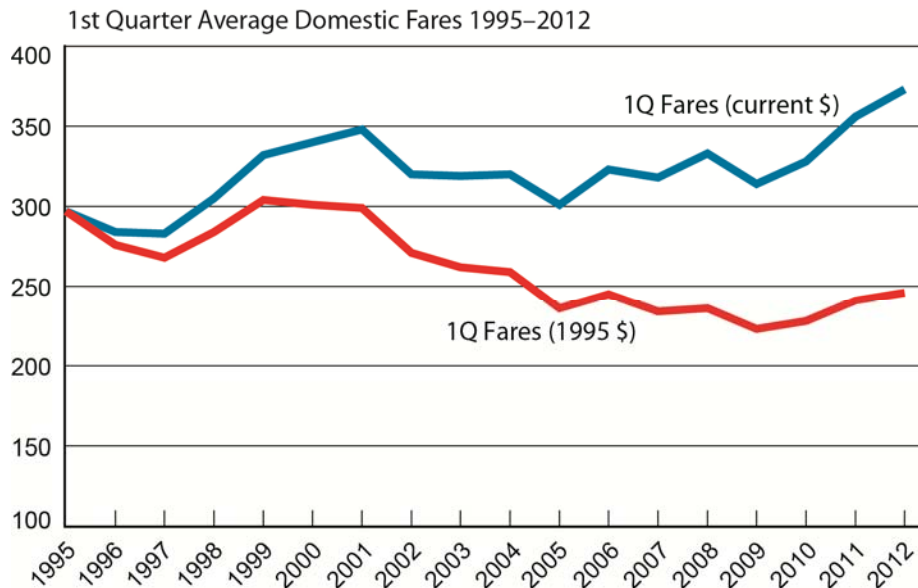
BTS Data

BTS 36-12
Thursday, July 26, 2012
Contact: Dave Smallen
Tel: 202-366-5568

1st-Quarter Domestic Air Fares Rose 4.8% from 1st Quarter 2011

Top 100 Airports: Highest Fares at Cincinnati, Lowest Fares at Atlantic City

Domestic Air Fares



Average domestic air fares rose to \$373 in the first quarter of 2012, up 4.8 percent from the average fare of \$356 in the first quarter of 2011 (Table 1), the U.S. Department of Transportation's Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) reported today. Cincinnati had the highest average fare, \$526, while Atlantic City, NJ, had the lowest, \$157 (Table 3).

Not adjusted for inflation, the \$373 first-quarter 2012 average fares reached an all-time high for any quarter. The previous high was \$370 in the second quarter of 2011. The previous first-quarter high was \$356 in 2011. First-quarter 2012 fares were \$246 in 1995 dollars, down 19.2 percent from \$304 in 1999, the inflation-adjusted high for any first quarter since the beginning of BTS air fare records in 1995 (Tables 1 and 2).

- more -

AIR TRAVEL PRICE INDEX PRESS RELEASE

ADD ONE

BTS, a part of the Research and Innovative Technology Administration, reports average fares based on domestic itinerary fares. Itinerary fares consist of round-trip fares unless the customer does not purchase a return trip. In that case, the one-way fare is included. Fares are based on the total ticket value which consists of the price charged by the airlines plus any additional taxes and fees levied by an outside entity at the time of purchase. Fares include only the price paid at the time of the ticket purchase and do not include other fees, such as baggage fees, paid at the airport or onboard the aircraft. Averages do not include frequent-flyer or “zero fares” or a few abnormally high reported fares.

Passenger airlines collected 69.5 percent of their total revenue from passenger fares during the first quarter of 2012, down from 87.6 percent in 1990 (Table 1A).

Air fares in the first quarter of 2012 increased 9.6 percent from the first quarter of 2000, not adjusted for inflation, compared to an overall increase in consumer prices of 34.0 percent during that period. In the 17 years from 1995, the first year of BTS air fare records, air fares rose 25.6 percent compared to a 51.5 percent inflation rate (Table 6). The average inflation-adjusted first-quarter 2012 fare in 1995 dollars was \$246 compared to \$297 in 1995 and \$301 in 2000 (Table 1). BTS air fare records begin in 1995. See [BTS Air Fare web page](#) for historic data.

Unadjusted first-quarter 2012 fares were up 18.8 percent from the recession low of \$314 in 2009 and up 23.7 percent from the post 9/11 first-quarter low of \$301 in 2005 (Table 1).

First-quarter fares increased 1.2 percent from the fourth quarter of 2011 (Table 2). Quarter-to-quarter changes may be affected by seasonal factors such as the number of passengers. In the last 18 years, U.S. airlines carried an average of 7.8 percent fewer originating passengers in the first quarter of the year than in the fourth quarter. The number of originating passengers rose by 5.0 percent in the first quarter of 2012 from the fourth quarter of 2011. In 1995 dollars, fares declined 0.5 percent from the fourth quarter of 2011 to the first quarter of 2012.

See Tables 3-5 for data about the [top 100 airports](#) based on 2011 originating passengers.

Table 3: Five highest and five lowest average fares in the first quarter: Cincinnati, a market with a high representation of business travelers, had the highest average fare, \$526, while Atlantic City, a leisure-dominated market, had the lowest, \$157. For the Top 100 Airports, see [Table 8](#) on the BTS website.

Table 4: Five largest increases and five largest decreases from the first quarter of 2011 to the first quarter of 2012: Flint, MI, had the largest increase, 23.7 percent, and Knoxville, TN, had the largest decrease, 9.5 percent. For the Top 100 Airports, see [Table 9](#) on the BTS website.

- more -

**AIR TRAVEL PRICE INDEX PRESS RELEASE
ADD TWO**

Table 5: Five largest increases and five largest decreases from the first quarter of 2001 to the first quarter of 2012: Dallas Love, TX, had the largest increase, 49.3 percent, and White Plains, NY, had the largest decrease, 38.2 percent. For the Top 100 Airports, see [Table 10](#) on the BTS website.

For additional data, see [Top 100 Airports, Rankings](#) or [All Airports](#). Since average fares are based on the [Origin and Destination Survey](#) 10 percent ticket sample, averages for airports with smaller samples may be less reliable. Fares for Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico airports are not included in rankings but are available on the web page. Second-quarter 2012 average fare data will be released on Oct. 25.

Table 1: 1st Quarter Average Fares 1995-2012 Compared to Inflation Rate

| | Percent change from previous year | | | Percent change from 1995 | | |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------|---|---|------------------------------|
| | Average Domestic 1Q Fares (\$) | Average Fares (1Q to 1Q) | Inflation (Mar from previous Mar)* | Cumulative Average Fares (1Q 1995 to 1Q of each year) | Cumulative inflation rate (Mar of each year from Mar 1995)* | Average Fare in 1995 dollars |
| 1995 | 297 | | | | | 297 |
| 1996 | 284 | -4.4 | 2.8 | -4.4 | 2.8 | 276 |
| 1997 | 283 | -0.2 | 2.8 | -4.5 | 5.7 | 268 |
| 1998 | 305 | 7.5 | 1.4 | 2.6 | 7.1 | 284 |
| 1999 | 332 | 8.9 | 1.7 | 11.7 | 9.0 | 304 |
| 2000 | 340 | 2.6 | 3.8 | 14.6 | 13.1 | 301 |
| 2001 | 348 | 2.2 | 2.9 | 17.1 | 16.4 | 299 |
| 2002 | 320 | -8.0 | 1.5 | 7.8 | 18.1 | 271 |
| 2003 | 319 | -0.3 | 3.0 | 7.5 | 21.7 | 262 |
| 2004 | 320 | 0.3 | 1.7 | 7.9 | 23.8 | 259 |
| 2005 | 301 | -5.9 | 3.1 | 1.5 | 27.7 | 236 |
| 2006 | 323 | 7.3 | 3.4 | 8.9 | 32.0 | 245 |
| 2007 | 318 | -1.7 | 2.8 | 7.1 | 35.6 | 234 |
| 2008 | 333 | 4.9 | 4.0 | 12.3 | 41.0 | 236 |
| 2009 | 314 | -5.8 | -0.4 | 5.7 | 40.5 | 223 |
| 2010 | 328 | 4.6 | 2.3 | 10.5 | 43.7 | 228 |
| 2011 | 356 | 8.4 | 2.7 | 19.8 | 47.6 | 241 |
| 2012 | 373 | 4.8 | 2.7 | 25.6 | 51.5 | 246 |

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Rate calculated using Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index.

Note: Percent change based on unrounded numbers

**AIR TRAVEL PRICE INDEX PRESS RELEASE
ADD THREE**

Table 1A Passenger Airline Revenue from Fares 1990-2012

Revenue from Passenger Fares as Percent of Scheduled Passenger Airline Total Revenue*

| Year | Revenue from Passenger Fares as Percent of Total Scheduled Passenger Airline Revenue* (%) |
|-----------|---|
| 1990 | 87.6 |
| 1995 | 85.6 |
| 2000 | 84.1 |
| 2001 | 82.7 |
| 2002 | 82.3 |
| 2003 | 79.5 |
| 2004 | 76.6 |
| 2005 | 75.0 |
| 2006 | 74.4 |
| 2007 | 74.3 |
| 2008 | 72.9 |
| 2009 | 70.2 |
| 2010 | 71.3 |
| 2011 | 71.0 |
| 2012 (1Q) | 69.5 |

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics, P-12

* Scheduled passenger airline total revenue is the sum of the following Schedule P12 accounts with account numbers: Reservation cancellation fees (3919.1), Baggage fees (3906.2), Miscellaneous Operating Revenue (3919.2), Transport-Related Revenue (4898) and Passenger Revenue (Fares) (3901).

Table 2: Quarterly Change in Average Domestic Airline Fares
Percent Change by Quarter

| Quarter/Year | Average Domestic Fares | |
|--------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| | Current \$ Avg Fare (current\$) | Inflation-Adjusted Pct. Change from Previous Quarter (%) |
| 4Q 2009 | 320 | 4.2 |
| 1Q 2010 | 328 | 2.6 |
| 2Q 2010 | 341 | 3.8 |
| 3Q 2010 | 340 | -0.3 |
| 4Q 2010 | 335 | -1.5 |
| 1Q 2011 | 356 | 6.3 |
| 2Q 2011 | 370 | 3.9 |
| 3Q 2011 | 361 | -2.4 |
| 4Q 2011 | 368 | 2.1 |
| 1Q 2012 | 373 | 1.2 |

SOURCE: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

Note: Percent change based on unrounded numbers

Note: Quarter-to-quarter changes may be affected by seasonal factors.

- more -

AIR TRAVEL PRICE INDEX PRESS RELEASE
ADD FOUR

Table 3: Airports with Highest and Lowest U.S. Domestic Average Itinerary Fares 1st Quarter 2012

Top 100 Airports* Based on 2011 U.S. Originating Domestic Passengers

| Rank | Origin | 1st Quarter 2012 (\$) |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Highest Average Fares | | |
| 1 | Cincinnati, OH | 526 |
| 2 | Memphis, TN | 520 |
| 3 | Houston Bush, TX | 505 |
| 4 | Huntsville, AL | 503 |
| 5 | Washington Dulles | 485 |
| Average Fare at All Airports | | 373 |
| Lowest Average Fares | | |
| 1 | Atlantic City, NJ | 157 |
| 2 | Long Beach, CA | 210 |
| 3 | Bellingham, WA | 263 |
| 4 | Las Vegas, NV | 267 |
| 5 | Burbank/Glendale/Pasadena, CA | 268 |

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Not including Alaska, Hawaii or Puerto Rico

Note: Percent change based on unrounded numbers

-more-

**AIR TRAVEL PRICE INDEX
ADD FIVE**

Table 4: One-Year Change by Airport: Top 5 Percentage Increases and Decreases/Smallest Increases in U.S. Domestic Average Itinerary Fare, First Quarter 2011 to First Quarter 2012

Top 100 Airports* Based on 2011 U.S. Originating Domestic Passengers

| Rank | Origin | 1st Quarter 2011 (\$) | 1st Quarter 2012 (\$) | Percent Change (%) |
|---|----------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Largest Increases | | | | |
| 1 | Flint, MI | 308 | 381 | 23.7 |
| 2 | Indianapolis, IN | 332 | 387 | 16.3 |
| 3 | White Plains, NY | 323 | 374 | 15.8 |
| 4 | Ft. Myers, FL | 277 | 320 | 15.7 |
| 5 | Pensacola, FL | 389 | 447 | 15.0 |
| Average Fare at All Airports | | 356 | 373 | 4.8 |
| Largest Decreases/Smallest Increases | | | | |
| 1 | Knoxville TN | 449 | 406 | -9.5 |
| 2 | Atlantic City, NJ | 172 | 157 | -8.9 |
| 3 | Charleston, SC | 460 | 424 | -7.8 |
| 4 | Greenville/Spartanburg, SC | 407 | 393 | -3.4 |
| 5 | Long Beach, CA | 216 | 210 | -2.9 |

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Not including Alaska, Hawaii or Puerto Rico

Note: Percent change based on unrounded numbers

-more-

AIR TRAVEL PRICE INDEX
ADD SIX

Table 5: 11-Year Change by Airport: Top 5 Percentage Increases and Decreases in U.S. Domestic Average Itinerary Fare, 2001-2012

Top 100 Airports* Based on 2011 U.S. Originating Domestic Passengers

| Rank | Origin | 1st Quarter 2001 (\$) | 1st Quarter 2012 (\$) | Percent Change (%) |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Largest Increases | | | | |
| 1 | Dallas Love, TX | 189 | 282 | 49.3 |
| 2 | El Paso, TX | 256 | 373 | 45.7 |
| 3 | Burbank/Glendale/Pasadena, CA | 185 | 268 | 45.2 |
| 4 | Spokane, WA | 246 | 356 | 44.7 |
| 5 | Reno, NV | 223 | 322 | 44.6 |
| Average Fare at All Airports | | 348 | 373 | 7.2 |
| Largest Decreases | | | | |
| 1 | White Plains, NY | 606 | 374 | -38.2 |
| 2 | Long Beach, CA | 321 | 210 | -34.6 |
| 3 | Denver, CO | 452 | 321 | -29.1 |
| 4 | Greenville/Spartanburg, SC | 541 | 393 | -27.3 |
| 5 | Atlantic City, NJ | 215 | 157 | -27.1 |

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Not including Alaska, Hawaii or Puerto Rico

Note: Percent change based on unrounded numbers

- more -

**AIR TRAVEL PRICE INDEX
ADD SEVEN**

Table 6: Percent Changes to 2012 in Domestic Average Itinerary Fares and the Inflation Rate* by Year Since 1995

(1st Quarter to 1st Quarter for fares; March to March for inflation)

| Since 1st Quarter ... | Duration in Years | Average 1Q Itinerary Fare (\$) | Percent Change in Average Fare to 1st Quarter 2012 | Inflation Rate to Mar 2012 |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| 2012 | | 373 | n/a | n/a |
| 2011 | 1 | 356 | 4.8 | 2.7 |
| 2010 | 2 | 328 | 13.6 | 5.4 |
| 2009 | 3 | 314 | 18.8 | 7.8 |
| 2008 | 4 | 333 | 11.8 | 7.4 |
| 2007 | 5 | 318 | 17.3 | 11.7 |
| 2006 | 6 | 323 | 15.3 | 14.8 |
| 2005 | 7 | 301 | 23.7 | 18.7 |
| 2004 | 8 | 320 | 16.4 | 22.4 |
| 2003 | 9 | 319 | 16.8 | 24.5 |
| 2002 | 10 | 320 | 16.5 | 28.3 |
| 2001 | 11 | 348 | 7.2 | 30.2 |
| 2000 | 12 | 340 | 9.6 | 34.0 |
| 1999 | 13 | 332 | 12.4 | 39.0 |
| 1998 | 14 | 305 | 22.3 | 41.4 |
| 1997 | 15 | 283 | 31.5 | 43.4 |
| 1996 | 16 | 284 | 31.3 | 47.3 |
| 1995 | 17 | 297 | 25.6 | 51.5 |

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Rate calculated using Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index

Note: Percent change based on unrounded numbers

- more -

AIR TRAVEL PRICE INDEX

ADD EIGHT

For **air fares** for the following airports, go to <http://www.bts.gov/xml/atpi/src/index.xml>.

Multiple airport areas for which a single average fare calculation is available are: Boston, Chicago, Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston, Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco and Washington, DC.

Airports covered by average fare calculations are:

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Alabama | Birmingham, Huntsville |
| Arizona | Phoenix, Tucson |
| Arkansas | Little Rock |
| California | Burbank, Fresno, Long Beach, Los Angeles Intl, Oakland, Ontario/San Bernardino, Sacramento, San Diego, San Francisco, San Jose, Santa Ana (Orange County) |
| Colorado | Colorado Springs, Denver |
| Connecticut | Hartford |
| District of Columbia | Dulles, Reagan National |
| Florida | Ft. Lauderdale, Ft. Myers, Jacksonville, Miami, Orlando, Pensacola, Tampa, West Palm Beach |
| Georgia | Atlanta |
| Idaho | Boise |
| Illinois | Chicago Midway, Chicago O'Hare |
| Indiana | Indianapolis |
| Iowa | Des Moines |
| Kansas | Wichita |
| Kentucky | Louisville |
| Louisiana | New Orleans |
| Maine | Portland |
| Maryland | Baltimore |
| Massachusetts | Boston |
| Michigan | Detroit, Flint, Grand Rapids |
| Minnesota | Minneapolis/St. Paul |
| Mississippi | Jackson/Vicksburg |
| Missouri | Kansas City, St. Louis |
| Nebraska | Omaha |
| Nevada | Las Vegas, Reno |
| New Hampshire | Manchester |
| New Jersey | Atlantic City, Newark |
| New Mexico | Albuquerque |
| New York | Albany, Buffalo, Islip, New York JFK, New York LaGuardia, Rochester, Syracuse, White Plains |

- more -

AIR TRAVEL PRICE INDEX

ADD NINE

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| North Carolina | Charlotte, Greensboro, Raleigh/Durham |
| Ohio | Akron/Canton, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton |
| Oklahoma | Oklahoma City, Tulsa |
| Oregon | Portland |
| Pennsylvania | Harrisburg, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh |
| Rhode Island | Providence |
| South Carolina | Charleston, Greenville-Spartanburg |
| Tennessee | Knoxville, Memphis, Nashville |
| Texas | Austin, Dallas Love, Dallas/Ft. Worth, El Paso, Houston Bush, Houston Hobby, San Antonio |
| Utah | Salt Lake City |
| Vermont | Burlington |
| Virginia | Newport News/Williamsburg, Norfolk, Richmond |
| Washington | Bellingham, Seattle, Spokane |
| Wisconsin | Madison, Milwaukee |

-END-