

# Virtual Fed

## The price index is right

The Fed is intensely interested in accurately gauging prices and inflation. Along with maximum employment, price stability makes up half of the Fed's congressionally established "dual mandate." But it's not just the Fed that wants to know about such matters. The general public also has a lot at stake, and learning more about prices and inflation is an essential step in becoming financially literate.

The Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta's Inflation Project is a one-stop shop for anyone who wants to know about price stability. Its most comprehensive tool is the inflation dashboard, which collects 30 data series that measure an array of prices as well as money and credit, condensing them into six broad indexes. The project also hosts the Atlanta Fed's own forward-looking survey of inflation expectations, along with a price index for goods whose prices are "sticky," that is, change infrequently. Finally, the site contains a market-based measure of the chances of deflation—when prices in general fall—which can happen during recessions and cause further economic damage.

Still seem overwhelming? A short video tutorial walks visitors through the site and makes it easy to use. Compare prices at [frbatlanta.org/research/inflationproject/](http://frbatlanta.org/research/inflationproject/).

—Joe Mahon