

US Consumer Confidence Fell Sharply in November

Latest Press Release

Updated: Tuesday, November 25, 2025

Consumers revealed reduced confidence across jobs, incomes, and financial situations, both now and in the future, potentially due to the government shutdown

The Conference Board *Consumer Confidence Index*® declined by 6.8 points in November to 88.7 (1985=100) from 95.5 in October. The *Present Situation Index*—based on consumers' assessment of current business and labor market conditions—fell by 4.3 points to 126.9. The *Expectations Index*—based on consumers' short-term outlook for income, business, and labor market conditions—fell by 8.6 points to 63.2. The Expectations Index has tracked below 80 for ten consecutive months, the threshold under which the gauge signals recession ahead. The cutoff for preliminary results was November 18, 2025.

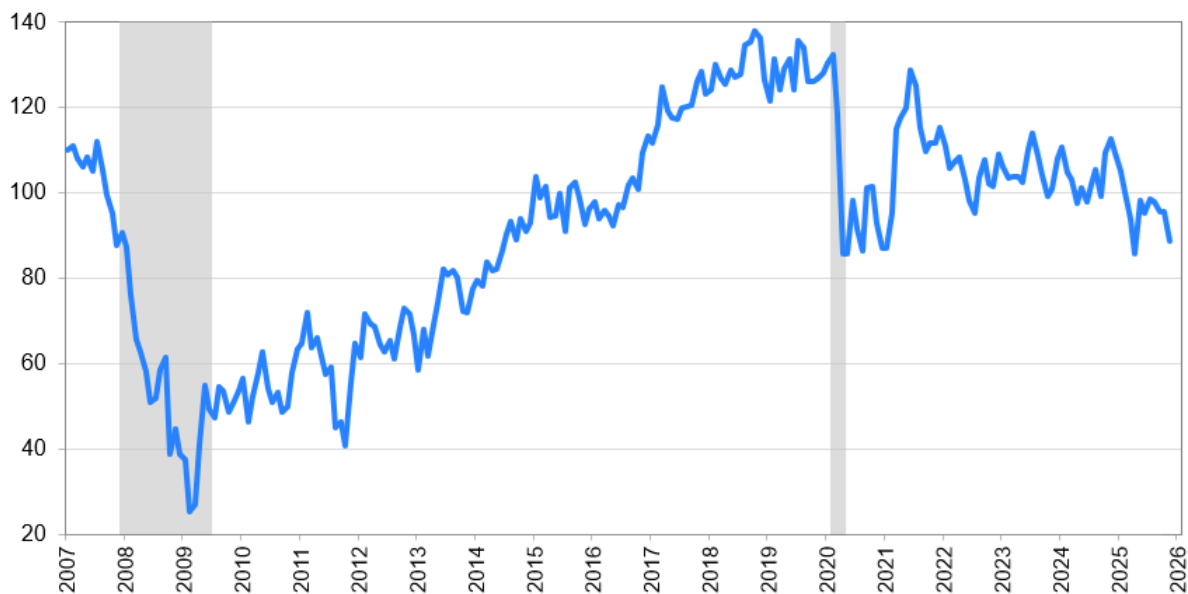
"Consumer confidence tumbled in November to its lowest level since April after moving sideways for several months," said Dana M Peterson, Chief Economist, The Conference Board. "All five components of the overall index flagged or remained weak. The *Present Situation Index* dipped as consumers were less sanguine about current business and labor market conditions. The labor market differential—the share of consumers who say jobs are 'plentiful' minus the share saying 'hard to get'—dipped again in November after a brief respite in October from its year-to-date decline. All three components of the *Expectations Index* deteriorated in November. Consumers were notably more pessimistic about business conditions six months from now. Mid-2026 expectations for labor market

conditions remained decidedly negative, and expectations for increased household incomes shrunk dramatically, after six months of strongly positive readings."

Among demographic groups, confidence continued to improve for consumers under 35 years old, but confidence for consumers age 35 and older dipped, with respondents 55 and over remaining the most downbeat this year. By income, confidence fell for nearly all cohorts after several months of increasing confidence for most groups. Consumers earning less than \$15K was the only income bracket in which confidence improved in November but remained the least optimistic among all income groups. Confidence fell among consumers of all political stripes, with the sharpest retreat among independent voters.

Consumer Confidence Index®

Index, 1985 = 100



*Shaded areas represent periods of recession.
Sources: The Conference Board; NBER
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Peterson added: "Consumers' write-in responses pertaining to factors affecting the economy continued to be led by references to prices and inflation, tariffs and trade, and politics, with increased mentions of the federal government shutdown. Mentions of the labor market eased somewhat but still stood out among all other

frequent themes not already cited. The overall tone from November write-ins was slightly more negative than in October."

Consumers' average 12-month inflation expectations remained elevated in November, and the median rate increased to 4.8%. The share of consumers expecting interest rates to rise edged lower in the month to about 50%, while the proportion expecting lower rates ticked down after rising over the past several months. Consumers' outlook for stock prices twelve months from now remained strongly positive but was a hair less confident than last month.

Consumers' views of their Family's Current and Future Financial Situation faltered in November after picking up in October. Assessments of current financial situations collapsed to the lowest level since August 2024, when a confluence of negative events stoked a brief financial market selloff and US recession concerns. Perceptions of future family financial situations were also less buoyant. The share of consumers believing a recession is "very likely" over the next 12 months fell further in November, but the share of consumers thinking that the economy was already in recession rose for the fourth consecutive month. The share saying a recession is "somewhat likely" also ticked up. (These measures are not included in calculating the Consumer Confidence Index®).

Plans for buying big-ticket items over the next six months declined in November following little change since May. After staging a mild comeback on a six-month moving average basis from early-summer lows, expectations for purchasing cars ticked downward, for both new and used vehicles. Purchasing plans for household appliances and most electronics also edged lower in November but remained above 2025 lows. Nonetheless, used cars, TVs, and smartphones remained the most popular future purchases among these categories. Homebuying expectations also ticked down in November but remained near two-year highs.

In November, consumers also curbed planned spending on services over the next six months. From October's survey to November's, consumers signaled reduced spending on nearly every category queried with two exceptions: historic sites, museums, and libraries intentions inched up, and childcare and educational services plans were unchanged. Still, both categories ranked among the bottom three with amusement parks and outdoor recreation.

The top five categories for planned services spending over the next six months continued to include restaurants, bars, take-out; streaming, internet, mobile

services; beauty and personal care; and hotels, motels for personal travel. Healthcare, which was among the top five planned services expenditures since June, suddenly displaced streaming, internet, and mobile services for the number-two spot in November. The focus on insurance premiums and subsidies throughout the shutdown potentially prompted the pop in the healthcare category. In general, spending trends among consumers this year have increasingly moved towards cheap thrills and necessary services and away from expensive and highly discretionary activities.

Vacation intentions fell back in November after a surprise October surge. Plans for domestic travel over the next six months continued to exceed international vacation plans, but both types retreated in November. This is consistent with the decline in intentions to spend on hotels, motels and airfare in the month.

Present Situation

Consumers' assessments of current business conditions worsened in November.

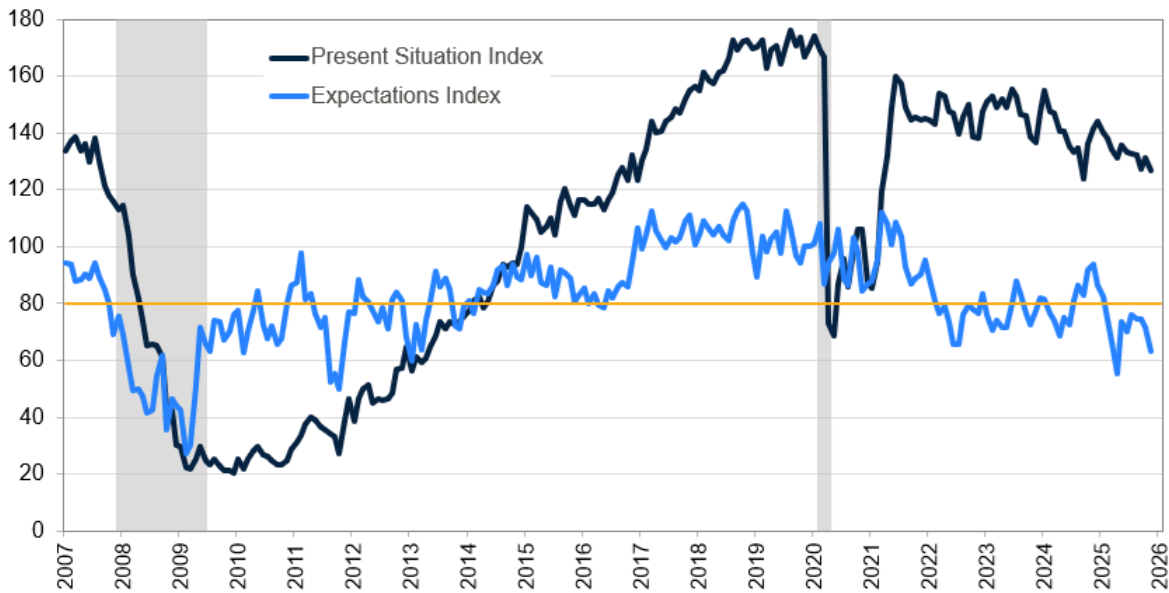
- 1% of consumers said business conditions were "good," down from 20.7% in October.
- 9% said business conditions were "bad," up from 14.5%.

On balance, consumers' views of the labor market on net were a tad weaker in November.

- 6% of consumers said jobs were "plentiful," down from 28.6% in October.
- However, 17.9% of consumers said jobs were "hard to get," down from 18.3%.

Present Situation and Expectations Index

Index, 1985 = 100



*Shaded areas represent periods of recession.
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Expectations Six Months Hence

Consumers were more pessimistic about future business conditions in November.

- 9% of consumers expected business conditions to improve, down from 18.9% in October.
- 7% expected business conditions to worsen, up from 22.2%.

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

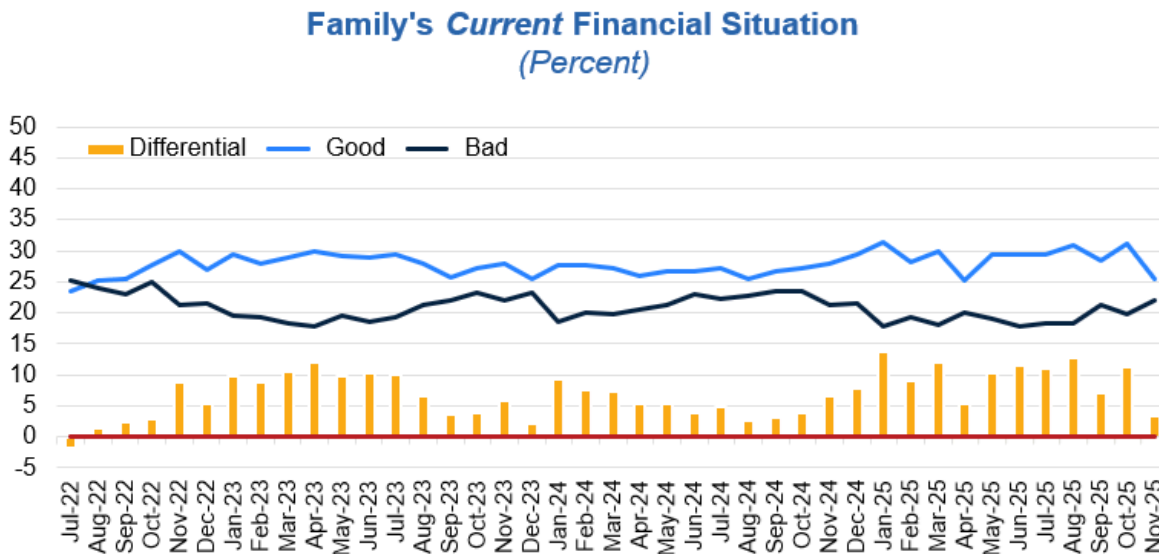
- 6% of consumers expected more jobs to be available, down from 15.8% in October.
- 5% anticipated fewer jobs, down from 28.8%.

Consumers' outlook for their income prospects was less positive in November.

- 3% of consumers expected their incomes to increase, down from 18.2% in October.
- 13.8% expected their incomes to decrease, up from 11.8%.

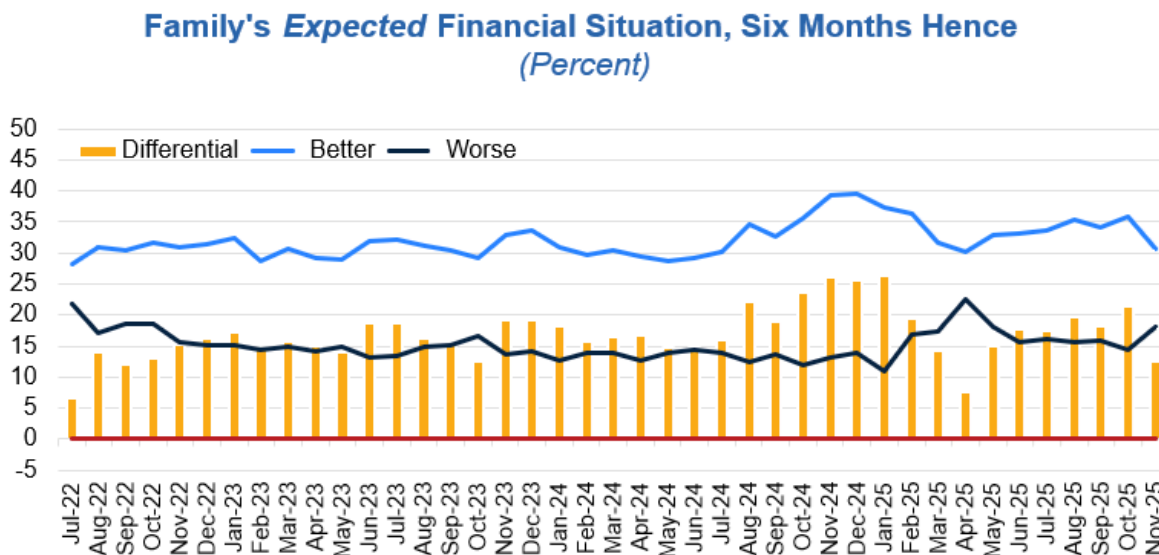
Assessment of Family Finances and Recession Risk

- Consumer assessments of their Family's Current Financial Situation deteriorated in November.



Source: The Conference Board, Consumer Confidence Survey®

- Consumer assessments of their Family's Expected Financial Situation also worsened.



Source: The Conference Board, Consumer Confidence Survey®

- Consumers' Perceived Likelihood of a US Recession over the Next 12 Months increased in November.

Perceived likelihood of a US recession over the next 12 months

