

MONEYMATTERS

THE FINANCIAL PULSE

2.9% - YOY CPI (inflation) as of August, showing cooling but still above the Fed's 2% target. ¹

4.3% - U.S. unemployment rate in August, steady but slightly higher than earlier this year. ²

0.25% - Amount the Fed cut rates by while signaling potential further cuts this year. ³

Recent headlines have focused on a few key areas: interest rates, inflation, jobs, and the government shutdown. The Federal Reserve has started to lower interest rates after an extended period of keeping them high to fight inflation. The goal of these cuts is to make borrowing a bit easier for businesses and consumers, which can help support overall economic growth.

Inflation has cooled from its peak but remains above the Fed's long-term target, so officials are moving cautiously. The last jobs report showed steady hiring and low unemployment, which suggests the economy remains resilient, though some industries are seeing slower growth. The government shutdown has delayed the most recent jobs report adding complexity to the situation as well. While shutdowns can cause some short-term disruptions the broader economic impact often depends on how long the situation lasts and how it affects business and consumer confidence.

MONEY CUE

With the holidays approaching, now's a good time to start a "gift budget" envelope — whether physical or digital. Setting aside a fixed amount each week between now and December helps keep spending stress in check.



STAT SHEET

The most recent data from [Finder.com](https://finder.com) revealed that the US public wasted \$397m on abandoned Gym enrollments - and of those who did show up, 7.4% only did so once a month or less.



ASK THE COACH

Q: How much money should I keep in an emergency fund?

A: A common guideline is to save enough to cover a few months of living expenses. The right number varies for each person, but even a small cushion can help reduce stress when unexpected costs come up.

Sources: 1 - www.bls.gov (Bureau of Labor Statistics) 2 - www.fred.stlouisfed.com (St Louis Federal Reserve) 3 - www.schwab.com/learn/story/fomc-meeting

