

MONEYMATTERS

THE FINANCIAL PULSE

3.4% - Year-over-year CPI (Consumer Price Index) inflation ¹

7.03% - Average 30-year mortgage rate as of September 24th ²

\$4.48 - Average price per gallon of gas nationally as of September 30th ³

The economy continues to send mixed signals as we head into the final months of the year. Prices are still rising, but not everything is moving at the same pace. Gas prices have climbed noticeably, while grocery prices have been relatively steadier. Mortgage rates also remain around 7%, keeping borrowing costs elevated.

Inflation remains above the Federal Reserve's long-term 2% target, which is one reason interest rates continue to be an important part of the economic picture. For households, though, the headline numbers only tell part of the story. How you're feeling the economy often depends on where your money goes—whether that's gas, groceries, housing or borrowing.

MONEY CUE

The 1% checkup. Increasing your contribution by even 1% may be easier to absorb than making a large change all at once. Small increases over time can add up, especially when combined with an employer match and years of compounding.



STAT SHEET

Americans spent a record \$12.2 billion on Halloween in 2023—including candy, costumes, decorations and even costumes for their pets. That worked out to roughly \$108 per person planning to celebrate.



ASK THE COACH

Q: How much should I be saving for retirement?

A: There's no perfect percentage for everyone. Your age, income, current savings and retirement goals all matter. A good starting point is knowing what you're saving today, whether you receive an employer match, and whether you're making progress toward your goal. Having a financial plan is the best way to know what "your percentage" should be.

Sources: 1 - www.bls.gov 2 - www.goldmansachs.com 3 - www.bls.gov 4 - www.sofi.com