

# 1950s prices

Here are some prices from the 1950s and today.

	In 1950	In 2012
<b>Average price of a house:</b>	£2,170	£165,000
<b>Average weekly salary for a man:</b>	£11	£500 (for men)
<b>Average family had:</b>	2.2 children	1.7 children
<b>Percentage of families owning a car:</b>	30%	70%
<b>500g beef sirloin:</b>	12p	£6.21
<b>250g cheddar cheese:</b>	3p	£2.28
<b>800g white bread:</b>	2p	£1.41p
<b>1 pint milk:</b>	2p	£1.37p
<b>1 kg potatoes:</b>	1p	£1.46p
<b>1 kg sugar:</b>	5p	78p

## Questions

1. How much more did a man earn in 2012 each week, than in 1950?

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2. Next time your family is shopping, go along and look at the prices for a loaf of white bread, 1 kg of potatoes and 1kg of sugar. What are the prices today? Are they more or less than in 2012?

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### Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

### Resources

Copies of the worksheet.

### Using the worksheet

Comparing prices is always tricky, because of course the value of the money changes as well, but this will give students some idea of how much both costs and salaries have gone up since 1950.

Students can see that some things have gone up, relatively, much more than others.

### Younger students

You may like to begin by pointing out that salaries (for men) today are about 50 times higher than they were in the 1950s, but the average price of a house is 80 times. Students should be able to see that both prices and income have risen a good deal in the last 50+ years. You may like to use this to discuss with the students the general cost of things and how much money people have to spend on non-essential items.

### Outcomes

Students can:

- Extract information from a chart.
- Understand that prices and incomes have risen a great deal since the 1950s
- Learn what some things cost in the 1950s.
- Compare 1950s salaries and prices with today's salaries and prices.

### Older students

Students may be curious why we only give data for a man's salary. This is because in the 1950s, men tended to be the breadwinners. Many women did work outside the home, although far fewer than during the war, but their salaries were a fraction of the men's, even for doing the same job. Sadly, this has not changed completely today and women's salaries are still not equal to men's. Students may like to discuss this, as well as whether or not people spend more money today on basics.

### Outcomes

Students can:

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- Learn what some things cost in the 1950s.
- Compare 1950s salaries and prices with today's salaries and prices.

### Answers

1. £489.
2. Answers will vary, but the prices will, of course, be much higher than in the 1950s.