

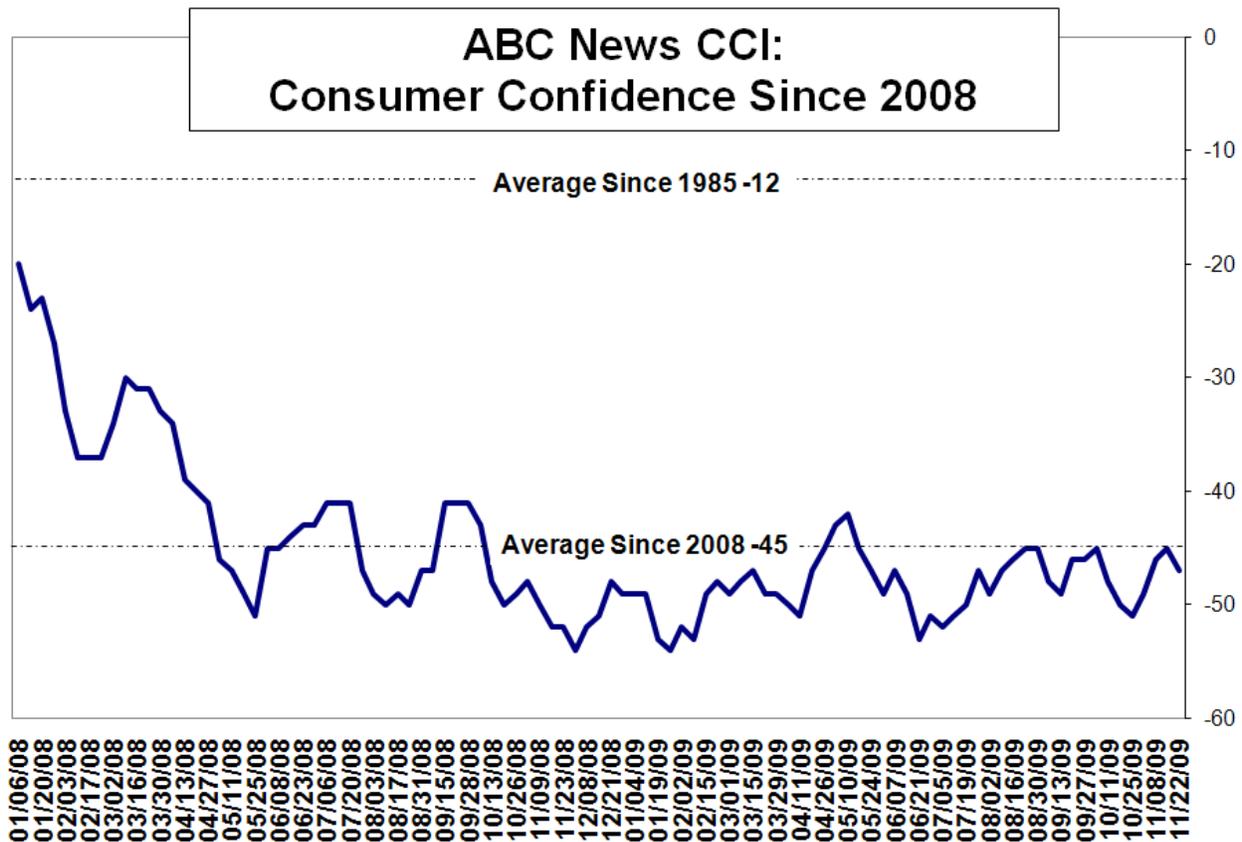
## **Little Consumer Confidence Heading Into Black Friday**

Consumer confidence stalled this week after a modest three-week advance, signaling trouble for the nation's retailers heading into the holiday shopping season. Confidence overall is near its historic lows, and nearly three-quarters of Americans call this a bad time to spend money.

The ABC News Consumer Comfort Index stands at -47 on its scale of +100 to -100, on pace for its worst full year on record in ongoing polling since late 1985. The CCI's averaged -48 this year, compared with -42 last year and a record low of -44 in 1992.

Those compare dismally to its long-term average -12, much less its best year, +29 in 2000.

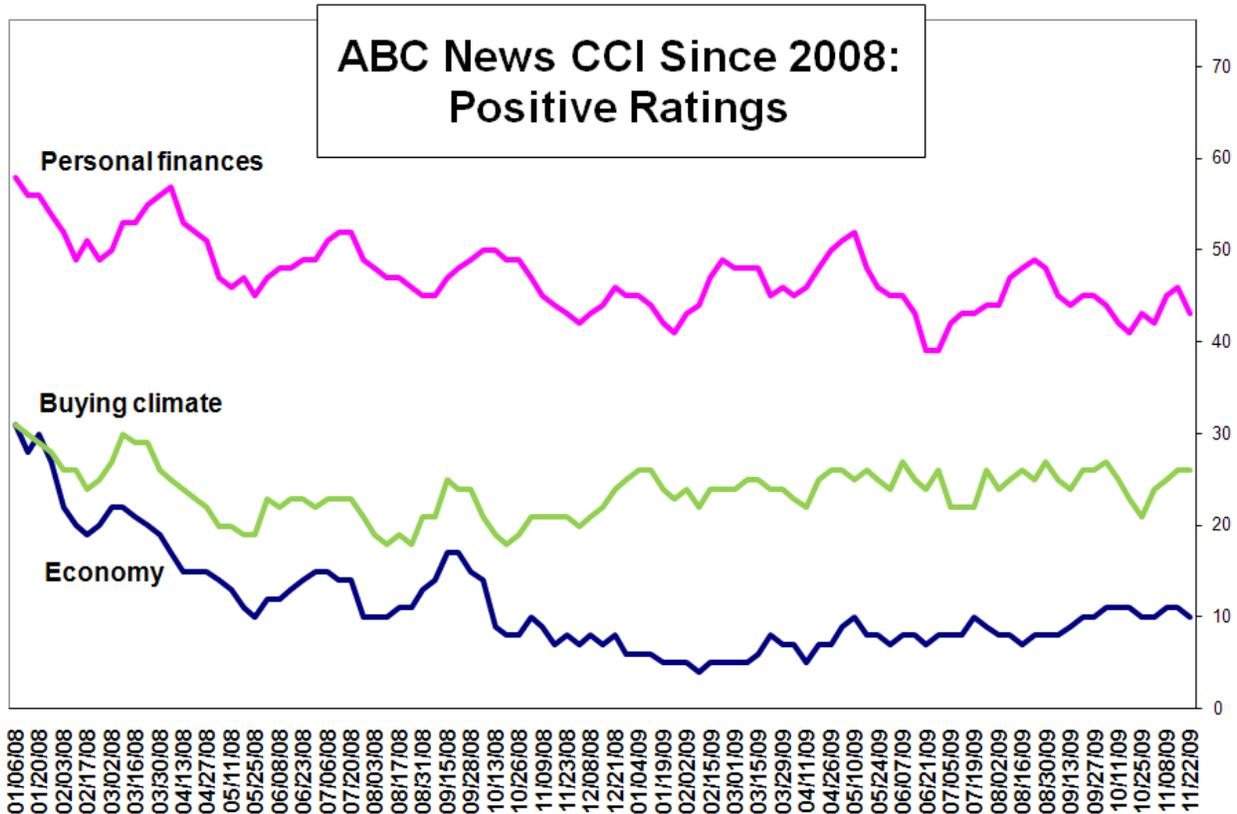
The index is based on three gauges: Nine in 10 Americans rate the economy negatively, 74 percent call it a bad time to buy things and 57 percent say their personal finances are in bad shape. None holds encouragement for retailers in their busiest season of the year.



The CCI's a grim reminder of the country's continued economic problems, chief among them 10.2 percent unemployment. In a separate ABC News/Washington Post poll this week, three in 10 said they or someone in their household had lost a job in the past year. And majorities in this group reported anger, stress, depression and serious financial hardship as a result.

INDEX – The CCI, as noted, is based on Americans' ratings of their current finances, the national economy and the buying climate. Just 43 percent now rate their own finances positively, 14 points below average and just 4 points from the record low in June. It's been below a majority for 28 weeks straight and all but two weeks this year.

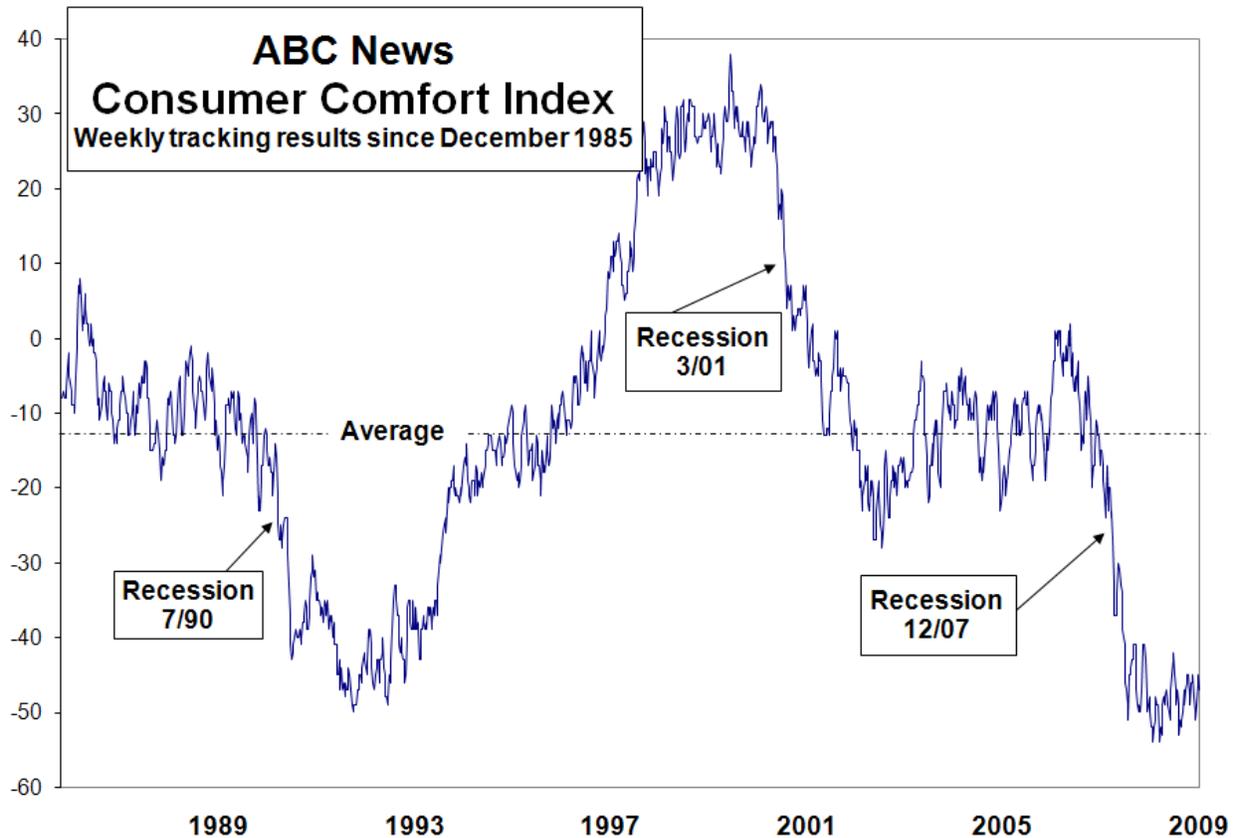
The 26 percent who rate the buying climate positively is a point from the year's best, but still 11 points below average and under 30 percent for a record 89 weeks. And positive ratings of the national economy, at 10 percent, are 28 points below their long-term average.



Positive ratings of:	ABC News CCI		Averages	
	This week	Last week	2009	'85-'09
National economy	10%	11	8	38
Buying climate	26	26	25	37
Personal finances	43	46	45	57
Consumer Comfort Index	-47	-45	-48	-12

**TREND** – The CCI’s best this year was -42 May 10; since then it’s seen no better than -45, a level it’s reached five times – including last week – only to fall back. It was a record low -54 in January, went back to a close -53 in late June, and has been mired in a 7-point range since then.

The CCI remains in remarkably bad shape historically; it’s been below -40 for a record 83 weeks, hasn’t been positive since March 2007 and is 35 points below its long-term average. Its best week on record was +38 in January 2000. Those days seem very far off.



	ABC News CCI	
This week	-47	
Last week	-45	
2009 high	-42	May 10
2009 low	-54	Jan. 25, record low
2009 average	-48	
2000 average	+29	Best full year
1992 average	-44	Worst full year
Jan. 16, 2000	+38	Record high
Average since 12/85	-12	

**GROUPS** – The index, as usual, is higher among better-off Americans, but has been negative across the board for 39 weeks straight, the longest such run in data since 1990.

It's -21 among those with the highest incomes but -75 among those with the lowest, -41 among people who've attended college (the worst since July) vs. -60 among high school dropouts, -43 among men while -49 among women, -41 among homeowners compared with -55 among renters, and -44 among whites vs. -56 among blacks. The last is far different from the usual 28-point racial gap.

Partisan differences remain, but they're much attenuated. The CCI's -34 among Republicans, compared with -46 among Democrats (the best since May) and -48 among independents. That 12-point Democratic-Republican gap compares with a 32-point difference long-term.

Here's a closer look at the three components of the ABC News CCI:

**NATIONAL ECONOMY** – Ten percent of Americans rate the economy as excellent or good; it was 11 percent last week. The highest was 80 percent Jan. 16, 2000. The worst was 4 percent Feb. 8, 2009.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	10	1	9	90	42	48
Avg. since 12/85	38	3	34	62	40	22

**PERSONAL FINANCES** – Forty-three percent say their own finances are excellent or good; it was 46 percent last week. The best was 70 percent, last reached in January 2000. The worst was 39 percent June 28 and 21, 2009.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	43	6	37	57	36	21
Avg. since 12/85	57	5	51	43	30	13

**BUYING CLIMATE** – Twenty-six percent say it's an excellent or good time to buy things, the same as last week. The best was 57 percent Jan. 16, 2000. The worst was 18 percent, last reached Oct. 19, 2008.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	26	1	25	74	44	30
Avg. since 12/85	37	3	34	63	42	21

**METHODOLOGY** – Interviews for the ABC News Consumer Comfort Index are reported in a four-week rolling average. This week's results are based on telephone interviews among a random national sample of 1,000 adults in the four weeks ending Nov. 22, 2009. The results have a 3-point error margin. Field work by ICR-International Communications Research of Media, Pa.

The index is derived by subtracting the negative response to each index question from the positive response to that question. The three resulting numbers are added and divided by three. The index can range from +100 (everyone positive on all three measures) to -100 (all negative on all three measures). The survey began in December 1985.

Analysis by Peyton M. Craighill.

ABC News polls can be found online at <http://abcnews.com/pollingunit>.

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11/22/09	This Week	Last Week	4 Wks Ago	3 Mo. Ago	1 Yr. Ago	12 Mo High	12 Mo Low	12 Mo Avg
Group								
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GENERAL POPULATION:								
Overall Index	-47	-45	-51	-45	-52	-42	-54	-49
State of Economy	-80	-78	-80	-84	-84	-78	-92	-84
Personal Finances	-14	-8	-14	-2	-14	4	-22	-10
Buying Climate	-48	-48	-58	-50	-58	-46	-60	-51
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OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS								
Sex:								
Men	-43	-39	-42	-40	-48	-28	-49	-42
Women	-49	-48	-57	-49	-56	-45	-60	-54
Age:								
18 - 34	-46	-40	-44	-38	-53	-31	-61	-45
35 - 44	-48	-49	-55	-46	-40	-35	-62	-49
45 - 54	-42	-41	-51	-51	-57	-36	-65	-50
55 - 64	-53	-51	-49	-39	-57	-39	-65	-52
65+	-44	-41	-52	-52	-55	-40	-56	-48
Income:								
Under \$15K	-75	-74	-80	-79	-76	-51	-84	-72
\$15K To \$24.9K	-49	-42	-63	-40	-55	-40	-81	-65
\$25K To \$39.9K	-51	-50	-58	-49	-61	-49	-73	-60
\$40K To \$49.9K	-36	-47	-41	-48	-61	-27	-68	-49
Over \$50K	-30	-27	-32	-30	-35	-19	-41	-29
\$50K To \$74.9K	-31	-32	-46	-35	-40	-24	-54	-39
\$75K To \$99.9K	-37	-27	-23	-25	-48	-12	-52	-31
Over \$100K	-21	-24	-18	-31	-21	5	-34	-17
Region:								
Northeast	-40	-38	-56	-41	-62	-38	-62	-50
Midwest	-45	-44	-52	-45	-52	-41	-58	-49
South	-50	-48	-54	-49	-45	-39	-59	-50
West	-46	-42	-35	-40	-56	-19	-58	-42
Race:								
White	-44	-41	-50	-45	-47	-39	-52	-47
Black	-56	-56	-59	-49	-81	-41	-81	-57
Politics:								
Republican	-34	-30	-35	-37	-35	-28	-42	-36
Democrat	-46	-47	-51	-52	-62	-43	-65	-55
Independent	-48	-42	-55	-45	-52	-39	-59	-49
Education:								
< High School	-60	-53	-80	-69	-68	-51	-82	-66
High Sch. Grad.	-49	-50	-55	-53	-53	-46	-65	-55
College +	-41	-37	-39	-33	-47	-30	-50	-40
Home:								
Own	-41	-40	-45	-39	-44	-35	-49	-43
Rent	-55	-52	-61	-57	-80	-48	-80	-61
Marital Status:								

Single	-47	-41	-52	-53	-67	-34	-69	-51
Married	-42	-42	-45	-35	-46	-33	-47	-41
Sep/Wid/Div	-56	-54	-59	-59	-55	-53	-70	-61
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	-36	-36	-40	-34	-39	-31	-45	-39
Part-Time	-56	-49	-42	-47	-61	-31	-67	-50
Not Employed	-53	-49	-60	-55	-63	-49	-65	-57

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