Consumer Price Index (CPI) Conversion Factors to Convert to 2013 Dollars
Using the CPI-U-RS series, an experimental CPI measure
(can be used when exact comparisons are needed between years during the period starting 1947; see below)

To convert dollars of a year to 2013 dollars, DIVIDE the dollar amount of that year by the conversion factor (CF) for that year. Note: see the important limits discussed below.

Example: $1000 dollars of 1948 = $8264 dollars of 2013 ($1000 / 0.121). Suggest ROUNDING to no more than three significant digits (in this example, $8260).

Note: To **reverse** the process, that is, to determine what a 2013-dollar figure would be in the dollars of another year, simply **multiply** the 2013 figure by the conversion factor of that year, e.g., $1000 2013 dollars would equal about $112 in 1947 ($1000 x 0.112).

Year	CF	Year	CF	Year	CF	Year	CF	Year	CF
1947	0.112	1963	0.154	1979	0.334	1995	0.659	2011	0.966
1948	0.121	1964	0.156	1980	0.372	1996	0.676	2012	0.986
1949	0.120	1965	0.158	1981	0.407	1997	0.691	2013	**1.000**
1950	0.121	1966	0.163	1982	0.431	1998	0.701		
1951	0.131	1967	0.168	1983	0.450	1999	0.715		
1952	0.133	1968	0.175	1984	0.468	2000	0.739		
1953	0.134	1969	0.182	1985	0.484	2001	0.760		
1954	0.135	1970	0.191	1986	0.493	2002	0.772		
1955	0.135	1971	0.199	1987	0.510	2003	0.790		
1956	0.137	1972	0.205	1988	0.529	2004	0.811		
1957	0.141	1973	0.218	1989	0.551	2005	0.838		
1958	0.145	1974	0.240	1990	0.579	2006	0.866		
1959	0.146	1975	0.260	1991	0.600	2007	0.890		
1960	0.149	1976	0.275	1992	0.615	2008	0.924		
1961	0.150	1977	0.292	1993	0.630	2009	0.921		
1962	0.152	1978	0.305	1994	0.643	2010	0.936		

Inflation assumptions: No projections are produced of RS series data, so assumptions about future inflation rates are not relevant.

Revised April 8, 2014, using final 2013 CPI (CPI = 2.32957) and RS data available from http://www.bls.gov/cpi/cpirsdc.htm and *Economic Report of the President 2013*, Table 62.   CPI-U-RS data re-based so that 2013 = 1.000. In the words in included in a note to Table 62 regarding this data series: "All data are subject to revision annually."

The Census Bureau uses the Bureau of Labor Statistics' experimental Consumer Price Index (CPI-U-RS) starting 1977. The Census Bureau derived the CPI-U-RS for years before 1977 by applying the 1977 CPI-U-RS-to-CPI-U ratio to the 1947 to 1976 CPI-U. This is available at http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/income07/cpiurs.html.   Additional sources of information about the CPI-U-RS are available from the BLS at http://www.bls.gov/cpi/cpirsdc.htm.

See also the important notes on the reverse side about the limits of the CPI-U-RS. **Because of the method of extrapolation of the CPI-U-RS for the years before 1978, CPI-U-RS conversion factors for those years must be used with special caution .**

The address of the inflation conversion factor web page is http://oregonstate.edu/cla/polisci/sahr/sahr.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics' Statement on the Use of the CPI-U-RS

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) has made numerous improvements to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) over the past quarter-century. While these improvements make the present and future CPI more accurate, historical price index series are not adjusted to reflect the improvements. Many researchers, however, expressed an interest in having a historical series that was measured consistently over the entire period. Accordingly, the Consumer Price Index research series using current methods (CPI-U-RS) presents an estimate of the CPI for all Urban Consumers (CPI-U) from 1978 to present that incorporates most of the improvements made over that time span into the entire series.

The CPI-U-RS is in some ways an extension of the CPI-U-X1, an experimental series that shows what the inflation rate in the CPI-U might have been, if the current rental-equivalence method of measuring the cost of homeownership had been in place prior to 1983.

The CPI-U-RS has some limitations. First, most estimates are based on BLS research covering a short period of time and extrapolated to a longer period. Therefore, there is considerable uncertainty surrounding the magnitude of the adjustments. Second, there have been several improvements in the CPI not incorporated into the CPI-U-RS, either because they do not represent changes in methodology, because they had negligible impacts on the CPI's growth rate, or because it was impossible to systematically estimate the impacts of the new methods in past years.

Nonetheless, the CPI-U-RS can serve as a valuable proxy for researchers needing a historical estimate of inflation using current methods. The direct adjustment of individual CPI index series makes this the most detailed and systematic estimate available of a consistent CPI series.

April 5, 2004

From http://www.bls.gov/cpi/cpiurstx.htm [note: no longer posted online]

See also BLS Q&A at http://www.bls.gov/cpi/cpirsqa.pdf.