

# The Minimum Wage and Fitter (Trade) Rate Since 1906

Source: Basic Wage Table, Metal Industry Increases Table

Year	Basic Wage/ Minimum Wage per week (s)(d) and (\$)¹	Real Basic Wage/ Minimum Wage \$2020²	Fitter Rate (Trades) per week (s)(d) and (\$)	Fitter Rate Margin/ difference from basic wage (Real) \$2020	Fitter Rate total per week (Real) \$2020	Fitter rate total (Real) as % of basic wage (Real) & vice versa
1906	£8-£34 month					
1907	42s.	323.06	60s total (60s-42s = 18s) (2 CAR 1 at 19)	138.46	461.52	142.86 / 70%
1908	42s.	304.06	No fitter rate			
1913	42s.	262.83	No fitter rate			
1914	53s.	320.79	No fitter rate			
1915	53s	279.55	No fitter rate			
1916	53s	275.61	No fitter rate			
1917	53s	260.91	No fitter rate			
1918	53s	244.60	No fitter rate			
1919	69s	279.95	No fitter rate			
1920	69s	247.34	No fitter rate			
1921	84s	344.60	120s total (15 CAR at 332)	147.68	492.28	142.86 / 70%

¹ The History of the Australian Minimum Wage, the Hon. Reg Hamilton, Waltzing Matilda and the Sunshine Harvester Factory website. From 1907 to 1920 there was no one 'minimum wage' but rather rates were fixed in each case.

² Converted in real terms using the [RBA Inflation Calculator](#) as at April 2021.

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1922	Feb: 79s	343.75 (Nov)	£5.1.0 p/w (16 CAR 281 at 282) (22s margin)	93.36	437.11	127.16 / 79%
	May³: 77 s 6d					
	Aug: 80s					
	Nov: 81s					
1923	Feb: 80s 6d	362.99 (Nov)	22s margin	91.27	454.26	125.14 / 80%
	May: 80s 6d					
	Aug: 85s					
	Nov: 87s 6d					
1924	Feb: 85s	348.23 (Nov)	24s margin (20 CAR at 983)	100.70	448.93	128.92 / 78%
	May: 84s 6d					
	Aug: 84s					
	Nov: 83s					
1925	Feb: 83s 6 d	360.82 (Nov)	24s margin	100.70	461.52	127.91 / 78%
	May: 84s 6d					
	Aug: 85s 6d					
	Nov: 86s					
1926	Feb: 86s 6 d	363.06 (Nov)	24s margin	98.46	461.52	127.12 / 79%
	May: 88s					
	Aug: 90s 6d					
	Nov: 88s 6d					

³ Source: Federal Basic Wage, 1922-1950 (shillings per week), Professor Keith Hancock, The Hon. Reg Hamilton. From 1951-1966 the source is Federal Industrial Laws, Fourth Edition, Butterworths, p.161. From 1968 the Metal Industry Award Victoria males is used, and from 1998 the Federal Minimum Wage clause.

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1927	Feb: 88s	365.06 (Nov)	24s margin (25 CAR 389 at 190)	99.57	464.63	127.27 / 79%
	May: 87s 6d					
	Aug: 86s 6d					
	Nov: 88s					
1928	Feb: 89s	360.92 (Nov)	24s margin	99.56	460.48	127.59 / 78%
	May: 88s					
	Aug: 88s					
	Nov: 87s					
1929	Feb: 87s	367.18 (Nov)	24s margin	97.38	464.56	126.52 / 79%
	May: 90s 6d					
	Aug: 90s 6d					
	Nov: 90s 6d					
1930	Feb: 90s 6d	352.24 (Nov)	24s margin (28 CAR 1024 at 1026)	101.85	454.09	128.91 / 78%
	May: 87s					
	Aug: 86s					
	Nov: 83s					
1931	Feb: 71s 1d	308.86 (Nov)	24s margin All wage rates reduced 10% (restored in 1934)	71.35	380.21 (422.46-10%)	123.10 / 81%
	May: 69s 4d					
	Aug: 67s 6d					
	Nov: 65s 3d					

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1932	Feb: 64s 4d	314.33 (Nov)	24s margin -10% of total wage	76.33	390.66 (434.07-10%)	124.28 / 80%
	May: 64s 4d					
	Aug: 63s 11d					
	Nov: 63s					
1933	Feb: 61s 8d	329.34 (Nov)	24s margin -10% of total wage	79.40	408.74 (454.15-10%)	124.11 / 81%
	May: 64s 2d					
	Aug: 63s 4d					
	Nov: 63s 4d					
1934	Feb: 63s 9d	333.81 (Dec)	24s margin 10% cut of wages restored (33 CAR at 175)	121.38	455.19	136.36 / 73%
	May: 65s					
	Jun: 66s					
	Sep: 66s					
	Dec: 66s					
1935	Mar: 66s	339.28 (Dec)	27s margin (34 CAR 462 at 465)	134.71	473.99	139.70 / 72%
	Jun: 66s					
	Sep: 66s					
	Dec: 68s					
1936	Mar: 68s	334.75 (Dec)	27s margin	132.92	467.67	139.71 / 72%
	Jun: 68s					
	Sep: 68s					
	Dec: 68s					

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1937	Mar: 70s	359.75 (Dec)	30s margin (37 CAR at 186; confirmed in 38 CAR at 343)	142.00	501.75	139.47 / 72%
	Jun: 70s					
	Jul: 73s					
	Sep: 73s					
	Oct: 75s					
	Dec: 76s					
1938	Mar: 77s	359.98 (Dec)	30s margin	138.46	498.44	138.46 / 72%
	Jun: 77s					
	Sep: 77s					
	Dec: 78s					
1939	Mar: 78s	355.70 (Dec)	30s margin	135.08	490.78	137.98 / 72%
	Jun: 79s					
	Sep: 79s					
	Dec: 79s					
1940	Feb: 80s	360.53 (Nov)	30s margin	130.31	490.84	136.14 / 73%
	May: 80s					
	Aug: 82s					
	Nov: 83s					
1941	Feb: 85s	360.92 (Nov)	30s margin + additional 6s loading (44 CAR at 573)	149.34	510.26	141.38 / 71%
	May: 86s					
	Aug: 86s					
	Nov: 87s					

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1942	Feb: 88s	361.60 (Nov)	30s margin + 6s loading	137.03	498.63	137.90 / 73%
	May: 90s					
	Aug: 93s					
	Nov: 95s					
1943	Feb: 96s	354.59 (Nov)	30s margin + 6s loading	131.60	486.19	137.11 / 73%
	May: 96s					
	Aug: 98s					
	Nov: 97s					
1944	Feb: 96s	354.44 (Nov)	30s margin + 6s loading	132.92	487.36	137.50 / 73%
	May: 96s					
	Aug: 96s					
	Nov: 96s					
1945	Feb: 96s	354.44 (Nov)	30s margin + 6s loading	132.92	487.36	137.50 / 73%
	May: 96s					
	Aug: 96s					
	Nov: 96s					
1946	Feb: 96s	380.07 (Dec)	30s margin + 6s loading	130.31	510.38	134.29 / 74%
	May: 97s					
	Aug: 98s					
	Nov: 98s					
	Dec: 105s					

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1947	Feb: 106s	379.66 (Nov)	46s margin + 6s loading (58 CAR at 553, 1096; also 59 CAR at 1278)	181.12	560.78	147.71 / 68%
	May: 106s					
	Aug: 107s					
	Nov: 109s					
1948	Feb: 111s	375.52 (Nov)	46s margin + 6s loading	164.10	539.62	143.70 / 70%
	May: 114s					
	Aug: 116s					
	Nov: 119s					
1949	Feb: 122s	372.10 (Nov)	46s margin + 6s loading	149.99	522.09	140.31 / 71%
	May: 124s					
	Aug: 127s					
	Nov: 129s					
1950	Feb: 133s	429.90 (Dec)	46s margin + 6s loading	137.99	567.89	132.10 / 76%
	May: 135s					
	Aug: 138s					
	Nov: 142s					
	Dec: 162s					
1951	Feb: 169s	444.40 (Nov)	46s margin + 6s loading	115.55	559.95	126.00 / 79%
	May: 176s					
	Aug: 189s					
	Nov: 200s					

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1952	Feb: 210s	437.86 (Nov)	46s margin + 6s loading (confirmed 73 CAR at 418)	98.57	536.43	122.51 / 82%
	May: 216s					
	Aug: 227s					
	Nov: 231s					
1953	Feb: 321s	428.12 (Aug)	46s margin + 6s loading	94.33	522.45	122.03 / 82%
	May: 234s					
	Aug: 236s					
1954	236s	421.53	75s margin (80 CAR at 95)	133.96	555.49	131.78 / 76%
1955	236s	415.15	75s margin	131.93	547.08	131.78 / 76%
1956	Jun: 246s	409.47	75s margin	124.84	534.31	130.49 / 77%
1957	May: 256s	414.24	75s margin	121.36	535.60	129.30 / 77%
1958	May: 261s	419.41	75s margin	120.52	539.93	128.74 / 78%
1959	Jun: 276s	434.49	96s margin (92 CAR at 813)	151.13	585.62	134.78 / 74%
1960	276s	418.87	96s margin	145.69	564.56	134.78 / 74%
1961	Jul: 288s	427.31	96s margin	142.43	569.74	133.33 / 75%
1962	288s	428.68	96s margin	142.89	571.57	133.33 / 75%
1963	288s	425.95	106s margin (102 CAR at 155)	156.77	582.72	136.80 / 73%
1964	Jun: 308s	442.83	106s margin	152.41	595.24	134.42 / 74%
1965	308s	428.25	112s margin (110 CAR at 178)	155.73	583.98	136.36 / 73%
1966	Jul: \$32.80	441.52	\$12.30 margin (116 CAR at 713)	165.57	607.09	137.50 / 73%



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1967	\$32.80	426.68	\$53.40 total (118 CAR at 655 and Print B2916) ⁴	267.97 (difference)	694.65	162.80 / 61%
1968	\$29.85⁵	378.75	\$54.75 total (Print B3554)	315.95 (difference)	694.70	183.42 / 55%
1969	\$30.70	377.17	\$56.40 total (Print B4546)	315.74 (difference)	692.91	183.71 / 54%
1970	\$39.50	469.15	\$59.80 total (Print B6060)	241.11 (difference)	710.26	151.39 / 66%
1971	\$44	492.38	\$65.80 total (Print B6934)	243.95 (difference)	736.33	149.55 / 67%
1972	\$46	485.51	\$67.80 total (Print B8626)	230.09 (difference)	715.60	147.39 / 68%
1973	\$52.50	507.94	\$74.70 total	214.78 (difference)	722.72	142.28 / 70%
1974	\$83.40	699.11	\$106.10 total	190.29 (difference)	889.40	127.22 / 79%
1975	\$86.40	628.91	\$113.70 total	198.71 (difference)	827.62	131.60 / 76%
1976	\$98	629.48	\$129.90 total	204.90 (difference)	834.38	132.55 / 75%
1977	\$108.49	620.48	\$143.10 total	197.94 (difference)	818.42	131.90 / 76%
1978	\$140.60	744.52	\$166.20 total	135.56 (difference)	880.08	118.21 / 85%
1979	\$138.90	674.04	\$177.90 total	189.25 (difference)	863.29	128.08 / 78%
1980	\$151.30	666.64	\$193.70 total	186.82 (difference)	853.46	128.02 / 78%
1981	\$189.30	761.79	\$242.40 total	213.69 (difference)	975.48	128.05 / 78%
1982	\$200.20	723.52	\$256.40 total	203.11 (difference)	926.63	128.07 / 78%
1983	\$208.81	685.79	\$267.40 total	192.43 (difference)	878.22	128.06 / 78%
1984	\$217.40	686.81	\$278.40 total	192.72 (difference)	879.52	128.06 / 78%

⁴ The fitter wage 1967 onwards is taken from the orders hyperlinked to 'The History of the Australian Minimum Wage', The Hon. Reg Hamilton. The 1966 amount is taken from 'Six Wage Concepts', J.Hutson, p.97.

⁵ From 1968-1997 the Victorian Metal Industry minimum wage is used, which was influential but there were a range of rates, rates sometimes being lower. From 1998 onwards the new 'Federal Minimum Wage' is used and has application to all awards.

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1985	\$231.60	685.50	\$296.50 total	192.09 (difference)	877.59	128.02 / 78%
1986	\$236.90	642.99	\$303.30 total	180.23 (difference)	823.22	128.03 / 78%
1987	\$256.80	642.21	\$325.80 total	172.55 (difference)	814.76	126.87 / 79%
1988	\$270.70	631.41	\$341.80 total	165.84 (difference)	797.25	126.27 / 79%
1989	\$295.10	640.10	\$373.90 total	170.92 (difference)	811.02	126.70 / 79%
1990	\$311.30	629.10	\$397.90 total	175.01 (difference)	804.11	127.82 / 78%
1991	\$325.40	637.35	\$417.20 total	179.81 (difference)	817.16	128.21 / 78%
1992	\$325.40	630.96	\$417.20 total	178.01 (difference)	808.97	128.21 / 78%
1993	\$333.40	635.33	\$425.20 total	174.94 (difference)	810.27	127.54 / 78%
1994	\$333.40	623.06	\$425.20 total	171.56 (difference)	794.62	127.54 / 78%
1995	\$341.40	609.79	\$441.20 total	178.26 (difference)	788.05	129.23 / 77%
1996	\$341.40	594.25	\$441.20 total	173.72 (difference)	767.97	129.23 / 77%
1997	\$359.40	624.18	\$451.20 total	159.43 (difference)	783.61	125.54 / 80%
1998	\$373.40	642.96	\$465.20 total	158.07 (difference)	801.03	124.58 / 80%
1999	\$385.40	653.93	\$477.20 total	155.76 (difference)	809.69	123.82 / 81%
2000	\$400.40	650.39	\$492.20 total	149.11 (difference)	799.50	122.93 / 81%
2001	\$413.40	643.16	\$507.20 total	145.93 (difference)	789.09	122.69 / 82%
2002	\$431.40	651.73	\$525.20 total	141.71 (difference)	793.44	121.74 / 82%
2003	\$448.40	659.40	\$542.20 total	137.93 (difference)	797.33	120.92 / 83%
2004	\$467.40	671.60	\$561.20 total	134.78 (difference)	806.38	120.07 / 83%
2005	\$484.40	677.78	\$578.20 total	131.25 (difference)	809.03	119.36 / 84%
2006	\$511.86	691.61	\$605.56 total	126.61 (difference)	818.22	118.31 / 85%

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2007	\$522.12	689.43	\$615.82 total	123.73 (difference)	813.16	117.95 / 85%
2008	\$543.78	688.10	\$637.48 total	118.56 (difference)	806.66	117.23 / 85%
2009	\$543.78	676.12	\$637.48 total	116.51 (difference)	792.63	117.23 / 85%
2010	\$569.90	688.51	\$663.48 total	113.05 (difference)	801.56	116.42 / 86%
2011	\$589.30	689.17	\$686.04 total	113.14 (difference)	802.31	116.42 / 86%
2012	\$606.40	696.89	\$705.94 total	114.39 (difference)	811.28	116.41 / 86%
2013	\$622.20	697.95	\$724.29 total	114.51 (difference)	812.46	116.41 / 86%
2014	\$640.90	701.47	\$746.20 total	115.25 (difference)	816.72	116.43 / 86%
2015	\$656.90	708.30	\$764.90 total	116.45 (difference)	824.75	116.44 / 86%
2016	\$672.70	716.19	\$783.30 total	117.75 (difference)	833.94	116.44 / 86%
2017	\$694.90	725.68	\$809.10 total	119.26 (difference)	844.94	116.43 / 86%
2018	\$719.20	736.97	\$837.40 total	121.12 (difference)	\$858.09	116.43 / 86%
2019	\$740.80	747.07	\$862.50 total	122.73 (difference)	\$869.80	116.43 / 86%
2020	\$753.80	753.80	\$877.60 total	123.80 (difference)	\$877.60	116.42 / 86%