

10 Federal Debt Facts That Will Make You Feel Queasy

It's no secret that the U.S. government is swimming in red ink. Government statistics [show](#) federal debt currently stands at \$19.3 trillion.

The problem is that the human mind has trouble understanding a figure so huge. Nineteen trillion is just a number—unless it has context.

Here are 10 facts that will help you understand how big that number really is:

1. You could wrap our planet in \$100 bills many times over. How many times? Ten times? Nope. Fifty? Try, again. How about 75 times.

2. In 2015, the U.S. paid \$223 billion in interest on its debt—\$22 billion more than Richard Nixon's [entire budget](#) in his first year as president, which took place during the middle of the Vietnam War.

3. That \$223 billion figure would be much higher if not for the [historically low](#) interest rates the U.S. enjoyed in recent years.

4. Analysts [project](#) the U.S. will spend \$880 billion per year to finance its debt in 2024. That is the equivalent of all federal revenue in 1987.

5. The U.S. currently owes \$60,000 *per citizen*.

6. The federal debt now exceeds our national gross domestic product.

Only 10 nations in the world, including Greece and Japan, have debt to GDP ratios worse than the U.S.

8. The federal debt is [projected](#) to increase 50 percent—to \$29.3 trillion—in a decade.

9. All of these debt projections use “cash accounting” instead of “accrual accounting,” which [ignores unfunded liabilities](#) to government entitlement programs such as Medicare and Social Security.

10. Using accrual accounting, which is lawfully required by corporations, the current debt would be closer to \$100 trillion.

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