

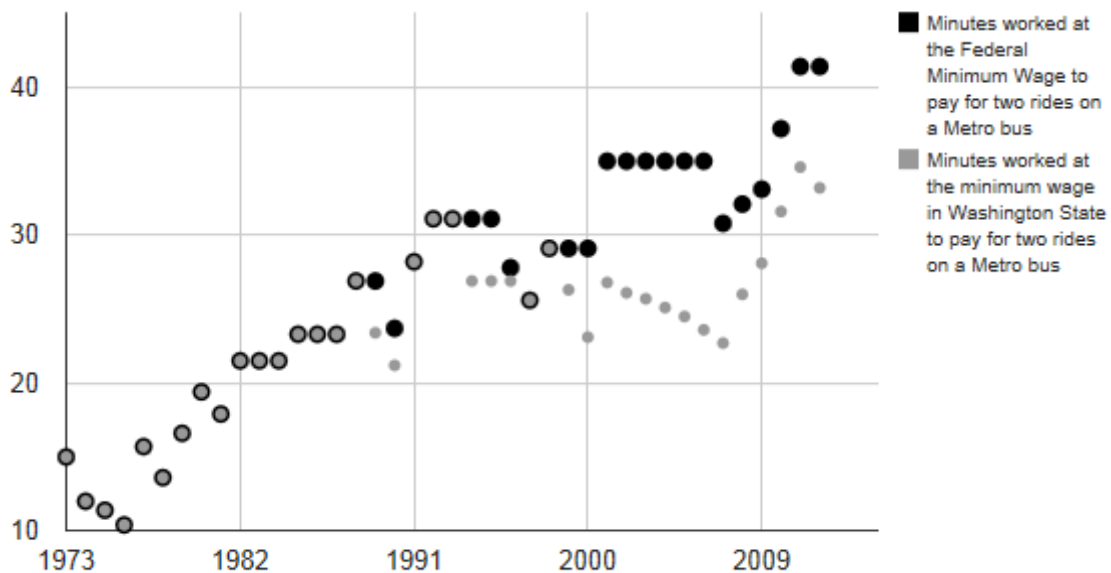
# Working More to Ride to Work

Ever get the feeling that riding the bus is taking a bigger bite out of your paycheck than it used to? Well, that's because it is.

In the mid-1970s, a worker in Seattle making the Federal minimum wage had to work for just over 10 minutes to make enough money to pay for their bus rides to and from work. Today, they'd have to work for over 40 minutes to cover their commute – or, at Washington State's higher minimum wage, almost 35 minutes.

For low wage workers, the cost of riding public transit has effectively tripled in the past forty years!

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The source data is on the next page. Fare data is compiled from Metro's site: <http://metro.kingcounty.gov/am/history/history.html>. Federal and Washington State minimum wage date is readily available on-line.

*Transit Riders Union, 2012*



<b>Year</b>	<b>Peak Metro fare</b>	<b>Fed. Min. wage</b>	<b>Wash. Min. wage*</b>	<b>Minutes at Fed min. wage to afford 2 rides</b>	<b>Minutes at WA min. wage to afford 2 rides</b>
1973	\$0.20	\$1.60	\$1.60	15.00	15.00
1974	\$0.20	\$2.00	\$1.80	12.00	13.33
1975	\$0.20	\$2.10	\$2.00	11.43	12.00
1976	\$0.20	\$2.30	\$2.30	10.43	10.43
1977	\$0.30	\$2.30	\$2.30	15.65	15.65
1978	\$0.30	\$2.65	\$2.30	13.58	15.65
1979	\$0.40	\$2.90	\$2.30	16.55	20.87
1980	\$0.50	\$3.10	\$2.30	19.35	26.09
1981	\$0.50	\$3.35	\$2.30	17.91	26.09
1982	\$0.60	\$3.35	\$2.30	21.49	31.30
1983	\$0.60	\$3.35	\$2.30	21.49	31.30
1984	\$0.60	\$3.35	\$2.30	21.49	31.30
1985	\$0.65	\$3.35	\$2.30	23.28	33.91
1986	\$0.65	\$3.35	\$2.30	23.28	33.91
1987	\$0.65	\$3.35	\$2.30	23.28	33.91
1988	\$0.75	\$3.35	\$2.30	26.87	39.13
1989	\$0.75	\$3.35	\$3.85	26.87	23.38
1990	\$0.75	\$3.80	\$4.25	23.68	21.18
1991	\$1.00	\$4.25	\$4.25	28.24	28.24
1992	\$1.10	\$4.25	\$4.25	31.06	31.06
1993	\$1.10	\$4.25	\$4.25	31.06	31.06
1994	\$1.10	\$4.25	\$4.90	31.06	26.94
1995	\$1.10	\$4.25	\$4.90	31.06	26.94
1996	\$1.10	\$4.75	\$4.90	27.79	26.94
1997	\$1.10	\$5.15	\$5.15	25.63	25.63
1998	\$1.25	\$5.15	\$5.15	29.13	29.13
1999	\$1.25	\$5.15	\$5.70	29.13	26.32
2000	\$1.25	\$5.15	\$6.50	29.13	23.08
2001	\$1.50	\$5.15	\$6.72	34.95	26.79
2002	\$1.50	\$5.15	\$6.90	34.95	26.09
2003	\$1.50	\$5.15	\$7.01	34.95	25.68
2004	\$1.50	\$5.15	\$7.16	34.95	25.14
2005	\$1.50	\$5.15	\$7.35	34.95	24.49
2006	\$1.50	\$5.15	\$7.63	34.95	23.59
2007	\$1.50	\$5.85	\$7.93	30.77	22.70
2008	\$1.75	\$6.55	\$8.07	32.06	26.02
2009	\$2.00	\$7.25	\$8.55	33.10	28.07
2010	\$2.25	\$7.25	\$8.55	37.24	31.58
2011	\$2.50	\$7.25	\$8.67	41.38	34.60
2012	\$2.50	\$7.25	\$9.04	41.38	33.19

\* For years in which Washington's minimum wage was lower than the Federal minimum wage, the graph only depicts the Federal data; the lower Washington standard would only have applied to categories of workers exempted from the Federal regulations. Since 1989 the Washington minimum wage has been higher than the Federal minimum wage.