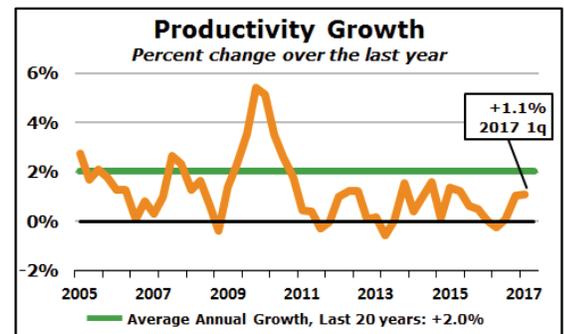
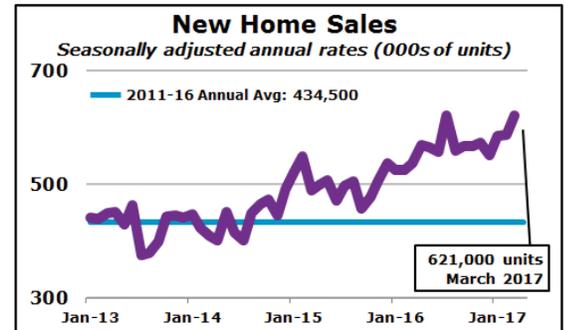


Keeping Current

- Existing home sales hit a ten-year high in March, with an annual rate of 5.71 million units sold. For the full year, 5.45 million homes were sold in 2016. Sales in the first quarter of 2017 were up 5.1% over sales during last year's first quarter.¹
- The median price of existing homes sold in March was \$236,400, up 6.8% from the median price in March 2016. Half of the properties sold in March were on the market for 34 days or fewer, down from a median of 47 days on the market a year earlier.¹
- New home sales rose 5.8% in March to an annualized rate of 621,000 units. That's the second-fastest pace recorded since early 2008. Sales during the first quarter of 2017 are up 11.2% over sales during the first quarter of 2016.²
- The median price of new homes sold in March was \$315,100, up 1.2% from the median price in March 2016.²
- The economic expansion slowed during the first quarter of 2017, as GDP rose at a 0.7% annualized rate. That's down from the 2.8% annualized growth rate in 2016's second half.³
- The number of hours worked rose 1.6% during the first quarter while output rose 1.0%. That resulted in a 0.6% decline in productivity, or output per hour worked. Productivity has fallen in four of the past six quarters. Over the past two years, productivity has grown at a 0.6% average annual rate, compared to a 2.0% average over the past 20 years.⁴
- The homeownership rate was 63.6% in the first quarter, up from 63.5% in the fourth quarter. A year ago, the rate was also 63.5%. In the second quarter of 2016, the homeownership rate was 63.2%, its lowest level since the 1960s.⁵
- The average rate on 30-year fixed-rate mortgages in Freddie Mac's survey was 4.02% during the week ending May 4, down 1 basis point from the week before. The April average was 4.05%, and the March average was 4.20%. All rates quoted have fees and points averaging 0.4% to 0.5% of the loan amount.⁶



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1. "Existing-Home Sales Jumped 4.4% in March," National Association of Realtors®, April 21, 2017. All sales data are seasonally adjusted; price and days on market are not. www.nar.realtor/news-releases/2017/04/existing-home-sales-jumped-44-in-march.
2. "New Residential Sales, March 2017," Census Bureau, April 25, 2017. www.census.gov/construction/nrs/pdf/newresales_201703.pdf.
3. "National Income and Product Accounts – GDP First Quarter 2017 (Advance Estimate)," Bureau of Economic Analysis, Department of Commerce, April 28, 2017. www.bea.gov/newsreleases/national/gdp/2017/gdp1q17_adv.htm.
4. "Productivity and Costs, First Quarter 2017 - Preliminary," Bureau of Labor Statistics, Department of Labor, May 4, 2017. Data reflect the nonfarm business sector. www.bls.gov/news.release/prod2.nr0.htm.
5. "Quarterly Residential Vacancies and Homeownership, First Quarter 2017," U.S. Census Bureau, April 27, 2017. Homeownership data are seasonally adjusted. www.census.gov/housing/hvs/data/q117ind.html
6. Freddie Mac Primary Mortgage Market Survey, May 4, 2017. www.freddiemac.com/pmms/ The FRB of St Louis Economic Data system (FRED) was used to collect data on existing home sales and prices, new home sales and prices, GDP, productivity, and homeownership.

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