

# WEEKLY VANTAGE POINT

December 23-27, 2019

## Economic Calendar

### Monday, December 30

Trade Deficit in Goods, Retail/Wholesale Inventories, MNI Chicago PMI, Pending Home Sales.

### Tuesday, December 31

S&P CoreLogic Case-Shiller Home Prices, Consumer Confidence, Early Market Close 1 p.m. ET.

### Wednesday, January 1

New Year's Holiday, All Markets Closed.

### Thursday, January 2

Jobless Claims, IHS Markit US Manufacturing PMI.

### Friday, January 3

Construction Spending, ISM Manufacturing PMI, FOMC Meeting Minutes.

## What We're Reading

[China Trade Deal Soon?](#)

[Rise of Gold](#)

[German Political Instability](#)

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## Online Sales Hit Records Despite Late Thanksgiving

### **Equities Finish Near All-Time Highs**

U.S. stocks finished the week higher yet again in a shortened holiday week with light trading. The S&P 500 rose for a fifth-straight week, barely hitting another record closing high on Friday. With just a couple trading days left in the year, the S&P 500 is up 31.84%. If this holds, it would be the best year for the index since 1995.

### **Weekly Performance**

For the week, the Dow Industrials Average was up 0.67%, the S&P 500 increased by 0.60%, and the tech-heavy Nasdaq Composite advanced 0.92%. The MSCI EAFE was up 0.77%, while the MSCI Emerging Markets Index outgained all jumping 1.16%.

### **Record Online Sales**

Thanksgiving was later this year, leaving six fewer sales days between Turkey Day and Christmas. Even with this high hurdle, the U.S. holiday online sales still rose 18.8% from a year ago to a new record, accounting for 14.6% of total retail sales. Overall holiday retail sales climbed 3.4% this year.

### **Consumer Discretionary Leads the Way**

10 of the 11 major sector groups posted gains last week, led by Consumer Discretionary (+1.49%), Technology (+1.11%), and Materials (+0.65%). Utilities, which led last week, trailed (-0.38%).

### **Treasury Yields Decline**

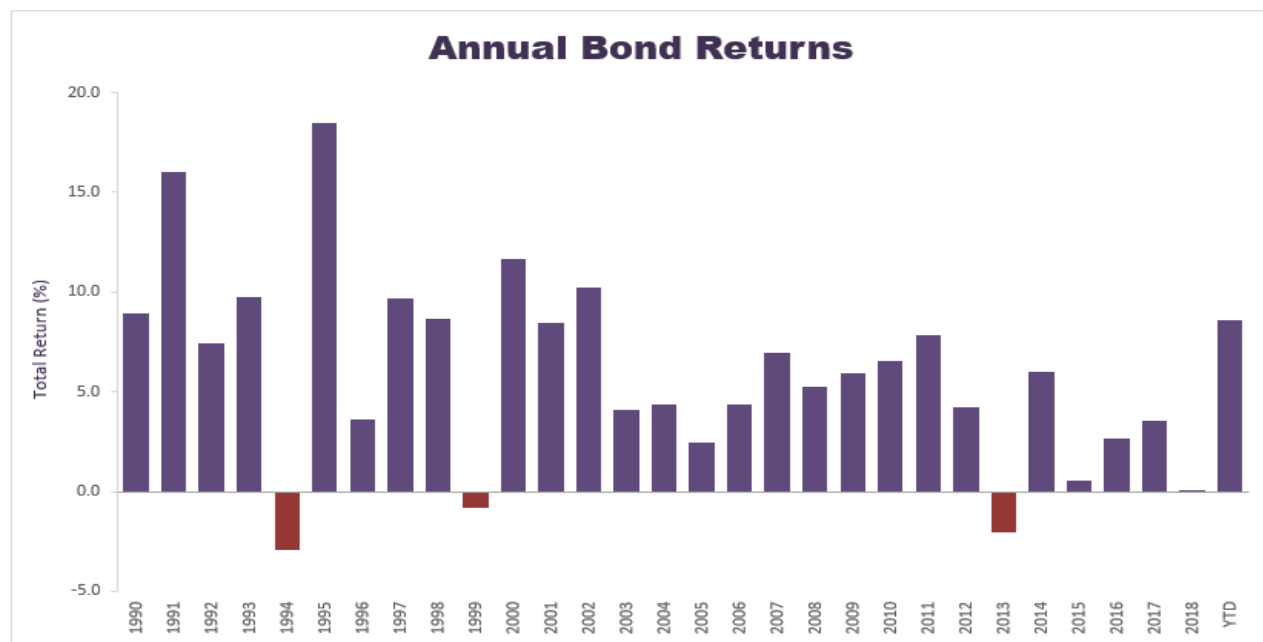
U.S. Treasury prices increased last week as yields fell. The benchmark 10-year yields pulled back 0.04% to 1.88%. The Barclays Aggregate Bond Index was up 0.30% for the week and is on pace for its best annual return since 2002. For the week, the U.S. Dollar Index retreated nearly 1%, while WTI crude oil remained steady above \$60/bbl. Both oil and gold ended near three-month highs. Gold has been climbing higher and is above \$1,500/oz, as investors may be hedging equity risk as stocks continue to hit record-setting levels.

## Market Watch

Stocks	1-Week	MTD	3-Month	YTD	1-Year	3-Year
Dow Jones Industrial Avg.	0.67	2.12	6.80	22.80	23.82	12.83
S&P 500	0.60	3.29	9.92	31.84	32.86	14.88
NASDAQ Composite	0.92	4.01	13.73	37.20	38.42	19.26
Russell 3000	0.52	3.13	9.91	31.33	32.45	14.17
MSCI EAFE	0.77	3.54	8.11	22.36	24.74	9.95
MSCI Emerging Markets	1.16	7.84	12.18	18.84	20.54	12.55
Bonds	1-Week	MTD	3-Month	YTD	1-Year	3-Year
Barclays Agg Bond	0.30	0.07	0.37	8.87	9.19	4.34
Barclays Municipal	0.08	0.31	0.76	7.54	7.62	4.84
Barclays US Corp High Yield	0.18	1.99	2.60	14.31	14.91	6.41
Commodities	1-Week	MTD	3-Month	YTD	1-Year	3-Year
Bloomberg Commodity	1.22	5.63	4.27	8.29	6.81	-0.79
S&P GSCI Crude Oil	2.12	11.87	10.39	35.92	38.39	4.62
S&P GSCI Gold	2.51	3.08	0.78	18.48	18.51	10.06

Source: Morningstar

## Chart of the Week: Best Returns in 17 Years for Bonds?



Source: Cetera Investment Management, Morningstar, Barclays. Bond returns are based on the BBgBarc US Aggregate Bond Index. Data as of 12/26/2019.

While strong stock market returns captured most of the headlines in 2019, bonds are on track for their best year in 17 years. The Barclays Aggregate bond index has a total return of 8.64% YTD, following a flat year in 2018. Tepid inflation, three Fed rate cuts, and yields falling to a 3-year low over the summer propelled bond returns this year. With the 10-year yield below 2% and the Fed on hold, bond returns aren't likely to be as strong next year.

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### **Glossary**

The **Dow Jones Industrial Average** is a price-weighted average of 30 significant stocks traded on the New York Stock Exchange and the NASDAQ.

The **S&P 500** is an index of 500 stocks chosen for market size, liquidity and industry grouping (among other factors) designed to be a leading indicator of U.S. equities and is meant to reflect the risk/return characteristics of the large cap universe.

The **NASDAQ Composite Index** includes all domestic and international based common type stocks listed on The NASDAQ Stock Market. The NASDAQ Composite Index is a broad-based index.

The **Russell 2000 Index** measures the performance of the small-cap segment of the U.S. equity universe and is a subset of the Russell 3000 Index representing approximately 10% of the total market capitalization of that index. It includes approximately 2000 of the smallest securities based on a combination of their market cap and current index membership.

The **Russell 3000 Index** measures the performance of the largest 3,000 U.S. companies representing approximately 98% of the investable U.S. equity market.

The **Russell Midcap Index** measures the performance of the mid-cap segment of the U.S. equity universe. It includes approximately 800 of the smallest companies in the Russell 1000 Index, based on a combination of their market cap and current index membership. The Russell Midcap represents approximately 31% of the total market capitalization of the Russell 1000 Index.

The **Bloomberg Barclays US Aggregate Bond Index**, which was originally called the Lehman Aggregate Bond Index, is a broad based flagship benchmark that measures the investment grade, US dollar-denominated, fixed-rate taxable bond market. The index includes Treasuries, government-related and corporate debt securities, MBS (agency fixed-rate and hybrid ARM pass-throughs), ABS and CMBS (agency and non-agency) debt securities that are rated at least Baa3 by Moody's and BBB- by S&P. Taxable municipals, including Build America bonds and a small amount of foreign bonds traded in U.S. markets are also included. Eligible bonds must have at least one year until final maturity, but in practice the index holdings have a fluctuating average life of around 8.25 years. This total return index, created in 1986 with history backfilled to January 1, 1976, is unhedged and rebalances monthly.

The **Bloomberg Barclays US Corporate High Yield Index** measures the USD-denominated, non-investment grade, fixed-rate, taxable corporate bond market. Securities are classified as high yield if the middle rating of Moody's, Fitch, and S&P is Ba1/BB+/BB+ or below, excluding emerging market debt. Payment-in-kind and bonds with predetermined step-up coupon provisions are also included. Eligible securities must have at least one year until final maturity, but in practice the index holdings have a fluctuating average life of around 6.3 years. This total return unhedged index was created in 1986, with history backfilled to July 1, 1983 and rebalances monthly.

The **Bloomberg Barclays US Municipal Bond Index** covers the USD-denominated long-term tax-exempt bond market. The index has four main sectors: state and local general obligation bonds, revenue bonds, insured bonds, and prerefunded bonds. Many of the subindices of the Municipal Index have historical data to January 1980. In addition, several subindices based on maturity and revenue source have been created, some with inception dates after January 1980, but no later than July 1, 1993. Eligible securities must be rated investment grade (Baa3/BBB- or higher) by Moody's and S&P and have at least one year until final maturity, but in practice has a fluctuating average life of around 12.8 years. This total return index is unhedged and rebalances monthly.

The **MSCI All-Country World Index** is a free float-adjusted market capitalization weighted index that is designed to measure the equity market performance of developed and emerging markets. The SMCI ACWI consists of 46 country indexes comprising 23 developed and 23 emerging market country indexes. The developed country indexes include: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States. The emerging market country indexes included are: Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, Czech Republic, Egypt, Greece, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Qatar, Russia, South Africa, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey and United Arab Emirates.

The **MSCI EAFE Index** is designed to measure the equity market performance of developed markets (Europe, Australasia, Far East) excluding the U.S. and Canada. The Index is market-capitalization weighted.

The **MSCI Emerging Markets Index** is designed to measure equity market performance in global emerging markets. It is a float-adjusted market capitalization index.

The **MSCI Europe Index** is a free float-adjusted market capitalization index that is designed to measure developed market equity performance in Europe.

The **MSCI Pacific Index** captures large and mid-cap representation across five Developed Markets (DM) countries in the Pacific region. With 470 constituents, the index covers approximately 85% of the free float-adjusted market capitalization in each country.

The **Bloomberg Commodity Index** is a broadly diversified index that measures 22 exchange-traded futures on physical commodities in five groups (energy, agriculture, industrial metals, precious metals, and livestock), which are weighted to account for economic significance and market liquidity. No single commodity can comprise less than 2% or more than 15% of the index; and no group can represent more than 33% of the index. However, between rebalancings, group weightings may fluctuate to levels outside the limits. The index rebalances annually, weighted 2/3 by trading volume and 1/3 by world production.

The **S&P GSCI Crude Oil Index** is a sub-index of the S&P GSCI, provides investors with a reliable and publicly available benchmark for investment performance in the crude oil market.

The **S&P GSCI Gold Index**, a sub-index of the S&P GSCI, provides investors with a reliable and publicly available benchmark tracking the COMEX gold futures market.

**West Texas Intermediate (WTI)** is crude oil produced in Texas and southern Oklahoma which serves as a reference or "marker" for pricing several other crude streams. WTI is the underlying commodity of the New York Mercantile Exchange's oil futures contracts.

The **Cboe Volatility Index® (VIX®)** is a key measure of market expectations of near-term volatility conveyed by S&P 500 stock index option prices.

The **U.S. Dollar Index** is a weighted geometric mean that provides a value measure of the United States dollar relative to a basket of major foreign currencies. The index, often carrying a USDX or DXY moniker, started in March 1973, beginning with a value of the U.S. Dollar Index at 100.000. It has since reached a February 1985 high of 164.720 and has been as low as 70.698 in March 2008.