

Home Alone with Pizza Abundance

For the time price of one pizza in 1990, unskilled workers get 3.8 pizzas today.

GALE POOLEY
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In the classic 1990 holiday movie *Home Alone*, the McCallister family orders 10 pizzas and the bill comes to \$122.50 (plus tip). Unskilled workers at the time were earning around \$6.03 an hour. That would put the time price of the 10 pizzas at 20.3 hours, or about 2 hours per pizza.



Jadrian Wooten and Chris Clarke over at [Monday Morning Economist](#) conducted a price check on how much 10 basic cheese and pepperoni pizzas cost today at a Little Caesars near the McCallisters’ home. It came to only \$91.98 (plus tip). So, the nominal price of pizza actually shrank!

Unskilled workers are earning closer to \$17.17 an hour today, so that would put the time price of 10 pizzas at 5.35 hours, or about 32 minutes per pizza. The time price of pizza has fallen by 73.6 percent. That means that for the time it took to earn the money to buy one pizza in 1990, you get 3.8 pizzas today. That’s a 280 percent increase in personal pizza abundance.

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Since 1990, the US population has increased by 36.3 percent, from 248 million to 340 million. Each 1 percent increase in population corresponded to a 7.71 percent increase in pizza abundance.



If you started your first job in 1990 and went from being an unskilled worker to a blue collar worker in 2024, your hourly compensation (wages and benefits) increased from \$6.03 an hour to \$38 an hour. Your personal pizza abundance went from one pizza to 8.4 pizzas. Enjoy the party.

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