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# Mortgage rates don't budge much in first March survey

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Photo credit: AP Photo | The average interest rate for a 30-year mortgages stayed near record lows during the first week of March. (March 12, 2012)

## Web links

Mortgage rates remain near the record lows they've set this winter in our latest survey of major lenders.

We continue to expect an increase in the cost of most home loans this spring.

The two big government-owned mortgage companies, [Fannie Mae](#)

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and [Freddie Mac](#), are raising the fee they charge lenders for guaranteeing the home loans they make.

They will begin charging an additional one-tenth of a percentage point of the loan amount effective April 1.

That's expected to drive up mortgage rates by about one-eighth of a percent as those costs are passed along to borrowers.

We expect banks and mortgage companies are already including the new cost in their prices, because borrowers applying for a loan now won't be closing until next month.

So far, however, we haven't seen that reflected in our survey results.

Our March 7 survey found the average interest rate for a:

30-year, fixed-rate loan increased slightly to 4.11% from 4.10% the previous week. That was the record low for this type of loan, which cost 5.04% in early March last year.

15-year, fixed-rate mortgage fell from 3.35% to 3.34%, tying the record low. At this point last year, the average 15-year mortgage cost 4.32%.

30-year, fixed-rate jumbo loan -- which, depending on the city, exceeds \$417,000 to \$625,000 -- held steady at 4.63% for the second week in a row. Jumbo rates hit a record low of 4.55% on Feb. 1. Last February, the average jumbo mortgage cost 5.58%.

5-year, adjustable-rate mortgage -- where the initial interest rate remains fixed for the first five years and then resets once a year -- declined from 3.04% to 3.03% this week. On Feb. 1, rates for 5/1 ARMs reached a record 3.02% low. In early March 2011, the average 5/1 ARM cost 3.88%.

Our database of mortgage rates can help you find the best deals in your area, including many that are less costly than the national averages.

You can use our mortgage calculator to determine the monthly payments for the exact amount you want to borrow with this or any home loan.

It will also provide a month-by-month amortization schedule that shows how much you've reduced your debt and how much you still owe if you want to pay off your mortgage.

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