

2021 Fall Weather Outlook: September to December

Seasonal outlook from the world's most accurate forecaster¹ to help brands make more informed marketing decisions.

Weather Summary

- The US could see a staggered start to fall temperatures depending on location. In the North and Midwest, the feelings of fall could start early in September where below average temperatures are predicted. But the West and South may not feel like fall until a bit later in the season.
- Fall activity could also be extended later than usual as above average temperatures are predicted for November.
- Keep in mind that these outlooks are for the season and month(s) on average. Even with overall above average temperatures, cool weather days could occur, bringing hints of fall or perhaps winter. Mornings are also likely to be cooler, even when warmer temperatures are forecast for the afternoons.

What does this mean for marketers?

- Seasonal transitions can create powerful consumer moments with increased social activity and spend due to feelings of optimism and confidence brought on by the change in weather.
 - Marketers should expect the seasonal transition to fall to happen early.
- Given the state of the pandemic, the ability to be outdoors later into the season is likely to benefit consumer spend as time outdoors enables socializing, dining, recreational activities and commerce.
 - Marketers should expect typical fall purchases and behaviors to possibly carry on later into the season.
- Marketers should take advantage of cooler weather days as consumers anticipate winter and holiday-related activity and purchases, given the potential for extended fall weather and a challenging holiday season.

Temperature
Above average temperatures are expected in most of the country in October and November, but September is likely to start off cool in the North and Midwest.

Precipitation levels
Like last year, precipitation levels are likely to be average for September and October and potentially below average in November and December.

27% of people say they spend more money at the start of a new season.²

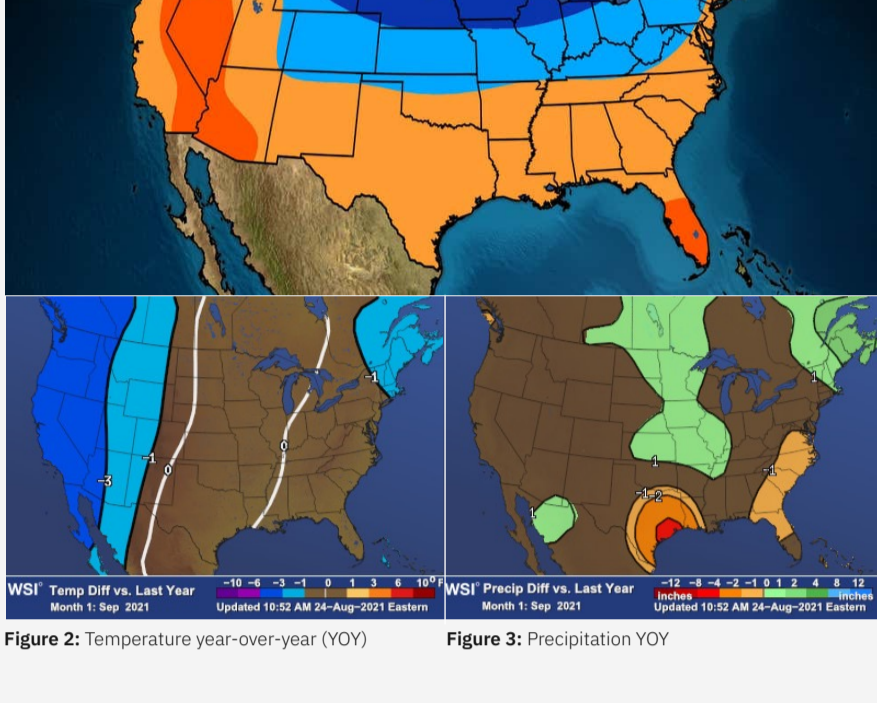
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Monthly weather outlook

Monthly outlook: [September](#) | [October](#) | [November](#) | [December](#)

September outlook

Figure 1: Sep 2021 temperature versus average



Forecast

Due to likely cooler than average September temperatures in the North and Midwest, fall is forecast to start earlier than in the West and South where summer-like temperatures are likely to hold a bit longer.

- The relatively cooler temperatures forecast for 2021 compared to 2020 might cause fall seasonal activities and sales to see a weather-related boost year-over-year. But temperatures that are still above average make it more likely that summer activity could extend into September.
- Precipitation levels are likely to be near average across the country except in the Central region.

Figure 2: Temperature year-over-year (YOY)

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Figure 3: Precipitation YOY

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October outlook

Forecast

With near-to above-average temperatures across the country, October is forecast to feel warmer than usual, which could slow feelings of fall conditions and related fall seasonal product sales and activity.

- Warm October weather could be helpful for outdoor activity.
- Compared to last year, both coasts are likely to be cooler, which could help drive positive year-over-year seasonal sales and activity comparisons in those regions.
- Like last year, precipitation levels are expected to be about average.

Figure 1: Oct 2021 temperature vs average

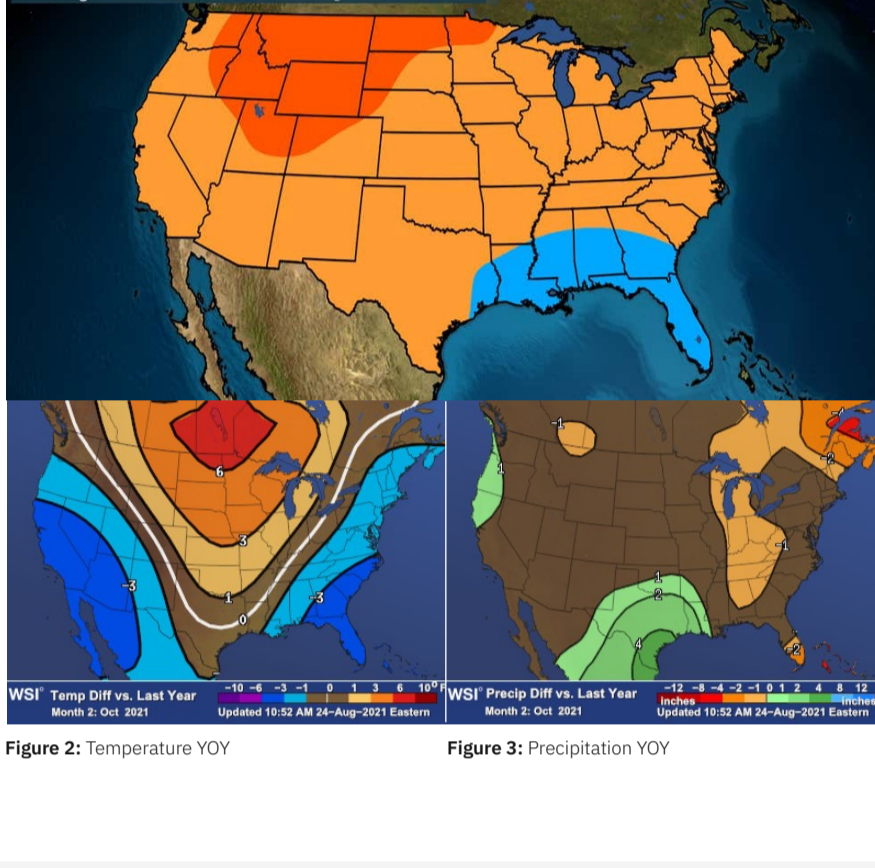


Figure 2: Temperature YOY

Figure 3: Precipitation YOY

November outlook

Figure 1: May 2021 temperature vs average

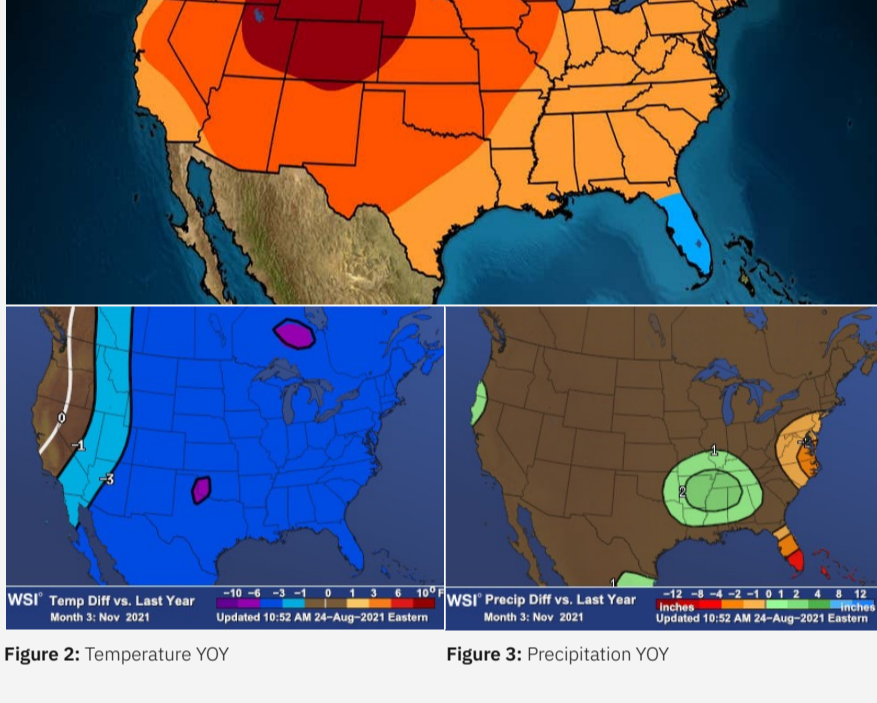


Figure 2: Temperature YOY

Figure 3: Precipitation YOY

Forecast

November is forecast to be warmer than usual, although cooler than last year, potentially extending fall seasonal activities and product purchases, while delaying the start of cooler winter weather and related holiday and seasonal activity.

- Like last year, precipitation levels in November are likely to be relatively dry for most of the country.

December outlook

Forecast

December is forecast to be cooler than last year but could still deliver above-average temperatures.

- Cooler temperatures should be helpful for driving holiday and winter-related activity and spending.
- Like last year, precipitation levels are likely to be below average in most of the country.

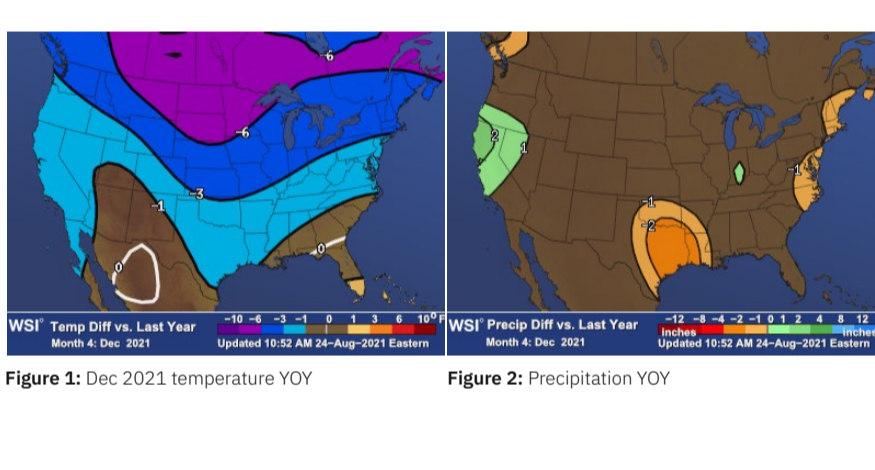
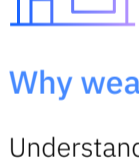


Figure 1: Dec 2021 temperature YOY

Figure 2: Precipitation YOY

Industry impact

Industry: [Retail](#) | [Consumer Packaged Goods \(CPG\)](#)



Retail

Why weather matters for retail marketers

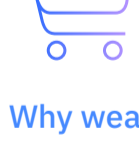
Understanding weather's impact on behavior can help retailers anticipate consumer mindset and influence their shopping decisions, trip frequency and product selections. Here are some things to consider heading into the fall and holiday seasons:

- Anticipate a potentially early start to fall seasonal sales and retail activity in the North and Midwest. The additional possibility of warmer weather throughout the country later in the fall could buoy sales and drive consumption by enabling outdoor social, retail and dining activities as COVID-19 impacts and restrictions continue to loom.
- Warmer weather days throughout the fall season may lead consumers into a more holiday-oriented mindset to kick off shopping activity, particularly during November and December months when winter season mindsets are most likely to first occur.
- An [active 2021 hurricane season](#) could drive consumers to stores in potentially impacted areas to stock up on supplies, including home improvement and repair products like plywood and generators in addition to food, water and first aid.
 - With hurricane season formally extending until the end of November, retailers may see spikes in related shopping activity throughout the fall and should consider how to best address preparation and recovery needs.

[Contact us](#) to learn more about recommended Retail weather triggers.

41% of people say weather is a source of shopping inspiration.²

+288% A sportswear brand increased its click-through rate (CTR) by +288% with [IBM Watson Advertising Weather Targeting](#).



CPG

Why weather matters for CPG marketers

Understanding weather's impact on behavior can help brands impact consideration, purchase of products and loyalty. Here are some things to consider heading into the fall and holiday seasons:

- **Food and beverage:**
 - Seasonal product sales may start early with the arrival of cooler temperatures and anticipated cravings for traditional fall (and winter) foods and beverages. Warmer weather later in the season could slow seasonal product demand.
 - Cooler weather days could be important drivers of both purchase and consumption. Marketers should be ready to activate during those conditions.
- **Personal care:**
 - Warmer conditions throughout the season could cause consumers to spend more time outdoors, leading to increased need for personal-care products including sunscreen, bug spray, moisturizer, deodorant, haircare and laundry products.
- **Health:**
 - Seasonal transitions lead many people to adjust their health routines.
 - As cooler temperatures eventually trigger fall and winter feelings, anticipate spikes in purchases of health products, vitamins and self-care items.
 - As people start to spend more time indoors, they may become concerned with the spread of germs and potential for cold and flu activity in addition to COVID-19, leading to an increased health-oriented mindset and purchase of related products.
- Finally, the [2021 hurricane season](#) is forecast to be active and does not formally end until November 30.
 - Prepare for stock-up and replenishment purchases of key products like first-aid, shelf-stable foods and snacks, water, alcohol and batteries.

[Contact us](#) to learn more about recommended CPG weather triggers.

41% of people adjust their health routine at the start of a new season.³

300% A cold and flu brand achieved 300% improvement in CTR and 71% lift in social reach by using [Weather Targeting](#) to connect more effectively with consumers as they researched symptoms and conditions.

Learn more about the power of AI and Weather Targeting.

Learn more →

Sources:

1. ForecastWatch, Global and Regional Weather Forecast Accuracy Overview, 2017-2020, <https://www.forecastwatch.com/accuracy-overview/2017-2020>, commissioned by IBM.

2. IBM Holiday and Loyalty Survey, June 2021.

3. IBM Spring Retail Survey, February 2021.