Investment Weekly: Preseason Numbers, Regular-Season Consequences

For the week ended July 31, 2026

Last week, America opened football training camp and released the first reading of 2Q gross domestic product. Both looked great on paper, neither counts yet, and the real results won't arrive for another month.

- **U.S. stocks rebounded.** The S&P 500 rose 1.05% and the Nasdaq grew by 1.59%. Consumer discretionary led while utilities lagged. Large caps beat small caps and value outperformed growth. International stocks won across the board, led by Japan.
- **Bonds and rates:** The Bloomberg Aggregate Bond Index slipped 0.12% as the U.S. Treasury yield curve steepened, with the 2-year yield falling to 4.27% while the 30-year rose to 5.25%, a 19-year high. A hawkish Fed usually pushes short-term yields up and long-term yields down, because tighter monetary policy now means lower inflation later; this did the opposite.
- **Commodities:** Crude oil fell 5.2% to $84.67 a barrel while gasoline climbed to $4.40 from $4.30. Gold rose to $4,107 and the dollar slipped to 99.91. Copper, a decent read on whether the world is actually building anything, hit $13,834 a metric ton, up 10.6% since December.
- **The Fed held at 3.50%–3.75% on a 9–3 vote, with all three dissenters wanting a hike,** marking the most dissents since September 2016. Fed Chair Warsh has stripped the official statement down and dropped forward guidance, so the vote count is now the only tea leaf left to parse. September hike odds have moved from 24% to 57%.
- **The personal consumption expenditures price index fell 0.1% in June after rising 0.5% in May,** while core PCE, which strips out food and energy, rose 0.1%. Year over year, headline cooled to 3.7% and core held at 3.3%. Energy prices have since gone completely feral, and forecasters expect July to run hotter.
- **The first reading of Q2 gross domestic product showed the U.S. economy grew by 1.5%, down from 2.1% in Q1 and below the 2.1% economists expected.** The drag came from lower government spending and a jump in imports, which GDP subtracts. Real final sales to private domestic purchasers (consumer spending plus business investment) rose 3.9%, more than double Q1. But everybody's going to quote the 1.5%.
- **Durable goods orders rose 0.3% in June, held back by carmakers and defense.** Strip those out and core capital goods—the stuff businesses buy to build things—rose 0.9%, and computers and electronics jumped 3.1%. Core shipments had their best month in four-and-a-half years.
- **Consumers:** June income rose 0.2%, spending rose 0.3%, and the saving rate fell to 2.7%. Americans covered the gap from the emergency fund, which lives in the junk drawer under the takeout menus, six keys of unknown origin, and a disposable camera from 2004.
- **Consumer confidence slipped to 90.8 in July from 92.2, missing the 92.65 estimate.** June's reading improved on cheaper gas; July's gave it back.
- **Jobless claims**: Initial jobless claims for the week ended July 25 came in at 197,000 against 207,500 expected. Continuing claims for the week ended July 18 were 1.782 million.
- **Earnings:** Blended S&P 500 earnings growth is 26%, with 304 companies reporting and 196 to go. 85% beat expectations, 4% matched, and 11% missed. Energy leads at 127.9%. So, the Iran war that's inflating your gas bill and worrying three Fed policymakers is also the biggest contributor to American corporate profits. Every time you wince at the pump, a small part of your retirement account is thrilled.

Market data

Index prices ($)	07/31/2026	12/31/2025
Dow Jones Industrial Average	52,485	48,063
S&P 500	7,490	6,846

Returns (%)	1wk	QTD	YTD	3mo
Equities				
S&P 500	1.05	-0.06	10.14	4.19
S&P Mid Cap 400	-0.67	-2.38	14.54	3.60
S&P Small Cap 600	0.40	-1.90	21.55	6.35
Russell 1000	1.01	-0.35	9.93	4.20
Russell MidCap	0.30	-0.62	14.59	5.39
Russell 2000	0.05	-3.03	18.85	4.99
Dow Jones Industrial Average	1.04	0.38	10.17	6.13
NASDAQ Composite	1.59	-3.19	9.53	2.09
Fixed income				
Bloomberg U.S. Aggregate	-0.12	-1.30	-0.69	-0.76
Bloomberg Global Aggregate	0.63	-0.53	-0.75	-0.90
Bloomberg High Yield Bond	0.18	-0.25	1.71	0.51
S&P / LSTA Senior Loan	0.10	1.15	1.57	1.20
JPM EMBI+ Emerging Markets Bond	-0.15	-1.29	2.27	0.09
S&P 500 sectors				
Technology	-0.11	-3.43	15.65	8.35
Materials	-1.72	-1.65	10.12	-2.28
Consumer discretionary	8.30	0.82	0.04	-1.41
Health care	-0.01	2.40	5.96	11.89
Utilities	-4.21	-2.23	5.29	-4.74
Consumer staples	1.15	2.11	10.31	-0.64
Energy	-0.16	12.60	34.74	0.96
Financials	1.07	6.16	4.91	9.63
Industrials	-1.58	-3.01	16.54	3.21
Communication services	5.37	0.58	1.39	-8.09
Real Estate	-2.20	2.52	14.33	2.30
Equity style performance				
Large cap value	1.40	3.80	20.67	9.28
Large cap growth	0.56	-4.76	0.32	-0.63
Mid cap value	0.34	1.47	19.32	6.97
Mid cap growth	0.16	-6.46	0.35	0.64
Small cap value	-0.10	0.01	23.00	6.87
Small cap growth	0.19	-5.86	15.02	3.18
International equities				
MSCI EAFE	2.02	1.97	12.00	5.30
MSCI U.K.	2.24	5.32	11.86	4.21
MSCI Europe ex-U.K.	1.71	0.59	9.59	5.85
MSCI Japan	2.54	1.03	17.16	5.74
MSCI AC Asia ex-Japan	2.47	-3.18	22.32	6.38
MSCI Emerging Markets	2.37	-3.03	20.27	4.93
MSCI ACWI	1.37	0.10	11.60	4.50

Source: FactSet.

VOYA INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT

U.S. Economic Release Calendar

Date	Event
8/3/2026	ISM Manufacturing, Construction Spending
8/4/2026	International Trade Balance, Factory Orders, JOLTS
8/5/2026	ISM Services
8/6/2026	Productivity, Jobless Claims
8/7/2026	Employment Situation, Consumer Credit

Market data, cont'd

As of:	Last close	Prior week	Year end	3 mos ago
U.S. bond rates (%)				
U.S. federal funds target rate	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75
U.S. 2yr Treasury	4.27	4.31	3.48	3.89
U.S. 10yr Treasury	4.71	4.65	4.18	4.39
U.S. 20yr Treasury	5.27	5.15	4.79	4.99
U.S. 30yr Treasury	5.25	5.13	4.86	4.99
High yield (Merrill U.S. Corporates)	6.92	6.86	6.42	6.59
Consumer rates (%)				
30yr mortgage rate	6.73	6.69	6.25	6.35
Prime rate	6.75	6.75	6.75	6.75
Commodities				
Gold (USD/oz)	$4,107	$4,077	$4,341	$4,629
Crude oil (USD/bbl)	$84.67	$82.61	$57.42	$105.07
Copper (LME $/mt)	$13,834	$13,810	$12,504	$13,015
Gasoline (USD/gal)	$4.40	$4.30	$3.10	$4.38
Exchange rates				
$ per €	1.15	1.14	1.17	1.17
$ per £	1.35	1.33	1.35	1.36
¥ per $	159.23	163.73	156.75	156.71
U.S. Dollar Index	99.91	101.54	98.32	98.06

Source: FactSet.

Index definitions

Bloomberg Global Aggregate Bond Index measures a wide range of global government, government-related, corporate and securitized fixed-income investments, all with maturities greater than one year.

Bloomberg High Yield Bond Index tracks the performance of below investment grade U.S. dollar-denominated corporate bonds publicly issued in the U.S. domestic market.

Bloomberg U.S. Aggregate Index is a bond market index composed of U.S. securities in Treasury, Government-Related, Corporate, and Securitized sectors that are of investment-grade quality or better, have at least one year to maturity, and have an outstanding par value of at least $250 million.

Dow Jones Industrial Average is a price-weighted average computed from the stock prices of 30 of the largest and most widely held public companies in the U.S., adjusted to reflect stock splits and stock dividends.

FTSE EPRA / NAREIT Global Real Estate Index represents general performance trends of the equity securities of real estate companies involved in the ownership, disposition and development of income-producing properties worldwide.

JPMorgan Emerging Markets Bond Index Plus (EMBI+) tracks total returns for traded foreign currency denominated debt instruments in the emerging markets which meet minimum criteria for face value outstanding and market trading liquidity.

MSCI ACWI Index is a free float-adjusted market capitalization weighted index designed to provide a broad measure of equity-market performance throughout the world, capturing large and mid cap representation across 23 Developed Markets (DM) and 26 Emerging Markets (EM) countries.

MSCI EAFE Index is a free float-adjusted market capitalization weighted index designed to measure developed markets' equity performance, excluding the U.S. & Canada, for 21 countries.

MSCI Europe ex-U.K. Index is a free float-adjusted market capitalization weighted index designed to measure equity performance of the 15 developed European markets except the U.K..

MSCI U.K. Index is a free float-adjusted market capitalization weighted index designed to measure equity performance of listed common stocks in the U.K..

MSCI Asia ex-Japan Index is a free float-adjusted market capitalization weighted index designed to measure equity performance of the 15 developed Asian markets except Japan.

MSCI Japan Index is a free float-adjusted market capitalization weighted index designed to measure equity performance of listed common stocks in Japan.

MSCI Emerging Markets Index is a free float-adjusted market capitalization index that measures emerging market equity performance of 23 countries.

Municipal Bond Index is a bond index that includes investment-grade, tax-exempt fixed-rate bonds with long-term maturities (greater than two years) selected from issues larger than $50 million.

NASDAQ Composite Index is a market capitalization weighted index of the performance of domestic and international common stocks listed on the Nasdaq Stock Market including over 2,800 securities.

Large Growth: Russell 1000 Growth Index measures the large-cap growth segment of the U.S. equity market including Russell 1000 companies with higher price-to-book ratios and forecasted growth.

Large Value: Russell 1000 Value Index measures the large-cap value segment of the U.S. equity market including Russell 1000 companies with lower price-to-book ratios and lower expected growth.

Midcap Growth: Russell MidCap Growth Index measures the performance of the mid-cap growth segment of the U.S. equity market including Russell Midcap Index companies with higher price-to-book ratios and forecasted growth.

Midcap Value: Russell MidCap Value Index measures the performance of the mid-cap growth segment of the U.S. equity market including Russell Midcap Index companies with lower price-to-book ratios and forecasted growth.

Small Cap Growth: Russell 2000 Growth Index measures the performance of small-cap growth stocks in the U.S. equity market including Russell 2000 companies with higher price-to-value ratios and forecasted growth.

Small Cap Value: Russell 2000 Value Index measures the performance of small-cap growth stocks in the U.S. equity market including Russell 2000 companies with lower price-to-value ratios and forecasted growth.

S&P 500 Index is a widely regarded as the best single gauge of the U.S. equities market, including 500 leading companies in major industries of the U.S. economy.

S&P 500 Sectors are defined as the GICS (Global Industry Classification Standard) sectors which provide standardized industry definitions consisting of 10 sectors, 24 industry groups, and 67 industries.

The S&P MidCap 400 includes 400 companies and represents almost 6% of the U.S. markets. To be eligible for inclusion in the index, a company should be a U.S. company, have a market cap between USD 3.3 billion to USD 11.8 billion, maintain a public float of at least 10% of its shares outstanding, and its most recent quarter's earnings and the sum of its trailing four consecutive quarters' earnings must be positive. The index implements changes on an as-needed basis.

The S&P SmallCap 600 includes 600 companies and represents almost 3% of the U.S. market. To be eligible for inclusion in the index, a company should be a U.S. company, have a market cap between USD 750 million to USD 3.3 billion, maintain a public float of at least 10% of its shares outstanding, and its most recent quarter's earnings and the sum of its trailing four consecutive quarters' earnings must be positive. The index implements changes on an as-needed basis.

The Russell 1000 Index measures the performance of the large-cap segment of the U.S. equity market and includes approximately 1,000 of the largest securities based on market capitalization and representing approximately 92% of the U.S. market.

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