



**Mike Baker**

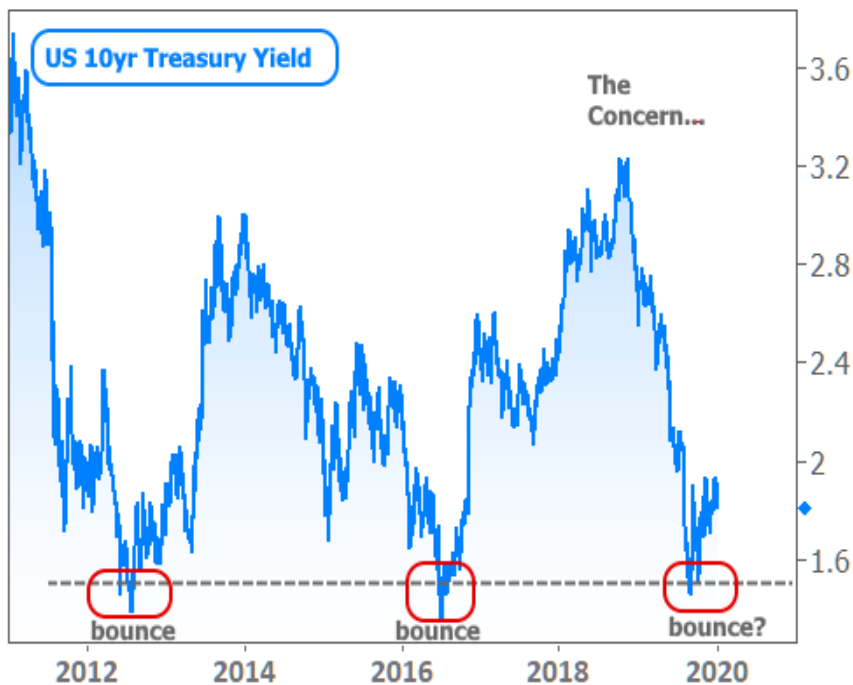
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## Mortgage Rates Start 2020 on Strong Note

Everything's relative when it comes to mortgage rates. For every homeowner that's been concerned about a short-term increase in rates, there's another who's glad to remind them how high rates used to be.

At the moment, with top tier 30yr fixed offerings hanging out under 4%, it's **hard to be too concerned** about where we are **today**. But fretting over the **future** is always fair game. With that in mind, let's repeat a chart from the previous newsletter that showed the long-term trend in rates (as represented by 10yr Treasury yields--the benchmark for all longer-term rates in the US).



In other words, rates had a **stellar** run from long-term highs, ultimately bouncing near all-time lows. The last two times this has happened, it marked a big picture turning point that ultimately restored long-term highs.

A repeat performance is always possible, but there are a few things worth noting. First off, the other two examples both **relied on a catalyst event** for the majority of the momentum back toward higher rates. In 2013 it was the Fed signaling an end to QE (the bond-buying program that had helped rates realize all-time lows only a few months prior). In 2016 it was the market's reaction to the presidential election.

## National Average Mortgage Rates



	Rate	Change	Points
<b>Mortgage News Daily</b>			
30 Yr. Fixed	7.07%	+0.02	0.00
15 Yr. Fixed	6.45%	0.00	0.00
30 Yr. FHA	6.51%	+0.02	0.00
30 Yr. Jumbo	7.26%	0.00	0.00
5/1 ARM	7.02%	-0.01	0.00
<b>Freddie Mac</b>			
30 Yr. Fixed	6.86%	-0.01	0.00
15 Yr. Fixed	6.16%	+0.03	0.00

Rates as of: 6/28

## Market Data

	Price / Yield	Change
MBS UMBS 5.5	98.49	-0.45
MBS GNMA 5.5	99.10	-0.44
10 YR Treasury	4.3902	-0.0078
30 YR Treasury	4.5568	-0.0072

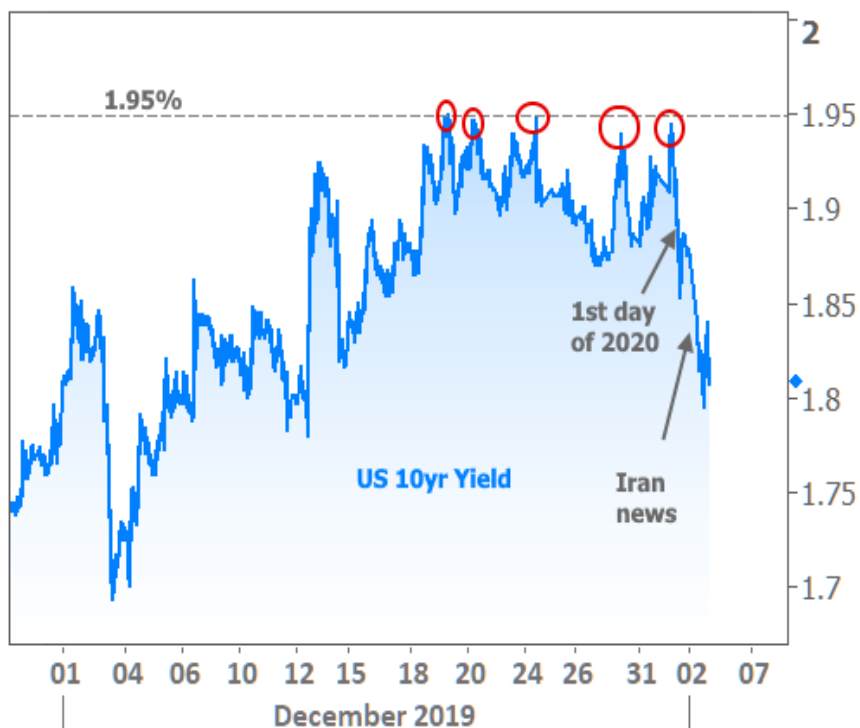
Pricing as of: 7/1 12:51AM EST

## Recent Housing Data

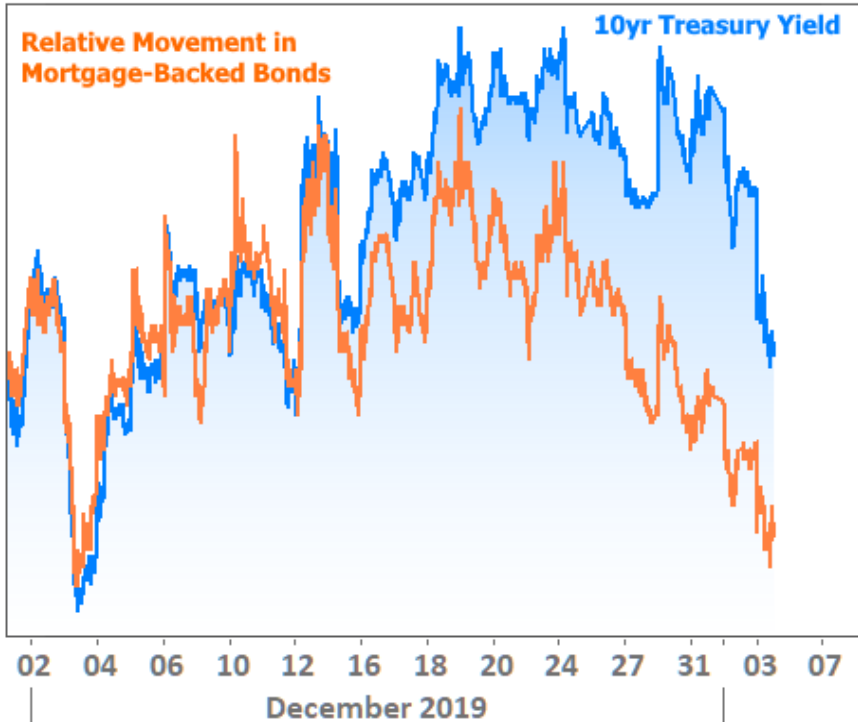
		Value	Change
Mortgage Apps	Jun 12	208.5	+15.58%
Building Permits	Mar	1.46M	-3.95%
Housing Starts	Mar	1.32M	-13.15%
New Home Sales	Mar	693K	+4.68%
Pending Home Sales	Feb	75.6	+1.75%
Existing Home Sales	Feb	3.97M	-0.75%
Builder Confidence	Mar	51	+6.25%

So far, we **don't** have an equivalent sort of motivation, just the initial corrective bounce that seems to be common for all 3 examples. To be fair, that motivation could materialize simply due to strong economic data and a solidified US/China trade deal, but neither is a given at this point. Conversely, there's no rule that says rates can't turn right back around and head lower again.

That sort of friendly momentum can come from things like geopolitical risks and disappointing economic data. It can even be as simple as traders seeing a show of support at any given **ceiling level** for rates. **1.95% in 10yr Treasury yields** filled that role at the end of December (as seen in the chart below). By the end of this week, that supportive undertone was joined by geopolitical risk (escalation in US/Iran relations after a drone strike killed Iran's top military leader) and weak manufacturing data on Friday morning.

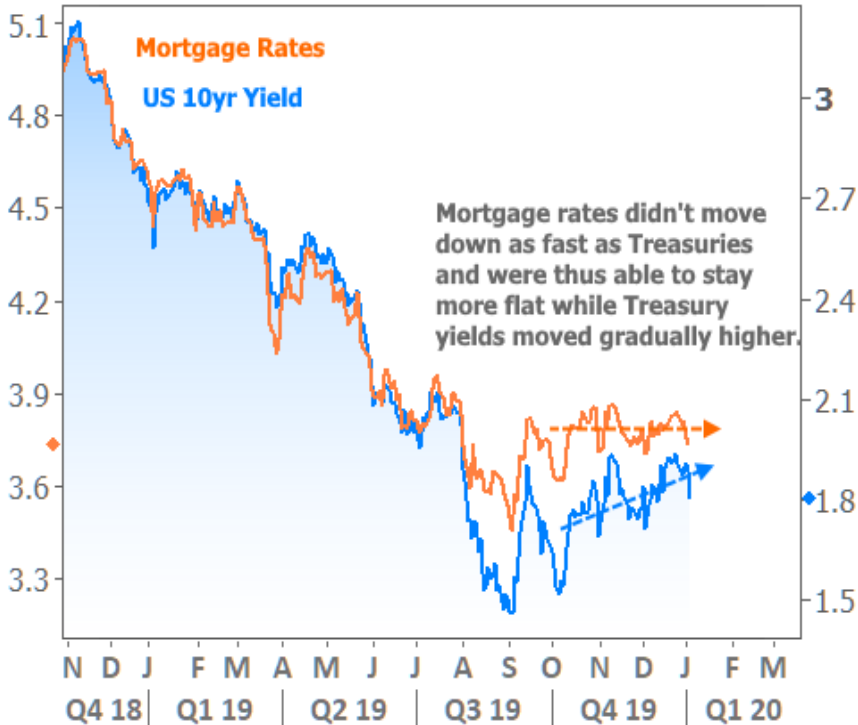


If December looked like a dicey month for rates, remember, everything's relative when it comes to mortgage rates. While it's true that Treasury yields set the tone for overall rate momentum, mortgage rates are ultimately based on mortgage-specific bonds that can move a bit differently at times. December was one of those times--something we can easily see if we chart the movement in mortgage-backed securities versus Treasury yields.



The takeaway there is that mortgage rates were **already** near their lowest levels in a month a few days **before** Treasury yields experienced their biggest recent drop.

Why was the mortgage sector able to outperform Treasuries? There are several fairly boring, confusing reasons for that, but one fairly simple one. So let's stick with what we know (i.e. everything's relative for mortgage rates, and this is no exception). Simply put, mortgages were able to outperform Treasuries because they had underperformed so badly in August and September.



Explaining past movement is one thing. Getting ahead of the next big move is another. To reiterate, there's certainly a concern about history repeating itself as seen in the first chart, but again, it will take a catalyst. Progressively stronger econ data in 2020 would do plenty of damage to rates, but there's no way to know if that's what we'll see until we see it.

When it comes to deciding on what to watch, **next week is a great candidate**. It has a slew of the most important monthly economic reports, and it occurs on the first full week back from holiday breaks for many market participants. There's also a high probability of additional headlines over the weekend that speak to geopolitical risks.

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## Recent Economic Data

Date	Event	Actual	Forecast	Prior
<b>Monday, Dec 30</b>				
9:45AM	Dec Chicago PMI	48.9	48.0	46.3
10:00AM	Nov Pending Home Sales (%)	+1.2	1.2	-1.7
10:00AM	Nov Pending Sales Index	108.5		106.7
<b>Tuesday, Dec 31</b>				
9:00AM	Oct CaseShiller 20 yy (%)	2.2	2.2	2.1
10:00AM	Dec Consumer confidence	126.5	128.2	126.8
<b>Thursday, Jan 02</b>				
7:00AM	w/e MBA Purchase Index			250.1
7:00AM	w/e Mortgage Refinance Index			1859.0
8:30AM	w/e Jobless Claims (k)	222	225	222
<b>Friday, Jan 03</b>				
10:00AM	Dec ISM Manufacturing PMI	47.2	49.0	48.1
<b>Tuesday, Jan 07</b>				
10:00AM	Dec ISM N-Mfg PMI	55.0	54.5	53.9
10:00AM	Dec ISM N-Mfg Bus Act	57.2	52.0	51.6
10:00AM	Nov Factory orders mm (%)	-0.7	-0.8	0.3
1:00PM	3-Yr Note Auction (bl)	38		
<b>Wednesday, Jan 08</b>				
7:01AM	w/e Mortgage Refinance Index	1713.7		1375.0
7:01AM	w/e MBA Purchase Index	263.2		255.6
8:15AM	Dec ADP National Employment (k)	202	160	67
1:00PM	10-yr Note Auction (bl)	24		
<b>Thursday, Jan 09</b>				
8:30AM	w/e Jobless Claims (k)	214	220	222
1:00PM	30-Yr Bond Auction (bl)	16		
<b>Friday, Jan 10</b>				
8:30AM	Dec Non-farm payrolls (k)	145	164	266
8:30AM	Dec Unemployment rate mm (%)	3.5	3.5	3.5

## Event Importance:

No Stars = Insignificant

☆ Low

★ Moderate

★★ Important

★★★ Very Important

Date	Event	Actual	Forecast	Prior
10:00AM	Nov Wholesale inventories mm (%)	-0.1	0.1	0.0

## Real Talk

At The Rate Shop, we're not your average mortgage banker. We specialize in bringing you ridiculously low interest rates that will make you wonder what the other guys are doing. In fact the ONLY objection we ever hear is "your rates sound too good to be true". Well they're not, and here is why...

After 15 years in the retail banking world I was frustrated with the high interest rates that came from that business model. As I looked around at all the bloated layers of management and their expensive salaries and the overhead of running a larger company (think rent costs, employee health and benefit costs, payroll taxes, and on and on) it dawned on me that I was a part of the problem, and the solution, for me at least, was so easy to see.

Start my own mortgage brokerage shop. No expensive executive salaries, no expensive building to pay rent at, no unnecessary employees and all the costs that are associated with that. What happens when you cut out all the fat? You can provide lower rates and lower closing costs. It's simple. Now here is the best part, you still get great service from a local Kansas City Lender. My mission is to let everyone know that low rates and great customer service are NOT mutually exclusive.

Thanks for coming along on this journey where Low Rates meet Great Service. The two do NOT have to be mutually exclusive. It's just a lie that the big box mortgage companies have been telling you for years. Don't believe me? Give me a call or shoot me a text on my personal cell phone today and compare my rates and costs up against any other lender in the country, and be prepared to be blown away.

**Mike Baker**

