IRON AND STEEL SCRAP[1]

(Data in million metric tons, metal, unless otherwise specified)

Domestic Production and Use: In 2025, the total value of domestic purchases of iron and steel scrap (home scrap and net receipts of ferrous scrap by all domestic consumers from brokers, dealers, and other outside sources) was an estimated $19.7 billion, a 4% decrease compared with $20.4 billion in 2024. Manufacturers of pig iron, raw steel, and steel castings accounted for almost all scrap consumption by the domestic steel industry, using scrap together with pig iron and direct-reduced iron to produce steel products for various consumer industries. The ferrous castings industry consumed most of the remaining scrap to produce cast iron and steel products. Relatively small quantities of steel scrap were used for producing ferroalloys, for the precipitation of copper, and by the chemical industry; these uses collectively totaled less than 1 million tons.

U.S. apparent consumption of iron and steel scrap was an estimated 57 million tons in 2025 compared with 55 million tons in 2024. In 2025, estimated raw steel production, the leading use for iron and steel scrap, was 82 million tons compared with 79.5 million tons in 2024, and net shipments of steel mill products in 2025 were an estimated 82 million tons, compared with 78.7 million tons in 2024.

Salient Statistics—United States:	**2021**	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**	**2025[e]**
Production:					
Home scrap	6.6	7.3	7.1	7.7	7.0
Net receipts	65	62	59	57	58
Imports for consumption	5.3	4.7	5.1	4.8	5.0
Exports	18	18	16	15	13
Consumption:					
Reported	59	56	55	55	57
Apparent[2]	58	57	55	55	57
Price, average, delivered, No. 1 heavy melting composite price, dollars per metric ton[3]	417.66	381.72	333.28	314.85	319
Stocks, consumer, yearend	4.4	3.9	4.2	4.0	3.9
Employment, foundries, number[4]	101,000	105,000	107,000	106,000	107,000
Net import reliance[5] as a percentage of reported consumption	E	E	E	E	E

Recycling: Recycled iron and steel scrap is a vital raw material for the production of new steel and cast-iron products. The steel and foundry industries in the United States have been structured to recycle scrap and, as a result, are highly dependent upon scrap. Recycling 1 ton of steel conserves 1.1 tons of iron ore, 0.6 ton of coking coal, and 0.05 ton of limestone. Recycling scrap also conserves energy because the remelting of scrap requires much less energy than the production of iron or steel products from iron ore.

Overall, the scrap recycling rate in the United States has averaged between 80% and 90% during the past decade, with automobiles making up the primary source of old steel scrap. Recycling of automobiles is nearly 100% each year, with rates fluctuating slightly owing to the rate of new vehicle production and general economic trends. More than 13 million tons per year of steel was recycled from automobiles, the equivalent of approximately 17 million cars, from more than 280 car shredders in North America. The recycling of steel from automobiles is estimated to save the equivalent energy necessary to power 18 million homes every year.

Recycling rates, which fluctuate annually, were estimated to be 97% for structural steel from construction, 78% for appliances, 74% for all construction end uses, 62% for steel containers, and 46% for miscellaneous end uses. For the latest year available, 2023, the five leading processors of steel scrap accounted for 26 million tons processed among 354 facilities. The recycling rates for appliance, can, and construction steel are expected to increase in the United States and at an even greater rate in emerging industrial countries. Public interest in recycling continues, and recycling has continued to be more profitable and convenient as environmental regulations for primary production increase.

In 2025, the primary source of recycled scrap was net receipts, accounting for 89% of recycled scrap, which included new scrap generated from manufacturing plants and old scrap sourced from outside sources, post-consumer recycling operations, and steel generated by other owned company plants. The remaining 11% was sourced from home scrap, including recirculated steel scrap generated by current operations and obsolete scrap generated onsite.

Import Sources (2021–24): Canada, 71%; Mexico, 15%; Netherlands, 4%; Sweden, 3%; and other, 7%.

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Tariff: Item	Number	Normal Trade Relations 12–31–25
Ferrous waste and scrap:		
Cast iron	7204.10.0000	Free.
Stainless steel	7204.21.0000	Free.
Other alloy steel	7204.29.0000	Free.
Tinned iron or steel	7204.30.0000	Free.
No. 1 bundles	7204.41.0020	Free.
No. 2 bundles	7204.41.0040	Free.
Borings, shovelings, and turnings	7204.41.0060	Free.
Shavings, chips, and mill waste	7204.41.0080	Free.
No. 1 heavy melting steel	7204.49.0020	Free.
No. 2 heavy melting steel	7204.49.0040	Free.
Cut plate and structural	7204.49.0060	Free.
Shredded steel	7204.49.0070	Free.
Other iron and steel	7204.49.0080	Free.
Remelting ingots	7204.50.0000	Free.
Used rails	7302.10.5040	Free.
Vessels and ships	8908.00.0000	Free.

Depletion Allowance: Not applicable.

Government Stockpile: None.

Events, Trends, and Issues: In the first 10 months of 2025, steel mills maintained normal operating rates of 75% to 80% of production capacity utilization, higher than the rates of 72% to 78% in 2024. Average composite prices published for the first 11 months of 2025 for No. 1 heavy melting steel scrap ranged from a high of $366.26 per ton in March to a low of $303.46 per ton in November. The annual average price delivered in 2025 was estimated to increase to $319.00 per ton compared with the full-year average of $314.85 per ton in 2024.

In the first 8 months of 2025, Turkey was the primary destination for exports of ferrous scrap, by tonnage, accounting for 29% of total exports, followed by Bangladesh, 13%, and India, 10%. The value of exported scrap for the same time period decreased to an estimated $3.6 billion in 2025 from $4.5 billion in 2024. In the first 8 months of 2025, Canada was the leading source of imports of ferrous scrap, by tonnage, accounting for 62% of total imports, followed by Mexico, 25%, and the United Kingdom, 4%. The value of imported scrap for the same time period increased to an estimated $1.4 billion in 2025 from $1.3 billion in 2024.

The World Steel Association[6] estimated global finished steel demand to remain unchanged in 2025 owing to declining steel demand in China, offset by growth in developing economies including Egypt, India, Saudi Arabia, and Vietnam. Globally, the manufacturing sector was expected to be affected by affordability pressures on consumers and elevated production costs. Countries with economies reliant on the export of steel-intensive goods were negatively affected by trade tensions.

World Production and Reserves: Because scrap is not mined, the concept of reserves does not apply. World production data for scrap were not available. See the Iron and Steel and Iron Ore chapters.

World Resources: Not applicable. See the Iron Ore chapter.

Substitutes: An estimated 7.8 million tons of direct-reduced iron was consumed in the United States in 2025 as a substitute for iron and steel scrap, compared with 8.1 million tons in 2023.

[e]Estimated. E Net exporter.

[1]See also the Iron and Steel, Iron and Steel Slag, and Iron Ore chapters. The methodology used for reporting consumption, production, and receipts of ferrous scrap was updated. The data were adjusted to reflect an estimation of the U.S. ferrous scrap consumption industry.

[2]Defined as home scrap + purchased scrap + imports – exports ± adjustments for industry stock changes.

[3]Source: Fastmarkets AMM.

[4]Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, North American Industry Classification System code 331500.

[5]Defined as imports – exports ± adjustments for industry stock changes.

[6]Source: World Steel Association, 2025, Worldsteel Short Range Outlook October 2025: Brussels, Belgium, World Steel Association press release, October 13, 3 p. (Accessed November 18, 2025, at https://worldsteel.org/media/press-releases/2025/worldsteel-short-range-outlook-october-2025/.)