ENGLISH · 18 OCTOBER 2026

The atlas of what Steam cannot carry

Price-ladder atlas of 30,266 CS2 item categories across five marketplaces, banded by cheapest ask, with item renders and grading.

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A dated reading edition of the published article. Original evidence, reported claims and editorial interpretation retain the distinctions and limits stated in the text.

READING MAP / 09 SECTIONS

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Exhibit IV-B / the price ladder / 2026-09-23

Skin Price-Ladder Atlas — The Liquidity Cliff

> Valve's market stops *where the money starts.*

WHAT THIS SECTION PROVES
This visual atlas analyzes 30,266 item categories across five marketplace catalogues, measuring market coverage above and below Valve's listing threshold. Below the $1,800 cap, Steam hosts 95.3% of active categories; immediately above it, official coverage collapses to 1.9% (with 0.0% coverage across corroborated assets). This demonstrates an abrupt, structural liquidity cliff where Valve delegates high-value transaction discovery to outside platforms while retaining full control over underlying asset custody.

← Back to Executive briefing

Every CS2 item with a live price on five marketplaces was placed in a price band by its cheapest ask, and each band was measured for one thing: what share of it Valve’s own Community Market still carries. Below Valve’s listing cap the answer is **95.3%**. Above it, the answer is **1.9%**. The drop is not gradual and it does not fall where demand falls — it falls exactly at the published rule. Of the **248 item categories that two or more marketplaces independently price above the cap, 100.0% have no Steam listing at all.**

See the cliff ↓Open the gallery of 419 itemsMethod and limits

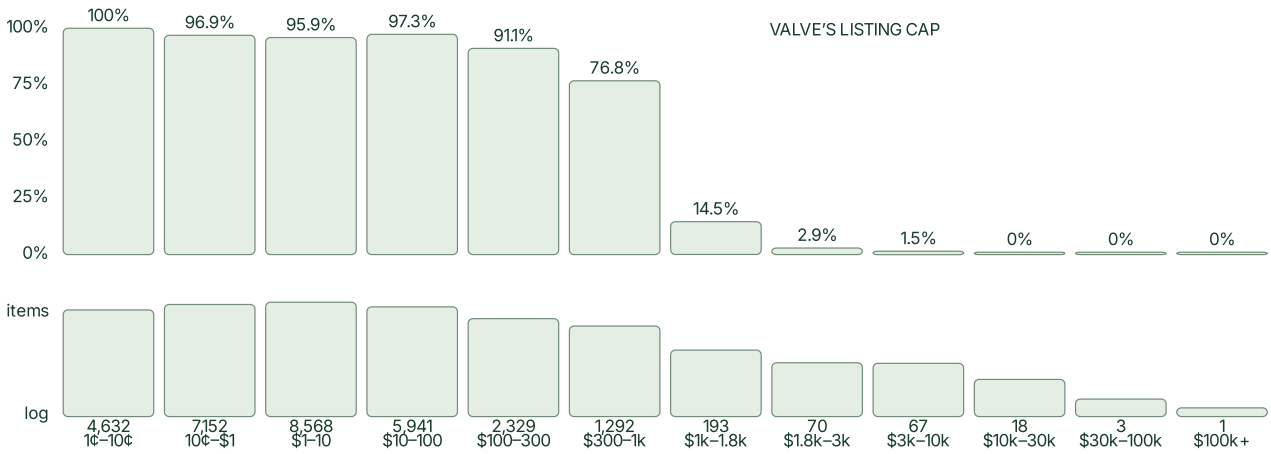
30,266 item categories measured
95.3% of sub-cap items carried by Steam
1.9% of above-cap items carried by Steam
$78.6M floor value of the corroborated set

01 / the measurement

The cliff lands on the rule, not on demand

Each of the 30,266 item categories below is placed in a band by its **cheapest** live ask across BUFF163, CSFloat, Skinport, YouPin 898 and C5Game, and only items quoted on two or more of them are counted, so no single optimistic listing can invent a band member. The upper panel is the share of each band that Valve’s own market still carries.

Share of each price band carried by the Steam Community Market
upper: steam coverage · lower: items per band, log scale



at or below Valve's listing capabove the cap — Valve's rule forbids the listingitem categories in the band

Coverage means a live Steam ask existed for that category at the moment of capture. The lower panel is logarithmic because the catalogue is overwhelmingly cheap: reading it linearly would flatten every band above $300 into the baseline.

What the shape rules out

If expensive items were simply unpopular, coverage would sag gradually as price rose. It does not. It holds at 76.8% through the $300–$1k band, then collapses to 14.5% in the band immediately beneath the cap and 2.9% in the band immediately above it. A demand effect does not know where Valve set its ceiling. A rule does.

Price band	Item categories	With a live Steam ask	Steam coverage	Copies listed off Steam
1¢–10¢	4,632	4,632	100%	8,223,227
10¢–$1	7,152	6,931	96.9%	5,488,315
$1–10	8,568	8,213	95.9%	3,939,538
$10–100	5,941	5,780	97.3%	1,328,255
$100–300	2,329	2,121	91.1%	364,466
$300–1k	1,292	992	76.8%	187,504
$1k–1.8k	193	28	14.5%	40,281
$1.8k–3k	70	2	2.9%	9,592
$3k–10k	67	1	1.5%	6,706
$10k–30k	18	0	0%	1,366
$30k–100k	3	0	0%	21
$100k+	1	0	0%	2

Pattern and phase variants are excluded from this ladder: Steam does not list a blue-gem tier or a Ruby phase as its own market entry, so counting them would understate Steam's coverage. Measured without the two-marketplace requirement the same ladder reads 79.1% below the cap and 6.5% above it across 37,204 items — a starker gap, built on weaker evidence, which is why it is not the figure quoted.

02 / evidential grading

An asking price is not a price

Anyone can list a P2000 for a round ten million yuan. Before a figure on this page is used for anything, it is graded by how many marketplaces independently quote the item above the cap and how tightly the middle of those quotes clusters. Only grades A and B are quoted — here or anywhere else in this dossier.

A Three or more shelves agree

Three or more marketplaces quote the item above the cap and their median sits within 25% of the cheapest. **197 categories, 18,218 copies, $76,585,587.**

Absent from Steam: **100.0%**.

B Two shelves agree

Two marketplaces agree above the cap, or three agree less tightly. **51 categories, 176 copies, $2,038,814.**

Absent from Steam: **100.0%**.

C One shelf — not used

A single marketplace carries the only above-cap ask. **171 categories, 247 copies.** Shown in the gallery for completeness and excluded from every total on this page.

These are requests for a price, not evidence of one.

What this correction cost, and what it bought

Dropping grade C removes 171 categories and $3,825,125 from the headline. What is left is smaller and much harder to argue with: **248 categories, 18,394 listed copies, $78,624,401, and 100.0% of them — every single one — absent from Valve's market.** The grade-C rows are the reason the figure moved; they are listed, not hidden.

Listings set aside as artefacts

Any quote more than three times the cheapest ask on the same item is set aside. Converted at the rate the data itself implies, most of them are round CNY figures — the signature of a placeholder or a platform ceiling rather than an offer. Because every total on this page uses the

cheapest ask, none of these figures could ever have inflated a number; they are excluded so that none of them can be quoted as a headline either.

Item	Cheapest live ask	Set aside
Souvenir P2000 | Wicked Sick (Minimal Wear)	$148,954	$1,489,543
★ Specialist Gloves | Crimson Kimono (Minimal Wear) | Phase 1	$37,239	$119,163
Souvenir USP-S | Printstream (Factory New)	$2,000	$59,582
★ Bowie Knife | Crimson Web (Factory New)	$2,957	$43,030
★ Karambit | Marble Fade (Factory New) | 1st	$11,916	$38,874
Sticker | Ninjas in Pyjamas (Holo) | Katowice 2014	$5,000	$31,748
Souvenir AWP | Dragon Lore (Battle-Scarred)	$4,225	$29,157
★ Karambit | Doppler (Minimal Wear) | Ruby	$7,122	$27,273

All 419 categories, with the object each price refers to

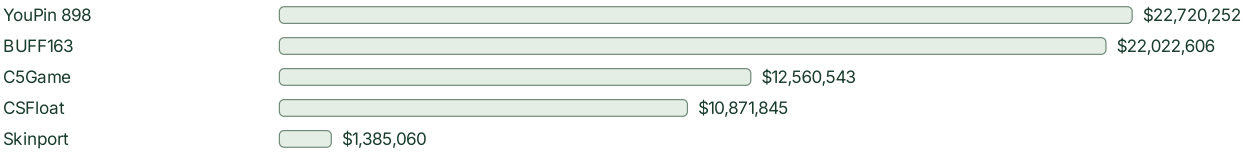
> Open the full visual catalogue and its source records online.

`04 / where it went instead`

The shelves that carry what Steam will not

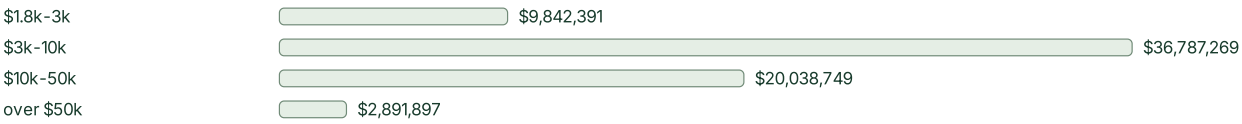
The same listings, grouped by the marketplace holding them. This is a count of where copies are **listed**, which is not the same as where they are owned and is not read here as such.

Floor value of above-cap listings, by marketplace
lowest ask x copies listed on that shelf



Jurisdictions, in the order above: YouPin 898 — China · BUFF163 — China · C5Game — China · CSFloat — United States · Skinport — Germany / Malta. The same physical item can be listed on more than one of these shelves, so these figures must not be summed with any other market total.

Floor value by price tier
how the money is distributed above the cap

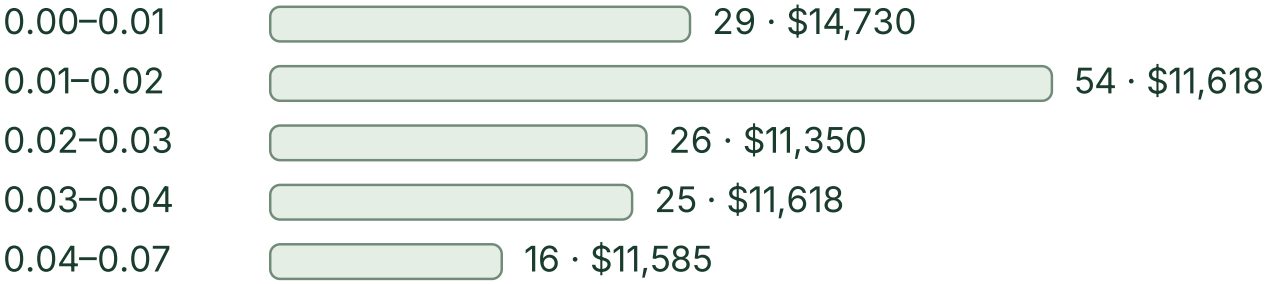


05 / scarcity you can count

How thin the supply actually is

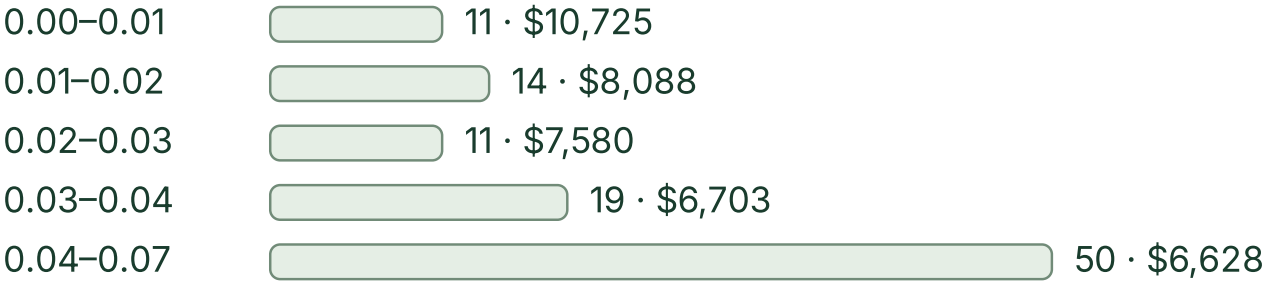
Each CS2 item carries a wear value, and the marketplaces publish how many copies sit in each band of it. That turns “rare” from an adjective into a number — and it is the number that explains why a single compromised account is worth the effort of a bespoke phishing kit.

AWP | Dragon Lore
150 listed · from $11,350



AWP | Dragon Lore (Factory New)

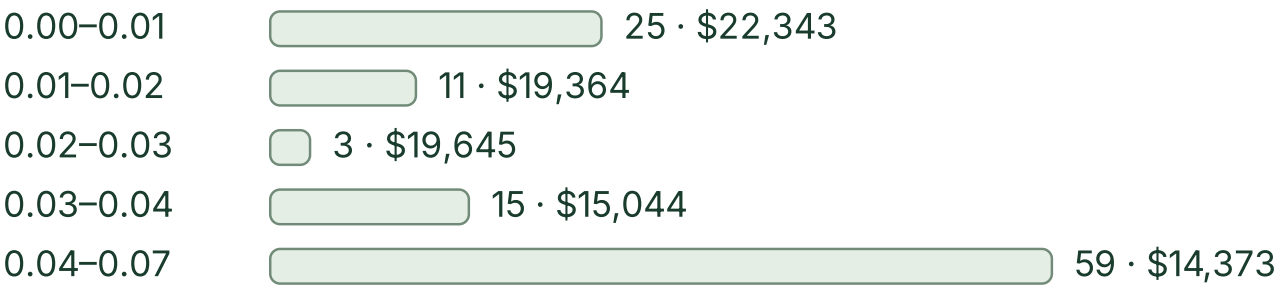
M4A4 | Howl
105 listed · from $6,628



M4A4 | Howl (Factory New)

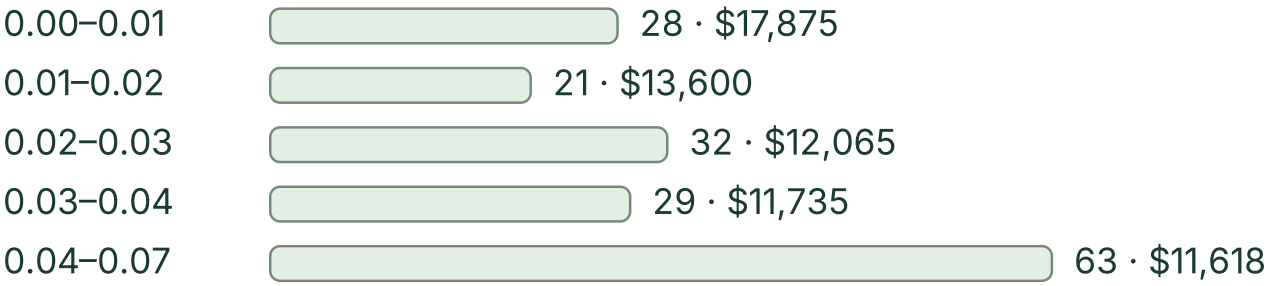
AK-47 | Wild Lotus

113 listed · from $14,373



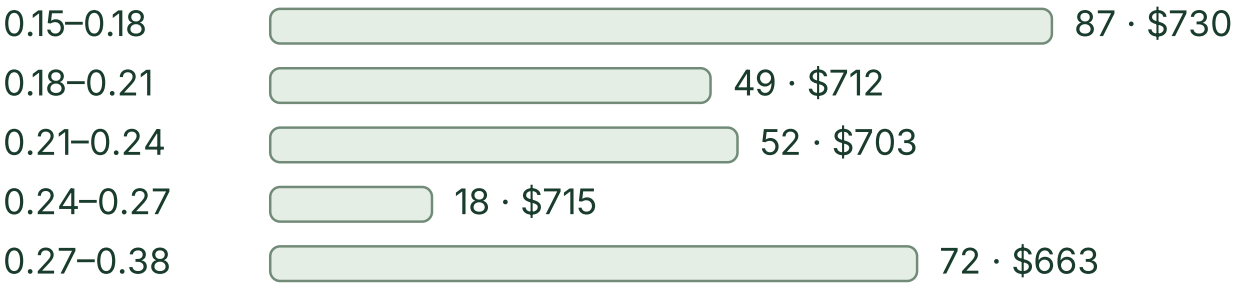
AK-47 | Wild Lotus (Factory New)

AWP | Gungnir
173 listed · from $11,618



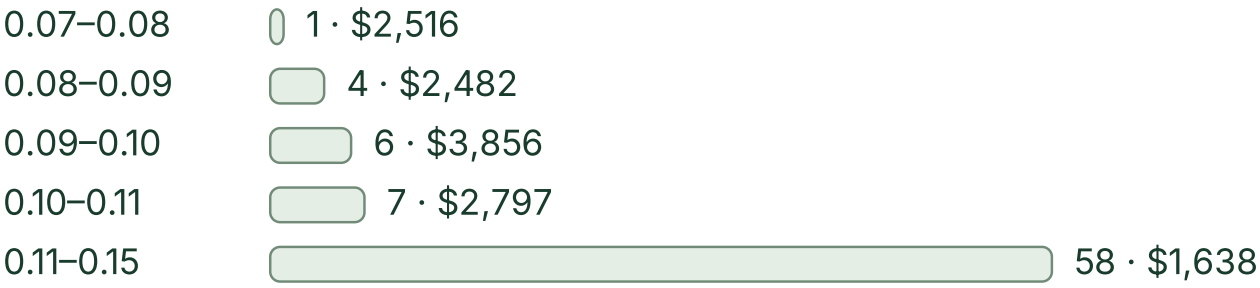
AWP | Gungnir (Factory New)

AK-47 | Fire Serpent
278 listed · from $663



AK-47 | Fire Serpent (Field-Tested)

Case Hardened (all tiers / blue gem)
76 listed · from $1,638



AK-47 | Case Hardened (Minimal Wear) | Tier 1

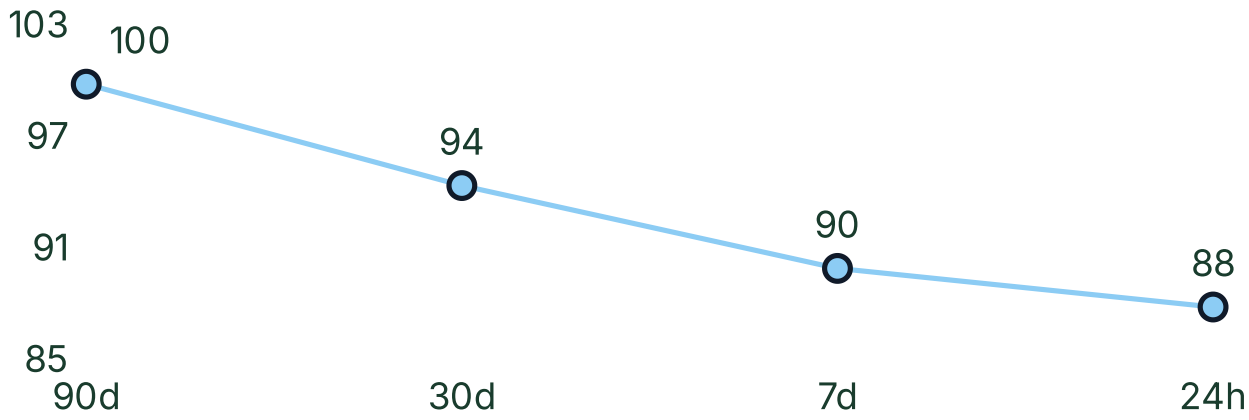
Bands are the marketplaces' own float buckets; only bands with at least one live listing are drawn. The price beside each bar is the cheapest live ask in that band, so the premium attached to a low float is directly readable rather than asserted.

06 / movement, measured off Steam

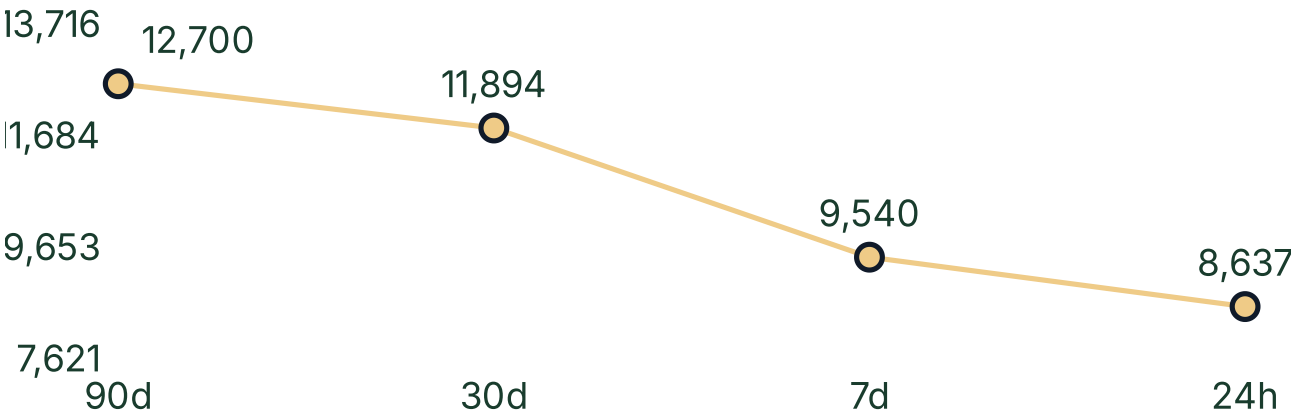
What the third-party shelves actually realised

Valve publishes no usable history at this tier, and this dossier claims none. Skinport does publish its own completed sales over the trailing 24 hours, 7, 30 and 90 days, and that is the whole of the time dimension available here: a median realised price per trailing window, indexed so the 90-day median is 100. **No Steam data is involved in either chart.**

Median realised price, trailing window
indexed to the 90-day median · 6,758 items with 20+ sales



Completed sales per day
same items, same windows



These are two charts rather than one with two vertical scales: an index and a daily count share no unit, and drawing them on a common axis would invite a comparison that is not valid. The windows are nested and trailing — the 90-day figure contains the 24-hour figure — so this is not a daily series and must not be read as one. What it supports is narrow and stated plainly: over the trailing windows Skinport published, the median realised price sat below its own 90-day median and the daily sale count fell with it.

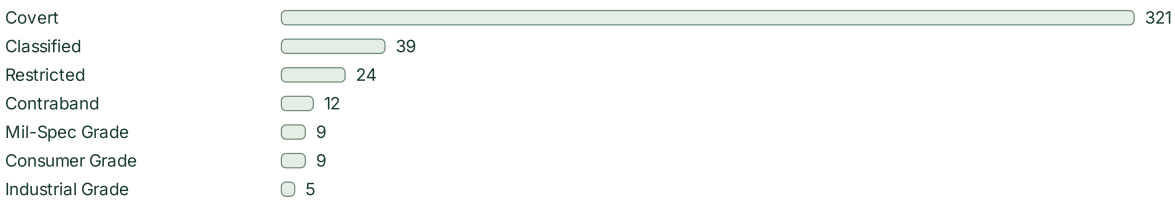
Skinport realised sales. The windows are nested and trailing, so each point is the median realised price over the trailing window, indexed to the 90-day median. It is not a daily series and no Steam data is involved.

07 / what it is made of

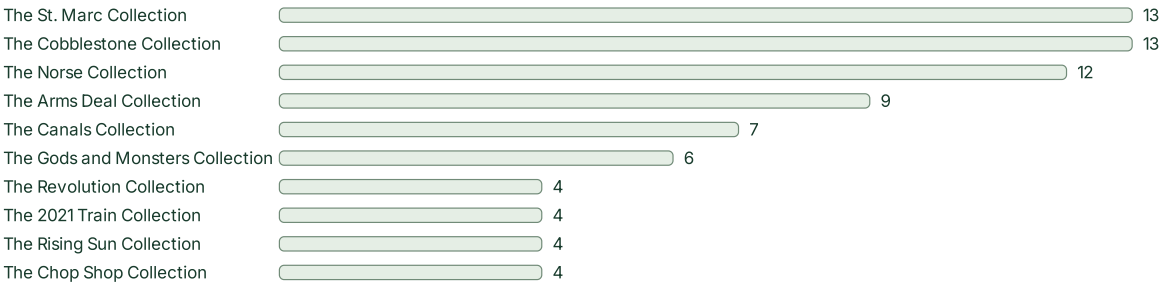
Sixteen-year-old stickers and a handful of gloves

The set above the cap is not a broad slice of the game. It concentrates in a few rarities and a few collections, several of which can no longer be obtained at all — which is exactly why the supply cannot respond to the price.

Categories above the cap, by rarity
count of item categories



Categories above the cap, by collection
top ten collections



By category: skin 366, sticker 48, container 3, sticker_slab 2.

`08 / the most anyone actually paid`

Highs backed by a transaction, not by a listing

Every other price on this page is an *ask* — what a seller wants. These are *sales*: the highest completed transaction Skinport recorded for each item, over the trailing 90 days. It is the only figure in this dossier that somebody actually paid, and each row links to the marketplace so the number can be checked against its source rather than against us.

21,216 items with a completed sale in the window
106 sold at or above Valve's listing cap
$14,192 highest single completed sale
67/419 above-cap categories with any recorded sale

The thirty highest completed sales in the window

Item	Highest sale	Median sale	Sales	Cheapest ask now	Steam	Check it
AWP | Gungnir (Factory New)	$14,192	$11,343	5	$11,490	absent	Skinport CSFloat Steam
StatTrak™ M4A4 | Howl (Factory New)	$12,387	$12,387	1	$13,836	absent	Skinport CSFloat Steam
AWP | Dragon Lore (Factory New)	$11,779	$11,063	16	$10,941	absent	Skinport CSFloat Steam
AK-47 | Wild Lotus (Minimal Wear)	$11,693	$11,693	1	$9,946	absent	Skinport CSFloat Steam

Item	Highest sale	Median sale	Sales	Cheapest ask now	Steam	Check it
AWP | Gungnir (Minimal Wear)	$10,437	$10,437	1	$9,610	absent	Skinport CSFloat Steam
StatTrak™ AK-47 | Blue Laminate (Minimal Wear)	$9,772	$37	76	$30	$40	Skinport CSFloat Steam
StatTrak™ M4A4 | Howl (Minimal Wear)	$9,463	$9,463	1	$9,500	absent	Skinport CSFloat Steam
AWP | Dragon Lore (Minimal Wear)	$9,104	$9,026	6	$8,524	absent	Skinport CSFloat Steam
★ Sport Gloves | Hedge Maze (Minimal Wear)	$8,139	$8,139	1	$6,819	absent	Skinport CSFloat Steam
AK-47 | Wild Lotus (Field-Tested)	$7,617	$7,390	4	$7,194	absent	Skinport CSFloat Steam
StatTrak™ M4A4 | Howl (Field-Tested)	$7,615	$7,615	1	$7,100	absent	Skinport CSFloat Steam
AWP | Gungnir (Field-Tested)	$7,149	$7,006	2	$7,165	absent	Skinport CSFloat Steam
AWP | Dragon Lore (Field-Tested)	$6,711	$6,194	15	$5,988	absent	Skinport CSFloat Steam
M4A4 | Howl (Factory New)	$6,679	$6,613	3	$6,628	absent	Skinport CSFloat Steam
★ Sport Gloves | Superconductor (Factory New)	$6,084	$6,084	1	$7,969	absent	Skinport CSFloat Steam

Item	Highest sale	Median sale	Sales	Cheapest ask now	Steam	Check it
AWP | Gungnir (Battle-Scarred)	$5,750	$5,413	3	$5,899	absent	Skinport CSFloat Steam
★ Sport Gloves | Pandora's Box (Minimal Wear)	$5,520	$5,508	3	$4,998	absent	Skinport CSFloat Steam
★ Sport Gloves | Vice (Factory New)	$5,385	$5,158	2	$5,700	absent	Skinport CSFloat Steam
M4A4 | Howl (Minimal Wear)	$5,342	$4,989	19	$4,997	absent	Skinport CSFloat Steam
★ Sport Gloves | Hedge Maze (Field-Tested)	$5,334	$4,862	5	$3,724	absent	Skinport CSFloat Steam
StatTrak™ AK-47 | Vulcan (Factory New)	$5,275	$1,418	12	$1,280	absent	Skinport CSFloat Steam
AK-47 | Wild Lotus (Well-Worn)	$4,978	$4,978	1	$4,942	absent	Skinport CSFloat Steam
AWP | Dragon Lore (Well-Worn)	$4,931	$4,931	1	$5,445	absent	Skinport CSFloat Steam
AK-47 | Hydroponic (Factory New)	$4,802	$4,351	2	$3,648	absent	Skinport CSFloat Steam
★ Talon Knife | Case Hardened (Minimal Wear)	$4,588	$466	16	$442	$630	Skinport CSFloat Steam
AWP | Medusa (Factory New)	$4,484	$4,484	1	$4,171	absent	Skinport CSFloat Steam

Item	Highest sale	Median sale	Sales	Cheapest ask now	Steam	Check it
★ Specialist Gloves | Pillow Punchers (Factory New)	$4,359	$4,359	1	$4,302	absent	Skinport CSFloat Steam
★ Sport Gloves | Pandora's Box (Field-Tested)	$4,359	$3,666	11	$3,245	absent	Skinport CSFloat Steam
M4A4 | Howl (Field-Tested)	$4,289	$4,225	8	$4,022	absent	Skinport CSFloat Steam
AWP | Dragon Lore (Battle-Scarred)	$4,124	$4,124	1	$4,279	absent	Skinport CSFloat Steam

Same item, same 90 days, wildly different price

Restricted to items with a $100 median and at least five completed sales, because on a cheap skin one freak sale swamps the ratio. What is left is dominated by **Case Hardened** finishes, where the pattern decides the price and the marketplace files every pattern under one name — the same mechanism measured by float in section 05.

Item	High vs median	Highest sale	Median sale	Sales	Check it
★ Talon Knife | Case Hardened (Minimal Wear)	+884%	$4,588	$466	16	Skinport CSFloat Steam
Desert Eagle | Cobalt Disruption (Factory New)	+859%	$1,210	$126	115	Skinport CSFloat Steam
AWP | BOOM (Minimal Wear)	+814%	$1,232	$135	89	Skinport CSFloat Steam
AK-47 | Case Hardened (Well-Worn)	+769%	$1,720	$198	70	Skinport CSFloat Steam
AWP | Graphite (Factory New)	+761%	$1,469	$171	124	Skinport CSFloat Steam

Item	High vs median	Highest sale	Median sale	Sales	Check it
★ Talon Knife | Case Hardened (Field-Tested)	+509%	$2,437	$400	48	Skinport CSFloat Steam
★ Kukri Knife | Case Hardened (Minimal Wear)	+448%	$723	$132	69	Skinport CSFloat Steam
★ Kukri Knife | Case Hardened (Field-Tested)	+415%	$549	$106	128	Skinport CSFloat Steam
★ Ursus Knife | Case Hardened (Minimal Wear)	+371%	$597	$127	12	Skinport CSFloat Steam
AK-47 | Case Hardened (Field-Tested)	+369%	$1,037	$221	125	Skinport CSFloat Steam
AK-47 | Red Laminate (Minimal Wear)	+360%	$552	$120	18	Skinport CSFloat Steam
AWP | Asiimov (Field-Tested)	+351%	$528	$117	439	Skinport CSFloat Steam
AK-47 | Vulcan (Field-Tested)	+337%	$865	$198	241	Skinport CSFloat Steam
StatTrak™ AK-47 | Nightwish (Factory New)	+322%	$625	$148	31	Skinport CSFloat Steam
AWP | Lightning Strike (Factory New)	+319%	$2,065	$493	198	Skinport CSFloat Steam
StatTrak™ AWP | Redline (Minimal Wear)	+312%	$574	$139	24	Skinport CSFloat Steam
StatTrak™ AWP | Asiimov (Battle-Scarred)	+287%	$524	$135	37	Skinport CSFloat Steam
AK-47 | Redline (Minimal Wear)	+277%	$562	$149	112	Skinport CSFloat Steam
AWP | Crakow! (Factory New)	+275%	$379	$101	72	Skinport CSFloat Steam
StatTrak™ AK-47 | Vulcan (Factory New)	+272%	$5,275	$1,418	12	Skinport CSFloat Steam

This is a 90-day high, NOT an all-time high, and it covers ONE marketplace. No all-time figure is claimed anywhere in this dossier. An item with no Skinport sale in the window is absent from this exhibit entirely, which is why the set is smaller than the census.

Verification links are built from the catalogue's own platform identifiers. They point at each marketplace's page for the item so a reader can check the figure against the source rather than against us. Outbound links carry rel="nofollow": they are citations, not endorsements, and several of the destinations are marketplaces this investigation is critical of.

09 / provenance and limits

Where this came from and what it cannot show

Every figure on this page is recomputed from two snapshot files whose hashes are published alongside them. Nothing here is transcribed from another site’s article.

Source and access

cs2.sh API, GET /v1/prices/latest and GET /v1/schema, single snapshot, captured 2026-09-23T00:44:27.871388581Z, priced in USD.

The data was obtained under a paid commercial subscription held by the GDPR requester documented in the archive, under the provider’s own terms. **No marketplace was scraped and no credential of any marketplace was used.** The requester’s key is held outside this repository and appears in no file here.

How an item qualifies

Every base item with at least one live ask on BUFF, CSFloat, Skinport, YouPin or C5Game is placed in a price band by its CHEAPEST such ask, so the band never depends on Steam. "Steam coverage" is the share of the items in that band carrying any live Steam ask at the moment of capture. Pattern and phase variants are excluded from the ladder because Steam does not list them separately; including them would understate Steam. Renders are the catalogue images for the same items, stored locally.

Renders and image rights. Catalogue item renders are the provider's images served for the same market_hash_name as the price rows, stored locally for offline and IPFS display. The renders are not PhishDestroy's work: all item imagery, logos and screenshots remain the property of their respective owners (cs2.sh, CSFloat, Skinport, BUFF, YouPin, C5Game, Valve and others). They are reproduced solely for identification and public-interest reporting; no ownership or licence is claimed.

What we could not obtain

The subscription tier used serves current snapshots only. Historical and archive endpoints were not available, and **no historical series is claimed anywhere on this page** beyond the trailing-window sales Skinport publishes itself in section 06.

One snapshot, not a time series. Absence of a Steam listing at the moment of capture is not proof an item may never appear there; it is the measured state of the shelf at that moment, and for prices above the cap it is also what Valve's published rule requires: Valve's Community Market explicitly caps listings at $1,800 per item (with a maximum Steam Wallet balance of $2,000; see Steam Community Market FAQ archived 2026-09-21 ↗ and Steam Subscriber Agreement § 3.C archived 2026-09-24 ↗).

Grading

An item's price is always its cheapest live ask, so a high outlier can never inflate a total. Grading governs which rows may be quoted. Any quote more than three times the cheapest ask on the same item is set aside as not a live price. Grade A: three or more marketplaces still quote above the cap and their median sits within 25 per cent of the cheapest. Grade B: two marketplaces agree, or three agree less tightly. Grade C: a single shelf - an asking price, not a market price. Only grades A and B are quoted anywhere in this dossier.

Outlier rule: quote > 3.0x the cheapest ask on the same item.

Why the totals are a floor

For each marketplace the item's **lowest** ask is multiplied by the number of copies that shelf lists. Every other copy there is priced at or above that lowest ask, so the true posted value is higher by construction, not by estimate. It is not a sale, not a cash flow, and not a valuation of the CS2 economy.

Check it yourself

The derived datasets behind every chart on this page are published in full: the atlas dataset, the grading and artefact screen, the underlying census and the manifest with the SHA-256 of each raw snapshot.

A correction recorded in the open

An earlier draft of the companion register led with a Souvenir AK-47 | Point Disarray asked at $148,954 on one Chinese marketplace while Steam priced it at $119. That row is grade C: a single shelf, a single copy, and no second marketplace agreeing. It is an asking price, not a price, and it has been demoted here and on that page. The corroborated leader is Sticker | Titan (Holo) | Katowice 2014 at **$66,285**, quoted by 4 marketplaces within 5.2% of each other — and absent from Steam entirely.

EDITION NOTES / TRACEABLE FILES

Read the claim. Check its source.

This reading edition was prepared on 18 October 2026 from the current English article. It retains the authored discussion and analytical tables in the source HTML. Navigation and interactive controls are removed. Interactive datasets remain linked rather than expanded into thousands of printed rows.

Selected source images remain linked to their publications or retained copies. The PDF does not independently authenticate the participants in a screenshot, verify every report in a collection, or determine the merits of a legal allegation.

Visual material linked separately

- visual catalogue: All 419 categories, with the object each price refers to

Check this edition

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