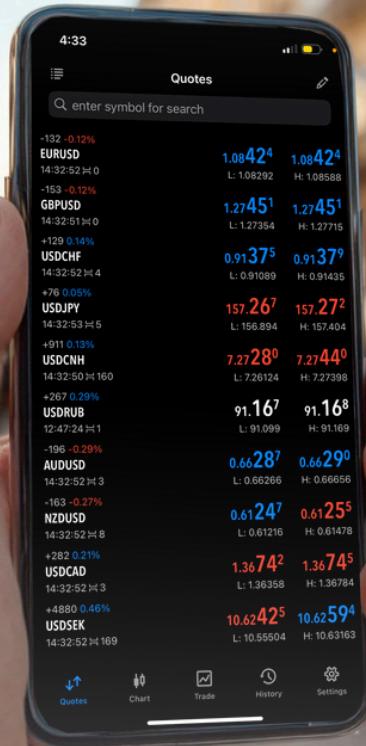


January Opportunity Map



06 - January - 2026

Prepared by
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January Markets Pulse

Where the Opportunities Lie in a Data-Heavy Start

January kicks off 2026 with a whirlwind of economic data and central bank signals, creating a roadmap for traders seeking actionable insights. From employment figures to inflation gauges, this month's events could shape market trends and asset allocation strategies across currencies, equities, and commodities.

2025 Markets Snapshot

- **Global vs. US Stocks:** While the S&P 500 gained a respectable +16%, international markets stole the show—MSCI ACWI ex-USA surged +29%. A weaker dollar boosted returns for overseas investors.
- **Asia's AI Boom:** South Korea's Kospi +76%, Japan's Nikkei +26%, TSMC +46%, Alibaba +76%. Tech and semiconductor giants thrived on AI-driven growth.
- **Europe's Revival:** Germany, Spain, Italy, and Poland all posted multi-year highs as fiscal stimulus, defense spending, and improving economies lifted equities. UK's FTSE 100 crossed 10,000 for the first time.
- **Precious Metals Supercycle:** Gold +65%, Silver +153%, Platinum +138%, Palladium +83%. Central bank buying, industrial demand, and geopolitical uncertainty drove a historic rally.

Key Themes & Events:

1. Employment & Sentiment:

Early January sees a cluster of U.S. labor data: ADP Non-Farm Employment (Jan 7), Non-Farm Payrolls (Jan 9), Unemployment Rate, and JOLTS Job Openings. Job creation and labor-market health remain leading indicators of consumer spending—the engine behind U.S. economic growth. Traders should watch currency pairs like USD/JPY and USD/CAD, as stronger-than-expected employment can drive dollar strength.

2. Manufacturing & Services PMI:

U.S. ISM Manufacturing (Jan 5) and Services PMI (Jan 7), followed by flash PMIs (Jan 23), offer a real-time lens into business confidence. Rising PMI readings often signal potential equity market strength, while dips may highlight defensive positioning opportunities.

3. Inflation Watch:

CPI (Jan 13), Core PCE (Jan 29), Producer Price Index (Jan 14 & 30), and UOM Inflation Expectations (Jan 9) are in focus. Inflation trends drive Fed policy, impacting bond yields, currencies, and interest-rate-sensitive sectors. Core PCE remains especially critical for USD valuation, as it guides FOMC decisions.

4. Retail & Consumer Trends:

Retail Sales (Jan 14) and Consumer Sentiment (Jan 9) provide a forward-looking view of spending momentum. Strong readings may favor cyclical sectors, while softer numbers could benefit defensive plays like staples and utilities.

5. Central Bank Moves:

BOJ (Jan 23), BOC (Jan 28), and FOMC (Jan 29) statements will be closely dissected for guidance on rate policy and economic outlook. Traders should track currency volatility around these events, particularly USD, CAD, and JPY pairs, as central banks set the tone for cross-asset flows.

Opportunities to Watch:

- **USD Pairs:** Employment, inflation, and FOMC guidance could drive significant USD moves.
- **Equities:** PMI, retail sales, and sentiment readings may guide sector rotation strategies.
- **Fixed Income:** PCE and CPI prints could affect Treasury yields and bond spreads.
- **Commodities:** Inflation signals and central bank outlook may create tactical opportunities in gold and oil.

January kicks off a data-heavy start to the year, offering clear signals for positioning across currencies, equities, fixed income, and commodities. Labor-market releases will test consumer momentum and USD strength, while PMI and retail data will guide sector rotation between cyclical and defensive plays. Inflation metrics, especially Core PCE, will influence Treasury yields and risk appetite, and central bank statements from the FOMC, BOJ, and BOC will likely drive short-term volatility and cross-asset flows.

Takeaway: Stay data-driven and nimble, this month is about spotting trend direction, adjusting exposure strategically, and capturing opportunities as economic signals and policy guidance converge.