

April 17, 2026

## Investor Signposts: Week beginning April 20, 2026

### Upcoming economic and financial market events

#### Australia

Wednesday April 22	◆ Westpac Leading Index (March)	-0.1% MoM in Feb
Thursday April 23	◆ Purchasing Managers' Index (April)	Composite PMI was 46.6 in prior month

#### Overseas

Monday April 20	◆ China loan prime rates (LPRs)	Current policy rate at 3.45%
Tuesday April 21	◆ US retail sales (March)	+1.2% MoM tipped
Tuesday April 21	◆ US pending home sales (March)	+1.8% MoM in Feb
Wednesday April 22	◆ US Fed Reserve Chair-Designate Kevin Warsh speaks	Testifies before senate committee
Thursday April 23	◆ US initial jobless claims (weekly)	219k in prior week
Thursday April 23	◆ US Purchasing Managers' Index (April)	50.3 in March
Friday April 24	◆ University of Michigan Consumer Sentiment (April)	47.6 in March
Friday April 24	◆ US Federal Reserve monetary policy report	Possible insights into economic outlook

### Investors weigh peace talks and turn an eye to US corporate earnings

- The S&P 500 and Nasdaq reached record highs over the past week and the scale of the market recovery from the lows of the Iran war has surprised some investors. It appears markets are pricing in an imminent deal to end the war and for the damage to economies to be short-lived. Investors are now switching their attention to corporate earnings in the US.
- Software stocks in America have had a notable bounce back, up 12% from March 27 lows at the time of writing, after being pummeled over artificial intelligence (AI) worries. Something that has fallen under the radar is the astonishing performance of US semiconductor stocks of late. These stocks – such as NVIDIA, Broadcom, and Micron– are helping fuel the rollout of AI. In 2026 so far, the US semiconductor index is up double digits and has risen more than 100% over the past year. It has done this despite the uncertainties from the war.
- Q1 2026 US reporting season is entering week two. There are earnings reports from United Airlines, 3M, GE Aerospace, UnitedHealth Group, Intuitive Surgical (**Tuesday**); Tesla, AT&T, Boeing, CME Group, GE Vernova, Philip Morris, IBM, Lam Research, ServiceNow (**Wednesday**); American Express, Blackstone, Thermo Fisher Scientific, Willis Towers Watson, Gilead Sciences, Intel (**Thursday**); Norfolk Southern, Procter & Gamble, and SLB (**Friday**).
- In US economic data, retail sales for March are out on Tuesday, with a rise of 1.2% month-on-month tipped. Meanwhile, US Federal Reserve Chair-Designate, Kevin Warsh will testify on his nomination before the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs. Investors will be watching for his views on the outlook for economic growth, inflation, and interest rates.
- **In Australia**, there are plenty of ASX companies and ETFs making dividend payments this week, including Vanguard Australian Shares Index, Vanguard Australian High Yield, Vanguard Australian Fixed Interest Index, New Hope, Vanguard MSCI Index International Shares ETF, Betashares Australia 200 ETF (**Monday**); HUB24, iShares Core S&P/ASX 200 ETF (**Tuesday**); and Nine Entertainment (**Thursday**).
- There are also a couple of companies trading ex-dividend, including Washington H. Soul Pattinson (**Monday**) and MFF Capital Investments (**Tuesday**).

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