

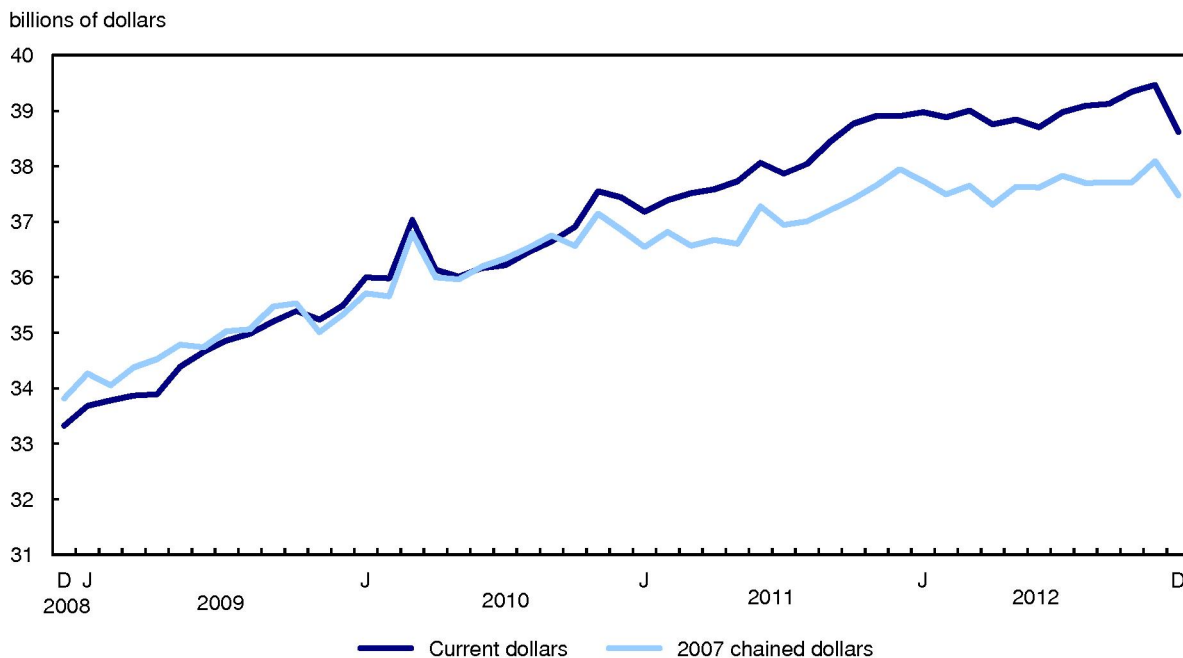
Retail trade, December 2012

Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time in *The Daily*, Friday, February 22, 2013

Following five consecutive monthly gains, retail sales declined 2.1% to \$38.6 billion in December. Excluding sales at motor vehicle and parts dealers, retail sales decreased 0.9%.

In volume terms, sales declined 1.6%.

Chart 1
Retail sales decrease in December



Lower sales were reported in 7 of 11 subsectors, representing 58% of total retail trade.

Sales declines at new car dealers accounted for most of the decrease at motor vehicle and parts dealers (-6.4%). The 7.7% drop in sales at new car dealers more than offset the previous six months of gains. Lower sales were also reported by automotive parts, accessories and tire stores (-1.8%) and other motor vehicle dealers (-1.4%).

Weaker holiday sales

Most store types typically associated with holiday shopping registered weaker sales in December.

General merchandise store receipts declined 3.7% in December. Store closures contributed to lower sales at department stores (-9.6%). Sales at 'other general merchandise stores' rose 1.1%.

Following a double-digit gain in November, sales at electronics and appliance stores fell 12.1% in December. Sales in this subsector can be affected by the timing of new product releases.

Sporting goods, hobby, book and music store sales declined 1.8%, more than offsetting the increase in November.



Furniture and home furnishings store sales decreased 1.3%. Declines at both furniture stores (-1.0%) and home furnishings stores (-1.6%) did not offset the gains in November.

Sales at clothing and clothing accessories stores rose 0.4%, a third increase in four months.

Sales down in all provinces

Retail sales were down in all provinces in December.

Ontario (-2.4%) reported the largest decrease in dollar terms, with widespread declines across store types. This decrease more than offset the gains of the previous two months.

Retail sales in Quebec (-2.5%) declined for the fourth time in five months.

Alberta (-2.5%) registered a second consecutive sales decrease following four months of growth.

Nova Scotia reported the largest decrease among the Atlantic provinces, down 1.8%.

Motor vehicles lead retail growth in 2012

On an annual basis, retailers sold \$467.8 billion worth of goods and services in 2012, up 2.5% from 2011. Sales growth in 2012 slowed compared with gains of 4.1% in 2011 and 5.6% in 2010. Retail sales in volume terms rose 1.6% in 2012.

About half of the growth in retail sales in 2012 came from a 5.6% advance at motor vehicle and parts dealers. According to the New Motor Vehicle Sales Survey, most of the growth came from sales of passenger cars.

Receipts at general merchandise stores increased 3.8% on the strength of the 'other general merchandise stores' category.

Gasoline station sales rose 2.4% in 2012, mainly as a result of higher prices.

Electronics and appliance stores posted a 5.7% decline in 2012, more than offsetting the sales increase registered in 2011.

Retail sales rose in nine provinces. The largest contributors to the growth were Alberta and Ontario. New Brunswick was the lone province to register a sales decline in 2012.

Note to readers

All the data in this release are seasonally adjusted and in current dollars, unless otherwise noted. For more information on seasonal adjustment, see [Seasonal adjustment and identifying economic trends](#).

Total retail sales expressed in volume are calculated by deflating current dollar values using consumer price indexes. The retail sales series in chained (2007) dollars is a chained Fisher volume index with 2007 as the reference year. For more information, see [Calculation of Volume of Retail Trade Sales](#). In November 2012, the Consumer Price Index changed the timing for the introduction of new model year vehicles into the [purchase of passenger vehicles index](#).

Table 1
Retail sales by province and territory – Seasonally adjusted

	December 2011	November 2012 ^r	December 2012 ^p	November to December 2012	December 2011 to December 2012
	millions of dollars			% change	
Canada	38,906	39,464	38,617	-2.1	-0.7
Newfoundland and Labrador	674	694	684	-1.5	1.5
Prince Edward Island	161	162	160	-0.7	-0.5
Nova Scotia	1,122	1,121	1,101	-1.8	-1.9
New Brunswick	937	917	902	-1.6	-3.7
Quebec	8,745	8,724	8,503	-2.5	-2.8
Ontario	13,634	13,836	13,506	-2.4	-0.9
Manitoba	1,408	1,402	1,379	-1.6	-2.0
Saskatchewan	1,394	1,479	1,454	-1.7	4.4
Alberta	5,603	5,859	5,712	-2.5	1.9
British Columbia	5,078	5,118	5,070	-0.9	-0.2
Yukon	55	57	54	-5.3	-3.0
Northwest Territories	62	63	61	-3.1	-1.3
Nunavut	31	30	30	-1.3	-2.8

^r revised

^p preliminary

Note(s): Figures may not add up to totals as a result of rounding.

Table 2
Retail sales by industry – Seasonally adjusted

	December 2011	November 2012 ^r	December 2012 ^P	November to December 2012	December 2011 to December 2012
	millions of dollars			% change	
Total retail trade (current dollars)	38,906	39,464	38,617	-2.1	-0.7
Total retail trade (2007 chained dollars)	37,949	38,090	37,475	-1.6	-1.2
Total (current dollars) excluding motor vehicle and parts dealers	30,236	30,342	30,078	-0.9	-0.5
Total (current dollars) excluding motor vehicle and parts dealers and gasoline stations	25,322	25,398	25,149	-1.0	-0.7
Motor vehicle and parts dealers	8,671	9,122	8,539	-6.4	-1.5
New car dealers	6,987	7,430	6,862	-7.7	-1.8
Used car dealers	503	496	500	0.9	-0.6
Other motor vehicle dealers	611	619	611	-1.4	0.0
Automotive parts, accessories and tire stores	570	577	566	-1.8	-0.6
Furniture and home furnishing stores	1,289	1,292	1,276	-1.3	-1.1
Furniture stores	798	792	784	-1.0	-1.7
Home furnishings stores	491	499	491	-1.6	0.1
Electronics and appliance stores	1,227	1,249	1,098	-12.1	-10.5
Building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers	2,361	2,214	2,228	0.7	-5.6
Food and beverage stores	8,800	8,855	8,928	0.8	1.5
Supermarkets and other grocery (except convenience) stores	6,220	6,259	6,310	0.8	1.5
Convenience stores	522	516	518	0.5	-0.7
Specialty food stores	471	450	461	2.5	-2.1
Beer, wine and liquor stores	1,587	1,629	1,638	0.5	3.2
Health and personal care stores	2,770	2,827	2,864	1.3	3.4
Gasoline stations	4,913	4,943	4,928	-0.3	0.3
Clothing and clothing accessories stores	2,242	2,216	2,225	0.4	-0.7
Clothing stores	1,751	1,716	1,726	0.6	-1.4
Shoe stores	245	245	251	2.3	2.5
Jewellery, luggage and leather goods stores	247	254	248	-2.3	0.6
Sporting goods, hobby, book and music stores	943	915	898	-1.8	-4.8
General merchandise stores	4,777	4,916	4,735	-3.7	-0.9
Department stores	2,199	2,211	2,000	-9.6	-9.1
Other general merchandise stores	2,578	2,705	2,735	1.1	6.1
Miscellaneous store retailers	913	916	898	-2.0	-1.7

^r revised

^P preliminary

Note(s): Figures may not add up to total as a result of rounding.

It is possible to consult tables of unadjusted data by [industry](#) and by [province and territory](#) in the *Tables by subject* module of our website.

For information on related indicators, refer to the [Latest statistics](#) page on our website.

Available in CANSIM: tables 080-0020 and 080-0024.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers 2406 and 2408.

The December 2012 issue of *Retail Trade* (63-005-X) will soon be available.

Data on retail trade for January will be released on March 21.

For more information or to order data, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; infostats@statcan.gc.ca).

For analytical information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Ashley Ker (613-951-2252; ashley.ker@statcan.gc.ca), Distributive Trades Division.