

# Retail trade, December 2014

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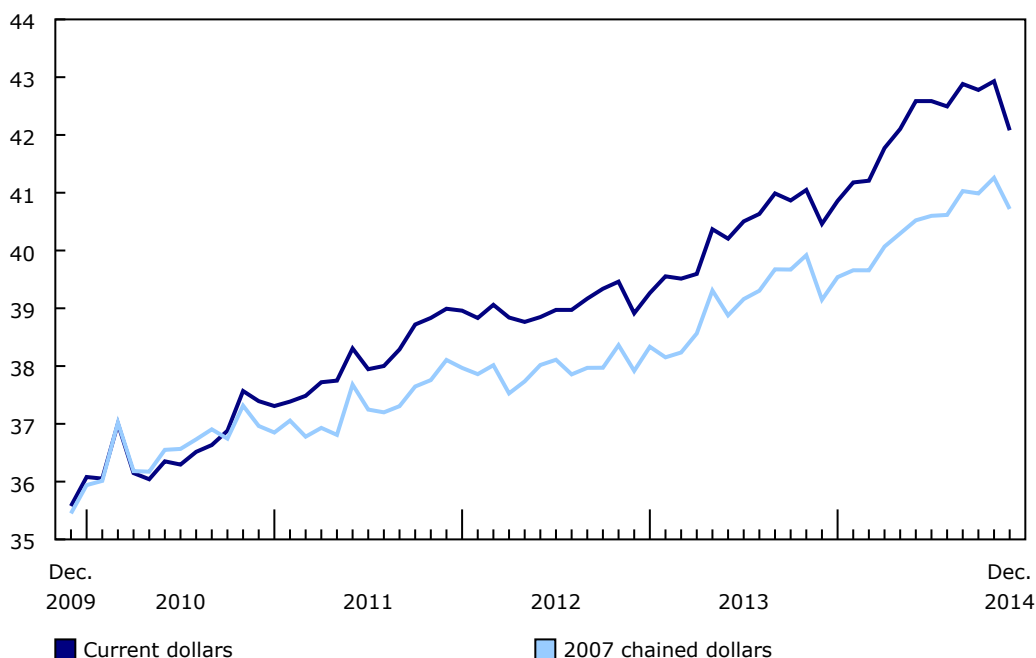
Retail sales fell 2.0% to \$42.1 billion in December. This was the largest decline since April 2010.

After removing the effects of price changes, particularly lower gas prices, sales in volume terms declined 1.3%.

Lower sales were reported in 9 of 11 subsectors, representing 71% of retail trade.

**Chart 1**  
**Retail sales decline in December**

billions of dollars



Source(s): CANSIM tables [080-0020](#) and [080-0024](#).

## Retail sales decrease in December

Sales at gasoline stations fell 7.4% in December, reflecting lower prices at the pump. This was the sixth straight monthly decrease and the largest decline since December 2008.

Lower sales at new car dealers accounted for most of the decrease at motor vehicle and parts dealers (-1.0%). After peaking in September, sales at new car dealers (-1.0%) declined for the third month in a row. Weaker sales were also reported at automotive parts, accessories and tire stores (-4.8%) and other motor vehicle dealers (-0.7%). Sales at used car dealers rose 3.1%, the second consecutive monthly gain.

The largest increase in dollar terms came from a 1.0% gain at food and beverage stores, reflecting higher sales at beer, wine and liquor stores (+4.0%), specialty food stores (+3.1%) and convenience stores (+2.3%). Sales at supermarkets and other grocery stores edged down 0.1% in December.



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## Weaker holiday sales

Most store types typically associated with holiday shopping registered weaker sales in December, more than offsetting November gains in these subsectors.

Receipts at clothing and clothing accessories stores declined 5.6%. Lower sales at clothing stores (-6.0%) accounted for most of this decline. Following a double-digit gain in November, sales at shoe stores fell 9.4% in December. Jewellery, luggage and leather goods stores posted a 1.8% gain, the third increase in four months.

The 9.2% drop in sales at electronics and appliance stores more than offset the gains of the previous six months. The decrease was widespread across most product types.

General merchandise store receipts declined 2.0% in December, led by a 3.9% decrease at department stores.

Sales at sporting goods, hobby, book and music stores declined 1.3%, partially offsetting the sales gain in November. Lower sales at sporting goods stores offset gains made at hobby, toy and games stores.

## Sales down in every province

Retail sales were down in every province in December.

Ontario (-2.3%) reported the largest decrease in dollar terms, with widespread declines across most store types.

Sales declines in the Prairie provinces were mainly a result of lower sales at gasoline stations and motor vehicle and parts dealers. Sales in Alberta (-2.5%) and Saskatchewan (-3.6%) were both down for the third consecutive month. Sales in Manitoba decreased 2.8% in December, more than offsetting the gain in November.

British Columbia reported a 2.2% decrease in December, with widespread declines.

Lower sales at gasoline stations accounted for most of the decline in Quebec (-0.5%). Results for other types of retailers were mixed.

Among the Atlantic provinces, New Brunswick (-1.9%) reported the largest decrease in dollar terms.

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.

### Note to readers

*All data in this release are seasonally adjusted and in current dollars, unless otherwise noted. For more information on seasonal adjustment, see [Seasonally adjusted data – Frequently asked questions](#).*

*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](#).*

**Table 1**  
**Retail sales by province and territory – Seasonally adjusted**

	December 2013	November 2014 <sup>r</sup>	December 2014 <sup>p</sup>	November to December 2014	December 2013 to December 2014
	millions of dollars			% change	
<b>Canada</b>	<b>40,461</b>	<b>42,930</b>	<b>42,081</b>	<b>-2.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>
Newfoundland and Labrador	711	758	743	-1.9	4.4
Prince Edward Island	158	168	162	-3.8	2.5
Nova Scotia	1,117	1,159	1,145	-1.1	2.5
New Brunswick	924	976	957	-1.9	3.6
Quebec	8,933	9,121	9,075	-0.5	1.6
Ontario	14,031	15,093	14,745	-2.3	5.1
Manitoba	1,431	1,532	1,489	-2.8	4.1
Saskatchewan	1,511	1,601	1,543	-3.6	2.1
Alberta	6,197	6,624	6,456	-2.5	4.2
British Columbia	5,298	5,746	5,618	-2.2	6.0
Yukon	54	55	52	-4.3	-3.0
Northwest Territories	67	70	66	-5.8	-2.1
Nunavut	29	29	30	2.1	2.7

<sup>r</sup> revised

<sup>p</sup> preliminary

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

**Source(s):** CANSIM table [080-0020](#).

**Table 2**  
**Retail sales by industry – Seasonally adjusted**

	December 2013	November 2014 <sup>r</sup>	December 2014 <sup>p</sup>	November to December 2014	December 2013 to December 2014
	millions of dollars			% change	
<b>Total retail trade (current dollars)</b>	<b>40,461</b>	<b>42,930</b>	<b>42,081</b>	<b>-2.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>
<b>Total retail trade (2007 chained dollars)</b>	<b>39,148</b>	<b>41,258</b>	<b>40,719</b>	<b>-1.3</b>	<b>4.0</b>
<b>Total (current dollars) excluding motor vehicle and parts dealers</b>	<b>31,187</b>	<b>32,543</b>	<b>31,798</b>	<b>-2.3</b>	<b>2.0</b>
<b>Total (current dollars) excluding motor vehicle and parts dealers and gasoline stations</b>	<b>25,814</b>	<b>27,377</b>	<b>27,014</b>	<b>-1.3</b>	<b>4.7</b>
Motor vehicle and parts dealers	9,274	10,387	10,284	-1.0	10.9
New car dealers	7,489	8,489	8,405	-1.0	12.2
Used car dealers	521	573	591	3.1	13.5
Other motor vehicle dealers	634	648	644	-0.7	1.6
Automotive parts, accessories and tire stores	631	676	644	-4.8	1.9
Furniture and home furnishings stores	1,206	1,357	1,344	-1.0	11.5
Furniture stores	757	856	852	-0.5	12.5
Home furnishings stores	449	501	493	-1.7	9.8
Electronics and appliance stores	1,173	1,334	1,212	-9.2	3.3
Building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers	2,133	2,397	2,373	-1.0	11.3
Food and beverage stores	8,995	9,186	9,274	1.0	3.1
Supermarkets and other grocery (except convenience) stores	6,305	6,427	6,419	-0.1	1.8
Convenience stores	549	578	592	2.3	7.8
Specialty food stores	500	503	519	3.1	3.9
Beer, wine and liquor stores	1,641	1,677	1,744	4.0	6.3
Health and personal care stores	3,047	3,121	3,126	0.2	2.6
Gasoline stations	5,373	5,167	4,783	-7.4	-11.0
Clothing and clothing accessories stores	2,308	2,512	2,371	-5.6	2.7
Clothing stores	1,808	1,979	1,861	-6.0	3.0
Shoe stores	262	289	262	-9.4	-0.2
Jewellery, luggage and leather goods stores	239	244	248	1.8	4.0
Sporting goods, hobby, book and music stores	921	1,012	999	-1.3	8.5
General merchandise stores	5,078	5,486	5,374	-2.0	5.8
Department stores	2,169	2,376	2,283	-3.9	5.3
Other general merchandise stores	2,910	3,110	3,091	-0.6	6.2
Miscellaneous store retailers	953	972	941	-3.2	-1.3

<sup>r</sup> revised

<sup>p</sup> preliminary

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

**Source(s):** CANSIM tables [080-0020](#) and [080-0024](#).

Available in CANSIM: tables [080-0020](#) and [080-0024](#).

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers [2406](#) and [2408](#).

The December 2014 issue of *Retail Trade* ([63-005-X](#)) will soon be available.

Data on retail trade for January will be released on March 20.

For more information, or to order data, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; [infostats@statcan.gc.ca](mailto:infostats@statcan.gc.ca)).

For analytical information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Jason Aston (613-951-0746; [jason.aston@statcan.gc.ca](mailto:jason.aston@statcan.gc.ca)), Retail and Service Industries Division.