

Retail trade, February 2017

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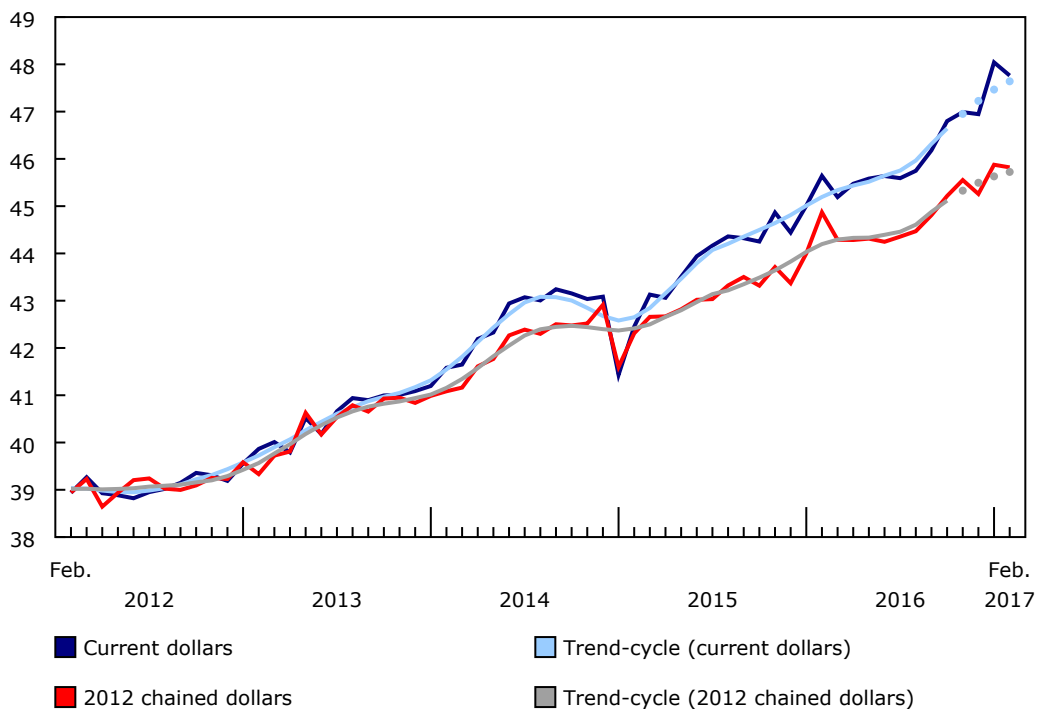
Retail sales declined 0.6% to \$47.8 billion in February, following a 2.3% increase in January. Sales were down in 5 of 11 subsectors, representing 67% of total retail sales.

Lower sales at motor vehicle and parts dealers and gasoline stations were the main contributors to the decline. Excluding these two subsectors, retail sales were up 0.5%.

After removing the effects of price changes, retail sales in volume terms edged down 0.1%.

Chart 1
Retail sales decrease in February

billions of dollars



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

Motor vehicle and parts dealers and gasoline stations lead the decline

Sales at motor vehicle and parts dealers (-1.8%) were down for the first time in seven months, largely reflecting weaker sales at new car (-1.7%) and other motor vehicle (-5.5%) dealers. Following gains in January, sales were 1.3% lower at used car dealers.

Gasoline stations (-3.6%) posted their first sales decline in three months, largely reflecting lower prices at the pump.

Following an increase in January, receipts at food and beverage stores decreased 0.4% in February. Lower sales at beer, wine and liquor stores (-1.7%) was the main contributor to the decline. Sales at specialty food stores (-0.6%) also declined, while supermarkets and other grocery stores sales were relatively unchanged from January.



Building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers (-0.8%) posted their first decline in six months.

Receipts at electronics and appliance stores edged down 0.2%, following a 5.4% increase in January.

Sales at health and personal care stores (+2.0%) rose for the second month in a row.

Clothing and clothing accessories stores reported a 2.2% sales gain in February. Higher sales at clothing (+3.4%) and shoe (+2.0%) stores more than offset the 6.2% decline at jewellery, luggage and leather goods stores.

Sales down in eight provinces

Retail sales were down in eight provinces in February.

Ontario (-0.6%) reported the largest decrease in dollar terms, led by lower sales at new car dealers.

In Nova Scotia (-4.5%), lower sales were reported at motor vehicle and parts dealers as well as building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers. Severe winter weather events were a factor.

Sales in Quebec were down 0.5% on lower sales at used car dealers and gasoline stations.

In Saskatchewan (+0.6%), retail sales advanced for the seventh consecutive month on higher sales at new and used car dealers.

Retail sales in New Brunswick (+0.3%) rose for the sixth time in seven months.

E-commerce sales by Canadian retailers

The figures in this section are based on unadjusted (that is, not seasonally adjusted) estimates.

On an unadjusted basis, retail e-commerce sales were \$939 million in February, accounting for 2.4% of total retail trade. On a year-over-year basis, retail e-commerce increased 27.4% while total unadjusted retail sales rose 3.2%.

Summary tables of unadjusted data by [industry](#) and by [province and territory](#) are now available.

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

Note to readers

Starting with the April 2017 release of February data, estimates for the Monthly Retail Trade Survey are being calculated using a new sample. The sample design has been modified to improve efficiency. The sample is periodically refreshed to take advantage of improvements made to the Business Register since the last sample selection, reflecting births, deaths and other changes to the survey population. In addition, the survey estimation methodology has been enhanced to use more administrative data. Seasonal adjustment specifications and factors were reviewed and updated.

Regular annual revisions from 2016 and typical historical revisions are also included in the new data series.

The data have been revised using historical linkage factors designed to preserve the continuity of the time series. The linkage method leads to larger revisions for more recent periods.

Seasonally adjusted estimates in CANSIM table 080-0020 have been revised back to 2009. Unadjusted estimates in CANSIM table 080-0020 have been adjusted back to 2012. Volume estimates and indices in CANSIM table 080-0024 have been revised back to 2004, reflecting a change in the base year from 2007 to 2012.

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

Statistics Canada's retail e-commerce figures are disseminated in unadjusted form. As a result, one must use caution when comparing retail sales that are seasonally adjusted (CANSIM 080-0020) in the Daily with retail e-commerce figures (CANSIM 080-0033).

Statistics Canada's retail e-commerce figures include the electronic sales of two distinct types of retailers. The first is retailers that do not have a storefront. These businesses are commonly referred to as 'pure-play' Internet retailers and are classified to North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) 45411—Electronic Shopping and Mail Order Houses. The second type of retailer is those that have a storefront and are commonly referred to as 'brick and mortar' retailers. If the online operations of a brick and mortar retailer are separately managed, they too are classified to NAICS 45411.

CANSIM 080-0033 represents the Internet sales of Canadian-based retailers. The foreign e-commerce purchases from Canadian-based retailers are included in the Internet sales totals. Conversely, Internet purchases by Canadians from foreign-based retailers are not included in Statistics Canada's retail trade figures.

Common electronic commerce transactions, such as travel and accommodation bookings, ticket purchases and financial transactions are not included in Canadian retail sales figures. For more information on individual Internet use and e-commerce, consult the most recent release of the [Canadian Internet Use Survey](#) and/or the [Survey of Digital Technology and Internet Use](#).

For more information on retail e-commerce in Canada, see [Retail E-Commerce in Canada](#).

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](#).

For information on trend-cycle data, see the [StatCan Blog](#) and [Trend-cycle estimates – Frequently asked questions](#).

Real-time CANSIM tables

Real-time CANSIM tables 080-8020 and 080-8024 will be updated on May 8. For more information, consult the document [Real-time CANSIM tables](#).

Next release

Data on retail trade for March will be released on May 19.

Table 1
Retail sales by province and territory – Seasonally adjusted

	February 2016	January 2017 ^r	February 2017 ^p	January to February 2017	February 2016 to February 2017
	millions of dollars			% change	
Canada	45,640	48,042	47,763	-0.6	4.7
Newfoundland and Labrador	768	782	771	-1.5	0.4
Prince Edward Island	183	198	193	-2.3	5.6
Nova Scotia	1,235	1,278	1,220	-4.5	-1.2
New Brunswick	1,009	1,022	1,024	0.3	1.5
Quebec	9,756	10,379	10,331	-0.5	5.9
Ontario	16,733	17,596	17,492	-0.6	4.5
Manitoba	1,612	1,638	1,635	-0.1	1.4
Saskatchewan	1,600	1,667	1,677	0.6	4.8
Alberta	6,238	6,651	6,634	-0.3	6.3
British Columbia	6,343	6,665	6,618	-0.7	4.3
Yukon	62	64	63	-1.6	0.4
Northwest Territories	64	64	63	-1.7	-1.5
Nunavut	36	39	43	8.2	19.4

^r revised

^p 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

	February 2016	January 2017 ^r	February 2017 ^p	January to February 2017	February 2016 to February 2017
	millions of dollars			% change	
Total retail trade (current dollars)	45,640	48,042	47,763	-0.6	4.7
Total retail trade (2007 chained dollars)	44,870	45,876	45,820	-0.1	2.1
Total (current dollars) excluding motor vehicle and parts dealers	33,356	35,341	35,291	-0.1	5.8
Total (current dollars) excluding motor vehicle and parts dealers and gasoline stations	29,199	30,104	30,244	0.5	3.6
Motor vehicle and parts dealers	12,284	12,702	12,472	-1.8	1.5
New car dealers	9,887	10,217	10,044	-1.7	1.6
Used car dealers	869	863	851	-1.3	-2.0
Other motor vehicle dealers	832	880	831	-5.5	-0.1
Automotive parts, accessories and tire stores	696	742	745	0.4	7.1
Furniture and home furnishings stores	1,490	1,555	1,569	0.9	5.3
Furniture stores	904	969	980	1.2	8.4
Home furnishings stores	586	586	589	0.4	0.4
Electronics and appliance stores	1,250	1,346	1,343	-0.2	7.4
Building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers	2,737	2,922	2,898	-0.8	5.9
Food and beverage stores	9,843	10,058	10,022	-0.4	1.8
Supermarkets and other grocery (except convenience) stores	6,754	6,900	6,898	-0.0	2.1
Convenience stores	648	662	664	0.2	2.5
Specialty food stores	567	587	584	-0.6	2.9
Beer, wine and liquor stores	1,873	1,908	1,876	-1.7	0.1
Health and personal care stores	3,627	3,825	3,903	2.0	7.6
Gasoline stations	4,157	5,236	5,046	-3.6	21.4
Clothing and clothing accessories stores	2,661	2,721	2,781	2.2	4.5
Clothing stores	2,046	2,093	2,165	3.4	5.8
Shoe stores	328	337	344	2.0	5.1
Jewellery, luggage and leather goods stores	287	290	272	-6.2	-5.3
Sporting goods, hobby, book and music stores	1,026	1,063	1,085	2.1	5.8
General merchandise stores	5,425	5,413	5,439	0.5	0.3
Miscellaneous store retailers	1,139	1,202	1,205	0.2	5.8

^r revised

^p 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](#), [080-0024](#) and [080-0033](#).

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

For more information, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.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@canada.ca), Retail and Service Industries Division.