

# Air fares, 2016

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Base air fares in Canada, domestic and international combined, averaged \$227.90 in 2016, down 5.4% from 2015. Base air fares do not include taxes and user fees. This marked the third consecutive annual decline following a year-over-year increase in 2013 (+0.2%).

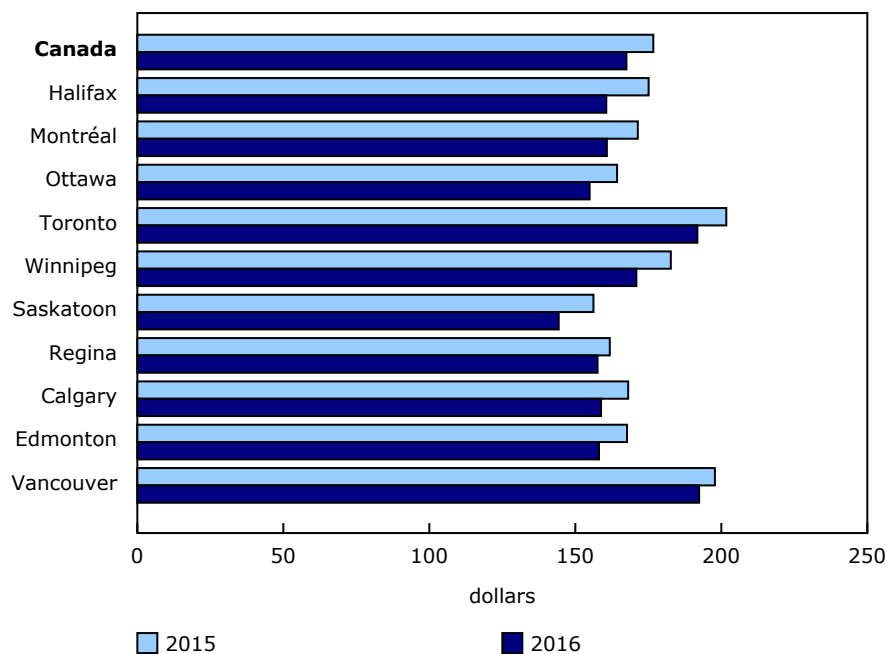
All four quarters saw year-over-year declines in 2016, with the most notable drops occurring in the first and second quarters.

The average domestic fare was \$167.50, down 5.2% from the previous year, while the average international fare fell 7.1% to \$292.00.

Average domestic fares declined in all 10 selected Canadian cities of enplanement compared with 2015. Decreases ranged from 2.6% in Regina to 8.3% in Halifax.

Vancouver (\$192.40) edged out Toronto (\$191.80) as the city with the highest average domestic air fare, while Saskatoon (\$144.30) posted the lowest average domestic air fare. Vancouver, Toronto and Winnipeg remained the only cities with average domestic air fares above the national average (\$167.50).

**Chart 1**  
**Average domestic air fares for 10 major Canadian cities**



Source(s): CANSIM table [401-0004](#).



In celebration of the country's 150th birthday, Statistics Canada is presenting snapshots from our rich statistical history.

On September 1, 1937, Canada's first national airline, Trans-Canada Air Lines, kicked off its passenger operations. Using its new Lockheed Electra aircraft and carrying two passengers, it flew its first regular service on a route between Vancouver and Boeing Field, Seattle, in 50 minutes. The air fare was \$7.90 one way and \$14.20 return.

The following year, regulation was introduced in an effort to protect the airlines. This regulatory oversight of fares continued essentially unchanged until 1984, when Canada began taking steps to open the air travel market to competition, culminating in the 1987 *National Transportation Act*.

After accounting for general price increases or inflation, the desired effect of these regulatory reforms appeared to be minimal at first, with air fares increasing slightly until 2000.

Since then, average base fares have fallen steadily, due not only to increased competition, but also to the unbundling of ticket prices into a lower base fare and supplementary charges (airport improvement fees, meals, checked bags), and, more recently, due to lower prices for jet fuel.

**Note to readers**

Average air fares are **base fares** and do not include the goods and services tax, air transportation taxes or user fees, such as airport improvement fees or fuel surcharges.

Average air fares are calculated for each flight stage. When the passenger boards the aircraft at one airport and departs the aircraft at another airport, this is considered a flight stage.

The Fare Basis Survey covers Air Canada (including Air Canada Rouge), Jazz, Air Canada's Canadian regional code-share partners, Air Transat and WestJet.

Data for the fourth quarter of 2016 have been revised.

The Fare Basis Survey is being redesigned.

**Table 1**  
**Average domestic air fares for 10 major Canadian cities**

	2015	2016	2015 to 2016
	dollars		% change
<b>Canada</b>	<b>176.70</b>	<b>167.50</b>	<b>-5.2</b>
Calgary	168.10	158.80	-5.5
Edmonton	167.70	158.10	-5.7
Halifax	175.10	160.60	-8.3
Montréal	171.40	160.80	-6.2
Ottawa	164.30	154.90	-5.7
Regina	161.80	157.60	-2.6
Saskatoon	156.20	144.30	-7.6
Toronto	201.70	191.80	-4.9
Vancouver	197.80	192.40	-2.7
Winnipeg	182.70	170.90	-6.5

**Note(s):**

The air carriers included are the Canadian Level I carriers operating scheduled services (Air Canada (including Air Canada Rouge), Jazz, Air Canada's Canadian regional code-share partners, Air Transat and WestJet).

All estimates shown above have a coefficient of variation of less than 10% and can be considered reliable from a sampling point of view.

Source(s): CANSIM table [401-0004](#).

Available in CANSIM: tables [401-0004](#), [401-0041](#) and [401-0042](#).

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [2708](#).

[Summary tables](#) are also available.

Air fare data are now available in "[Air Fares, Canadian Air Carriers, Level I](#)", as part of the service bulletin *Aviation*, 2016, Vol. 49, no. 22 ([51-004-X](#)), from the *Browse by key resource* module of our website, under *Publications*.

For more information, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; [STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca](mailto:STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca)) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; [STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca](mailto:STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca)).

For more information on the current definitions, data sources and methods of the Fare Basis Survey, click on the *Related information* tab of this release. Readers who wish to know more or consult with Statistics Canada about the redesign of this survey can also contact ([statcan.transportationstats-statistiquesdutransport.statcan@canada.ca](mailto:statcan.transportationstats-statistiquesdutransport.statcan@canada.ca)).