

Survey of Household Spending, 2017

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In 2017, the average Canadian household spent \$63,723 on goods and services, up 2.5% from 2016. Spending varied across provinces, and was highest in Alberta (\$72,957) and British Columbia (\$71,001), in part due to higher expenditures on shelter in these provinces.

Largest portions of household budgets go to shelter and transportation

Shelter remained the largest budget item for households in 2017, at 29.2% of their total consumption of goods and services. Spending on transportation, the second-largest expenditure category, accounted for 19.9% of total consumption, followed by food expenditures at 13.4%.

Households spent an average of \$18,637 on shelter, up 3.4% from 2016. Included in this total was an average of \$16,846 paid for principal residence (which includes rent, mortgage payments, repairs and maintenance costs, property taxes and utilities) and an average of \$1,791 for other accommodation, such as hotels and owned secondary residences.

In 2017, two out of every three Canadian households owned their home, and more than half of homeowners had a mortgage. Homeowners with a mortgage spent an average of \$25,904 on their principal residence, compared with \$9,642 for homeowners without a mortgage and \$13,499 for renters.

Canadian households paid \$12,707 for transportation in 2017, up 6.7% from 2016. They spent an average of \$11,433 on private transportation, which includes the purchase of cars, trucks and vans, as well as their operating costs. Households, on average, spent \$2,142 on gasoline and other fuels in 2017, up 9.8% from 2016, reflecting the [11.8% annual average increase in gasoline prices](#). Spending on public transportation, which covers public transit, taxis, intercity buses, trains and air fares, remained relatively unchanged at \$1,274.

In 2017, 84.0% of households owned or leased a vehicle. Vehicle ownership was highest in rural areas (94.9%) and lowest in cities with a population of at least one million residents (79.0%).

Income and household consumption

Spending is generally associated with income levels. In 2017, the 20% of Canadian households with the lowest incomes spent an average of \$33,764 on goods and services, compared with \$105,493 for those in the top 20% of household incomes.

On average, households in the lowest income group spent \$11,733 on shelter, or 34.8% of their consumption of goods and services. While households in the highest income segment spent more on shelter, an average of \$28,921 in 2017, this represented a smaller proportion of their total consumption (27.4%).

Spending patterns vary across the provinces

Two provinces stood out as having the highest average household spending on goods and services in 2017—Alberta (\$72,957) and British Columbia (\$71,001).

This was partly the result of higher spending on shelter compared with most other provinces. Households in British Columbia spent an average of \$21,844 on shelter, while those in Alberta spent \$21,068. Compared with the other provinces, households with a mortgage in Alberta and British Columbia had the highest average spending on mortgage payments. Similarly, renters in these two provinces paid the most for rent, on average, compared with the rest of Canada.

Households in Alberta also spent the largest average amount on transportation among the provinces at \$15,604. In contrast, average spending on transportation was lowest in Quebec (\$10,231).



Households in New Brunswick spent the least on goods and services, averaging \$52,608 in 2017. They also spent the least on shelter compared with households in other provinces at \$12,692.

Cell phone use continues to rise

Over the years, cellular telephones have replaced landline telephones as the most common telephone type among Canadian households. In 2017, 36.0% of households reported having only a cell phone and no landline, compared with 15.5% of households in 2012. Almost 9 in 10 households owned at least one cell phone. Cell phone ownership was highest in Alberta (93.6%) and Saskatchewan (93.5%) and lowest in Quebec (84.4%).

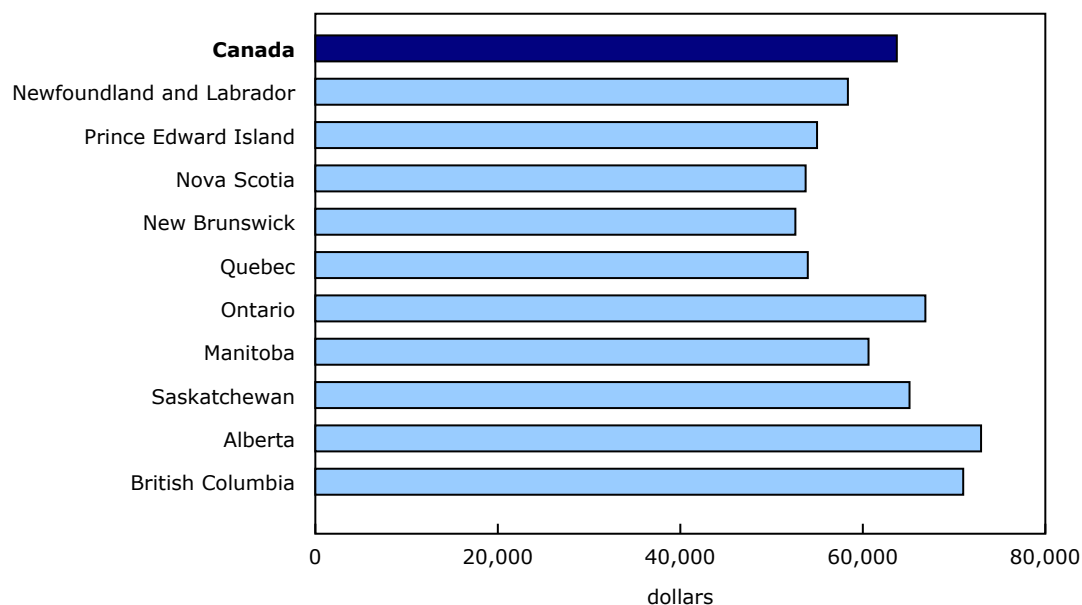
About one in five households reported having bought mobile telephone equipment, including cell phones and smartphones, in 2017. Households that purchased mobile phone equipment spent an average of \$542 in 2017. Five years earlier, in 2012, these households spent an average of \$281.

Spending in the territorial capitals

Among the territorial capitals, average spending on goods and services was highest in Iqaluit (\$94,396) and Yellowknife (\$93,354) and lowest in Whitehorse (\$67,701).

As in the provinces, in all three territorial capitals, the largest share of spending on goods and services went to shelter. Shelter expenditure in Iqaluit averaged \$30,336 (32.1% of total consumption on goods and services). In Yellowknife, households spent an average of \$30,146 on shelter (32.3% of their total consumption), while those in Whitehorse spent the least of the three capitals on shelter at an average of \$19,990 (29.5% of their total consumption).

Chart 1
Average spending on goods and services by province, 2017



Note(s): Canada-level statistics include the 10 provinces only.

Source(s): Table 11-10-0222-01.

Table 1
Average spending on goods and services and shares of spending of major categories by province, 2017

	Average spending on goods and services	Shelter	Transportation	Food
	dollars	share of spending on goods and services (%)		
Canada	63,723	29.2	19.9	13.4
Newfoundland and Labrador	58,364	24.7	23.4	13.3
Prince Edward Island	54,983	25.2	22.9	15.0
Nova Scotia	53,732	26.1	20.8	14.3
New Brunswick	52,608	24.1	23.1	14.5
Quebec	53,969	26.9	19.0	14.4
Ontario	66,855	31.1	19.6	13.0
Manitoba	60,624	26.0	21.8	13.8
Saskatchewan	65,117	26.9	20.4	14.0
Alberta	72,957	28.9	21.4	12.5
British Columbia	71,001	30.8	19.6	13.0

Note(s): Canada-level statistics include the 10 provinces only.

Source(s): Data were derived from table 11-10-0222-01.

Table 2
Average spending on goods and services and shares of spending of major categories by income quintile, Canada, 2017

	Average spending on goods and services	Shelter	Transportation	Food
	dollars	share of spending on goods and services (%)		
All quintiles	63,723	29.2	19.9	13.4
Lowest quintile	33,764	34.8	15.1	14.3
Second quintile	46,075	31.6	18.8	14.1
Third quintile	59,439	28.6	20.6	14.2
Fourth quintile	73,744	28.5	20.7	13.5
Highest quintile	105,493	27.4	21.1	12.2

Note(s):

Canada-level statistics include the 10 provinces only.

All households are ranked from lowest to highest according to the value of their before-tax income. The ranked population is then divided into five groups of equal numbers of units, called quintiles.

Source(s): Data were derived from table 11-10-0223-01.

Table 3
Selected communications equipment by province, 2017

	Households with landline telephone service	Households with a cellular telephone	Households with a cellular telephone but no landline telephone service
	households reporting (%)		
Canada	63.0	89.5	36.0
Newfoundland and Labrador	83.0	89.1	16.5
Prince Edward Island	67.8	87.3	30.8
Nova Scotia	68.2	87.1	30.7
New Brunswick	83.4	87.9	15.7
Quebec	67.6	84.4	30.9
Ontario	61.2	90.8	38.2
Manitoba	65.6	90.0	33.9
Saskatchewan	57.3	93.5	42.3
Alberta	55.6	93.6	43.2
British Columbia	59.3	92.1	39.4

Note(s): Canada-level statistics include the 10 provinces only.

Source(s): Data were derived from table 11-10-0228-01.

Table 4
Average spending on goods and services and shares of spending of major categories, territorial capitals, 2017

	Average spending on goods and services	Shelter	Transportation	Food
	dollars	share of spending on goods and services (%)		
Whitehorse, Yukon	67,701	29.5	18.9	13.9
Yellowknife, Northwest Territories	93,354	32.3	20.3	12.5
Iqaluit, Nunavut	94,396	32.1	15.2	17.1

Source(s): Data were derived from Table 11-10-0233-01.

Note to readers

Statistics Canada would like to thank the households across Canada who responded to the 2017 Survey of Household Spending (SHS).

The SHS provides detailed spending information as well as selected information on dwelling characteristics and household equipment. SHS data are an important input into Statistics Canada's Consumer Price Index, and are used in the calculation of gross domestic product. The SHS data are also used by government to develop social and economic policies and programs, as well as by private sector, research organizations and academics to study various topics related to household consumption and well-being, such as housing, child care and health care affordability, energy consumption and spending patterns of various groups of the population.

To provide this information, the survey combines a questionnaire with recall periods based on the type of expenditure item and a diary of daily expenses that selected households complete over the two weeks following an interview. The diary provides more detailed information, particularly for spending on food and other frequent purchases. For more information about the SHS methodology, see the ["User Guide for the Survey of Household Spending, 2017."](#)

The 2017 SHS was conducted from January to December 2017. The response rate was 67% for the interview component of the 2017 SHS. The response rate for the diary component, which is used to estimate about one quarter of the total current consumption, was 41%. Due to low response rates, Statistics Canada has been examining different methods to collect household expenditure data. For more information on data quality for the 2017 SHS, refer to the ["Survey of Household Spending Technical Note, 2017."](#)

Average spending for a specific good or service is calculated for all households, including those with and those without expenditures for the category, unless otherwise specified. Average spending includes sales taxes.

Total current consumption refers to the sum of the expenditures for food, shelter, household operations, household furnishings and equipment, clothing and accessories, transportation, health care, personal care, recreation, education, reading materials and other printed matter, tobacco products and alcoholic beverages, games of chance and miscellaneous expenditures.

Available tables: [11-10-0125-01](#), [11-10-0222-01](#) to [11-10-0228-01](#) , [11-10-0233-01](#) and [11-10-0234-01](#).

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [3508](#).

The report "[User Guide for the Survey of Household Spending, 2017](#)," now available as part of the *Household Expenditures Research Paper Series* ([62F0026M](#)), presents information about the survey methodology, concepts and data quality.

The infographics "[Results from the Survey of Household Spending, 2017](#)" and "[Household spending in the territorial capitals, 2017](#)," which are part of *Statistics Canada — Infographics* ([11-627-M](#)), are also available.

The document "[Survey of Household Spending Technical Note, 2017](#)," now available as part of the *Household Expenditures Research Paper Series* ([62F0026M](#)), provides additional information on the quality of the SHS data and their fitness for use.

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