

# Retail trade, February 2019

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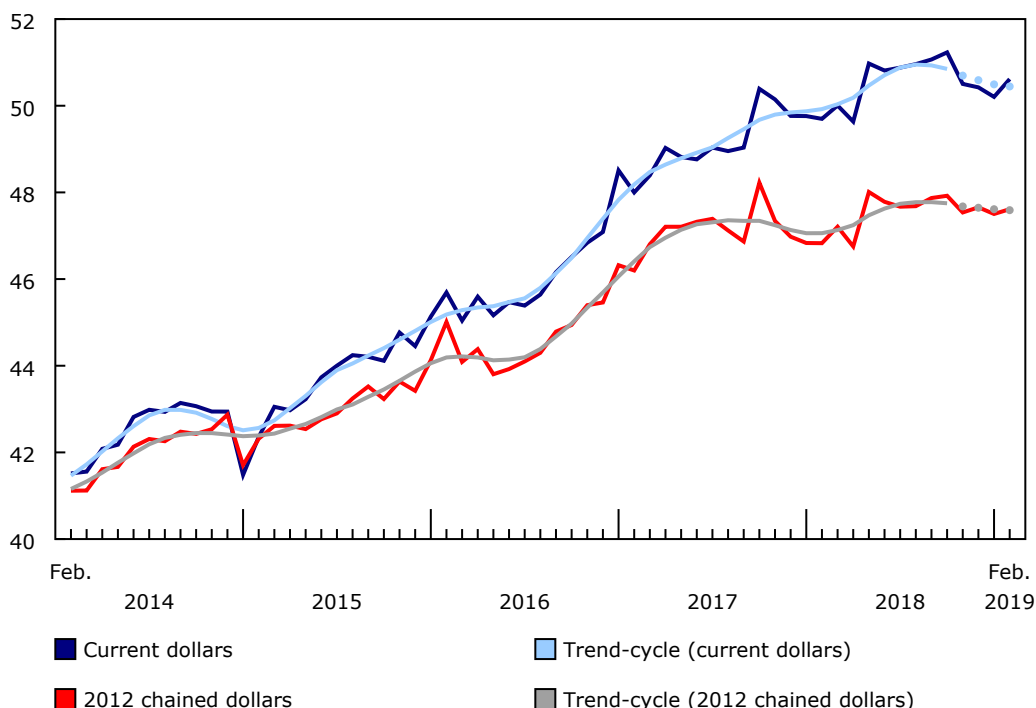
Following three consecutive monthly declines, retail sales rose 0.8% in February to \$50.6 billion. Sales were up in 5 of 11 subsectors, representing 73% of retail trade.

Higher sales at general merchandise stores and motor vehicle and parts dealers were the main contributors to the increase.

After removing the effects of price changes, retail sales in volume terms were up 0.2%.

**Chart 1**  
**Retail sales increase in February**

billions of dollars



Source(s): Tables [20-10-0008-01](#) and [20-10-0078-01](#).

## Retail sales up in five subsectors

Following a 2.8% decrease in January, retail sales at general merchandise stores (+3.8%) rebounded in February. Store types within this subsector include department stores, warehouse clubs as well as home and auto supplies stores.

Receipts at motor vehicle and parts dealers increased 1.4% on the strength of higher sales at new car dealers (+3.1%), the largest monthly increase since May 2018. All other store types within this subsector declined in February.

Following three consecutive monthly declines amid lower prices, sales at gasoline stations rose 1.9%, partially reflecting higher prices at the pump in February.



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After posting gains in December and January, sales at building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers were down 1.6%. Despite this decline, sales remain above the level in November.

Retail sales at electronics and appliance stores (-3.5%) were down for the third consecutive month.

### **Sales increase in seven provinces**

After three consecutive monthly declines, retail sales in Ontario rose 1.5%, with most subsectors posting gains. Sales in the census metropolitan area (CMA) of Toronto increased 1.3%.

In Quebec (+1.6%), the gain in February was partially attributable to higher sales at new car dealers as well as supermarkets and other grocery stores. Sales in the CMA of Montréal increased 3.1%.

All three Prairie provinces were up in February as Alberta (+0.9%), Manitoba (+2.2%) and Saskatchewan (+1.3%) posted increases following declines in January. The majority of the provincial gains stemmed from stronger sales at new car dealers.

Retail sales in British Columbia were down 1.9%. The decline was largely the result of lower sales at new car dealers and, to a lesser extent, building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers.

### **E-commerce sales by Canadian retailers**

The figures in the sections below are based on unadjusted (that is, not seasonally adjusted) estimates.

On an unadjusted basis, retail e-commerce sales were \$1.4 billion in February, accounting for 3.3% of total retail trade. On a year-over-year basis, retail e-commerce increased 23.8%, while total unadjusted retail sales were up 2.1%.

## Note to readers

With this release, unadjusted monthly data were revised back to January 2018, while seasonally adjusted data were revised back to January 2015. Factors influencing revisions include late receipt of respondent information, correction of information in the data provided, the replacement of estimated figures with actual values (once available), the re-classification of companies within, into and out of the retail trade industry and updates to seasonal factors.

Sales, price, and volume data in table 20-10-0078-01 have been revised back to January 2015. Additional annual revisions to the Laspeyres volume estimates in table 20-10-0078-01 will be included in the July release of May data, to incorporate annual revisions to the Retail Commodity Survey.

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](#).

As of October 17, 2018, the date of legalization, the monthly retail trade survey now collects and disseminates sales of licensed cannabis stores. This includes both in-store and Internet-based sales.

For more information regarding cannabis statistics, consult the [Cannabis Stats Hub](#).

Seasonally adjusted estimates for cannabis store retailers are presented in unadjusted form as there is no seasonal pattern established by official statistics yet. Establishing such a pattern requires several months of observed data. In the interim, the "seasonally adjusted" estimates for cannabis store retailers will be identical to the unadjusted figures.

Statistics Canada's retail e-commerce figures include the electronic sales of two distinct types of retailers. The first type 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 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.

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

Total retail sales expressed in volume terms are calculated by deflating current dollar values using consumer price indexes. The retail sales series in chained (2012) dollars is a chained Fisher volume index with 2012 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 tables

Real-time tables 20-10-0054-01 and 20-10-0079-01 will be updated on April 29.

## Next release

Data on retail trade for March will be released on May 22.

**Table 1**  
**Retail sales by province, territory and census metropolitan area – Seasonally adjusted**

	February 2018	January 2019 <sup>r</sup>	February 2019 <sup>p</sup>	January to February 2019	February 2018 to February 2019
	millions of dollars			% change	
<b>Canada</b>	<b>49,697</b>	<b>50,204</b>	<b>50,615</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>1.8</b>
Newfoundland and Labrador	756	742	739	-0.4	-2.4
Prince Edward Island	202	200	204	2.0	1.1
Nova Scotia	1,350	1,356	1,338	-1.3	-0.9
New Brunswick	1,063	1,073	1,074	0.2	1.0
Quebec	10,464	10,845	11,022	1.6	5.3
Montréal	4,844	5,232	5,393	3.1	11.3
Ontario	18,477	18,545	18,815	1.5	1.8
Toronto	7,604	7,661	7,762	1.3	2.1
Manitoba	1,672	1,709	1,747	2.2	4.5
Saskatchewan	1,633	1,583	1,604	1.3	-1.8
Alberta	6,760	6,695	6,753	0.9	-0.1
British Columbia	7,151	7,284	7,148	-1.9	-0.0
Vancouver	3,367	3,383	3,264	-3.5	-3.1
Yukon	67	68	66	-2.0	-0.3
Northwest Territories	66	65	64	-1.6	-2.8
Nunavut	37	39	40	1.1	8.6

<sup>r</sup> revised

<sup>p</sup> preliminary

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

**Source(s):** Table [20-10-0008-01](#).

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

	February 2018	January 2019 <sup>r</sup>	February 2019 <sup>p</sup>	January to February 2019	February 2018 to February 2019
	millions of dollars			% change	
<b>Total retail trade (current dollars)</b>	<b>49,697</b>	<b>50,204</b>	<b>50,615</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>1.8</b>
<b>Total retail trade (2012 chained dollars)</b>	<b>46,828</b>	<b>47,502</b>	<b>47,613</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>1.7</b>
<b>Total (current dollars) excluding motor vehicle and parts dealers</b>	<b>36,402</b>	<b>36,651</b>	<b>36,872</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>1.3</b>
<b>Total (current dollars) excluding motor vehicle and parts dealers and gasoline stations</b>	<b>30,869</b>	<b>31,606</b>	<b>31,730</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>2.8</b>
Motor vehicle and parts dealers	13,296	13,553	13,743	1.4	3.4
New car dealers	10,633	10,736	11,070	3.1	4.1
Used car dealers	945	1,019	994	-2.4	5.3
Other motor vehicle dealers	881	901	812	-9.9	-7.8
Automotive parts, accessories and tire stores	837	897	866	-3.4	3.5
Furniture and home furnishings stores	1,529	1,537	1,539	0.2	0.7
Furniture stores	942	964	953	-1.2	1.1
Home furnishings stores	587	572	586	2.4	-0.1
Electronics and appliance stores	1,262	1,261	1,217	-3.5	-3.6
Building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers	3,172	3,168	3,118	-1.6	-1.7
Food and beverage stores	10,198	10,607	10,694	0.8	4.9
Supermarkets and other grocery (except convenience) stores	6,961	7,225	7,342	1.6	5.5
Convenience stores	660	693	686	-1.0	4.0
Specialty food stores	650	665	659	-0.9	1.4
Beer, wine and liquor stores	1,927	2,024	2,008	-0.8	4.2
Health and personal care stores	3,885	3,988	3,986	-0.1	2.6
Gasoline stations	5,533	5,045	5,142	1.9	-7.1
Clothing and clothing accessories stores	2,836	2,906	2,861	-1.6	0.9
Clothing stores	2,204	2,282	2,216	-2.9	0.6
Shoe stores	346	346	342	-1.2	-1.2
Jewellery, luggage and leather goods stores	287	279	303	8.6	5.6
Sporting goods, hobby, book and music stores	1,064	1,039	1,033	-0.5	-2.9
General merchandise stores	5,677	5,750	5,967	3.8	5.1
Miscellaneous store retailers	1,246	1,351	1,315	-2.6	5.6
Cannabis stores <sup>1</sup>		55	50	-9.1	

<sup>r</sup> revised

<sup>p</sup> preliminary

1. Data for this Canadian industry are presented in unadjusted form as there is no seasonal pattern established by official statistics yet.

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

**Source(s):** Tables [20-10-0008-01](#) and [20-10-0078-01](#).

**Table 3**  
**Retail sales by industry at 2012 constant prices – Seasonally adjusted**

	February 2019 <sup>P</sup>	December 2018 to January 2019	January 2018 to January 2019	January to February 2019	February 2018 to February 2019
	millions of dollars		% change		
<b>Total retail trade at 2012 constant prices<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>47,652</b>	<b>-0.3</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>1.7</b>
<b>Total excluding motor vehicle and parts dealers</b>	<b>35,606</b>	<b>-0.3</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>-0.1</b>	<b>1.6</b>
<b>Total excluding motor vehicles and parts dealers and gasoline stations</b>	<b>30,065</b>	<b>-0.4</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>-0.2</b>	<b>1.4</b>
Motor vehicle and parts dealers	12,046	-0.3	1.5	0.9	2.0
New car dealers	9,656	-2.0	-0.2	2.7	2.5
Used car dealers	860	1.4	12.3	-2.8	3.7
Other motor vehicle dealers	705	5.3	6.4	-11.1	-6.9
Automotive parts, accessories and tire stores	825	14.8	5.9	-3.5	2.4
Furniture and home furnishings stores	1,481	2.0	0.5	-0.9	0.7
Furniture stores	922	1.6	2.6	-1.5	1.0
Home furnishings stores	559	2.6	-3.0	0.2	0.0
Electronics and appliance stores	1,414	-0.9	-13.8	-3.3	-1.5
Building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers	2,850	1.2	3.7	-2.3	-2.6
Food and beverage stores	9,502	-0.5	1.0	0.3	1.6
Supermarkets and other grocery (except convenience) stores	6,560	-0.9	0.9	0.9	2.0
Convenience stores	555	-0.4	-0.2	-1.6	-2.3
Specialty food stores	571	-1.7	0.9	-1.2	-2.2
Beer, wine and liquor stores	1,817	1.1	1.6	-0.8	2.4
Health and personal care stores	4,168	0.1	4.2	-0.3	4.1
Gasoline stations	5,541	0.3	1.1	0.7	2.7
Clothing and clothing accessories stores	2,766	0.2	3.0	-2.3	-1.1
Clothing stores	2,158	0.5	4.5	-3.4	-1.5
Shoe stores	333	-1.2	2.4	-2.6	-2.9
Jewellery, luggage and leather goods stores	276	-1.5	-8.3	8.2	4.5
Sporting goods, hobby, book and music stores	1,003	0.6	-2.4	-0.9	-3.7
General merchandise stores	5,656	-3.1	1.6	3.1	4.0
Miscellaneous store retailers	1,226	2.5	11.1	-3.0	3.7
Cannabis stores <sup>2</sup>	48	-4.9		-11.1	

<sup>P</sup> preliminary

1. Using Laspeyres method.

2. Data for this Canadian industry are presented in unadjusted form as there is no seasonal pattern established by official statistics yet.

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

**Source(s):** Table 20-10-0078-01.

**Table 4**  
**Retail e-commerce sales – Unadjusted**

	February 2018	January 2019	February 2019	February 2019
	millions of dollars			% change
<b>Retail trade sales (44-453)</b>	<b>39,461</b>	<b>42,253</b>	<b>40,101</b>	<b>1.6</b>
Electronic shopping and mail-order houses sales (45411)	800	1,090	1,005	25.7
Retail e-commerce <sup>1</sup>	1,101	1,513	1,363	23.8
Retail e-commerce <sup>1</sup> (% of total retail trade)	2.73	3.49	3.32	...

... not applicable

1. Retail e-commerce includes e-sales from both store retailers included in the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) 44-453 and non-store retailers included in electronic shopping and mail order houses (NAICS 45411).

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

**Source(s):** Table [20-10-0072-01](#).

**Available tables:** [20-10-0008-01](#), [20-10-0072-01](#) and [20-10-0078-01](#).

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

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