

Retail trade, July 2020

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Retail sales rose 0.6% to \$52.9 billion in July, led by higher sales at motor vehicle and parts dealers and gasoline stations.

Core retail sales, which exclude these two subsectors, declined 1.2% on lower sales at building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers as well as at food and beverage stores.

Overall, the recovery in total retail sales has been V-shaped, with sales in June and July, respectively, rebounding from the record low observed in April. As noted in the [National balance sheet and financial flow accounts, second quarter 2020](#), the period of depressed retail sales in the second quarter of 2020 coincided with a 13.7% decline in household spending (nominal terms) and an increase in the household savings rate to 28.2% as physical distancing measures left Canadians with fewer places to spend. However, with the gradual resumption of business activities across the country, retail sales in June and July, respectively, were able to recover and surpass February's pre-pandemic levels.

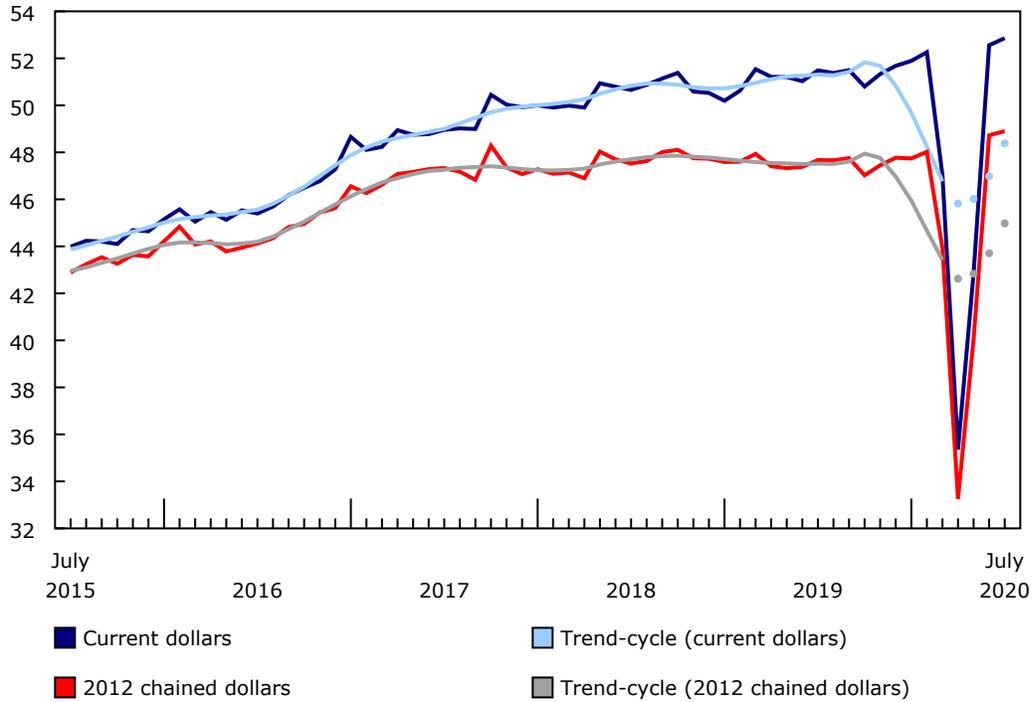
Retail sales in volume terms were up 0.4% in July.

Based on respondent feedback, approximately 3% of retailers were closed during July. The average length of shutdown was one business day. Despite these challenging times, many retailers reported their sales figures and Statistics Canada thanks them for their continued collaboration.

Given the rapidly-evolving economic situation, Statistics Canada is providing an advance estimate of August sales. Early estimates suggest that retail sales increased by 1.1% in August. Owing to its preliminary nature, this figure should be expected to be revised.

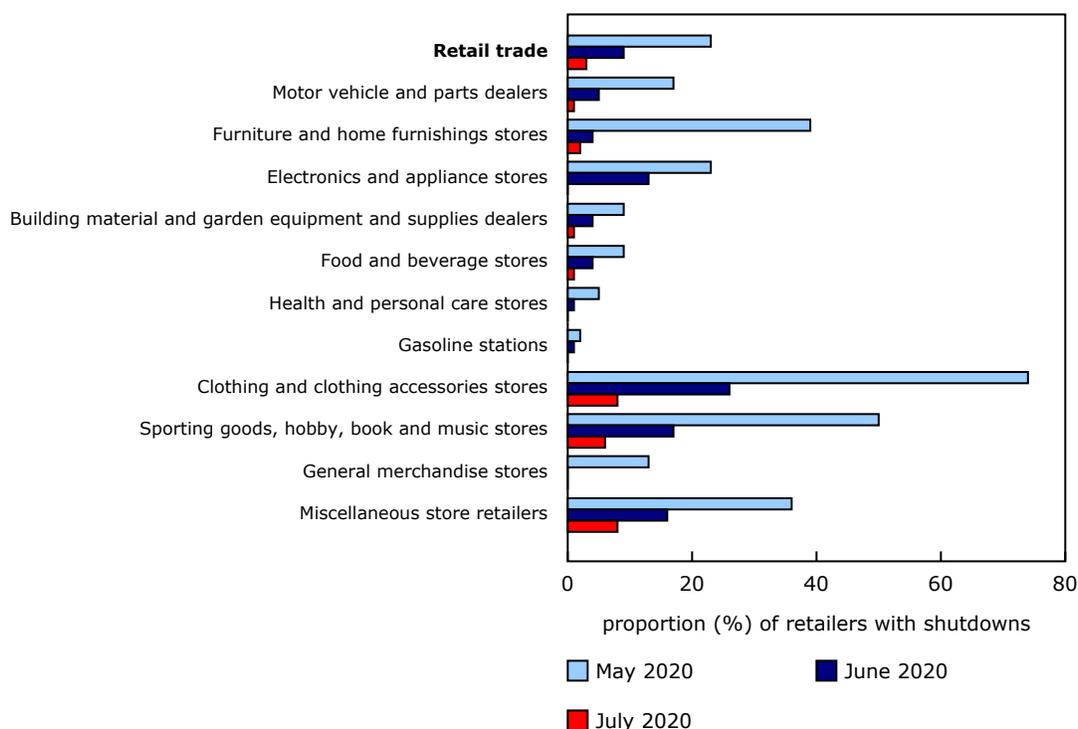
Chart 1
Retail sales increase in July

billions of dollars



Note(s): The higher variability associated with the trend-cycle estimates is indicated with a dotted line on the chart for the current reference month and the three previous months. For more information, see the note to readers.
Source(s): Tables [20-10-0008-01](#) and [20-10-0078-01](#).

Chart 2
Proportion of Canadian retailers with shutdowns decreases in July



Source(s): Monthly Retail Trade Survey (2406).

Sales up at motor vehicle and parts dealers and gasoline stations

Sales were up in 6 of 11 subsectors in July, accounting for 48.6% of total retail sales. The motor vehicle and parts dealers subsector (+3.3%) contributed the most to the sales increase in July, on continued pent-up demand for motor vehicles following pandemic-driven dealership closures in the spring.

According to the [New Motor Vehicle Sales Survey](#), the value of new motor vehicle sales was 23.6% higher in July (unadjusted) compared with February. However, on a year-over-year basis, the value of sales declined 7.9%, with passenger car sales down 17.8% and truck sales (which includes light trucks, heavy trucks and buses) down 5.5%.

Sales at gasoline stations increased 6.1%, while the volume of gasoline sold rose 5.5%. The sales gain was attributable to higher gasoline prices and the continued reopening of the economy, as well as more Canadians travelling and buying locally.

Core retail sales down on lower sales at building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers and at food and beverage stores

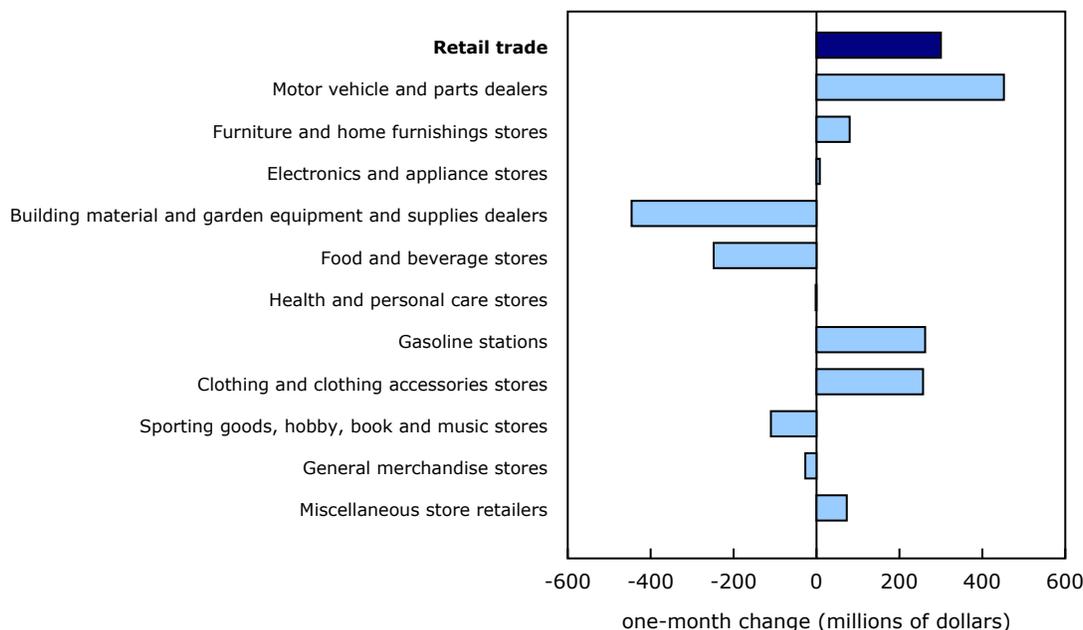
Following four increases in five months, sales at core retailers decreased 1.2% in July, led by sharply lower sales at building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers (-11.6%).

Sales at food and beverage stores declined 2.1% in July, the third monthly decrease following the stockpile-driven record high in March. Although food and beverage store sales remain above pre-pandemic levels, sales in July fell to their lowest level in four months.

General merchandise (-0.4%) and sporting goods, hobby, book, and music (-8.8%) store sales declined for the first time in three months.

Conversely, sales at clothing and clothing accessories stores rose for the third consecutive month, up 11.2% in July, as more regions allowed shopping malls to re-open. Nevertheless, sales at clothing and clothing accessories stores were 13.6% below February levels.

Chart 3 Sales up in 6 of 11 subsectors



Source(s): Table 20-10-0008-01.

Sales up in five provinces

Sales rose in British Columbia (+2.1%) on higher sales at gasoline stations. Manitoba (+1.9%) and Alberta (+1.2%) also posted gains in July, led by higher sales at motor vehicle and parts dealers.

Sales in Ontario increased 0.3% as the gains posted in the census metropolitan area (CMA) of Toronto (+3.9%), which proceeded with later stages of economic reopening in late June, offset declines in the rest of the province.

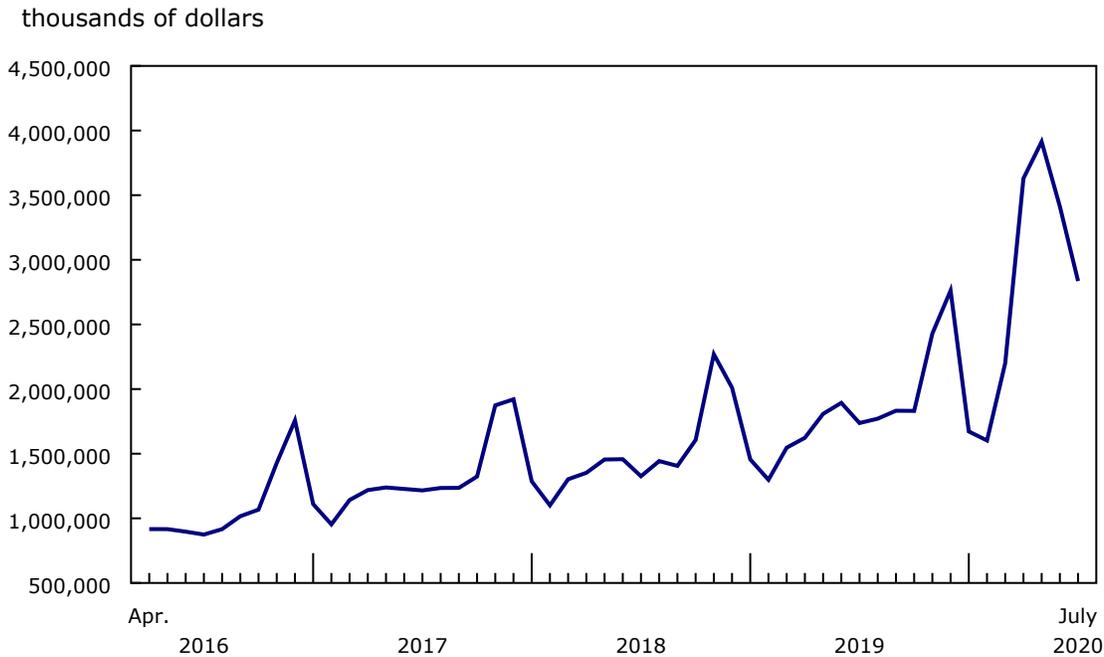
Retail sales in Quebec edged up 0.1% in July following two months of strong gains, while sales were flat in the CMA of Montréal (-0.0%).

Retail e-commerce sales in Canada

On an unadjusted basis, retail e-commerce sales were \$2.8 billion in July, accounting for 4.8% of total retail trade. As more retailers have expanded in-person shopping in accordance with public health measures, the share of retail e-commerce sales to total retail sales has declined, following the record high for retail e-commerce sales set in April. Nevertheless, retail e-commerce sales as a share of total retail sales were 1.7 percentage points above July 2019 levels.

On a year-over-year basis, retail e-commerce increased 63.2%, while total unadjusted retail sales increased 5.6%. When adjusted for basic seasonal effects, retail e-commerce decreased 8.1% in July.

Chart 4 Retail e-commerce decreases in July



Source(s): Monthly Retail Trade Survey (2406).

Today, Statistics Canada unveils its new [retail and wholesale](#) subject-matter portal.

As part of the agency's modernization efforts, the new portal provides users with a single window of access to find, analyze and use a wide range of data and information related to retail and wholesale in Canada.

Users can quickly and easily browse the various key subtopics, including the retail and wholesale trade programs, and access Statistics Canada's latest data tables and analytical articles.

The new portal now makes it easier, faster and more straightforward to find the information.

Note to readers

All data in this release are seasonally adjusted and expressed in current dollars, unless otherwise noted.

Seasonally adjusted data are data that have been modified to eliminate the effect of seasonal and calendar influences to allow for more meaningful comparisons of economic conditions from period to period. For more information on seasonal adjustment, see [Seasonally adjusted data – Frequently asked questions](#).

Trend-cycle estimates are included in selected charts as a complement to the seasonally adjusted series. These data represent a smoothed version of the seasonally adjusted time series and provide information on longer-term movements including changes in direction underlying the series. For information on trend-cycle data, see [Trend-cycle estimates – Frequently asked questions](#).

Both seasonally adjusted data and trend-cycle estimates are subject to revision as additional observations become available. These revisions could be large and could even lead to a reversal of movement, especially for reference months near the end of the series or during periods of economic disruptions.

For 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.

Some 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.

Real-time tables

Real-time tables 20-10-0054-01 and 20-10-0079-01 will be updated soon.

Next release

Data on retail trade for August will be released on October 21.

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

	July 2019	June 2020 ^r	July 2020 ^p	June to July 2020	July 2019 to July 2020
	millions of dollars			% change	
Canada	51,488	52,559	52,859	0.6	2.7
Newfoundland and Labrador	759	813	805	-1.1	6.1
Prince Edward Island	210	218	202	-7.3	-3.7
Nova Scotia	1,373	1,369	1,350	-1.4	-1.7
New Brunswick	1,085	1,165	1,164	-0.1	7.3
Quebec	10,961	11,486	11,502	0.1	4.9
Montréal	5,383	5,486	5,484	-0.0	1.9
Ontario	19,574	19,522	19,580	0.3	0.0
Toronto	8,145	7,579	7,874	3.9	-3.3
Manitoba	1,783	1,874	1,910	1.9	7.1
Saskatchewan	1,619	1,681	1,678	-0.2	3.6
Alberta	6,795	6,828	6,908	1.2	1.7
British Columbia	7,153	7,409	7,561	2.1	5.7
Vancouver	3,339	3,413	3,442	0.9	3.1
Yukon	74	72	74	3.2	0.2
Northwest Territories	63	74	77	4.9	22.3
Nunavut	40	48	47	-1.4	18.3

^r revised

^p 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

	July 2019	June 2020 ^r	July 2020 ^p	June to July 2020	July 2019 to July 2020
	millions of dollars			% change	
Total retail trade (current dollars)	51,488	52,559	52,859	0.6	2.7
Total retail trade (2012 chained dollars)	47,671	48,725	48,903	0.4	2.6
Total (current dollars) excluding motor vehicle and parts dealers	37,645	38,987	38,835	-0.4	3.2
Total (current dollars) excluding motor vehicle and parts dealers and gasoline stations	32,308	34,686	34,271	-1.2	6.1
Motor vehicle and parts dealers	13,843	13,572	14,024	3.3	1.3
New car dealers	11,088	10,466	10,758	2.8	-3.0
Used car dealers	1,026	982	1,095	11.5	6.7
Other motor vehicle dealers	873	1,218	1,258	3.2	44.1
Automotive parts, accessories and tire stores	857	905	914	1.0	6.7
Furniture and home furnishings stores	1,597	1,613	1,693	5.0	6.0
Furniture stores	1,007	1,105	1,110	0.5	10.2
Home furnishings stores	590	507	582	14.7	-1.3
Electronics and appliance stores	1,162	1,227	1,234	0.6	6.2
Building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers	3,241	3,840	3,394	-11.6	4.7
Food and beverage stores	10,819	11,978	11,730	-2.1	8.4
Supermarkets and other grocery (except convenience) stores	7,461	8,272	8,107	-2.0	8.7
Convenience stores	647	724	707	-2.4	9.3
Specialty food stores	681	742	748	0.8	9.7
Beer, wine and liquor stores	2,029	2,240	2,168	-3.2	6.8
Health and personal care stores	4,067	4,203	4,201	-0.0	3.3
Gasoline stations	5,337	4,302	4,564	6.1	-14.5
Clothing and clothing accessories stores	2,927	2,291	2,548	11.2	-12.9
Clothing stores	2,297	1,778	1,937	8.9	-15.7
Shoe stores	339	314	325	3.6	-4.1
Jewellery, luggage and leather goods stores	290	199	286	43.8	-1.4
Sporting goods, hobby, book and music stores	1,023	1,250	1,140	-8.8	11.4
General merchandise stores	6,032	6,737	6,710	-0.4	11.2
Miscellaneous store retailers	1,439	1,547	1,620	4.7	12.5
Cannabis stores ¹	106	201	232	15.2	118.4

^r revised

^p 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

	July 2019	June 2020 ^r	July 2020 ^P	June to July 2020	July 2019 to July 2020
	millions of dollars			% change	
Total retail trade at 2012 constant prices¹	47,711	48,751	48,979	0.5	2.7
Total excluding motor vehicle and parts dealers	35,788	37,290	37,181	-0.3	3.9
Total excluding motor vehicle and parts dealers and gasoline stations	30,465	32,435	32,057	-1.2	5.2
Motor vehicle and parts dealers	11,923	11,461	11,798	2.9	-1.0
New car dealers	9,530	8,794	8,998	2.3	-5.6
Used car dealers	874	816	908	11.3	3.9
Other motor vehicle dealers	716	1,015	1,050	3.4	46.6
Automotive parts, accessories and tire stores	802	835	842	0.8	5.0
Furniture and home furnishings stores	1,543	1,584	1,633	3.1	5.8
Furniture stores	985	1,111	1,093	-1.6	11.0
Home furnishings stores	559	473	540	14.2	-3.4
Electronics and appliance stores	1,386	1,509	1,521	0.8	9.7
Building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers	2,900	3,381	2,977	-11.9	2.7
Food and beverage stores	9,535	10,329	10,144	-1.8	6.4
Supermarkets and other grocery (except convenience) stores	6,601	7,147	7,028	-1.7	6.5
Convenience stores	514	556	543	-2.3	5.6
Specialty food stores	586	610	624	2.3	6.5
Beer, wine and liquor stores	1,834	2,016	1,949	-3.3	6.3
Health and personal care stores	4,238	4,366	4,370	0.1	3.1
Gasoline stations	5,323	4,855	5,124	5.5	-3.7
Clothing and clothing accessories stores	2,840	2,283	2,514	10.1	-11.5
Clothing stores	2,247	1,778	1,931	8.6	-14.1
Shoe stores	331	326	328	0.6	-0.9
Jewellery, luggage and leather goods stores	262	179	256	43.0	-2.3
Sporting goods, hobby, book and music stores	1,000	1,230	1,123	-8.7	12.3
General merchandise stores	5,699	6,339	6,292	-0.7	10.4
Miscellaneous store retailers	1,324	1,415	1,484	4.9	12.1
Cannabis stores ²	97	201	232	15.4	139.2

^r revised

^P preliminary

1. Calculated using the 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

	July 2019	June 2020	July 2020	July 2020
	millions of dollars			year-over-year % change
Retail trade sales (44-453)	54,614	56,342	57,246	4.8
Electronic shopping and mail-order houses sales (45411)	1,320	2,079	1,832	38.8
Retail e-commerce ¹	1,737	3,413	2,836	63.2
Retail e-commerce ¹ (% of total retail trade)	3.11	5.84	4.80	...

... not applicable

1. Retail e-commerce includes e-sales from both store retailers included in the North American Industry 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](#).

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, 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).