

Retail trade, October 2020

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Retail sales edged up 0.4% to \$54.6 billion in October, marking the sixth consecutive monthly increase since the record decline in April. The sales growth was led by motor vehicle and parts dealers.

Core retail sales—which excludes gasoline stations and motor vehicle and parts dealers—edged up 0.3%, on higher sales at sporting goods, hobby, book and music stores (+11.8%), furniture and home furnishings stores (+6.6%), as well as building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers (+2.9%).

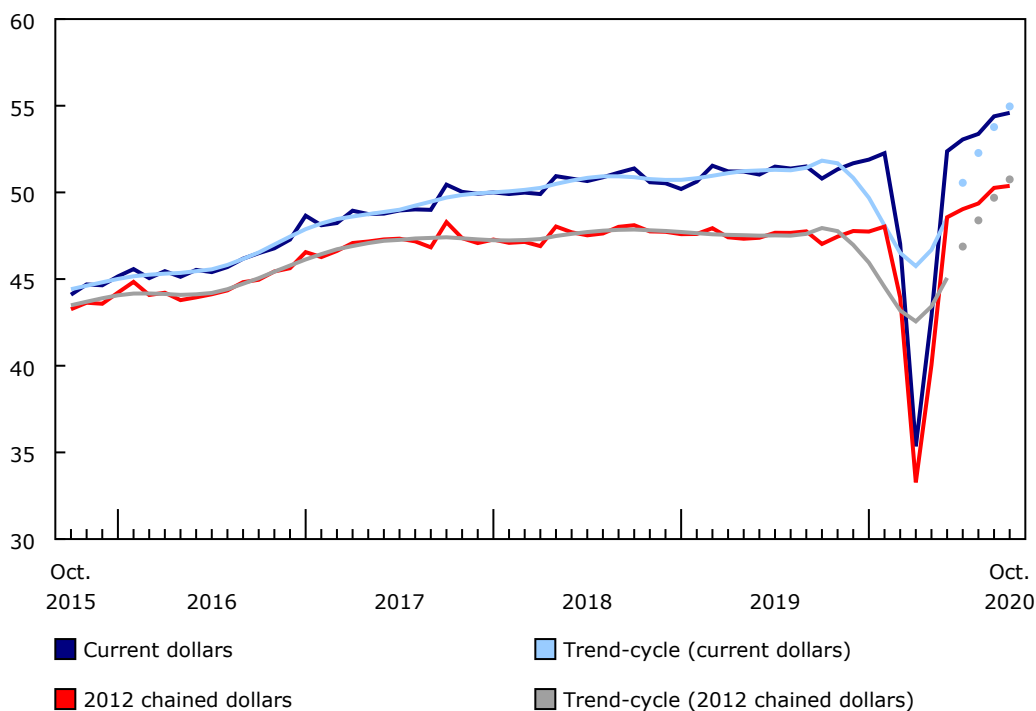
Retail sales increased in 6 of 11 subsectors, representing 50.9% of retail trade. In volume terms, sales edged up 0.2% in October.

Given the rapidly evolving economic situation, Statistics Canada is providing an advance estimate of retail sales, which suggests that sales were relatively unchanged in November. Owing to its preliminary nature, this figure will be revised.

This unofficial estimate was calculated based on responses received from 55% of companies surveyed. The average final response rate for the survey over the previous 12 months has been 87.9%.

Chart 1
Retail sales edge up in October

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](#).



Statistics Canada
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Canada

Higher sales at motor vehicle and parts dealers

Sales increased at all four store types within motor vehicle and parts dealers (+1.5%), led by new car dealers (+0.8%).

Year over year, sales of new passenger cars declined 23.2%, while new trucks, an aggregate group which includes light trucks, heavy trucks and buses, increased 4.1% from October 2019. After a 2.5% year-over-year increase in September, the value of [New Motor Vehicles](#) declined 0.7% in October, compared with the same month last year.

Sales at gasoline stations (-2.7%) declined for the first time in six months. In volume terms, sales were down 2.8%.

Core retail sales continue to rise

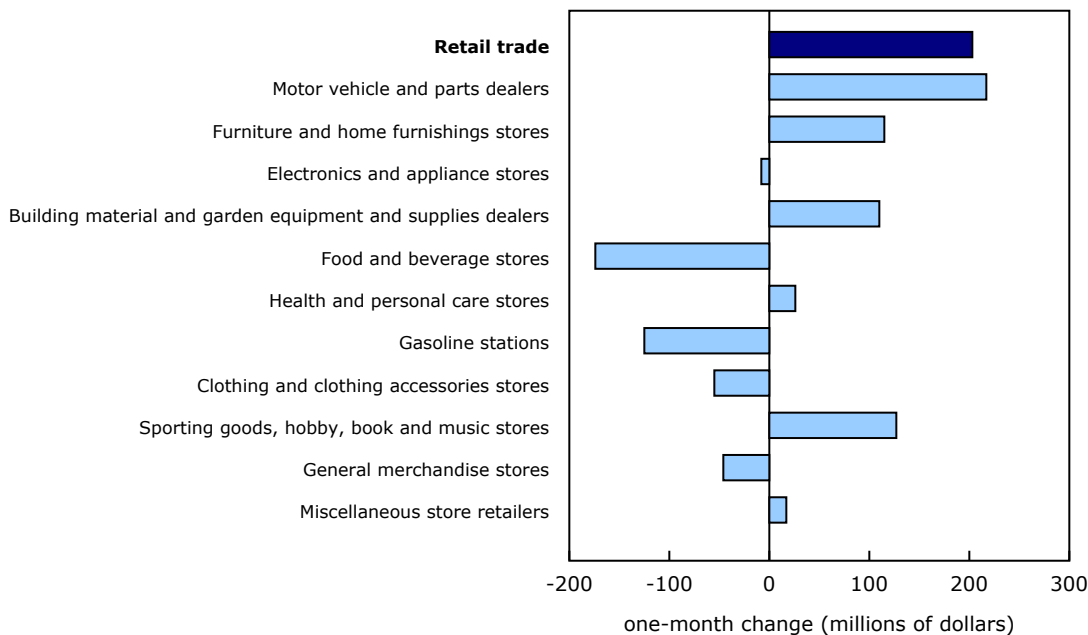
Core retail sales edged up 0.3% in October following a 2.1% increase in September.

Sporting goods, hobby, book and music stores (+11.8%) reported higher sales following three consecutive months of declines.

Sales at furniture and home furnishings stores rose for the second consecutive month, up 6.6% in October.

Sales at building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers (+2.9%) rose for the third consecutive month.

Chart 2 Sales up in 6 of 11 subsectors



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

Sales up in seven provinces

In British Columbia, sales rose 2.1%, with health and personal care stores, as well as building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers both contributing the most to the increase. In the census metropolitan area (CMA) of Vancouver, sales rose 2.8%.

Sales in Alberta rose 1.1% on higher sales at motor vehicle and parts dealers.

Sales in Ontario (-0.4%) fell for the first time since April, coinciding with a record number of COVID-19 cases and stricter public health measures within the province. The decrease was led by clothing and clothing accessories stores. In the CMA of Toronto, sales were down 1.2%.

New Brunswick (-4.3%) also reported a decline, on lower sales at general merchandise stores.

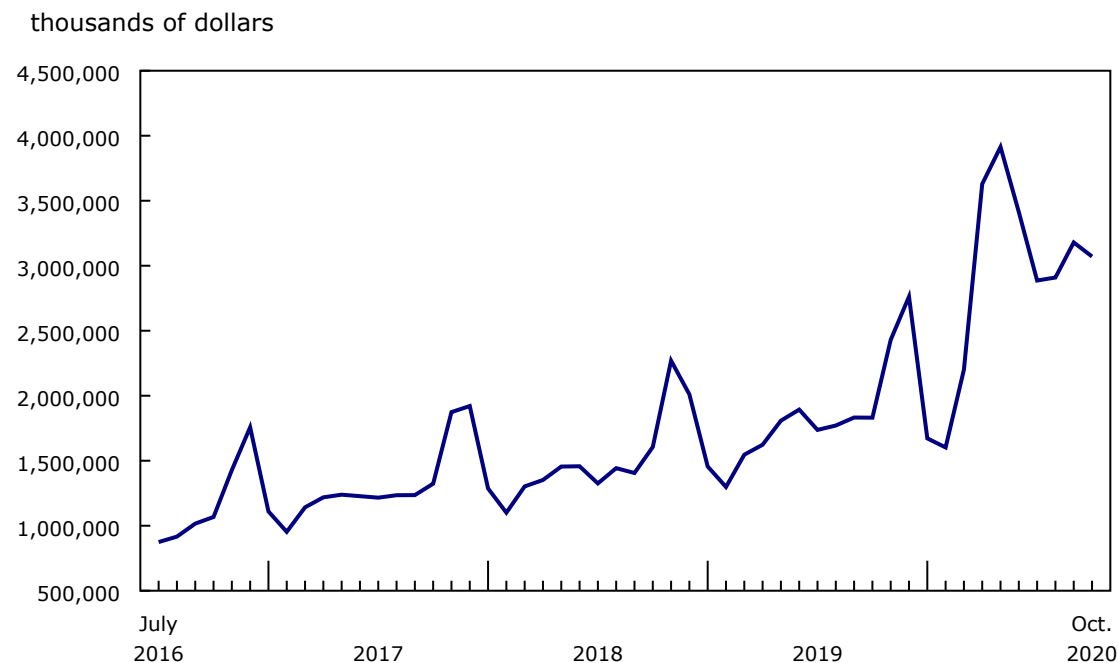
Retail e-commerce sales in Canada

On an unadjusted basis, retail e-commerce sales reached \$3.1 billion in October, accounting for 5.2% of total retail trade. The share of e-commerce sales out of total retail sales fell 0.3 percentage points from September, but was up 1.8 percentage points year over year.

Retail e-commerce sales were up by two-thirds (+67.7%) year over year in October, while total unadjusted retail sales increased 9.1%.

When adjusted for basic seasonal effects, retail e-commerce declined 5.0%.

Chart 3
Retail e-commerce decreases in October



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

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](#).

The percentage change for the advanced estimate for retail sales is calculated using seasonally adjusted data and is expressed in current dollars.

This early indicator is a special product being provided in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic to offer Canadians timely information on the retail sector. The data sources and methodology used are the exact same as those outlined in the [Monthly Retail Trade Survey](#) information page.

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.

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 November 2020 will be released on January 22, 2021.

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

	October 2019	September 2020 ^r	October 2020 ^p	September to October 2020	October 2019 to October 2020
	millions of dollars			% change	
Canada	50,800	54,387	54,590	0.4	7.5
Newfoundland and Labrador	771	793	787	-0.8	2.1
Prince Edward Island	213	228	229	0.6	7.6
Nova Scotia	1,359	1,419	1,441	1.5	6.1
New Brunswick	1,125	1,228	1,174	-4.3	4.4
Quebec	10,899	11,899	11,923	0.2	9.4
Montréal	5,293	5,599	5,569	-0.5	5.2
Ontario	18,852	20,116	20,037	-0.4	6.3
Toronto	7,877	8,193	8,098	-1.2	2.8
Manitoba	1,758	1,915	1,947	1.7	10.8
Saskatchewan	1,626	1,683	1,703	1.2	4.7
Alberta	6,800	7,031	7,107	1.1	4.5
British Columbia	7,216	7,879	8,045	2.1	11.5
Vancouver	3,337	3,622	3,723	2.8	11.6
Yukon	74	75	78	3.1	5.0
Northwest Territories	66	74	73	-1.1	11.1
Nunavut	41	47	46	-2.6	11.0

^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

	October 2019	September 2020 ^r	October 2020 ^p	September to October 2020	October 2019 to October 2020
	millions of dollars			% change	
Total retail trade (current dollars)	50,800	54,387	54,590	0.4	7.5
Total retail trade (2012 chained dollars)	47,024	50,260	50,377	0.2	7.1
Total (current dollars) excluding motor vehicle and parts dealers	37,311	39,875	39,861	-0.0	6.8
Total (current dollars) excluding motor vehicle and parts dealers and gasoline stations	32,009	35,309	35,421	0.3	10.7
Motor vehicle and parts dealers	13,489	14,512	14,729	1.5	9.2
New car dealers	10,777	11,433	11,528	0.8	7.0
Used car dealers	999	1,105	1,147	3.7	14.8
Other motor vehicle dealers	858	1,046	1,102	5.4	28.4
Automotive parts, accessories and tire stores	854	929	953	2.6	11.5
Furniture and home furnishings stores	1,570	1,744	1,859	6.6	18.4
Furniture stores	991	1,123	1,228	9.3	23.9
Home furnishings stores	579	621	631	1.6	9.0
Electronics and appliance stores	1,134	1,315	1,307	-0.6	15.2
Building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers	3,129	3,828	3,937	2.9	25.8
Food and beverage stores	10,786	11,849	11,675	-1.5	8.2
Supermarkets and other grocery (except convenience) stores	7,448	8,151	8,029	-1.5	7.8
Convenience stores	637	708	710	0.3	11.4
Specialty food stores	675	742	760	2.5	12.5
Beer, wine and liquor stores	2,025	2,249	2,176	-3.2	7.5
Health and personal care stores	3,891	4,290	4,316	0.6	10.9
Gasoline stations	5,302	4,566	4,440	-2.7	-16.3
Clothing and clothing accessories stores	2,967	2,665	2,610	-2.1	-12.0
Clothing stores	2,313	2,043	2,014	-1.4	-13.0
Shoe stores	331	317	291	-8.2	-12.1
Jewellery, luggage and leather goods stores	323	305	305	0.2	-5.4
Sporting goods, hobby, book and music stores	1,006	1,074	1,201	11.8	19.4
General merchandise stores	6,081	6,814	6,768	-0.7	11.3
Miscellaneous store retailers	1,444	1,730	1,747	1.0	20.9
Cannabis stores ¹	130	257	270	5.1	107.7

^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

	October 2019	September 2020 ^r	October 2020 ^P	September to October 2020	October 2019 to October 2020
	millions of dollars			% change	
Total retail trade at 2012 constant prices¹	47,075	50,302	50,384	0.2	7.0
Total excluding motor vehicle and parts dealers	35,451	38,106	37,975	-0.3	7.1
Total excluding motor vehicle and parts dealers and gasoline stations	30,025	33,019	33,028	0.0	10.0
Motor vehicle and parts dealers	11,624	12,196	12,409	1.7	6.8
New car dealers	9,260	9,570	9,679	1.1	4.5
Used car dealers	850	912	950	4.2	11.8
Other motor vehicle dealers	715	859	908	5.7	27.0
Automotive parts, accessories and tire stores	798	854	873	2.2	9.4
Furniture and home furnishings stores	1,505	1,663	1,772	6.6	17.7
Furniture stores	964	1,092	1,192	9.2	23.7
Home furnishings stores	540	571	580	1.6	7.4
Electronics and appliance stores	1,364	1,601	1,588	-0.8	16.4
Building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers	2,780	3,336	3,432	2.9	23.5
Food and beverage stores	9,459	10,252	10,026	-2.2	6.0
Supermarkets and other grocery (except convenience) stores	6,552	7,082	6,913	-2.4	5.5
Convenience stores	502	541	541	0.0	7.8
Specialty food stores	576	619	633	2.3	9.9
Beer, wine and liquor stores	1,830	2,010	1,938	-3.6	5.9
Health and personal care stores	4,046	4,479	4,454	-0.6	10.1
Gasoline stations	5,426	5,087	4,947	-2.8	-8.8
Clothing and clothing accessories stores	2,838	2,656	2,600	-2.1	-8.4
Clothing stores	2,222	2,071	2,040	-1.5	-8.2
Shoe stores	327	320	296	-7.5	-9.5
Jewellery, luggage and leather goods stores	289	264	264	0.0	-8.7
Sporting goods, hobby, book and music stores	980	1,056	1,195	13.2	21.9
General merchandise stores	5,733	6,393	6,336	-0.9	10.5
Miscellaneous store retailers	1,321	1,583	1,626	2.7	23.1
Cannabis stores ²	119	268	287	7.1	141.2

^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

	October 2019	September 2020	October 2020	October 2020
	millions of dollars			year-over-year % change
Retail trade sales (44-453)	52,426	55,671	56,709	8.2
Electronic shopping and mail-order houses sales (45411)	1,423	2,215	2,023	42.1
Retail e-commerce ¹	1,831	3,179	3,071	67.7
Retail e-commerce ¹ (% of total retail trade)	3.40	5.49	5.23	...

... 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).