

Retail trade, June 2021

Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time in The Daily, Friday, August 20, 2021

Retail sales were up 4.2% to \$56.2 billion in June, led by higher sales at clothing and clothing accessories stores. During the month of June, public health restrictions, which limited non-essential retail activities, were eased in many regions across the country.

Sales increased in 8 of 11 subsectors, representing 69.5% of retail trade.

Core retail sales—which exclude gasoline stations and motor vehicle and parts dealers—increased 4.6%.

In volume terms, retail sales were up 4.1% in June.

Retail sales declined 0.7% in the second quarter of 2021 after posting three consecutive increases. In volume terms, quarterly retail sales were down 0.9%.

Amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic in Canada, provincial governments eased public health restrictions in several regions across the country, which directly affected the retail sector. In light of evolving restrictions, both retailers and consumers have adapted to these business conditions.

Based on respondent feedback, 5.2% of retailers were closed at some point in June compared with 5.6% of retailers being closed one month prior. The average length of the shutdown was one day in both May and June.

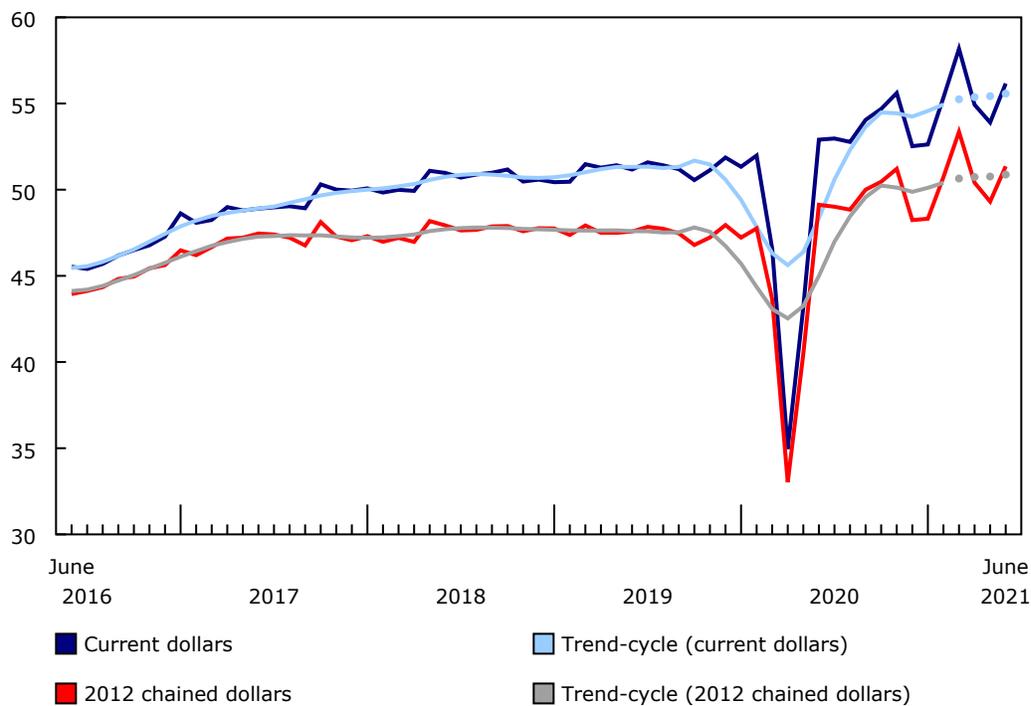
Despite these challenging times, most respondents reported their sales figures, and Statistics Canada thanks them for their continued collaboration.

Given the rapidly evolving economic situation, Statistics Canada is providing an advance estimate of retail sales, which suggests that sales decreased 1.7% in July. Owing to its preliminary nature, this figure will be revised. This unofficial estimate was calculated based on responses received from 38.2% of companies surveyed. The average final response rate for the survey over the previous 12 months has been 90.7%.



Chart 1
Retail sales increase in June

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](#).

Retail sales rise as restrictions on non-essential retail ease

Leading retail sales in June, sales at clothing and clothing accessories stores increased 49.1% following two months of declines. Gains were spread across all three store types, led by clothing stores (+55.0%), which coincided with the easing of restrictions on non-essential retailers and malls in many regions of the country. In June, 18.2% of clothing and clothing accessories stores were closed for an average of two days.

Following two consecutive decreases, sales at general merchandise stores rose 7.4%. In June, several regions began to ease restrictions on the sale of non-essential items at essential retailers.

Sales at motor vehicle and parts dealers were up 2.7% in June. Sales were led by gains at new car dealers (+3.3%), while other motor vehicle dealers (-3.9%) were the only store type in this subsector reporting a decrease.

The [New Motor Vehicle Sales Survey](#) noted that unit sales of passenger cars and trucks were 3.0% higher on a year-over-year basis. Compared with June 2019, unit sales of passenger cars and trucks were down 12.9% this month. [Prices of passenger vehicles](#) were also up year over year in June, partly attributable to the global supply chain shortage of semiconductor chips.

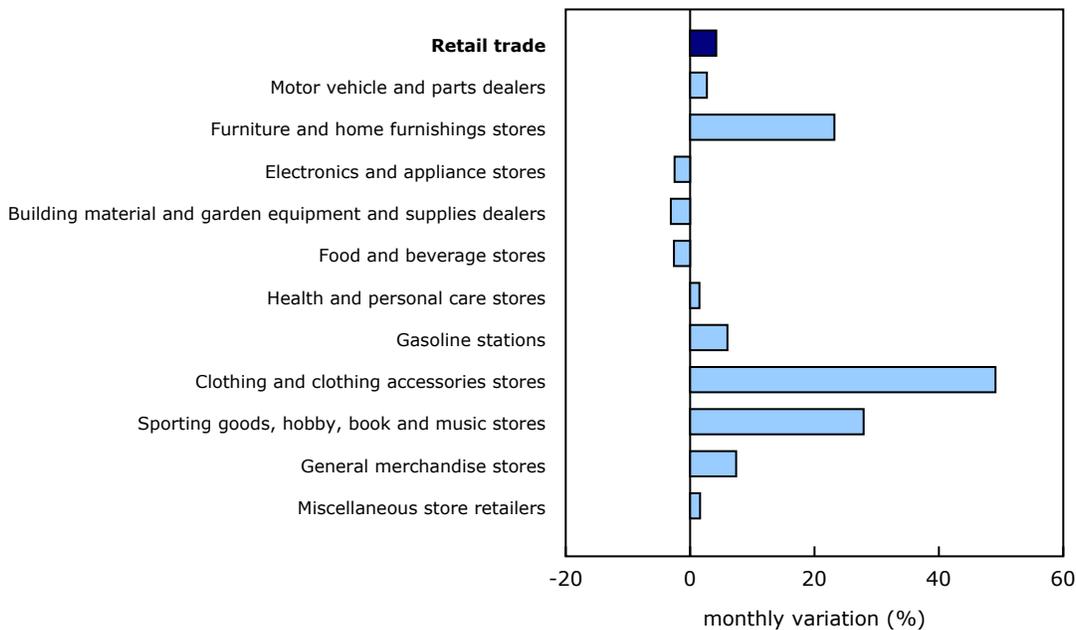
Sales at gasoline stations rose 6.0% in June, posting their strongest gain in four months. [Gasoline prices increased on a month-over-month basis](#), largely driven by higher prices from increased demand as businesses gradually reopened.

Sales at food and beverage stores and building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers decline

Sales at food and beverage stores fell 2.6%, led by declines at supermarkets and other grocery stores (-3.5%). This decrease follows growth in May that coincided with continued restrictions on food services and drinking places during the third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. In May, sales of fresh food and packaged food dry goods remained close to their elevated levels seen during the early stages of the pandemic a year earlier.

Decreasing for the third consecutive month, sales at building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers fell 3.1%. In June, 5.3% of retailers in this subsector reported being closed for at least one day.

Chart 2 Sales increase in 8 of 11 subsectors



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

Sales up in six provinces

Sales were up in six provinces in June, with Ontario accounting for the majority of the gain.

In Ontario, sales rose 9.8% on higher sales at clothing and clothing accessories stores and general merchandise stores. The increase coincides with the easing of COVID-19 restrictions and the reopening of non-essential retailers. This was the second largest monthly increase since June 2020, following the increase of 12.7% seen in March 2021. In the Toronto census metropolitan area, sales were up 11.3%.

Nova Scotia (+16.3%), posted their largest increase since a year prior in June 2020, offsetting the lower sales seen in New Brunswick (-2.0%), Newfoundland and Labrador (-2.6%) and Prince Edward Island (-1.4%).

Retail e-commerce in Canada

On a seasonally adjusted basis, retail e-commerce sales fell 9.5% in June.

On an unadjusted basis, retail e-commerce sales were up 6.3% year over year to \$3.6 billion in June, accounting for 5.8% of total retail trade. With the increased ability to purchase non-essential items in store, the share of e-commerce sales out of total retail sales fell by 1.2 percentage points in June compared with May.

Note to readers

With this release, sales, price, and volume data in table 20-10-0078-01 have been revised back to January 2017 in order to incorporate updated weights based on annual revisions to the Retail Commodity Survey and an updated Consumer Price Index basket. Starting with the January 2021 reference period, retail sales expressed in constant dollars for most industries are deflated using industry-based price indexes from the Retail Services Price Index.

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 advance estimate of 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 exactly the 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 extensive and could even lead to a reversal of movement, especially for the reference months near the end of the series or during periods of economic disruption.

Seasonally adjusted estimates for cannabis store retailers are presented in unadjusted form since 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 does not have a storefront. These businesses are commonly referred to as pure-play Internet retailers and are classified under the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code 45411—electronic shopping and mail-order houses. The second type has a storefront and is commonly referred to as a brick-and-mortar retailer. If the online operations of a brick-and-mortar retailer are separately managed, they, too, are classified under NAICS code 45411.

Some common e-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 July will be released on September 23, 2021.

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

	June 2020	May 2021 ^r	June 2021 ^p	May to June 2021	June 2020 to June 2021
	millions of dollars			% change	
Canada	52,901	53,899	56,161	4.2	6.2
Newfoundland and Labrador	831	839	818	-2.6	-1.6
Prince Edward Island	221	249	245	-1.4	11.2
Nova Scotia	1,380	1,362	1,583	16.3	14.7
New Brunswick	1,172	1,276	1,250	-2.0	6.6
Quebec	11,808	12,347	12,521	1.4	6.0
Montréal	5,654	5,741	5,879	2.4	4.0
Ontario	19,572	18,163	19,942	9.8	1.9
Toronto	7,772	7,104	7,906	11.3	1.7
Manitoba	1,859	1,987	2,007	1.0	8.0
Saskatchewan	1,677	1,824	1,806	-1.0	7.7
Alberta	6,826	7,374	7,493	1.6	9.8
British Columbia	7,363	8,278	8,294	0.2	12.6
Vancouver	3,315	3,882	3,943	1.6	18.9
Yukon	71	80	77	-3.3	9.0
Northwest Territories	73	73	76	4.5	5.2
Nunavut	48	46	47	0.6	-3.1

^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

	June 2020	May 2021 ^r	June 2021 ^p	May to June 2021	June 2020 to June 2021
	millions of dollars			% change	
Total retail trade (current dollars)	52,901	53,899	56,161	4.2	6.2
Total retail trade (2012 chained dollars)	49,122	49,310	51,356	4.1	4.5
Total (current dollars) excluding motor vehicle and parts dealers	39,025	39,409	41,279	4.7	5.8
Total (current dollars) excluding motor vehicle and parts dealers and gasoline stations	34,732	34,416	35,987	4.6	3.6
Motor vehicle and parts dealers	13,876	14,490	14,882	2.7	7.2
New car dealers	10,749	11,212	11,578	3.3	7.7
Used car dealers	990	1,140	1,174	3.0	18.5
Other motor vehicle dealers	1,222	1,202	1,155	-3.9	-5.6
Automotive parts, accessories and tire stores	915	936	975	4.2	6.6
Furniture and home furnishings stores	1,644	1,508	1,858	23.2	13.0
Furniture stores	1,116	987	1,176	19.2	5.4
Home furnishings stores	528	521	682	30.9	29.0
Electronics and appliance stores	1,239	1,344	1,310	-2.5	5.7
Building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers	3,859	4,098	3,972	-3.1	2.9
Food and beverage stores	12,000	12,187	11,865	-2.6	-1.1
Supermarkets and other grocery (except convenience) stores	8,340	8,485	8,186	-3.5	-1.9
Convenience stores	710	702	708	1.0	-0.2
Specialty food stores	715	755	678	-10.3	-5.1
Beer, wine and liquor stores	2,235	2,245	2,293	2.1	2.6
Health and personal care stores	4,121	4,209	4,270	1.5	3.6
Gasoline stations	4,293	4,994	5,292	6.0	23.3
Clothing and clothing accessories stores	2,296	1,750	2,609	49.1	13.6
Clothing stores	1,780	1,319	2,044	55.0	14.8
Shoe stores	320	216	304	40.7	-5.1
Jewellery, luggage and leather goods stores	195	215	261	21.3	33.7
Sporting goods, hobby, book and music stores	1,238	955	1,221	27.9	-1.3
General merchandise stores	6,785	6,565	7,052	7.4	3.9
Miscellaneous store retailers	1,550	1,800	1,829	1.6	18.0
Cannabis stores ¹	201	313	319	1.7	58.5

^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

	June 2020	May 2021 ^r	June 2021 ^P	May to June 2021	June 2020 to June 2021
	millions of dollars			% change	
Total retail trade at 2012 constant prices¹	49,132	49,255	51,422	4.4	4.7
Total excluding motor vehicle and parts dealers	37,395	37,074	38,919	5.0	4.1
Total excluding motor vehicle and parts dealers and gasoline stations	32,506	32,009	33,617	5.0	3.4
Motor vehicle and parts dealers	11,737	12,181	12,503	2.6	6.5
New car dealers	9,054	9,346	9,641	3.2	6.5
Used car dealers	825	941	966	2.7	17.1
Other motor vehicle dealers	1,014	1,039	1,006	-3.2	-0.8
Automotive parts, accessories and tire stores	844	854	890	4.2	5.5
Furniture and home furnishings stores	1,625	1,396	1,704	22.1	4.9
Furniture stores	1,133	925	1,099	18.8	-3.0
Home furnishings stores	492	471	606	28.7	23.2
Electronics and appliance stores	1,510	1,780	1,765	-0.8	16.9
Building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers	3,389	3,509	3,371	-3.9	-0.5
Food and beverage stores	10,368	10,544	10,260	-2.7	-1.0
Supermarkets and other grocery (except convenience) stores	7,222	7,400	7,143	-3.5	-1.1
Convenience stores	547	534	538	0.7	-1.6
Specialty food stores	586	624	557	-10.7	-4.9
Beer, wine and liquor stores	2,012	1,986	2,022	1.8	0.5
Health and personal care stores	4,299	4,329	4,395	1.5	2.2
Gasoline stations	4,889	5,065	5,302	4.7	8.4
Clothing and clothing accessories stores	2,310	1,726	2,563	48.5	11.0
Clothing stores	1,805	1,319	2,039	54.6	13.0
Shoe stores	333	227	307	35.2	-7.8
Jewellery, luggage and leather goods stores	172	180	218	21.1	26.7
Sporting goods, hobby, book and music stores	1,220	939	1,193	27.1	-2.2
General merchandise stores	6,368	6,138	6,698	9.1	5.2
Miscellaneous store retailers	1,417	1,648	1,667	1.2	17.6
Cannabis stores ²	201	338	344	1.8	71.1

^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

	June 2020	May 2021	June 2021	June 2021
	millions of dollars			year-over-year change (%)
Retail trade sales (44-453)	56,631	58,177	60,548	6.9
Electronic shopping and mail-order houses sales (45411)	2,144	2,259	2,174	1.4
Retail e-commerce ¹	3,409	4,251	3,625	6.3
Retail e-commerce ¹ (% of total retail trade)	5.8	7.0	5.8	...

... not applicable

1. Retail e-commerce includes e-sales from both store retailers included in North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes 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).