

Retail Commodity Survey, June 2021

Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time in *The Daily*, Wednesday, September 8, 2021

Retail sales reached \$60.5 billion in June, an increase of 6.9% compared with the same month a year earlier. Higher sales were reported in 15 of the 19 commodity categories.

In July, the advance estimate provided by the [Monthly Retail Trade Survey](#) suggests that unadjusted total retail sales increased by 4.1%. Because of its preliminary nature, this figure will be revised.

Strong automotive sales

For the fourth consecutive month, sales of motor vehicles posted the largest gain among all categories, increasing 10.8% in June compared with the same month a year earlier. Growth in automotive sales was propelled by higher sales of new motor vehicles (+13.5%), as new minivans, sport utility vehicles and light trucks (+15.2%) and new passenger automobiles (+7.2%) posted sales gains. Sales of used motor vehicles increased 7.1% from the same month in 2020.

Sales of automotive fuels continued to increase in June, rising 36.1% from a year earlier. These gains were buoyed by [increasing prices at the pump](#), pushing June's automotive fuels sales to within 0.7% of their pre-pandemic level from the same month in 2019.

Discretionary spending on the rise

Canadians continued to spend on tools and projects related to home improvement in June, with sales of hardware, tools, and renovation and lawn and garden products increasing 5.9% from the same month a year earlier. The largest contributor to sales growth in this category was lumber and other renovation materials and supplies (+12.1%), followed by floor coverings and tiles (+29.2%).

Increased spending on many non-essential retail products was observed as restrictions related to the third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic began to ease across the country. Year-over-year gains were seen in sales of clothing (+12.5%); infant care, personal and beauty products (+8.1%); and home furniture, furnishings, housewares, appliances and electronics (+2.2%).

Recreational vehicle sales slide

For the first time since May 2020, recreational vehicles saw sales decline year over year, resulting in the largest decrease in dollar terms. The top commodities that contributed to a 9.8% decline in sales in this category were new recreational boats (-11.4%), and new snowmobiles and personal off-road vehicles (-14.3%).

Increasing restaurant sales take a bite out of retail food spending

With restrictions related to dining out being eased across the country, food retailers saw declining sales (-0.6%) in June compared with the same month a year earlier, as [consumers returned to restaurants and patios](#) to enjoy the summer weather. Sales of fresh food decreased 0.8%, with the largest contributors to the decline being fresh fruit and vegetables (-3.2%), and fresh meat and poultry (-2.9%).

Despite lower sales of food, sales of soft drinks and alcoholic beverages posted a 6.1% increase compared with June 2020. Sales of alcoholic beverages (+6.2%) led the gains.



Table 1
Sales by type of commodity, all retail stores – Seasonally unadjusted

	June 2020 ^r	May 2021 ^r	June 2021 ^P	June 2020 to June 2021
	millions of dollars			% change
Total commodities, retail trade commissions and miscellaneous services	56,631,376	58,177,075	60,547,885	6.9
Food	10,111,891	10,435,471	10,050,625	-0.6
Soft drinks and alcoholic beverages	3,627,884	3,475,652	3,848,359	6.1
Cannabis products	201,108	313,187	318,666	58.5
Clothing	2,106,980	1,514,170	2,370,244	12.5
Footwear	595,624	426,313	618,560	3.9
Jewellery and watches, luggage and briefcases	271,546	319,683	352,652	29.9
Home furniture, furnishings, housewares, appliances and electronics	4,919,823	4,465,688	5,027,643	2.2
Sporting and leisure products (except publications, audio and video recordings, and game software)	1,350,221	1,063,897	1,404,925	4.1
Publications	200,792	167,485	197,747	-1.5
Audio and video recordings, and game software	59,850	44,173	42,614	-28.8
Motor vehicles	11,495,548	12,227,765	12,732,933	10.8
Recreational vehicles	1,623,372	1,614,250	1,464,074	-9.8
Motor vehicle parts, accessories and supplies	2,081,610	2,106,167	2,176,820	4.6
Automotive and household fuels	3,355,836	4,378,911	4,561,930	35.9
Home health products	3,243,252	3,322,720	3,403,572	4.9
Infant care, personal and beauty products	1,207,718	1,221,560	1,305,570	8.1
Hardware, tools, and renovation and lawn and garden products	5,707,692	6,404,543	6,043,944	5.9
Miscellaneous products	2,743,070	2,900,367	2,817,311	2.7
Total retail trade commissions and miscellaneous services	1,727,560	1,775,074	1,809,696	4.8

^r revised

^P preliminary

Note(s): Data may not add up to totals because of rounding.

Source(s): Table 20-10-0017-01.

Note to readers

The Retail Commodity Survey collects national-level retail sales data, by commodity, from the same businesses surveyed in the Monthly Retail Trade Survey. No data have been seasonally adjusted. All percentage changes are year over year.

New retail commodity data for e-commerce now available

Estimates from the [Retail Commodity Survey](#) are now available for the electronic shopping and mail-order houses industry (North American Industry Classification System [NAICS] code 454110).

E-commerce figures from brick-and-mortar retailers are included with the retailer's commodity sales. If the online operations of a brick-and-mortar retailer are separately managed, they are classified under NAICS code 45411 (electronic shopping and mail-order houses). Businesses commonly referred to as pure-play Internet retailers are also classified under NAICS code 45411. Total retail sales figures do not include sales from retailers classified under NAICS code 45411.

Available tables: table [20-10-0017-01](#).

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [2008](#).

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).