

Retail trade, October 2021

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Retail sales were up 1.6% to \$57.6 billion in October. The increase was led by higher sales at motor vehicle and parts dealers (+2.2%), as new car dealer sales (+2.8%) rebounded.

Sales increased in 7 of 11 subsectors, representing 59.9% of retail trade.

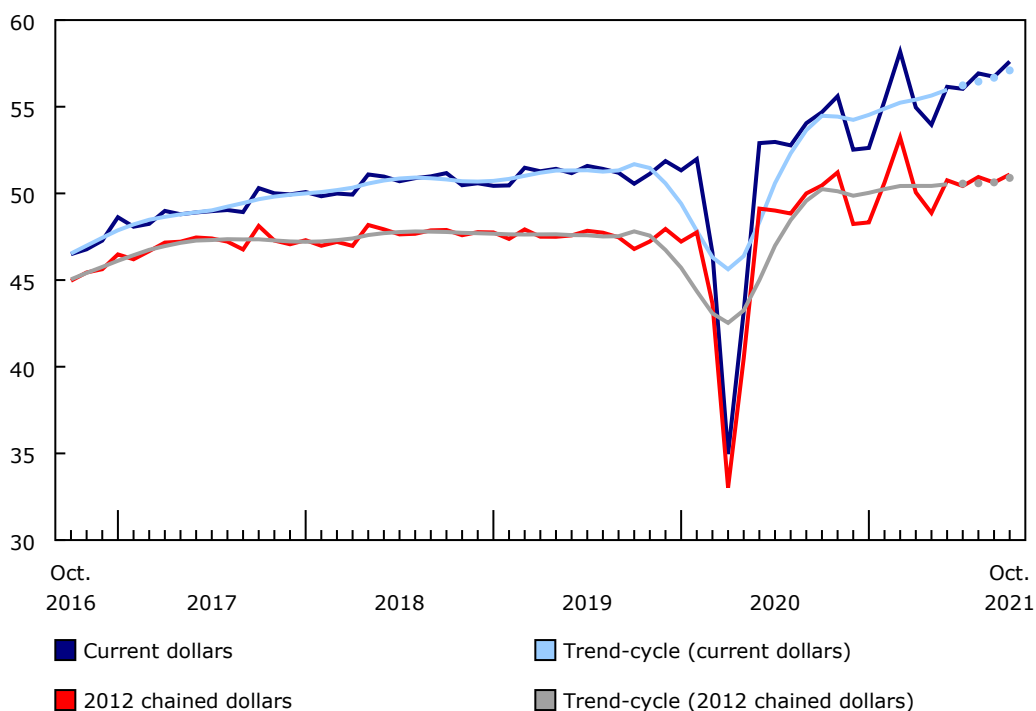
Core retail sales—which exclude gasoline stations and motor vehicle and parts dealers—increased 1.5%.

In volume terms, retail sales were up 0.9% in October.

Given the rapidly evolving economic situation, Statistics Canada is providing an advance estimate of retail sales, which suggests that sales increased 1.2% in November. Owing to its early nature, this figure will be revised. This unofficial estimate was calculated based on responses received from 40.9% of companies surveyed. The average final response rate for the survey over the previous 12 months has been 90.2%.

Chart 1
Retail sales increase 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 previous three months. For more information, see the Note to readers.

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



Higher sales at motor vehicle and parts dealers lead increase in retail sales

Sales at motor vehicle and parts dealers were up 2.2% in October. The increase was led by higher sales at new car dealers (+2.8%) as sales rebounded from two consecutive months of declines. The increase coincided with higher sales in the automotive subsectors of both manufacturing and wholesale trade in October. The effects of semiconductor chip shortages on motor vehicle supply inputs were less pronounced in October than in September.

Receipts at gasoline stations edged down 0.1% in October. In volume terms, sales were down 3.2%. The Consumer Price Index noted a 5.0% increase in gasoline prices in October.

Core retail sales increase on higher sales at general merchandise stores

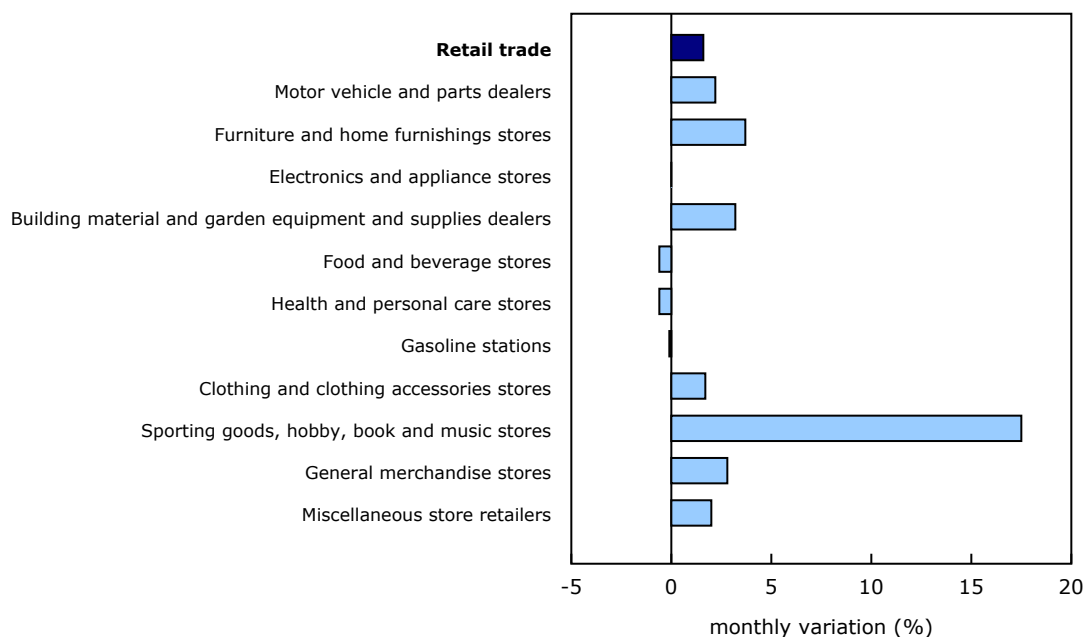
Core retail sales were up 1.5% in October. The increase was led by higher sales at general merchandise stores (+2.8%) as sales rose for a fifth consecutive month.

Sales at sporting goods, hobby, book and music stores (+17.5%) were up for a second month in a row. The increase coincided with the continued resumption of many recreational and school-based sporting leagues in the fall.

Also contributing to the increase were higher sales at building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers (+3.2%). Sales were up for a third consecutive month, following four months of declines from April to July 2021.

Lower receipts were recorded at food and beverage stores (-0.6%). The decline was primarily due to weaker sales at supermarkets and other grocery stores (-0.8%) and to a lesser extent, lower sales at convenience stores (-1.9%).

Chart 2 Sales increase in 7 of 11 subsectors in October



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

Sales up in nine provinces

Retail sales were up in nine provinces in October, led by higher sales in Ontario (+1.9%). The increase in Ontario was largely driven by higher sales at motor vehicle and parts dealers. Total retail sales were up 2.2% in the census metropolitan area (CMA) of Toronto.

Alberta (+3.8%) posted the second largest increase to retail sales in October. This was the largest increase in the province since January 2021 and was also the result of higher sales at motor vehicle and parts dealers.

Quebec posted the lone provincial decline, with sales down 0.2% in October. In the CMA of Montréal, sales declined 0.3%.

Retail e-commerce in Canada

On a seasonally adjusted basis, retail e-commerce sales fell 0.9% in October.

On an unadjusted basis, retail e-commerce sales were up 4.2% year over year to \$3.3 billion in October, accounting for 5.5% of total retail trade. The share of e-commerce sales out of total retail sales increased 0.1 percentage points compared with October 2020.

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 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 on 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.

Find more statistics on [retail trade](#).

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 2021 will be released on January 21, 2022.

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

	October 2020	September 2021 ^r	October 2021 ^p	September to October 2021	October 2020 to October 2021
	millions of dollars			% change	
Canada	54,686	56,728	57,608	1.6	5.3
Newfoundland and Labrador	780	856	863	0.8	10.6
Prince Edward Island	234	251	277	10.4	18.4
Nova Scotia	1,451	1,620	1,621	0.1	11.7
New Brunswick	1,168	1,264	1,281	1.4	9.7
Quebec	12,182	12,641	12,613	-0.2	3.5
Montréal	5,700	5,916	5,901	-0.3	3.5
Ontario	19,905	20,414	20,797	1.9	4.5
Toronto	7,495	8,210	8,388	2.2	11.9
Manitoba	1,914	1,982	2,074	4.6	8.4
Saskatchewan	1,691	1,788	1,853	3.7	9.6
Alberta	7,203	7,485	7,767	3.8	7.8
British Columbia	7,957	8,234	8,262	0.3	3.8
Vancouver	3,504	3,828	3,884	1.5	10.8
Yukon	80	78	80	1.7	-0.1
Northwest Territories	75	70	74	5.3	-0.9
Nunavut	46	45	46	3.0	0.2

^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 2020	September 2021 ^r	October 2021 ^p	September to October 2021	October 2020 to October 2021
	millions of dollars			% change	
Total retail trade (current dollars)	54,686	56,728	57,608	1.6	5.3
Total retail trade (2012 chained dollars)	50,460	50,627	51,089	0.9	1.2
Total (current dollars) excluding motor vehicle and parts dealers	40,195	42,136	42,690	1.3	6.2
Total (current dollars) excluding motor vehicle and parts dealers and gasoline stations	35,812	36,460	37,021	1.5	3.4
Motor vehicle and parts dealers	14,491	14,591	14,918	2.2	2.9
New car dealers	11,300	11,294	11,612	2.8	2.8
Used car dealers	1,126	1,230	1,265	2.9	12.4
Other motor vehicle dealers	1,090	1,067	1,098	2.9	0.7
Automotive parts, accessories and tire stores	975	1,001	944	-5.7	-3.2
Furniture and home furnishings stores	1,834	1,839	1,907	3.7	4.0
Furniture stores	1,204	1,172	1,200	2.4	-0.3
Home furnishings stores	630	667	707	6.0	12.3
Electronics and appliance stores	1,305	1,215	1,215	-0.0	-6.9
Building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers	3,948	3,792	3,912	3.2	-0.9
Food and beverage stores	11,855	12,013	11,937	-0.6	0.7
Supermarkets and other grocery (except convenience) stores	8,296	8,328	8,258	-0.8	-0.5
Convenience stores	696	691	678	-1.9	-2.5
Specialty food stores	720	734	735	0.2	2.1
Beer, wine and liquor stores	2,144	2,260	2,265	0.2	5.7
Health and personal care stores	4,491	4,294	4,267	-0.6	-5.0
Gasoline stations	4,384	5,676	5,669	-0.1	29.3
Clothing and clothing accessories stores	2,606	3,079	3,130	1.7	20.1
Clothing stores	2,029	2,392	2,468	3.2	21.6
Shoe stores	279	340	328	-3.6	17.6
Jewellery, luggage and leather goods stores	299	347	335	-3.6	12.1
Sporting goods, hobby, book and music stores	1,206	1,061	1,246	17.5	3.3
General merchandise stores	6,849	7,268	7,469	2.8	9.1
Miscellaneous store retailers	1,717	1,899	1,937	2.0	12.8
Cannabis stores ¹	268	354	364	2.8	35.7

^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, at 2012 constant prices, by industry – Seasonally adjusted

	October 2020	September 2021 ^r	October 2021 ^P	September to October 2021	October 2020 to October 2021
	millions of dollars			% change	
Total retail trade at 2012 constant prices¹	50,518	50,812	51,266	0.9	1.5
Total excluding motor vehicle and parts dealers	38,310	38,867	39,111	0.6	2.1
Total excluding motor vehicle and parts dealers and gasoline stations	33,454	33,411	33,829	1.3	1.1
Motor vehicle and parts dealers	12,208	11,945	12,155	1.8	-0.4
New car dealers	9,480	9,152	9,383	2.5	-1.0
Used car dealers	935	990	1,021	3.1	9.2
Other motor vehicle dealers	901	899	910	1.2	1.0
Automotive parts, accessories and tire stores	893	904	843	-6.7	-5.6
Furniture and home furnishings stores	1,750	1,684	1,745	3.6	-0.3
Furniture stores	1,173	1,087	1,111	2.2	-5.3
Home furnishings stores	577	597	634	6.2	9.9
Electronics and appliance stores	1,602	1,541	1,542	0.1	-3.7
Building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers	3,419	3,101	3,185	2.7	-6.8
Food and beverage stores	10,186	10,130	10,020	-1.1	-1.6
Supermarkets and other grocery (except convenience) stores	7,153	7,032	6,935	-1.4	-3.0
Convenience stores	527	520	508	-2.3	-3.6
Specialty food stores	597	590	583	-1.2	-2.3
Beer, wine and liquor stores	1,909	1,989	1,995	0.3	4.5
Health and personal care stores	4,687	4,496	4,472	-0.5	-4.6
Gasoline stations	4,856	5,456	5,282	-3.2	8.8
Clothing and clothing accessories stores	2,615	2,988	3,038	1.7	16.2
Clothing stores	2,074	2,363	2,429	2.8	17.1
Shoe stores	286	350	344	-1.7	20.3
Jewellery, luggage and leather goods stores	255	274	264	-3.6	3.5
Sporting goods, hobby, book and music stores	1,204	1,050	1,225	16.7	1.7
General merchandise stores	6,408	6,685	6,830	2.2	6.6
Miscellaneous store retailers	1,585	1,738	1,772	2.0	11.8
Cannabis stores ²	286	409	422	3.2	47.6

^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 2020	September 2021	October 2021	October 2021
	millions of dollars			year-over-year change (%)
Retail trade sales (44-453)	56,934	57,634	58,967	3.6
Electronic shopping and mail-order houses sales (45411)	2,078	2,238	2,297	10.5
Retail e-commerce ¹	3,211	3,244	3,347	4.2
Retail e-commerce ¹ (% of total retail trade)	5.4	5.4	5.5	...

... 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; infostats@statcan.gc.ca) or Media Relations (statcan.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.statcan@statcan.gc.ca).