

Retail trade, March 2022

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Retail sales were virtually unchanged in March. Sales were up in 10 of 11 subsectors, led by higher sales at gasoline stations (+7.4%). Lower sales at motor vehicle and parts dealers (-6.4%) erased the gains observed in the remaining subsectors.

Sales were up in 10 of 11 subsectors, representing 75.0% of retail trade.

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

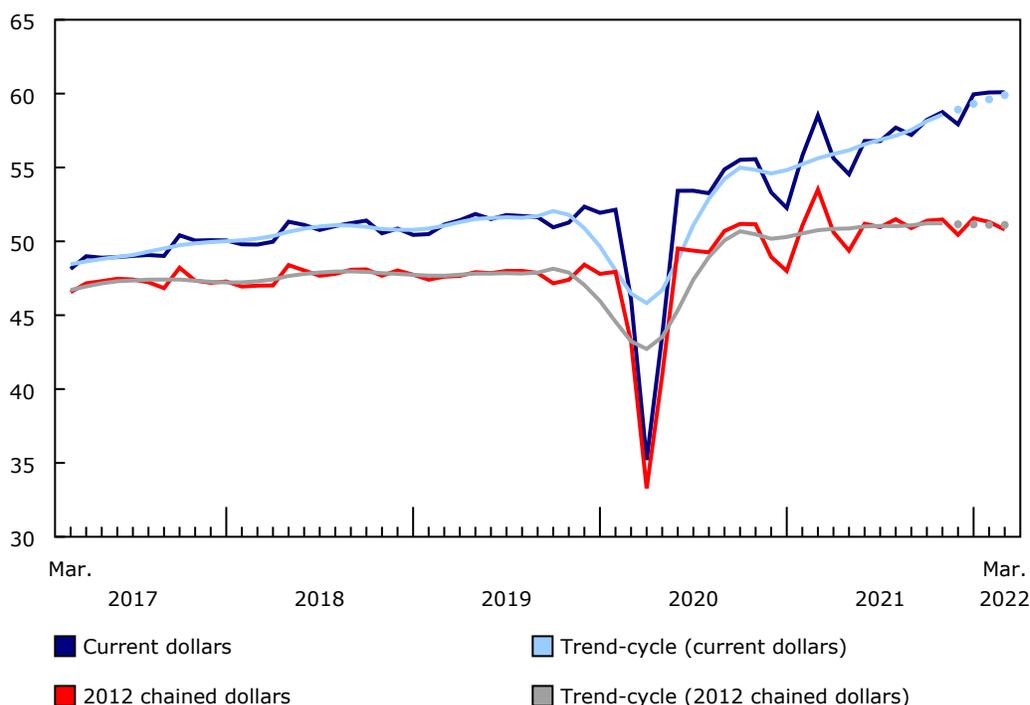
In volume terms, retail sales were down 1.0% in March.

Retail sales were up 3.0% in the first quarter of 2022. This was the largest quarterly increase since the third quarter of 2020. In volume terms, quarterly sales edged up 0.2%.

Given the continually evolving economic situation, Statistics Canada is providing an advance estimate of retail sales, which suggests that sales increased 0.8% in April 2022. Owing to its early nature, this figure will be revised. This unofficial estimate was calculated based on responses received from 54.3% of companies surveyed. The final average response rate for the survey over the previous 12 months has been 92.1%.

Chart 1
Retail sales virtually unchanged in March

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](#).



Sales at gasoline stations rise while sales at motor vehicle and parts dealers decline

Receipts at gasoline stations were up 7.4% in March. This was the third consecutive increase and tenth gain in the last 11 months. In volume terms, sales were up 3.1%. [Gasoline prices rose 11.8%](#) on a monthly basis, partly due to uncertainty surrounding supply following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Sales fell 6.4% at motor vehicle and parts dealers, led by lower sales at new car dealers (-5.9%). This was the largest decline at motor vehicle and parts dealers since sales plunged 42.8% at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in April 2020. The Bank of Canada's Monetary Policy Report noted that semiconductor chip shortages are continuing to impact production and prices for motor vehicles. The report also noted that while consumption growth for most goods is expected to moderate, spending on motor vehicles should pick up as supply chain shortages ease.

Core retail sales rise

Leading the increase in core retail were higher sales at building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers (+3.7%). Sales were up for the seventh time in the last eight months.

Receipts rose 0.9% at food and beverage stores, led by higher sales at supermarkets and other grocery stores (+1.6%). The Consumer Price Index noted that food prices continued to rise in March, up 8.7% from the previous year. Higher input prices and transportation costs have continued to impact grocery prices.

Sales were also up at miscellaneous store retailers (+5.9%) and clothing and clothing accessories stores (+2.2%).

Chart 2
Sales increase in 10 of the 11 subsectors in March



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

Sales increase in four provinces

Retail sales were up in four provinces in March, led by higher sales in Alberta (+1.8%). Higher sales at gasoline stations led the gain in this province.

Sales rose 0.3% in Ontario, also on higher sales at gasoline stations. In contrast, sales edged down 0.3% in the census metropolitan area (CMA) of Toronto.

In March, lower sales were observed in Quebec (-0.8%), British Columbia (-0.5%) and Saskatchewan (-1.6%).

Retail e-commerce sales in Canada

On a seasonally adjusted basis, retail e-commerce sales were down 1.9% in March.

On an unadjusted basis, retail e-commerce sales fell 24.6% year over year to \$3.0 billion in March, accounting for 4.9% of total retail trade. The share of e-commerce sales out of total retail sales fell 1.9 percentage points compared with March 2021.

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 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 no seasonal pattern has been 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 the Bank of Canada Monetary Policy Report, please consult [the report here](#).

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 April will be released on June 21, 2022.

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

	March 2021	February 2022 ^r	March 2022 ^p	February to March 2022	March 2021 to March 2022
	millions of dollars			% change	
Canada	58,523	60,078	60,093	0.0	2.7
Newfoundland and Labrador	857	886	896	1.1	4.6
Prince Edward Island	246	257	255	-0.6	3.8
Nova Scotia	1,565	1,648	1,619	-1.8	3.4
New Brunswick	1,247	1,325	1,325	-0.0	6.2
Quebec	12,967	13,678	13,573	-0.8	4.7
Montréal	6,155	6,670	6,591	-1.2	7.1
Ontario	21,911	22,046	22,118	0.3	0.9
Toronto	8,614	9,641	9,610	-0.3	11.6
Manitoba	2,091	2,093	2,100	0.3	0.4
Saskatchewan	1,845	2,019	1,987	-1.6	7.7
Alberta	7,370	7,618	7,752	1.8	5.2
British Columbia	8,217	8,309	8,267	-0.5	0.6
Vancouver	3,752	4,017	3,986	-0.8	6.2
Yukon	81	83	85	2.4	4.4
Northwest Territories	79	68	70	3.0	-11.3
Nunavut	46	48	46	-2.7	1.4

^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

	March 2021	February 2022 ^r	March 2022 ^p	February to March 2022	March 2021 to March 2022
	millions of dollars			% change	
Total retail trade (current dollars)	58,523	60,078	60,093	0.0	2.7
Total retail trade (2012 chained dollars)	53,505	51,311	50,801	-1.0	-5.1
Total (current dollars) excluding motor vehicle and parts dealers	43,058	44,033	45,081	2.4	4.7
Total (current dollars) excluding motor vehicle and parts dealers and gasoline stations	37,960	37,767	38,350	1.5	1.0
Motor vehicle and parts dealers	15,465	16,045	15,012	-6.4	-2.9
New car dealers	11,939	12,458	11,720	-5.9	-1.8
Used car dealers	1,268	1,311	1,105	-15.7	-12.9
Other motor vehicle dealers	1,209	1,199	1,115	-7.0	-7.8
Automotive parts, accessories and tire stores	1,049	1,078	1,072	-0.6	2.2
Furniture and home furnishings stores	1,963	1,942	1,980	2.0	0.9
Furniture stores	1,285	1,229	1,256	2.3	-2.2
Home furnishings stores	678	713	724	1.5	6.8
Electronics and appliance stores	1,492	1,311	1,331	1.6	-10.7
Building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers	4,976	4,431	4,595	3.7	-7.7
Food and beverage stores	12,114	11,941	12,054	0.9	-0.5
Supermarkets and other grocery (except convenience) stores	8,407	8,249	8,381	1.6	-0.3
Convenience stores	741	691	673	-2.7	-9.2
Specialty food stores	680	737	723	-2.0	6.2
Beer, wine and liquor stores	2,286	2,263	2,277	0.6	-0.4
Health and personal care stores	4,382	4,402	4,436	0.8	1.2
Gasoline stations	5,098	6,265	6,732	7.4	32.1
Clothing and clothing accessories stores	2,753	3,089	3,157	2.2	14.7
Clothing stores	2,114	2,427	2,478	2.1	17.2
Shoe stores	328	312	323	3.5	-1.4
Jewellery, luggage and leather goods stores	311	349	356	1.9	14.5
Sporting goods, hobby, book and music stores	1,338	1,216	1,246	2.4	-6.9
General merchandise stores	7,126	7,563	7,568	0.1	6.2
Miscellaneous store retailers	1,816	1,873	1,983	5.9	9.2
Cannabis stores ¹	298	324	359	10.7	20.4

^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 at 2012 constant prices, by industry – Seasonally adjusted

	March 2021	February 2022 ^r	March 2022 ^p	February to March 2022	March 2021 to March 2022
	millions of dollars			% change	
Total retail trade at 2012 constant prices¹	53,517	51,367	50,934	-0.8	-4.8
Total excluding motor vehicle and parts dealers	40,422	38,436	38,949	1.3	-3.6
Total excluding motor vehicle and parts dealers and gasoline stations	35,396	33,044	33,392	1.1	-5.7
Motor vehicle and parts dealers	13,095	12,931	11,985	-7.3	-8.5
New car dealers	10,056	9,958	9,263	-7.0	-7.9
Used car dealers	1,057	1,052	879	-16.4	-16.8
Other motor vehicle dealers	1,026	976	907	-7.1	-11.6
Automotive parts, accessories and tire stores	956	944	936	-0.8	-2.1
Furniture and home furnishings stores	1,815	1,651	1,668	1.0	-8.1
Furniture stores	1,197	1,027	1,040	1.3	-13.1
Home furnishings stores	618	623	627	0.6	1.5
Electronics and appliance stores	1,886	1,552	1,565	0.8	-17.0
Building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers	4,109	3,373	3,479	3.1	-15.3
Food and beverage stores	10,488	9,811	9,854	0.4	-6.0
Supermarkets and other grocery (except convenience) stores	7,320	6,738	6,792	0.8	-7.2
Convenience stores	562	528	512	-3.0	-8.9
Specialty food stores	566	578	564	-2.4	-0.4
Beer, wine and liquor stores	2,041	1,968	1,986	0.9	-2.7
Health and personal care stores	4,661	4,320	4,321	0.0	-7.3
Gasoline stations	5,026	5,392	5,557	3.1	10.6
Clothing and clothing accessories stores	2,711	2,947	3,027	2.7	11.7
Clothing stores	2,125	2,345	2,403	2.5	13.1
Shoe stores	336	326	346	6.1	3.0
Jewellery, luggage and leather goods stores	250	276	279	1.1	11.6
Sporting goods, hobby, book and music stores	1,319	1,131	1,159	2.5	-12.1
General merchandise stores	6,746	6,574	6,534	-0.6	-3.1
Miscellaneous store retailers	1,664	1,686	1,786	5.9	7.3
Cannabis stores ²	322	381	423	11.0	31.4

^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

	March 2021	February 2022	March 2022	March 2022
	millions of dollars			year-over-year change (%)
Retail trade sales (44-453)	56,853	48,057	59,237	4.2
Electronic shopping and mail-order houses sales (45411)	2,573	1,939	2,186	-15.0
Retail e-commerce ¹	4,028	2,634	3,035	-24.6
Retail e-commerce ¹ (% of total retail trade)	6.8	5.3	4.9	...

... 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).