

# Retail trade, March 2024

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Retail sales decreased 0.2% to \$66.4 billion in March. Sales were down in seven of nine subsectors and were led by decreases at furniture, home furnishings, electronics and appliances retailers.

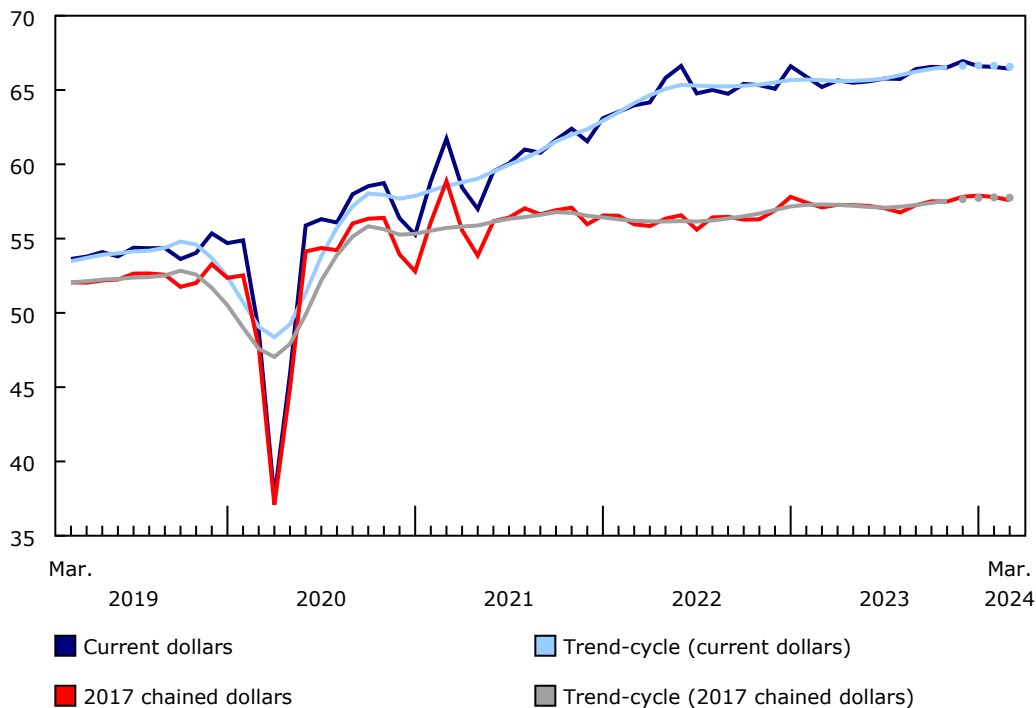
Core retail sales—which exclude gasoline stations and fuel vendors and motor vehicle and parts dealers—were down 0.6% in March.

In volume terms, retail sales decreased 0.4% in March.

Retail sales were down 0.2% in the first quarter, while in volume terms, retail sales increased 0.3%.

**Chart 1**  
**Retail sales decrease 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 [20-10-0056-01](#) and [20-10-0067-01](#).

## Core retail sales decline

Core retail sales were down 0.6% in March. This was the first decrease for core retail sales in four months. The decline was broad-based with sales at all but one core retail subsector being down.

Lower sales were reported at furniture, home furnishings, electronics and appliances retailers (-1.6%) and at clothing, clothing accessories, shoes, jewelry, luggage and leather goods retailers (-1.6%).

Receipts were also down at food and beverage retailers (-0.4%) and sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, book, and miscellaneous retailers (-1.5%).

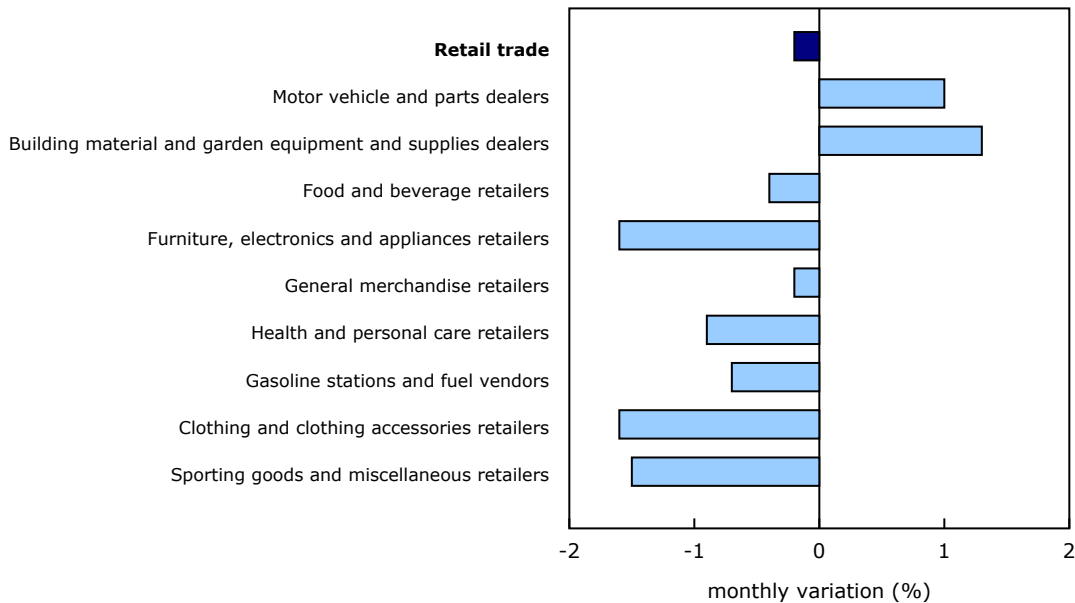
Building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers (+1.3%) was the only core retail subsector to report an increase in sales in March.

### Sales at motor vehicle and parts dealers rise

The largest increase in retail sales in March was observed at motor vehicle and parts dealers (+1.0%), up for a second consecutive month. The gain was led by higher sales at new car dealers (+1.1%). The sole decline in this subsector came from used car dealers (-2.0%).

Sales at gasoline stations and fuel vendors (-0.7%) were down in March. In volume terms, sales at gasoline stations and fuel vendors decreased 1.7%.

**Chart 2**  
Sales decrease in seven of nine subsectors in March



Source(s): Table 20-10-0056-01.

### Sales down in six provinces

Retail sales decreased in six provinces in March. The largest provincial decrease was observed in Ontario (-0.3%), led by lower sales at sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, book and miscellaneous retailers. In the census metropolitan area (CMA) of Toronto, sales were up 1.5%.

In Saskatchewan, retail sales decreased 3.4%, led by lower sales at motor vehicle and parts dealers.

The largest provincial increase in retail sales in March was observed in Quebec (+0.6%). In the CMA of Montréal, sales were up 0.3%.

## Retail e-commerce sales in Canada

On a seasonally adjusted basis, retail e-commerce sales were up 3.0% to \$4.0 billion in March, accounting for 6.0% of total retail trade, compared with 5.8% in February.

### Advance retail indicator

Statistics Canada is providing an advance estimate of retail sales, which suggests that sales increased 0.7% in April. Owing to its early nature, this figure will be revised. This unofficial estimate was calculated based on responses received from 51.0% of companies surveyed. The average final response rate for the survey over the previous 12 months was 90.5%.

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### 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 unofficial estimate being provided 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.

Some common e-commerce transactions, such as travel and accommodation bookings, ticket purchases and financial transactions, are not included in Canadian retail sales figures.

Total retail sales expressed in volume terms are calculated by deflating current-dollar values using consumer price indexes.

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

### Next release

Data on retail trade for April will be released on June 21.

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

	March 2023	February 2024 <sup>f</sup>	March 2024 <sup>P</sup>	February to March 2024	March 2023 to March 2024
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**Table 1**  
**Retail sales, by province, territory and census metropolitan area — Seasonally adjusted**

	March 2023	February 2024 <sup>r</sup>	March 2024 <sup>p</sup>	February to March 2024	March 2023 to March 2024
	millions of dollars			% change	
<b>Canada</b>	<b>65,200</b>	<b>66,552</b>	<b>66,440</b>	<b>-0.2</b>	<b>1.9</b>
Newfoundland and Labrador	930	1,012	977	-3.4	5.1
Prince Edward Island	288	304	307	0.7	6.4
Nova Scotia	1,730	1,831	1,840	0.5	6.4
New Brunswick	1,357	1,489	1,486	-0.2	9.6
Quebec	14,613	14,759	14,844	0.6	1.6
Montréal	7,350	7,393	7,418	0.3	0.9
Ontario	24,361	25,180	25,098	-0.3	3.0
Toronto	10,962	11,160	11,323	1.5	3.3
Manitoba	2,219	2,262	2,256	-0.3	1.7
Saskatchewan	2,060	2,114	2,042	-3.4	-0.9
Alberta	8,451	8,392	8,420	0.3	-0.4
British Columbia	8,971	8,970	8,933	-0.4	-0.4
Vancouver	4,456	4,503	4,499	-0.1	1.0
Yukon	92	100	102	1.7	11.0
Northwest Territories	78	87	83	-5.5	5.8
Nunavut	51	51	53	3.7	3.1

<sup>r</sup> revised

<sup>p</sup> preliminary

**Note(s):** Figures may not add up to totals as a result of rounding.

**Source(s):** Table [20-10-0056-01](#).

**Table 2**  
**Retail sales, by industry — Seasonally adjusted**

	March 2023	February 2024 <sup>r</sup>	March 2024 <sup>p</sup>	February to March 2024	March 2023 to March 2024
	millions of dollars			% change	
<b>Total retail trade (current dollars)</b>	<b>65,200</b>	<b>66,552</b>	<b>66,440</b>	<b>-0.2</b>	<b>1.9</b>
<b>Retail e-commerce</b>	<b>3,909</b>	<b>3,864</b>	<b>3,980</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>1.8</b>
<b>Total retail trade (2017 chained dollars)</b>	<b>57,099</b>	<b>57,795</b>	<b>57,580</b>	<b>-0.4</b>	<b>0.8</b>
<b>Total (current dollars) excluding motor vehicle and parts dealers</b>	<b>47,959</b>	<b>48,580</b>	<b>48,288</b>	<b>-0.6</b>	<b>0.7</b>
<b>Total (current dollars) excluding motor vehicle and parts dealers and gasoline stations and fuel vendors</b>	<b>41,462</b>	<b>42,185</b>	<b>41,940</b>	<b>-0.6</b>	<b>1.2</b>
Motor vehicle and parts dealers	17,241	17,972	18,152	1.0	5.3
New car dealers	13,530	14,180	14,340	1.1	6.0
Used car dealers	1,376	1,426	1,398	-2.0	1.6
Other motor vehicle dealers	1,078	1,115	1,135	1.7	5.3
Automotive parts, accessories and tire retailers	1,258	1,251	1,279	2.3	1.7
Building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers	3,871	3,911	3,961	1.3	2.3
Food and beverage retailers	12,649	12,783	12,728	-0.4	0.6
Supermarkets and other grocery retailers (except convenience)	8,839	8,981	8,957	-0.3	1.3
Convenience retailers and vending machine operators	747	729	734	0.8	-1.7
Specialty food retailers	836	905	901	-0.4	7.9
Beer, wine and liquor retailers	2,226	2,168	2,135	-1.5	-4.1
Furniture, home furnishings, electronics and appliances retailers	3,718	3,643	3,586	-1.6	-3.6
Furniture retailers	1,215	1,210	1,212	0.2	-0.2
Floor covering, window treatment and other home furnishing retailers	742	682	651	-4.5	-12.3
Electronics and appliances retailers	1,761	1,752	1,722	-1.7	-2.2
General merchandise retailers	8,534	9,139	9,116	-0.2	6.8
Health and personal care retailers	5,286	5,587	5,537	-0.9	4.7
Gasoline stations and fuel vendors	6,497	6,395	6,348	-0.7	-2.3
Clothing, clothing accessories, shoes, jewellery, luggage and leather goods retailers	3,506	3,440	3,384	-1.6	-3.5
Clothing and clothing accessories retailers	2,712	2,644	2,618	-1.0	-3.5
Shoe retailers	395	402	393	-2.2	-0.4
Jewellery, luggage and leather goods retailers	398	394	373	-5.5	-6.4
Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, book, and miscellaneous retailers	3,898	3,682	3,627	-1.5	-6.9
Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument and book retailers and news dealers	1,377	1,342	1,354	0.9	-1.7
Miscellaneous store retailers	2,521	2,340	2,274	-2.8	-9.8
Cannabis retailers	421	425	422	-0.8	0.3

<sup>r</sup> revised

<sup>p</sup> preliminary

**Note(s):** Figures may not add up to totals as a result of rounding.

**Source(s):** Tables [20-10-0056-01](#) and [20-10-0067-01](#).

**Table 3**  
**Retail sales at 2017 constant prices, by industry — Seasonally adjusted**

	March 2023	February 2024 <sup>r</sup>	March 2024 <sup>p</sup>	February to March 2024	March 2023 to March 2024
	millions of dollars			% change	
<b>Total retail trade at 2017 constant prices<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>57,401</b>	<b>58,158</b>	<b>57,941</b>	<b>-0.4</b>	<b>0.9</b>
<b>Total excluding motor vehicle and parts dealers</b>	<b>42,247</b>	<b>42,964</b>	<b>42,621</b>	<b>-0.8</b>	<b>0.9</b>
<b>Total excluding motor vehicle and parts dealers and gasoline stations and fuel vendors</b>	<b>37,102</b>	<b>37,455</b>	<b>37,203</b>	<b>-0.7</b>	<b>0.3</b>
Motor vehicle and parts dealers	15,154	15,194	15,320	0.8	1.1
New car dealers	11,818	11,917	12,021	0.9	1.7
Used car dealers	1,204	1,201	1,174	-2.2	-2.5
Other motor vehicle dealers	1,084	1,068	1,098	2.8	1.3
Automotive parts, accessories and tire retailers	1,047	1,007	1,026	1.9	-2.0
Building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers	3,865	3,823	3,865	1.1	0.0
Food and beverage retailers	10,254	10,004	9,940	-0.6	-3.1
Supermarkets and other grocery retailers (except convenience retailers)	7,139	7,063	7,042	-0.3	-1.4
Convenience retailers and vending machine operators	578	539	538	-0.2	-6.9
Specialty food retailers	686	652	646	-0.9	-5.8
Beer, wine and liquor retailers	1,851	1,751	1,714	-2.1	-7.4
Furniture, home furnishings, electronics and appliances retailers	3,574	3,635	3,589	-1.3	0.4
Furniture retailers	1,020	1,068	1,077	0.8	5.6
Floor covering, window treatment and other home furnishing retailers	679	623	591	-5.1	-13.0
Electronics and appliances retailers	1,875	1,944	1,921	-1.2	2.5
General merchandise retailers	7,344	7,940	7,904	-0.5	7.6
Health and personal care retailers	5,052	5,318	5,270	-0.9	4.3
Gasoline stations and fuel vendors	5,145	5,509	5,418	-1.7	5.3
Clothing, clothing accessories, shoes, jewellery, luggage and leather goods retailers	3,451	3,493	3,435	-1.7	-0.5
Clothing and clothing accessories retailers	2,732	2,759	2,730	-1.1	-0.1
Shoe retailers	405	419	404	-3.6	-0.2
Jewellery, luggage and leather goods retailers	315	316	301	-4.7	-4.4
Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, book and miscellaneous retailers	3,563	3,241	3,201	-1.2	-10.2
Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument and book retailers and news dealers	1,272	1,260	1,277	1.3	0.4
Miscellaneous store retailers	2,290	1,981	1,924	-2.9	-16.0
Cannabis retailers	509	529	525	-0.8	3.1

<sup>r</sup> revised

<sup>p</sup> preliminary

1. Calculated using the Laspeyres method.

**Note(s):** Figures may not add up to totals as a result of rounding.

**Source(s):** Table 20-10-0067-01.

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**Available tables:** [20-10-0056-01](#) and [20-10-0067-01](#).

**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](mailto:infostats@statcan.gc.ca)) or Media Relations ([statcan.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.statcan@statcan.gc.ca](mailto:statcan.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.statcan@statcan.gc.ca)).