

# Wholesale trade, May 2024

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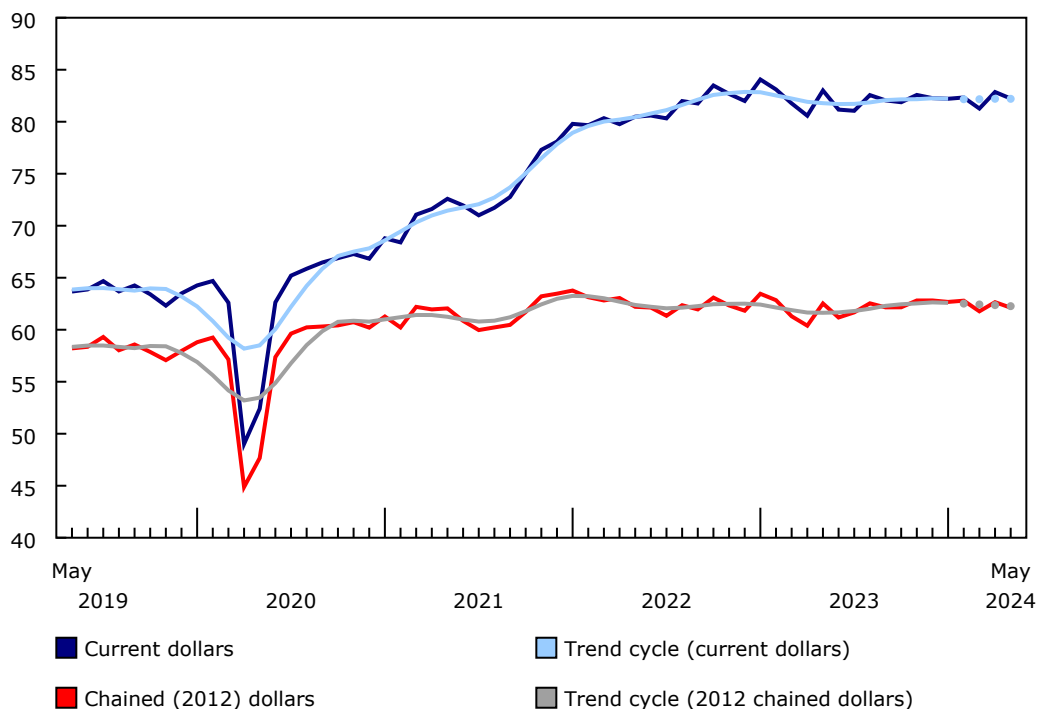
Wholesale sales (excluding petroleum, petroleum products, and other hydrocarbons and excluding oilseed and grain) fell 0.8% to \$82.2 billion in May. Sales declined in five of the seven subsectors, with the largest decline coming from the motor vehicle and motor vehicle parts and accessories subsector. Wholesale sales were 0.9% lower in May compared with the same month one year earlier.

In volume terms, wholesale sales decreased by 0.8% in May.

## Chart 1

### Wholesale sales (excluding petroleum, petroleum products, and other hydrocarbons and oilseed and grain) decrease in May

billions of dollars



**Note(s):** The higher variability associated with the trend-cycle estimates is indicated on the chart with a dotted line for the current reference month and the previous three months. For more information, see the Note to readers.

**Source(s):** Tables 20-10-0074-01 and 20-10-0003-01.

## Motor vehicle and motor vehicle parts and accessories taps the brakes in May

Following a large increase in April, sales in the motor vehicle and motor vehicle parts and accessories subsector decreased by 3.8% to \$13.9 billion in May. Sales fell in all three industry groups in May, with the largest decline coming from motor vehicle merchant wholesalers (-4.4% to \$11.2 billion). This is in line with lower sales of motor vehicles from Canadian manufacturers and a [7.1% decrease in imports of passenger cars and light trucks over the same period](#).



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Sales in the machinery, equipment and supplies subsector fell 0.4% to \$17.9 billion in May, its first decline in the last five months. Two of its four industry groups registered declines; the computer and communications equipment and supplies industry group (-2.5% to \$4.9 billion) was the largest contributor to the decrease, followed by the farm, lawn and garden machinery and equipment industry group (-2.8% to \$2.8 billion).

After last month's rise, the miscellaneous subsector declined 0.5% to \$10.4 billion in May, as four out of its seven industry groups were down.

### **Manitoba at the forefront of sales declines**

In May, a majority of the provinces reported a decrease in wholesale sales, with the largest decline being in Manitoba, followed by Quebec.

Wholesale sales in Manitoba fell 13.5% to \$1.7 billion in May, following April's uptick, registering its fourth decline since the beginning of the year. Sales dropped in six of the seven subsectors in May, driven by the miscellaneous (-18.0% to \$288.7 million) and the machinery, equipment and supplies (-14.3% to \$377.3 million) subsectors.

Sales in Quebec decreased by 1.3% to \$14.5 billion in May, marking the province's third straight drop. Five of the seven subsectors recorded declines, with the largest contributions coming from the machinery, equipment and supplies (-5.0% to \$2.5 billion) and motor vehicle and motor vehicle parts and accessories (-5.2% to \$1.8 billion) subsectors.

In contrast, sales in Ontario (+0.5% to \$43.2 billion) increased for the second consecutive month in May, as six out of the seven subsectors posted gains. The increase was driven by the machinery, equipment and supplies subsector (+1.8% to \$8.8 billion). The motor vehicle and motor vehicle parts and accessories subsector (-2.5% to \$9.8 billion) was the sole subsector to decrease and significantly mitigated growth in the province.

### **Inventories grow in May**

Wholesale inventories increased 0.9% to \$127.8 billion in May.

Inventories increased in four of the seven subsectors in May, led by the machinery, equipment, and supplies subsector (+1.3% to \$39.3 billion), as all four industry groups were up. The building material and supplies subsector (+2.1% to \$22.1 billion) also contributed to higher stocks, as two of its three industry groups increased.

The inventory-to-sales ratio increased from 1.53 in April to 1.55 in May. This ratio is a measure of the time (in months) required to exhaust inventories if sales were to remain at their current levels.

**Table 1**  
**Wholesale merchants' sales by industry—seasonally adjusted**

	May 2023	April 2024 <sup>f</sup>	May 2024 <sup>p</sup>	April to May 2024	May 2023 to May 2024
	millions of dollars			% change	
<b>Total, wholesale sales (current dollars)</b>	<b>129,741</b>	<b>122,801</b>	<b>121,062</b>	<b>-1.4</b>	<b>-6.7</b>
<b>Total, wholesale sales (current dollars), excluding petroleum, petroleum products, and other hydrocarbons and oilseed and grain</b>	<b>83,004</b>	<b>82,858</b>	<b>82,230</b>	<b>-0.8</b>	<b>-0.9</b>
<b>Total, wholesale sales (2012 chained dollars), excluding petroleum, petroleum products, and other hydrocarbons and oilseed and grain</b>	<b>62,526</b>	<b>62,650</b>	<b>62,119</b>	<b>-0.8</b>	<b>-0.7</b>
<b>Total wholesale sales (current dollars), excluding motor vehicle and parts, petroleum, petroleum products, and other hydrocarbons and oilseed and grain</b>	<b>69,279</b>	<b>68,373</b>	<b>68,291</b>	<b>-0.1</b>	<b>-1.4</b>
Farm product (excluding oilseed and grain)	1,358	1,445	1,433	-0.8	5.5
Oilseed and grain <sup>1</sup>	3,093	3,122	3,203	2.6	3.6
Petroleum, petroleum products, and other hydrocarbons <sup>1</sup>	43,644	36,821	35,629	-3.2	-18.4
Food, beverage and tobacco	14,846	14,841	14,871	0.2	0.2
Food	13,138	13,192	13,180	-0.1	0.3
Beverage	953	958	961	0.3	0.9
Cigarette and tobacco product	520	470	467	-0.7	-10.3
Cannabis	234	221	263	19.0	12.1
Personal and household goods	11,607	12,233	12,228	-0.0	5.4
Textile, clothing and footwear	1,542	1,367	1,399	2.3	-9.3
Home entertainment equipment and household appliance	799	876	875	-0.0	9.5
Home furnishings	685	704	763	8.4	11.5
Personal goods	1,052	1,124	1,165	3.7	10.7
Pharmaceuticals and pharmacy supplies	6,525	6,927	6,850	-1.1	5.0
Toiletries, cosmetics and sundries	1,002	1,235	1,175	-4.8	17.2
Motor vehicle and motor vehicle parts and accessories	13,724	14,485	13,939	-3.8	1.6
Motor vehicle	11,163	11,707	11,197	-4.4	0.3
New motor vehicle parts and accessories	2,485	2,700	2,667	-1.2	7.3
Used motor vehicle parts and accessories	77	77	75	-2.5	-1.9
Building material and supplies	11,815	11,372	11,404	0.3	-3.5
Electrical, plumbing, heating and air-conditioning equipment and supplies	3,804	3,890	3,884	-0.1	2.1
Metal service centres	2,333	2,123	2,074	-2.3	-11.1
Lumber, millwork, hardware and other building supplies	5,678	5,360	5,446	1.6	-4.1
Machinery, equipment and supplies	18,570	18,007	17,933	-0.4	-3.4
Farm, lawn and garden machinery and equipment	2,756	2,882	2,801	-2.8	1.6

**Table 1 - continued**  
**Wholesale merchants' sales by industry—seasonally adjusted**

	May 2023	April 2024 <sup>r</sup>	May 2024 <sup>p</sup>	April to May 2024	May 2023 to May 2024
Construction, forestry, mining, and industrial machinery, equipment and supplies	6,247	6,046	6,089	0.7	-2.5
Computer and communications equipment and supplies	4,960	5,009	4,882	-2.5	-1.6
Other machinery, equipment and supplies	4,608	4,070	4,160	2.2	-9.7
Miscellaneous	11,083	10,475	10,422	-0.5	-6.0
Recyclable material	1,257	1,135	1,098	-3.3	-12.7
Paper, paper product and disposable plastic product	1,211	1,142	1,162	1.8	-4.1
Agricultural supplies	4,061	3,532	3,489	-1.2	-14.1
Chemical (except agricultural) and allied product	1,884	1,803	1,820	0.9	-3.4
Mineral, ore and precious metal	558	638	614	-3.8	10.1
Log, wood chips, and other wood products	108	108	126	16.8	16.3
Other miscellaneous	2,004	2,117	2,115	-0.1	5.5

<sup>r</sup> revised

<sup>p</sup> preliminary

1. Unadjusted and not included in wholesale sales calculation.

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

**Source(s):** Tables [20-10-0074-01](#) and [20-10-0003-01](#).

**Table 2**  
**Wholesale merchants' sales by province and territory—seasonally adjusted (excluding petroleum, petroleum products, and other hydrocarbons and oilseed and grain)**

	May 2023	April 2024 <sup>r</sup>	May 2024 <sup>p</sup>	April to May 2024	May 2023 to May 2024
	millions of dollars			% change	
<b>Canada</b>	<b>83,004</b>	<b>82,858</b>	<b>82,230</b>	<b>-0.8</b>	<b>-0.9</b>
Newfoundland and Labrador	401	471	476	1.0	18.6
Prince Edward Island	121	120	115	-4.0	-5.2
Nova Scotia	1,097	1,225	1,226	0.1	11.8
New Brunswick	722	825	794	-3.7	10.0
Quebec	14,897	14,642	14,451	-1.3	-3.0
Ontario	42,593	42,925	43,151	0.5	1.3
Manitoba	1,768	1,929	1,668	-13.5	-5.7
Saskatchewan	3,628	3,585	3,481	-2.9	-4.1
Alberta	9,894	9,350	9,234	-1.2	-6.7
British Columbia	7,805	7,696	7,556	-1.8	-3.2
Yukon	x	x	x	x	x
Northwest Territories	48	34	37	7.9	-23.2
Nunavut	x	x	x	x	x

<sup>r</sup> revised

<sup>p</sup> preliminary

x suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*

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

**Source(s):** Table [20-10-0074-01](#).

**Table 3**  
**Wholesale merchants' inventories by industry—seasonally adjusted**

	May 2023	April 2024 <sup>r</sup>	May 2024 <sup>p</sup>	April to May 2024	May 2023 to May 2024
	millions of dollars			% change	
<b>Total, wholesale inventories</b>	<b>153,954</b>	<b>140,906</b>	<b>140,523</b>	<b>-0.3</b>	<b>-8.7</b>
<b>Total, wholesale inventories (excluding petroleum, petroleum products, other hydrocarbons and oilseed and grain)</b>	<b>129,164</b>	<b>126,636</b>	<b>127,759</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>-1.1</b>
Farm product (excluding oilseed and grain)	356	406	377	-7.1	6.0
Petroleum, petroleum products, and other hydrocarbons <sup>1</sup>	..	..	..	..	..
Food, beverage and tobacco	13,775	14,065	13,871	-1.4	0.7
Food	12,129	11,720	11,500	-1.9	-5.2
Beverage	901	1,644	1,659	0.9	84.1
Cigarette and tobacco product	478	412	417	1.4	-12.7
Cannabis	266	290	294	1.5	10.5
Personal and household goods	21,084	20,902	20,620	-1.4	-2.2
Textile, clothing and footwear	4,350	3,600	3,559	-1.1	-18.2
Home entertainment equipment and household appliance	1,464	1,285	1,301	1.2	-11.1
Home furnishings	1,968	1,806	1,856 <sup>E</sup>	2.8	-5.7
Personal goods	3,060	3,471	3,251	-6.3	6.3
Pharmaceuticals and pharmacy supplies	9,151	9,514	9,429	-0.9	3.0
Toiletries, cosmetics and sundries	1,092	1,226	1,223	-0.2	12.0
Motor vehicle and motor vehicle parts and accessories	16,196	16,237	16,633	2.4	2.7
Motor vehicle	10,240	10,086	10,400	3.1	1.6
New motor vehicle parts and accessories	5,819	6,009	6,092	1.4	4.7
Used motor vehicle parts and accessories	F	142 <sup>E</sup>	F	F	F
Building material and supplies	23,733	21,679	22,128	2.1	-6.8
Electrical, plumbing, heating and air-conditioning equipment and supplies	6,965	6,640	6,626	-0.2	-4.9
Metal service centres	6,418	5,392	5,664	5.0	-11.8
Lumber, millwork, hardware and other building supplies	10,350	9,646	9,838	2.0	-4.9
Machinery, equipment and supplies	38,027	38,745	39,257	1.3	3.2
Farm, lawn and garden machinery and equipment	8,699	10,086	10,253	1.7	17.9
Construction, forestry, mining, and industrial machinery, equipment and supplies	17,714	18,370	18,495	0.7	4.4
Computer and communications equipment and supplies	3,751	3,474	3,581	3.1	-4.5
Other machinery, equipment and supplies	7,863	6,815	6,928	1.7	-11.9
Miscellaneous	15,993	14,602	14,873	1.9	-7.0
Recyclable material	1,130	1,016 <sup>E</sup>	1,094	7.7	-3.2
Paper, paper product and disposable plastic product	1,436	1,325	1,380	4.1	-3.9
Agricultural supplies	7,157	6,438	6,544	1.7	-8.6
Chemical (except agricultural) and allied product	1,788	1,618	1,659	2.5	-7.2
Mineral, ore and precious metal	241	283	273	-3.6	13.1
Log, wood chips, and other wood	100	84	86	2.8	-13.3
Other miscellaneous	4,141	3,837	3,837	0.0	-7.3

<sup>r</sup> revised

<sup>p</sup> preliminary

.. not available for a specific reference period

<sup>E</sup> use with caution

<sup>F</sup> too unreliable to be published

1. Unadjusted and not included in wholesale sales calculation.

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

**Source(s):** Table 20-10-0076-01.

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## Note to readers

Wholesale (sales and inventories) values exclude petroleum, petroleum products, and other hydrocarbons and oilseed and grain unless otherwise stated.

Petroleum, petroleum products, and other hydrocarbons and oilseed and grain data continue to be available in data tables but will be excluded from monthly analysis until historical data are available.

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 [Section 2: Issues related to analysis and interpretation](#).

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 (see [Section 1: Context, definitions and terminology](#)) and provide information on longer-term movements, including underlying changes in direction in 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 large and could even lead to a reversal of movement, especially for reference months near the end of the series or during periods of economic disruptions.

Total wholesale sales expressed in volume are calculated by deflating current dollar values using relevant price indexes. The wholesale sales series in chained (2012) dollars is a chained Fisher volume index, with 2012 as the reference year. For more information, see the publication "[Deflation of wholesale sales](#)."

The Monthly Wholesale Trade Survey covers all industries within the wholesale trade sector, as defined by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), with the exception of business-to-business electronic markets, and agents and brokers (NAICS 419).

### Real-time data tables

Real-time data tables 20-10-0019-01, 20-10-0020-01 and 20-10-0005-01 will be updated soon.

### Next release

Wholesale trade data for June will be released on August 15.

The next release of wholesale trade data will incorporate annual revisions. Unadjusted monthly wholesale data will be revised back to January 2023, while seasonally adjusted data will be revised back to January 2020. Factors influencing revisions include the late receipt of respondent information, the correction of information in the data provided, the replacement of estimated figures with actual values (once available), the reclassification of companies within, into and out of the wholesale trade sector, and updates to seasonal factors.

**Available tables:** [20-10-0003-01](#), [20-10-0074-01](#) and [20-10-0076-01](#).

**Definitions, data sources and methods:** survey number [2401](#).

The product "[Monthly Wholesale Trade Survey: Interactive Tool](#)" ([71-607-X](#)) is available online. This product is based on the data published in the tables of the Monthly Wholesale Trade Survey: [20-10-0074-01](#), [20-10-0076-01](#) and [20-10-0003-01](#).

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)).