

DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND COMMERCE
DOMINION BUREAU OF STATISTICS
MERCHANDISING AND SERVICES BRANCH
OTTAWA, CANADA

STATISTICAL
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Monthly Indexes of Retail Sales in Canada, March, 1944
(1935-1939=100)

Retail sales in Canada during the month of March increased 13 per cent over February and were 9 per cent higher than in March, 1943, according to index numbers of sales based on reports received from a representative number of firms covering 12 different trades. Sales for the first quarter of the current year average 3 per cent higher than for the corresponding period of 1943. The general index of sales unadjusted for number of business days or for normal seasonal movements, and on the base, 1935-1939=100, stands at 165.2 for March compared with 139.5 for February and 151.4 for March a year ago.

Easter Sunday fell on April 25th in 1943 and on April 9th this year. Consequently the entire Easter trade was concentrated in April a year ago while a certain portion of the Easter trade would be transacted in the latter part of March this year. On making allowance for differences in number of business days, for normal seasonal movements, and on making a further allowance for the shift in the date of Easter, the adjusted index of retail sales stands at 177.2 for March, 1944 compared with 172.6 for February and 137.8 for March a year ago. The seasonally adjusted index of 177.2 for March is the highest figure yet recorded since the inception of these monthly indexes 15 years ago.

Sales of radio and electrical stores were lower by 8 per cent in March of this year than last; shoe store sales were unchanged while all other lines of business for which figures are available recorded increases, these ranging from 2 per cent in the case of variety stores to 15 per cent for candy stores. A brief statement regarding the situation with respect to each of the trades covered in these monthly surveys follows.

Sales of men's clothing stores averaged 7 per cent higher in March of this year than last while sales for the first quarter of the year stand 3 per cent above the corresponding period of 1943. March sales in Ontario were unchanged from March a year ago but all other regions recorded increases amounting to 4 per cent for British Columbia, 10 per cent for the Maritime Provinces, 13 per cent for Quebec and 22 per cent for the Prairie Provinces.

Women's clothing store sales increased 13 per cent in March of this year over last and stand 4 per cent higher for the year-to-date. All regions of the country reported increased sales in March, 1944 over the corresponding month last year, percentage increases standing at 17 per cent for the Maritime Provinces, 11 per cent for Quebec, 11 per cent for Ontario, 20 per cent for the Prairie Provinces and 12 per cent for British Columbia.

Sales made by department stores including the mail order business transacted by such stores were 11 per cent higher in March of this year than last and increased 7 per cent for the first quarter of the year. Results on a regional basis

show that department store sales in Ontario were practically unchanged from last year both for the month of March and for the year-to-date. All other regions reported substantial increases. Percentage changes between March of this year and last for the other economic divisions of the country, with increases for the first quarter of the year in brackets, are as follows: Maritime Provinces, 26 per cent (14 per cent); Quebec, 12 per cent (4 per cent); Prairie Provinces, 20 per cent (15 per cent) and British Columbia, 11 per cent (8 per cent).

Drug store sales continue to record the increases reported in earlier months, March sales standing 6 per cent above March, 1943 while sales for the first quarter of the year stand 9 per cent above the first quarter of 1943. Increases on a regional basis for March, with quarterly gains shown in brackets, are as follows: Maritime Provinces, 10 per cent (12 per cent); Quebec, 6 per cent (8 per cent); Ontario, 4 per cent (6 per cent); Prairie Provinces, 10 per cent (13 per cent) and British Columbia, 9 per cent (15 per cent).

Food store sales gained 10 per cent in March of this year over last and were up by 6 per cent for the year-to-date. The substantial increase in March sales for food stores was shared by all sections of the country and may be attributed in some degree to an expansion in meat sales following the temporary discontinuance of meat rationing as from the beginning of the month. March increases for the various regions of the country, with increases for the year-to-date in brackets, are as follows: Maritime Provinces, 12 per cent (10 per cent); Quebec, 9 per cent (5 per cent); Ontario, 10 per cent (6 per cent); Prairie Provinces, 13 per cent (11 per cent) and British Columbia, 6 per cent (4 per cent).

The trend in variety store sales continues on a horizontal plane, sales for March and for the first quarter of the year standing within narrow limits of the corresponding figures for 1943. Results on a regional basis for this trade show sales in British Columbia slightly below last year, moderate increases occurring in the Prairie Provinces and practically unchanged volume of business being transacted in Central and Eastern Canada.

Results for other lines of business included in the survey showed increases in March this year compared with last of 10 per cent for restaurants, 7 per cent for hardware stores, 6 per cent for furniture stores and 15 per cent for candy stores. As stated earlier in this summary radio and electrical store sales were down by 8 per cent from March, 1943.

Jewellery store sales in Canada were 10 per cent higher in March this year than last. Increases for various regions were as follows: 12 per cent for the Maritime Provinces, 16 per cent for Quebec, 6 per cent for Ontario, 18 per cent for the Prairie Provinces and 11 per cent for British Columbia.

The increase in total sales of 20 firms which reported a breakdown of sales by departments was the same, at 11 per cent, as that recorded for all firms. The greater portion of the increased volume of business resulted from heavy purchasing of men's and women's apparel, piece goods and the continued upward trend in sales of furniture. Sales of women's clothing were 16 per cent higher than in March, 1943, while men's clothing departments recorded an increase of 18 per cent. Footwear sales gained 9 per cent in the same comparison. Piece goods departments showed an increase of 23 per cent in sales. The increase recorded for furniture amounted to 18 per cent, but other household lines showed less activity. Home furnishings departments reported sales up 6 per cent, while household appliance sales were 6 per cent lower and radio and music departments did 35 per cent less business than last year. An increase of 10 per cent was recorded in sales of hardware. Moderate gains of 5 and 3 per cent were reported for drug and food departments respectively.

Comparison of Retail Sales in Canada, for 1943 and 1944, by Kinds of Business
 (Comparisons are based on dollar value. No corrections have been made for higher prices.)

Kind of Business	March, 1944			
	+ or - per cent compared with			
	March, 1939	March, 1943	February, 1944	Jan.-Mar., 1944 Jan.-Mar., 1943
General Index	+79.0	+ 9.1	+18.4	+ 6.8
Boot and Shoe Stores	+101.3	- 0.3	+32.4	- 5.6
Candy Stores	(g)	+15.3	-10.2	+ 8.9
Men's Clothing Stores	+109.1	+ 7.2	+32.1	+ 3.0
Women's Clothing Stores	+110.9	+12.6	+41.6	+ 4.3
Department Stores	+88.4	+11.4	+32.4	+ 6.6
Drug Stores	+31.4	+ 6.2	+ 4.0	+ 3.7
Furniture Stores	+42.1	+ 5.9	+14.7	+ 4.9
Grocery and Meat Stores	+66.9	+ 9.9	+11.9	+ 6.3
Hardware Stores	+81.1	+ 6.9	+17.6	+ 7.0
Radio and Electrical Stores ...	+23.8	- 7.8	+ 3.8	- 7.6
Restaurants	+103.1	+ 9.9	+ 9.0	+13.2
Variety Stores	+94.4	+ 1.6	+10.2	+ 1.9

Comparison of Retail Sales of Boot and Shoe Stores and Jewellery Stores

Region	Boot and Shoe Stores	Jewellery Stores
	Sales in March, 1944 Compared with Sales in March, 1943	Sales in March, 1944 Compared with Sales in March, 1943
CANADA	- 0.3	+10.1
Maritime Provinces	+ 2.0	+12.0
Quebec	+ 0.7	+16.5
Ontario	- 4.2	+ 5.7
Prairie Provinces	+ 3.6	+17.6
British Columbia	+ 6.6	+11.3

(g) Not available.

Index Numbers of Retail Sales - (Average for 1935-1939 = 100)

A. Unadjusted. B. Adjusted for Number of Business Days and Seasonal Variations.
(Figures for the current year are subject to final revision)

Year and Month	General Index		Boots and Shoes		Candy(h)		Men's Clothing (c)	
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B
March, 1939	92.3	93.1	89.0	91.9	(g)	(g)	70.2	85.5
March, 1940	105.9	112.3	83.6	93.4	180.1	123.3	90.5	105.6
March, 1941	119.2	129.3	99.6	132.2	102.7	132.3	105.0	130.6
March, 1942	144.7	161.0	139.1	177.1	137.1	187.1	168.0	209.8
March, 1943	151.4	167.8	139.3	198.7	143.9	191.2	133.9	132.0
<u>1943</u>								
April	137.7	163.3	136.1	145.3	199.3	144.0	137.0	176.1
May	162.8	154.5	175.6	149.9	159.8	166.1	162.9	160.6
June	158.8	155.5	198.5	160.4	122.0	186.5	172.4	165.2
July	147.8	155.4	181.3	161.8	149.2	207.6	143.0	164.1
August	142.5	162.1	144.8	181.4	158.3	200.1	117.8	161.9
September	158.0	158.5	169.5	160.8	162.3	204.3	155.6	159.9
October	173.6	157.6	171.5	158.2	189.6	202.1	197.5	152.5
November	174.2	165.1	162.5	171.7	180.9	212.8	206.4	164.3
December	221.7	167.9	209.6	163.1	384.6	173.6	230.1	183.7
<u>1944</u>								
January	132.6	166.2	109.3	150.8	145.5	195.4	103.1	143.7
February	139.5	172.6	104.9	173.7	184.3	194.6	111.1	182.6
March	165.2	177.2	138.9	185.0	165.9	217.3	143.3	132.3

Year and Month	Women's Clothing		Department		Drugs	
	A	B	A	B	A	B
March, 1939	83.7	95.8	86.0	91.7	105.2	106.1
March, 1940	102.7	106.0	95.4	105.8	109.4	110.0
March, 1941	114.7	135.7	111.6	125.0	123.7	125.6
March, 1942	149.2	173.4	141.2	156.9	142.0	147.5
March, 1943	156.3	190.7	145.4	164.3	159.9	162.9
<u>1943</u>						
April	214.5	167.0	157.9	153.5	156.9	161.9
May	180.2	169.6	139.1	138.7	159.1	162.2
June	174.9	157.3	136.8	130.9	154.4	134.2
July	151.9	172.7	112.5	144.7	159.7	159.8
August	139.9	199.0	120.9	148.4	153.8	157.1
September	176.2	188.9	150.1	156.8	158.3	157.9
October	206.5	165.9	177.8	157.3	171.6	164.2
November	203.0	182.0	196.0	168.8	169.9	173.0
December	269.8	185.3	240.2	145.8	247.9	196.3
<u>1944</u>						
January	128.4	183.3	109.5	151.0	167.3	176.6
February	124.7	207.4	122.4	150.3	163.2	175.4
March	176.5	206.1	162.0	172.7	169.3	171.9

(c) Includes men's furnishings.

(h) Candy indexes are based largely upon returns from retail candy chains.

(g) Not available.

Index Numbers of Retail Sales - (Average for 1935-1939 = 100)

A. Unadjusted. B. Adjusted for Number of Business Days and Seasonal Variations.
(Figures for the current year are subject to final revision)

Year and Month	Furniture		Groceries and Meats		Hardware	
	A	B	A	B	A	B
March, 1939	82.0	94.5	109.6	104.9	72.0	97.1
March, 1940	93.0	112.2	124.5	119.6	79.1	115.3
March, 1941	113.9	132.7	134.7	126.9	97.5	136.7
March, 1942	111.3	132.7	153.3	154.9	122.9	172.2
March, 1943	110.0	128.2	166.4	163.6	113.8	159.9
<u>1943</u>						
April	132.9	123.3	172.7	174.9	144.2	141.4
May	145.0	115.7	177.1	167.4	168.9	128.0
June	114.2	116.7	171.9	174.6	163.2	137.1
July	105.4	130.9	170.0	161.0	154.2	135.9
August	112.5	112.4	157.7	172.5	148.1	141.0
September	116.4	102.8	155.1	160.8	150.5	130.6
October	128.4	107.2	167.2	159.8	157.1	137.7
November	120.3	112.3	155.9	159.4	153.2	150.2
December	141.4	125.5	189.9	181.8	174.7	162.5
<u>1944</u>						
January	92.8	144.2	154.7	167.7	105.1	177.9
February	101.6	125.5	163.4	172.8	110.9	195.8
March	116.5	135.7	182.9	175.7	130.4	179.2

Year and Month	Radio and Electrical		Restaurants		Variety	
	A	B	A	B	A	B
March, 1939	82.1	95.7	94.9	95.7	80.2	102.7
March, 1940	97.2	122.4	100.8	102.0	103.6	125.8
March, 1941	119.4	144.6	117.0	118.3	121.0	150.9
March, 1942	126.7	153.5	140.0	143.6	148.2	191.3
March, 1943	110.2	123.5	175.4	173.9	152.3	198.8
<u>1943</u>						
April	114.8	125.9	172.4	172.0	182.9	193.6
May	119.6	107.0	172.5	170.9	190.0	184.8
June	107.2	115.5	170.4	170.6	184.3	181.6
July	97.7	122.8	173.0	163.1	182.4	172.5
August	100.0	127.4	180.9	169.7	160.2	174.8
September	116.2	99.6	185.0	177.6	170.2	182.2
October	118.9	93.2	181.6	179.4	195.7	182.4
November	118.0	92.6	177.6	187.7	199.1	197.8
December	139.6	99.2	182.4	173.9	329.4	185.4
<u>1944</u>						
January	102.3	132.1	184.1	196.3	131.7	212.3
February	97.9	126.4	176.8	192.3	141.5	203.6
March	101.6	118.5	192.7	193.2	155.9	200.3

Unadjusted Indexes of Retail Sales by Provinces - (Average for 1935-1939 = 100)
 (Figures for the current year are subject to final revision)

Year and Month	CANADA	Maritime	Quebec	Ontario	Prairie	British
		Provinces			Provinces	Columbia
<u>Men's Clothing Stores (c)</u>						
March, 1940	90.5	108.2	88.2	91.0	84.4	87.6
March, 1941	105.0	128.5	100.4	110.6	90.6	89.1
March, 1942	168.0	194.6	180.9	169.9	138.0	142.5
March, 1943	136.9	182.2	128.6	132.6	134.2	142.5
<u>1944</u>						
January	108.1	173.6	90.0	100.4	123.4	114.4
February	111.1	160.2	94.4	104.6	125.8	129.3
March	146.8	202.1	144.9	132.7	164.0	143.1
% Change,						
<u>March, 1944</u>	+ 7.2	+10.3	+12.7	+ 0.1	+22.1	+ 3.9
March, 1943						
% Change,						
<u>Jan.-Mar., 1944</u> .	+ 3.0	+ 3.9	+ 2.0	- 0.8	+17.5	+ 2.5
Jan.-Mar., 1943 .						
<u>Women's Clothing Stores</u>						
March, 1940	102.7	110.5	88.7	100.9	112.6	133.5
March, 1941	114.7	122.0	105.9	115.5	110.1	138.9
March, 1942	149.2	157.8	148.9	152.8	136.4	147.6
March, 1943	156.8	195.5	146.0	159.1	144.7	177.8
<u>1944</u>						
January	128.4	169.9	104.0	132.6	123.5	161.5
February	124.7	153.1	106.6	123.8	138.6	146.9
March	176.5	228.8	162.5	176.2	173.9	198.7
% Change,						
<u>March, 1944</u>	+12.6	+17.0	+11.3	+10.9	+20.2	+11.8
March, 1943						
% Change,						
<u>Jan.-Mar., 1944</u> .	+ 4.3	+ 9.5	- 0.7	+ 3.7	+11.7	+ 7.5
Jan.-Mar., 1943 .						
<u>Grocery and Meat Stores</u>						
March, 1940	124.5	120.5	131.7	124.6	113.8	119.7
March, 1941	134.7	129.6	137.7	139.3	118.5	131.0
March, 1942	153.2	153.2	158.8	156.6	134.7	145.9
March, 1943	166.4	178.5	179.1	162.6	143.5	158.4
<u>1944</u>						
January	154.7	177.4	160.2	154.4	136.3	138.4
February	163.4	180.6	173.4	160.8	145.0	149.5
March	182.9	199.0	195.4	179.8	162.8	167.1
% Change,						
<u>March, 1944</u>	+ 9.9	+11.5	+ 9.1	+ 9.9	+13.4	+ 5.5
March, 1943						
% Change,						
<u>Jan.-Mar., 1944</u> .	+ 6.3	+ 9.9	+ 4.9	+ 5.7	+10.6	+ 3.5
Jan.-Mar., 1943 .						

(c) Includes men's furnishings.

Unadjusted Indexes of Retail Sales by Provinces - (Average for 1935-1939 = 100)
 (Figures for the current year are subject to final revision)

Year and Month	CANADA	Maritime Provinces	Quebec	Ontario	Prairie Provinces	British Columbia
<u>Department Stores</u>						
March, 1940	95.4	89.8	101.8	93.9	93.0	101.4
March, 1941	111.6	115.9	116.1	112.1	104.3	119.6
March, 1942	141.2	157.6	157.1	144.8	125.3	138.5
March, 1943	145.4	170.3	147.4	142.7	137.3	153.5
<u>1944</u>						
January	109.5	117.5	105.5	100.7	114.3	126.7
February	122.4	132.8	123.5	116.1	121.2	135.1
March	162.0	215.3	166.9	145.9	165.3	169.8
% Change,						
<u>March, 1944</u>	+11.4	+26.4	+13.2	+ 1.5	+20.4	+10.6
March, 1943						
% Change,						
<u>Jan.-Mar., 1944</u> .	+ 6.6	+13.7	+ 4.1	+ 0.2	+14.5	+ 7.8
Jan.-Mar., 1943 .						
<u>Variety Stores</u>						
March, 1940	108.6	125.1	111.1	103.5	112.6	105.3
March, 1941	121.0	156.0	122.2	117.5	116.2	105.6
March, 1942	148.2	187.6	158.2	139.6	145.6	125.7
March, 1943	153.5	192.5	172.8	142.5	142.4	129.4
<u>1944</u>						
January	131.7	152.4	156.4	118.8	130.9	107.0
February	141.5	172.4	153.5	130.5	149.4	121.2
March	155.9	196.6	177.5	143.5	151.7	120.6
% Change,						
<u>March, 1944</u>	+ 1.6	+ 2.1	+ 2.7	+ 0.7	+ 6.5	- 6.8
March, 1943						
% Change,						
<u>Jan.-Mar., 1944</u> .	+ 1.9	+ 5.5	+ 1.2	+ 0.2	+ 9.7	- 2.1
Jan.-Mar., 1943 .						
<u>Drug Stores</u>						
March, 1940	109.4	116.5	115.2	108.2	106.8	102.4
March, 1941	123.7	133.3	126.0	124.9	115.3	116.8
March, 1942	142.0	161.6	145.6	139.7	139.5	135.2
March, 1943	159.9	189.1	165.0	152.5	156.5	174.0
<u>1944</u>						
January	167.8	195.9	171.3	158.0	169.9	189.1
February	163.2	190.9	166.4	153.1	166.2	185.7
March	169.8	207.6	174.3	158.5	171.9	189.7
% Change,						
<u>March, 1944</u>	+ 6.2	+ 9.8	+ 5.6	+ 3.9	+ 9.8	+ 9.0
March, 1943						
% Change,						
<u>Jan.-Mar., 1944</u> .	+ 8.7	+11.7	+ 8.2	+ 5.9	+12.9	+14.6
Jan.-Mar., 1943 .						

DEPARTMENT STORE SALES IN CANADA, BY SELECTED DEPARTMENTS

March, 1943 and March, 1944

(Based on dollar sales of 20 firms including mail order houses)

	March, 1943	March, 1944	% Change, 1944/1943
	\$	\$	
TOTAL SALES, ALL DEPARTMENTS	27,247,501	30,344,757	+11.4
1. Women's dresses, coats and suits	3,347,719	3,818,606	+14.1
2. Girls' and infants' wear	1,165,494	1,457,370	+25.0
3. Hosiery and gloves	1,123,566	1,196,399	+ 6.5
4. Lingerie and corsets	1,218,944	1,490,902	+22.5
5. Millinery	360,510	405,584	+12.5
3. Women's and children's apparel--(Total,1-5) ...	7,216,233	8,368,861	+16.0
7. Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings	2,790,698	3,284,913	+17.7
8. Drugs and toilet articles and preparations	810,563	853,224	+ 5.3
9. Piece goods	2,229,100	2,733,343	+22.6
10. Smallwares	957,656	1,090,420	+13.9
11. Food and kindred products	2,559,131	2,644,996	+ 3.4
12. Furniture (including mattresses and springs) ..	1,487,372	1,756,446	+18.1
13. Home furnishings	2,016,662	2,144,892	+ 6.4
14. Household appliances and electrical supplies ..	533,429	503,023	- 5.7
15. Hardware and kitchen utensils	1,196,187	1,309,351	+ 9.5
16. Radios, musical instruments and supplies	338,198	219,089	-35.2
17. Shoes and other footwear	1,909,199	2,078,937	+ 8.9
18. Stationery, books and magazines	403,202	451,565	+10.6
19. All other departments, total	2,794,338	2,905,697	+ 4.0

DEPARTMENT STORE SALES IN CANADA, BY SELECTED DEPARTMENTS

Jan.-to-Mar., 1943 and Jan.-to-Mar., 1944

(Based on dollar sales of 20 firms including mail order houses)

	Jan.-to- Mar., 1943	Jan.-to- Mar., 1944	% Change, 1944/1943
	\$	\$	
TOTAL SALES, ALL DEPARTMENTS	67,178,641	70,997,515	+ 5.7
1. Women's dresses, coats and suits	7,544,440	8,032,971	+ 6.5
2. Girls' and infants' wear	2,406,311	2,839,138	+18.0
3. Hosiery and gloves	2,723,332	2,857,655	+ 4.9
4. Lingerie and corsets	3,158,397	3,458,009	+ 9.5
5. Millinery	671,589	752,400	+12.2
6. Women's and children's apparel--(Total, 1-5)	16,504,069	17,342,173	+ 8.7
7. Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings	6,546,335	7,143,399	+ 9.1
8. Drugs and toilet articles and preparations	2,213,285	2,305,351	+ 3.9
9. Piece goods	6,072,335	6,678,762	+10.0
10. Smallwares	2,534,378	2,775,190	+ 7.4
11. Food and kindred products	6,981,733	7,032,703	+ 0.7
12. Furniture (including mattresses and springs)	3,713,427	4,409,333	+16.7
13. Home furnishings	4,833,313	4,982,970	+ 2.4
14. Household appliances and electrical supplies	1,402,499	1,237,306	-11.3
15. Hardware and kitchen utensils	2,534,221	2,769,476	+ 7.2
16. Radios, musical instruments and supplies	940,142	630,518	-32.9
17. Shoes and other footwear	4,545,122	4,439,532	- 2.3
18. Stationery, books and magazines	1,131,397	1,253,223	+11.2
19. All other departments, total	7,090,355	7,391,643	+ 4.2

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