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## CANADA

 DOMINION BUREAU OF STATISTICS
# CENSUS OF MERCHANDISE AND SERVICE ESTABLISHMENTS 

## RETAIL MERCHANDISE TRADE

## IN

## CANADA

## CALENDAR YEAR



Published by Authority of the HON. JAHES A. MacKINNON, M.P., Minister of Trade and Commerce

DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND COMMERCE<br>DO:ALIION BUREAU OF STATISTICS<br>INTERNAL TRADE BRANCH<br>OTTAWA, CANADA

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| :--- | :--- |

## CENSUS OF MERCHANDISING AND SERVICF ESTABLISHMENTS

## Retail Merchandise Trade in Canada, 1939

Retail merchandise trade in Canada is estimated at $\$ 2,447,658,000$ for 1939, up 2 per cent fron the areceding year and approximately on a par with the level obtaining in 1937. Annual figures for 1939 represent the net resultant of the reversal in trend in consumer purcliaising which took place at the outhreak of the war; they do not reveal the marked upward movement during the last four montis of the year. Results of monthly surveys of retall trade conducted by the Burenu indicate that after making allowance for usual seasonal differences, sales in the last four months of the year averaged 8 per cent above tie level of the preceding eight-month period.

All provinces recorded increases over 1938. Increased incone in Saskatchewan, resulting fro: the greatly improved crop conditions in that province, was effective in producing a 12 per cent gain in retail purchasing in 1939. Increases over 1938 were slight in other province3, being 4 per cent for New Brunswick, 3 per cent for Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, 2 per cent for Alberta, and only 1 per cent for each of the otier provinces.

The relative position occupied by chains in 1939 increased slightly from 1338. There were 446 chain store companies in Canata last year and these operated a total of 7,595 individual stores with annual sales of $4432,026,100$ or 17.7 per cent of the totill sules of all stores including botin crains and independentis. In 1933, there were 457 chain companies witi 7,592 stores and these accounted for 17.2 per cent of the total annual retail business. Ratios of chain to total sales for earlier years were 16.9 per cent for $1937,17.9$ per cent for 1936 , and 17.7 per cent for 1935 . The ratio was 17.7 per cent for 1930 , the earliest year for which these figures are availsble.

Grocery and combination store chains form the most important group in point of view of number of chain companies, number of individual branch stores and volume of annual turnover. There were 73 such chains in Canada last year and these operated 1,887 stores with sales of $\{123,826,200$ or 35 per cent of the total business of all grocery and combination stores. The chain ratio was up slightly from 1938 when it stood at 33.7 per cent.

There were 16 varlety store chains wit. 489 stores and $\$ 51,416,000$ sales, an amount wich forms 10 e than 30 per cent of the total annual turnover in tinis field. Ratios of chain store sales to totisl sales in 1939 for some of the other lines of business in which chains are of importance ase ais follows: (Katios for 1338 are shom in brackets). Shoe stores, 36.4 per cent ( 34.2 per cent); lumber and building material
dealers, 29.7 per cent (29.7 per cent); drug stores, 20.5 per cent ( 20.7 per cent); furniture stores, 15.0 per cent ( 13.4 per cent). It should be noted that these figures relate to stores classified according to kind of business and not to sales of individual comodities. No information is avallable to show the ratio in which chains and independents share in the tride in any individual conmodity.

Results for individual lines of business show but slight changes in dollar volune of trading in 1939 compared with the preceding year. Salles of the food group of stores at $\$ 524,146,000$ for 1939 were practicully unchanged fnom the preceding year. Grocery and combination store sales were also maintained at an only slightly higher level than in 1338, sales for the year under review eitimated at. $351,410,000$ exceading by 3 per cent the amount calculated for the earlier period.

Country generai stome sale3 were estimated at $519 \%, 183,00 \%$ for 1939, down by 2 per cent from the preceding year, slight increases in Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick and Saskatchewan being more than offset by reductions ranging up to four per cent in other provinces.

Stores in the general merchandise group did 4 per cent more business in 1939 than in 1938. Department stores and variety store3 form the two nost important classifications in this division. Department store sales at $2289,887,000$ for 1939 were up by 4 per cent from the preceling year, results for various regions of the country showing gains of 6 per cent in the Maritime Provinces, 5 per cent in the Prairie Provinces, 4 per cent in Ontario, 3 per cent in Suebec, and 2 per cent in British Columbia. Variety store sales increazed by 3 per cent from ©52,556,000 in 1938 to $\$ 57,027,000$ in 1939.

Salea in the automotive group were maintained at the 1938 level, gains in the servicing trades--filling stations and merchandise garages--offsetting a decline of 3 per cent in the total annual business of motor vehicle dealers. Sales of motor vehicle dealera were estimated at $¢ 302,889,000$ in 1939 and $\$ 311,026,000$ in 1938. These figures represent the tothl annual turnover of the firms in question including not only the sales of new and used motor venicles but also receipts from the sale of parts and accessories, gas and oil, togetner with recelpts from repairs and sorvice operations. The decline in new motor vehicle sales alone was somewhat greater than that recordel for the motor vehicle dealer business as a whole. There were 114,747 new notor vehícles sold for $\$ 125,967,521$ in Canada last year, down 5 per cent in number and 7 per cent in value from the 121,165 units which sold for $\$ 135,011,908$ in 1938.

Increase: demand for textile products following the outbreak of the war resulted in a considerable gain in business for stores in the clothing trades. But these gains little more tian offset losse3 sustained earlier in tine year with the result that sales for the upparel group as a whole were only 3 per cent higher in 1939 than in 1938. Tot,al sales for the grou? were eitimated at $\$ 182,111,000$ for 1939. Results for individual kinds of business vuried but little from the group average. Sales of men's clothing stores were up by 3 per cent; family clothing store sales gained 4 per cent; women's apparel stores, 4 per cent; wille shoe store sale:; remained unchanged from the preceding year.

Sales in the lumber and building materials group and the furniture and household group registered slight increases over 1938. Hardware store sales were up by 1 per cent, lumber and building material dealers, 8 per cent; and furniture stores, 3 per cent. Household appliance store sales were off by 3 per cent.

Drug store sales at $\$ 63,643,000$ were 2 per cent higher in 1939 than in the preceding year. Sales of retail fuel deulers were $u_{p}$ by 8 per cent while jewellery store sales registered a similar increase. The increase in jewellery store sales coincides with a pronounced increase in marriages in the latter half of the year under review. Tobacco stores did 3 per cent more business in 1939 than in 1938 while government liquor store sales were up by 5 per cent.

## Comparison of Indexes of Retail Sales

## and Cost of Living Indexes

A comparison of the movements in the dollar value of consumer purchases and retail prices has formed part of this annual survey of retail trade for some years. While the Bureau's Retail Price Index is not constructed in such a way as to warrant its use in deflating tine dollar value of sules yet comparison of the two series does give some indication of the extent to which the dollar figures reflect price movements rather than changes in the physical volume of goodis sold. Comparison of indexes of dollar value of retail sales and the Bureau's Retail Price Index (Equated to the year $1930=100$ ) is given below.

| Year | Total <br> Retail Sales | $\begin{aligned} & \text { Index } \\ & \text { of Sales } \end{aligned}$ | Retail Price Index |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | \$ |  |  |
| 1930 | 2,755,569,900 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| 1931 | 2,320,963,000 | 84.2 | 85.3 |
| 1932 | 1,922,066,000 | 69.8 | 75.1 |
| 1933 | 1,785,768,000 | 64.8 | 72.5 |
| 1934 | 1,958,754,000 | 71.1 | 76.2 |
| 1935 | 2,054,897,000 | 74.6 | 76.6 |
| 1936 | 2,208,142,000 | 80.1 | 78.4 |
| 1937 | 2,453,715,000 | 89.0 | 81.2 |
| 1938 | 2,404,756,000 | 87.3 | 82.0 |
| 1939 | 2,447,658,000 | 88.8 | 80.8 |

Comparison of the two sets of indexes clearly indicetes that a large portion of the decline in dollar sales in the depression years was due to price movements. Part of the recovery since 1933 in dollar sales must also be attributed to price changes. While some increase in prices was evident in the last nuarter of 1939, these increases failed to offset the domward trend in the first half of the year, the average retail price index for 1939 standing 1 per cent below the 1938 level. It is evident, therefore, that the moderate increase of 2 per cent in dollar sales between 1938 and 1939 must be attributed to an increase in the volume of goods purchased rather than to a change in price levels.

The Bureau's Cost of Living Indexes for the period under review are given below and, for comparison purposes, have been adjusted to make the 1930 figure equal 100.

## Index Numbers of Ketail Prices, Rents and Costs of Services, Canada <br> (1930-100)

| Year | TOIAL Index | Food Index | Fuel <br> Index | Rent Index | Clothing Index | Sundries Index | Retail Price Index (Foods, fuel, clothing, household requirements) |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 1930 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| 1931 | 90.3 | 78.4 | 98.4 | 97.3 | 87.5 | 98.0 | 85.3 |
| 1932 | 82.0 | 65.2 | 95.5 | 89.4 | 77.0 | 95.2 | 75.1 |
| 1933 | 78.1 | 64.6 | 91.6 | 80.4 | 71.5 | 93.2 | 72.5 |
| 1934 | 79.2 | 70.4 | 91.6 | 75.6 | 74.2 | 92.7 | 76.2 |
| 1935 | 79.7 | 71.4 | 90.7 | 76.8 | 74.4 | 92.8 | 76.6 |
| 1936 | 81.5 | 74.4 | 90.3 | 79.0 | 75.1 | 93.5 | 78.4 |
| 1937 | 83.4 | 78.4 | 88.7 | 82.1 | 77.4 | 94.0 | 81.2 |
| 1938 | 84.8 | 79.1 | 88.9 | 84.8 | 78.1 | 94.7 | 82.0 |
| 1939 | 84.4 | 77.0 | 88.7 | 85.0 | 77.8 | 94.9 | 80.9 |

Separate price indexes are shown for food, fuel, rent and clothing. The sundries index indicates the price changes in a miscellaneous group of commodities, togetiner with the variations in costs of certain services, such as theatre costs, insurance, doctors and dentists' fees, hospital charges and laundry. The total index given in the second coluran of the table is an average of the figures in the following five colums, each weighted in proportion to the consumption of the items involved. The last column "Retail Price Index" is also a wejghted average but omits the rental figures and includes only the perchandising items in the sundries index.

In comparing the indexes of retail sales for the period 1930 to 1939 with the Retail Price Indexes shown. in the last column of the above table, it should be remembered that figures for certain kinds of business are included in the former which are not included in the latter. In particular, automobile dealer establishments have considerable weight in detemming the indexes of retail sales but commodities sold by these establishments are not included in the price indexes. It must also be remembered that the whole weighting system used in computing the Bureau's indexes of retail prices is based on an estimated aggregate consumption in Canada, including a proportion which does not pass through the channels of distribution covered by the Census of Merchandising.

## Description of Metinod Used in Constructing Indexes <br> of Retail Sales

Figures for the basic yeur 1930, as shown in this report, were secured for the Census of Merchandising and Service Establishments, 1931, when returns were sent in by every retail firm in the country. Total sales figures for years subsequent to 1930 are computed fron the 1930 figures as base, together with trends in sales derived from deturns secured each year from all chain stores and from a representative number of independent establishments. In all, including both chains and independents, reports have been received from about 26,000 retail stores and it is
estimated that these transacted approximately 64 per cent of the total retail trade of the country in 1939. The reports which have been secured have been used in determining the most probable value of siles of those firms which do not report to the annual Census. The sales figures given in this bulletin, therefore, relate to the total estimated retail trade of the country and not only to those units from which returns have been secured.

It is, therefore, evident that figures presented in this report for the years 1331 to 1339 are eatimates based on indexes computed from returns from a sample number of firms. The chief factor which may not be reflected in the sales indexes is variation in trade due to changes in the number of stores in operution. No information is available to show the extent to which firms going out of business have been replaced by new stores of a similar nature. The natural tendency of the metnod is to underestimate the extent of the decline in business during a period of recession and likewise to underestimate the extent of the recovery when the cycle turns upward once more. This factor is of chief importance in certain kinds of business dealing chiefly in duruble or luxury lines of merchandise such as automobile dealers, furmiture stores, radio and music stores. There is evidence to show that the total number of gasoline filling stations has increased during recent years. For this reason, the trend in sales for gusoline filling stations has been re-computed on the basis of gallonage figures as reported to the provincial governments and retall gasoline prices rather than on the basis of the business of those stations reporting to the annual survey of retail trade. In spite of the limitations attending the methods of calculation, it is believed that a fair degree of accuracy attends the results for the total retail trade as a whole and for most of the individual lines of business for which figures are shown.

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Table 1.-Summary of Retail Merchandise Trade, by Provinces, 1930-1939

(1) Includes Yukon and Northwest Territories.

CANADA--KETALL MERCHANDISE TRADE, 1939
Table 2.-Total Net Sules and Sales Indexes, by Kinds of Business

(1) See footnotes on Page 9 .

Table 2.-Total Net Sales and Sales Indexes, by Kinds of Business--(Cont'd.)


Table 2.--Total Net Sales and Sales Indexes, by Kincis of Business=-(Cont áa)

| Kind of Business | Stores and Sales, 1930 |  | Total Net Sales, (Estimated) |  | Indexes of Retail Sales$(1930=100)$ |  |  |  |  |  | $\begin{gathered} \text { g of } \\ \text { Change } \\ 1939 / 38 \end{gathered}$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | of Stores | Sales |  | 1939 | $1930]$ | 1933 | 1936 | 1937 | 1938 | 1939 |  |
| Furniture and House- |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| hold Group ............ | 3,288 | 101,665,900 | 78,213,000 | 79,326,000 | 100,0 | 49.9 | 70.8 | 81.8 | 76.9 | 78.0 | $\begin{array}{r}1 \\ +\quad 104 \\ \hline+29\end{array}$ |
| Fumiture stores ........ | 1,101 | 41,016,500 | 35,656,000 | 36,698,000 | 100.0 | 56.3 | 78.6 | 92. 2 | 86.9 | 89.5 | + 2.9 |
| Household appliance stores | 590 | 17,798,200 | 15,164,000 | 14,791,000 | 100.0 | 51.7 | 75.4 | 88.5 | 85.2 | 83.1 | - 2.5 |
| Other home furnishings |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| (including floor ings, curtains, | 559 | 8,957,000 | 7,065,000 | 7,185,000 | 100.0 | 55.9 | 75.7 | 85.4 | 78.9 | 80.2 | $+1.7$ |
| Radio and music stores... | 938 | 33,894,200 | 20,328,000 | 20,652,000 | 100.0 | 39.7 | 57.8 | 64.8 | 60.0 | 60.9 | $+\quad 76$ |
| Restaurants, cafeterias and Eating Places .... | 5,609 | 75,977,100 | 50, 176,000 | 49,969,000 | 100.0 | 54.8 | 64.2 | 68.4 | 66.0 | 65.8 |  |
| Other Retail Stores | 26,349 | 517,939,500 | 445,144,000 | 460,911,000 | 100.0 | 65.5 | 77.8 | 86.1 | 85,9 | 89.0 | $\pm$ |
| Farmers ${ }^{\text {d }}$ supply stores | 2,351 | 45,760,600 | 43,024,000 | 40,038,000 | 100.0 | $\overline{63} .7$ | 83.7 | 99.0 | 94.0 | 87.5 | 6.9 |
| Book stores | 358 | 8,837,500 | 7,031,000 | 7,122,000 | 100,0 | 61.2 | 71.1 | 79.6 | 79. | 80 | $+1.3$ |
| Coal and wood yards | 2,071 | 86,046,800 | 77,060,000 | 83,135,000 | 100.0 | 81.8 | 88.3 | 91.6 | 89.6 | 96.6 | + 7.9 |
| Drug stores .. | 3,559 | 76,848,900 | 68,164,000 | 69,643,000 | 100.0 | 74.5 | 83.1 | 89.4 | 39.7 | 90.6 | + 2.2 |
| Florists | 689 | 9,264,700 | 6,950,000 | 6,772,000 | 100.0 | 60.1 | 63.6 | 76.8 | 75.0 | 73.1 | - 2.6 |
| Jewellery stores ........ | 1,532 | 26,662,600 | 21,382,000 | 23,044,000 | 100.0 | 56.4 | 74.5 | 82.3 | 30.2 | 86.4 | + 7.8 |
| Office, school and store supplies and equipment |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| dealers ...... | 395 | 19,829,900 | 17,953,000 | 18,551,000 | 100.0 | 50.4 | 79.0 | 93.8 | 90.5 | 93.6 | $+3.3$ |
| Tobacco stores and stands | 2,420 | 30,702,800 | 26,640,000 | 27,323,000 | 100.0 | 70.3 | 79.8 | 86.7 | 86.8 | 89.0 | + 2.6 |
| Government licuor stores(2) ..... | 651 | 100,694,600 | 77,298,000 | 81,227,000 | 100.0 | 54.5 | 65.5 | 73.8 | 76.8 | 80.7 | + 5. |
| Unclassified kirds |  |  |  | 81,227,000 |  |  |  |  | 76.8 | 80.7 |  |
| of business . ......... | 12,323 | 113,291,100 | 33,642,000 | 104,056,000 | 200.0 | 61.7 | 75.8 | 85.9 | 88.0 | 91.8 | + 4.4 |

(1) Figures for years subsequent to 1930 have been estimated on basis of gallonage data and retail gasoline prices.
(2) Due to changes in method of reporting exact comparisons of figures for varlous years are not valid.

NOTE: The number of stores is shown only for 1930. Sales figures for later years are calculated from the sampling principle. The total number of stores for these years is not known.

## CANADA-FETAIL MBRCHANDISE TRADE 1939

Table 3.--Number of Chains, Chain Stores, Total Chain Store Sales, and Percentage of Chain Store Sales to Total Sales, by Provinces

(1) Includes Yukon and Northwest Territories.

Table 3.--Number of Chains, Chain Stores, Total Chain Store Sales, and Percentage of Chain Store ©ales to Total Sales, by Provinces-Concl'd)


Note: The chain store figures relate to corporate chains only; that is, groups of four or more stores (exclusive only of department stores) under the same ownership and management and carrying on the same or similar lines of business. All department stores are considered as independents.

## CANADA-RETAIL MERCHANDISE TRADE, 1939

Table 40 Number of Chains Chain Stores, Total Chain Store Sales, and Percentage of Chain Sture Sales to Total Sales by Kinds of Business


Tahle 4.--Number of Chains, Chain Stores, Total Chain Store Sales, and Percentage of Chain Store Sales to Total Sales, by Kinds of Business-(Concl1d)

|  | 1930 | 1933 | 1938 | 1939 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Lumber and Building Material Dealers |  |  |  |  |
| Chains | 46 | 42 | 35 | 31 |
| Yards (maximum) . | 1,035 | 883 | 804 | 779 |
| Chain sales ........ | \$18, 697,500 | \& 9,505,700 | \$13,464,300 | \$14,489,000 |
| Total sales $\qquad$ <br> E, chains to total | $\begin{gathered} \$ 66,200,700 \\ 28.1 \end{gathered}$ | $\begin{gathered} \$ 29,331,000 \\ 32.4 \end{gathered}$ | $445,321,000$ | $\$ 48,716,000$ |
| Furniture Stores - |  |  |  |  |
| Chains ............. | 8 | 9 | 7 | 7 |
| Stores (maximum) ... | 96 | 84 | 76 | 81 |
| Chain sales ........ | \$ 9,367,900 | \$ 4,317,400 | * 4,793,100 | ( 5,492,800 |
| Totul sales ........ | \$41,016,500 | \$23,073,000 | \$35,656,000 | \$36,698,000 |
| \%, chains to total. | $22.8$ | 18.7 | 13.4 | $15.0$ |
| Restaurants, Cafeterias and Eating Places - |  |  |  |  |
| Chains ............ | 21 | 17 | 14 | 15 |
| Stores (maximum) ... | 262 | 240 | 210 | 213 |
| Chain sales ....... | \$13,438,600 | \$ 7,129,300 | \$ 6,917,400 | \$ 7,180,700 |
| Total sales ........ | \$75,977,100 | \$41,667,000 | \$50,176,000 | \$49,969,000 |
| \%, chains to total. | 17.7 | 17.1 | 13.8 | 14.4 |
| Drug Stores - |  |  |  |  |
| Chains .. | 31 | 29 | 33 | 31 |
| Stores (maximum) ... | 292 | 301 | 347 | 345 |
| Chain sales ........ | ©13,971,300 | \$11,001,300 | \$14,127,100 | \&14,251,800 |
| Total sales ........ \%, chains to total | $\$ 76,848,900$ | \$57,253,000 | ¢,68,164,000 |  |
| \%, chains to total | $18.2$ | $19.2$ | $20.7$ | $20.5=$ |
| Office, Store and School Supplies and Equipment Dealers - |  |  |  |  |
| Chains ....... | 16 | 11 | 12 | 12 |
| Stores (maximum) | 173 | 144 | 152 | 155 |
| Chain sales | \$11,134,200 | \$ 5,332,100 |  |  |
| Total sales | \$19,829,900 | \$10,003,000 | \$17,953,000 | \$18,551,000 |
| 8 , chains to total | 56.1 | 53.3 | 58.9 | 59.2 |
| Tobacco Stores and Stands - |  |  |  |  |
| Chains | 9 | 9 | 9 | 9 |
| Stores (maximum).... | 215 | 234 | 217 | 217 |
| Chain sales ........ | \$ 7,800,700 | \$ 5,446,200 | \& 6,047,400 | \$ 6,029,000 |
| Total sales ........ | \$30,702,800 | *21,586,000 | \$26,640,000 | \$27,323,000 |
| \%, chains to total. | 25.4 | 25.2 | 22.7 | 22.1 |

Note: The chain store figures relate to corporate chains only; that is, groups of four or more stores (exclusive only of department stores) under the same ownership and management and carrying on the same or similar lines of business. All department stores are considered as independents.

