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Canadian Market Research

Canadian Retail Sales

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There are a number of sources for Canadian retail sales data.

Monthly & Quarterly Retail Trade Survey

The principle source for retail sales data in Canada is Statistics Canada. Their monthly retail sales data is provided by store type:

- New Car Dealers
- Used & Recreational Vehicle Dealers
- Gas Service Stations
- Furniture
- Home Furnishings
- Computer & Software
- Home Electronics & Appliances
- Home Centres, Hardware etc,
- Supermarkets & Grocery Stores
- Convenience & Specialty Foods
- Beer, Wine, Liquor

Research Tip

Surveys often exist for specific retail products

Use our [Source Lists](#) to find the latest polls and surveys related to your [retail product](#).

Also browse through various reports on [Consumer Behaviour](#).

- Clothing
- Shoes, Clothing Accessories, Jewellery
- Pharmacies, Personal Care
- General Merchandise Stores
- Sporting, Hobby, Music and Books
- Miscellaneous

The latest monthly and quarterly data by province is presented in the free publication [Retail Trade](#)

If you are interested in local retail sales data, this survey provides quarterly data for only three metropolitan areas in Canada (Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver) And even then some data is suppressed (e.g. computer and software sales for Vancouver). This local data is not included in the the publication [Retail Trade](#). You can only access it through the CANSIM database (<http://cansim2.statcan.ca/>). See table [080-0015](#). There is a \$3 charge per store type / geography to access this data.

[Click here for more information on CANSIM.](#)

For data at a more detailed store level (5-digit NAICS (e.g. 45391 Pet and Pet Supplies Stores) you can now use Statistics Canada's Monthly Trade Survey. Again the only local figures are for the metropolitan areas of Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver. However it cannot be accessed through CANSIM and is only available from January 2004 forward. It is a custom order. The charge is \$50 per NAICS code. For that price you are provided with all available geographical levels (Canada, provinces, three metropolitan areas.) As with the quarterly information there is some suppression of data.

For data at a more detailed municipal level, you can use the publication *FP Markets - Canadian Demographics*.

This publication is a staple of Canadian consumer market research. If you do not own a copy of this publication or at least know where your closest local copy can be found, you need to find this out right away! You can order the latest issue online at http://www.fpinformart.ca/prod/prod_list.php The cost is \$199. If you are not planning on referring to it a number of times over the year, you are best to find a public source such as a major library or business resource centre to access it.

FP Markets includes detailed demographic and psychographic profiles of communities across Canada. More importantly to the subject at hand, it provides local sales by the same store types as Statistics Canada for all municipal regions (Census Divisions) and metropolitan areas across Canada.

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Annual Retail Trade Survey

This Statistics Canada survey provides financial data beyond simple retail sales by store type. This includes Sales of goods for resale, Total operating revenue, Opening inventory, Purchases, Closing inventory, Cost of goods sold, Total labour remuneration, Total operating expenses, Number of stores. Data is available for chain and non-chain stores for Canada and the provinces.

To access this data use the CANSIM database (<http://cansim2.statcan.ca/>). See table [080-0011](#). There is a \$3 charge per store type / geography to access this data.

[Click here for more information on CANSIM.](#)

You can also order custom data from this same survey which covers estimates of sales by store location (street, shopping center, other) at the Canada level, by Trade Group and estimates of total operating revenue, total operating expenses, cost of goods sold and total labour expenses **per square foot** at the Canada level by Trade Group.

If you wish to order this information or want more information you can either contact us at GDSourcing (contact@gdsourcing.com) or Statistics Canada directly (1-800-263-1136).

Sales per square foot is a popular retail statistic. Another free option for access ing this beyond the custom order described above is the detailed Industry Canada report: [The Structure of Retail Trade in Canada](#) The sale per square foot data covers the years 1999 to 2003. [Click here to link to the table directly.](#)

Small & Medium Business Retail Sales Benchmarks

If you are not interested in the performance of the your sector as a whole but rather of only small or medium retailers, you can use [Financial Ratios](#) to find out the typical percentage increase in sales for your type of retail business.

[Click here for more information.](#)

Quarterly Retail Commodity Survey

All of the above retail trade resources are organized by store type rather than by product so the numbers do not represent the total market size. They exclude product sales from other retailers especially department stores and mass merchants.

Statistics Canada has another retail database called the Quarterly Retail Commodity Survey, which as its name suggests, is organized by commodity (product type). It disregards store type and estimates the total retail market for specific commodities (e.g. Floor coverings & tiles). Data for this survey is only available at a national level. To access this information use the CANSIM database (<http://cansim2.statcan.ca/>). See table [080-0018](#). There is a \$3 charge per store type / geography to access this data.

[Click here for more information on CANSIM.](#)

Monthly Survey of Large Retailers

Related to the Quarterly Retail Commodity survey is the Monthly Survey of Large Retailers. It covers total retail commodity sales by Canada's largest food, clothing, home furnishings, electronics, sporting goods, and general merchandise retailers. ([Click here for a list of the chains surveyed](#))

To access this data use the CANSIM database (<http://cansim2.statcan.ca/>). See table [080-0009](#). There is a \$3 charge per store type / geography to access this data.

[Click here for more information on CANSIM.](#)

The Monthly Survey of Large Retailers is organized by the same commodity groupings as the Quarterly Retail Commodity survey and therefore allows you to determine what percentage of a particular commodity's retail market is held by the large chains surveyed. To make this calculation all you need to do is make sure both data sets are on the same time frame. (e.g. annual data or quarterly data). Then simply divide the related large retailer commodity sales by the total retail commodity sales and multiply by 100 to get the percentage market share. For example in 2003 Annual retail sales of non-athletic footwear in Canada was \$2,846,246,000. In that same year Large Retail Chains sold \$1,029,302,000 worth. This means they controlled 36.2% of the market.

$$(\$1,029,302,000 / \$2,846,246,000) \times 100 = 36.2\%$$

By looking at data from previous years, we can then identify a trend in large retailers gaining market share with this commodity. In 2000, they held 33.1% of the non-athletic shoe market in Canada.

For information on retail sales forecasts see the [Market Forecast](#) research guide.

For a list of additional polls, reports and surveys related to [Canadian consumers](#) and to [specific types of stores within the retail sector](#) see our Stats Link Canada [Source Lists](#).

Next: [Imports & Exports](#)

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