

# Consumer Price Index, April 2020

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The Consumer Price Index (CPI) fell 0.2% on a year-over-year basis in April, down from a 0.9% gain in March. This was the first year-over-year decline in the CPI since September 2009. The CPI declined as energy prices fell as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Excluding energy, the CPI rose 1.6%.

On a [seasonally adjusted monthly basis](#), the CPI fell 0.7% in April. Excluding food and energy, the seasonally adjusted CPI fell 0.1%.

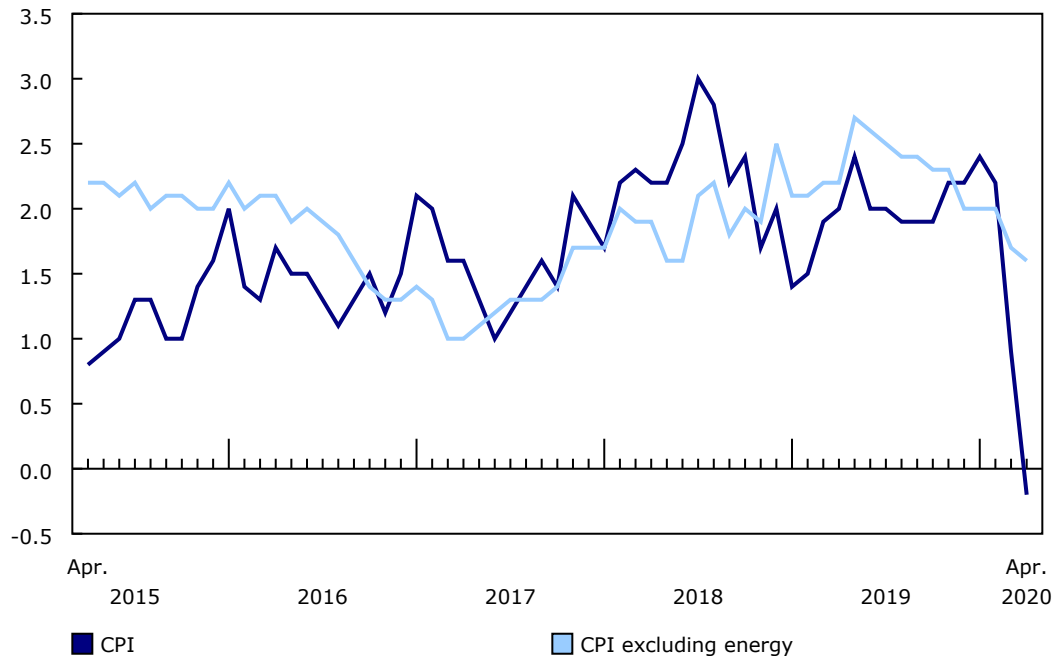
## Two ways of exploring the Consumer Price Index (CPI)

Visit the [Consumer Price Index Portal](#) to find all CPI data, publications, interactive tools, and announcements highlighting new products and upcoming changes to the CPI in one convenient location.

Check out the [Consumer Price Index Data Visualization Tool](#) to access current and historical CPI data in a customizable, visual format.

**Chart 1**  
**The 12-month change in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and CPI excluding energy**

12-month % change



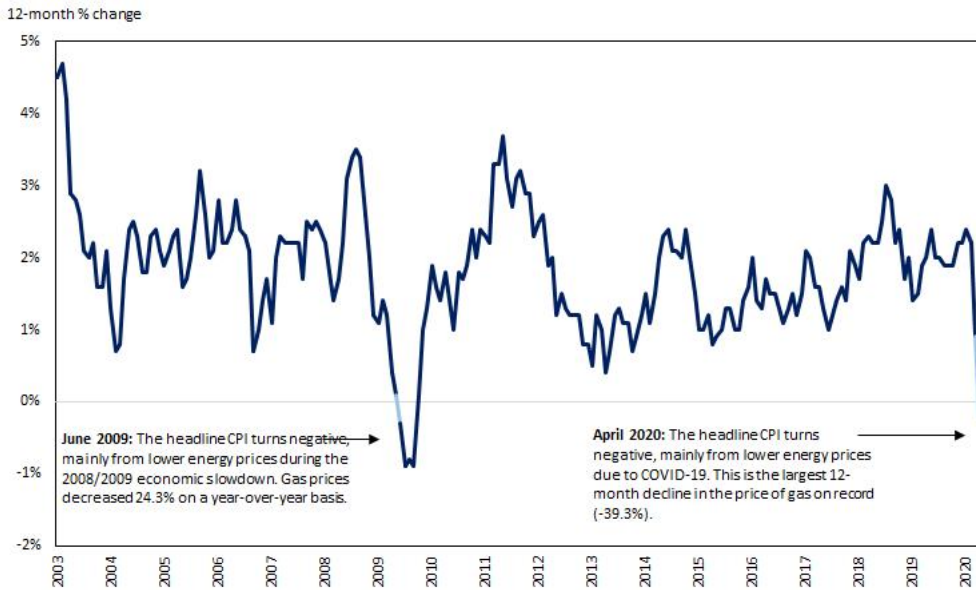
Source(s): Table 18-10-0004-01.



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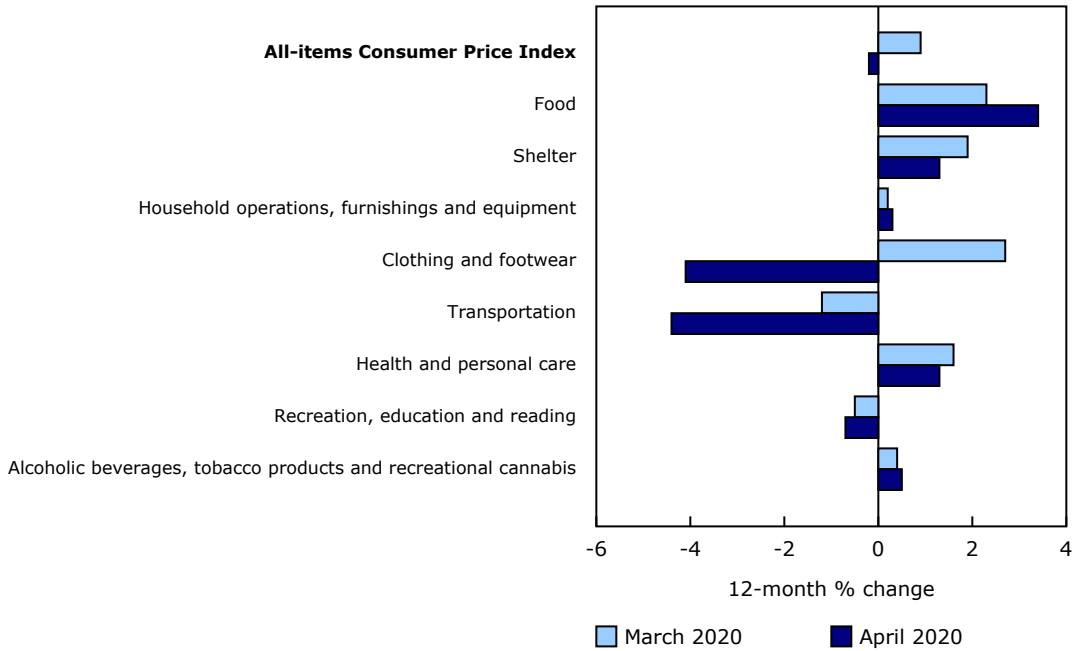
## Infographic 1 – The 12-month change in the Consumer Price Index, January 2003 to April 2020



### Highlights

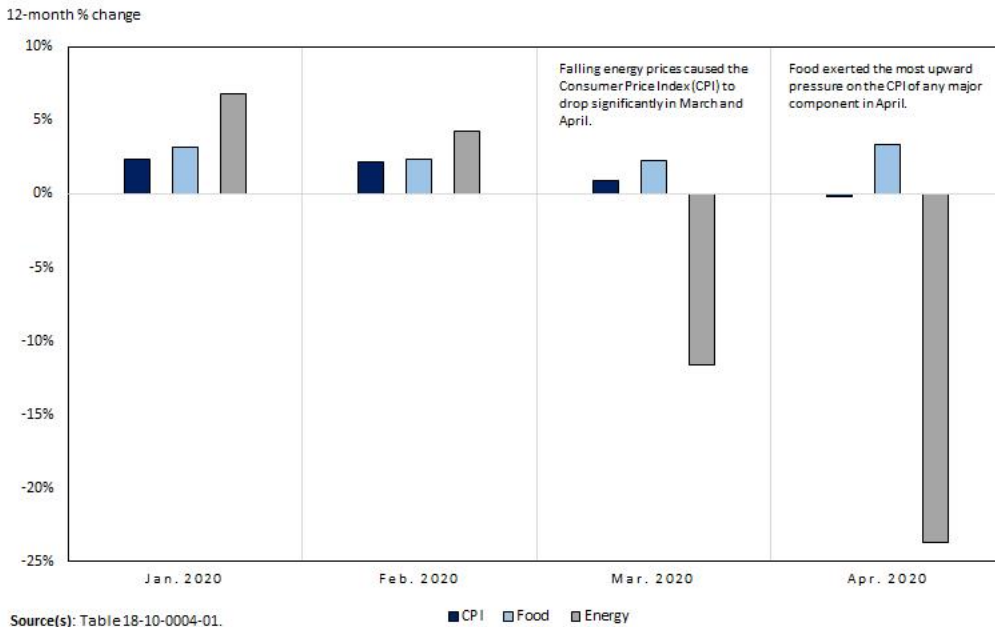
Compared with April 2019, consumers paid less for transportation (-4.4%), clothing and footwear (-4.1%), and recreation, education and reading (-0.7%). In contrast, the growth in food prices (+3.4%) accelerated in April 2020 and recorded the largest year-over-year increase of any major component. Prices rose in five of the eight major components on a year-over-year basis.

**Chart 2**  
**Prices rise in five of eight major components**



Source(s): Table 18-10-0004-01.

**Infographic 2 – Food and energy price movements**



Source(s): Table 18-10-0004-01.

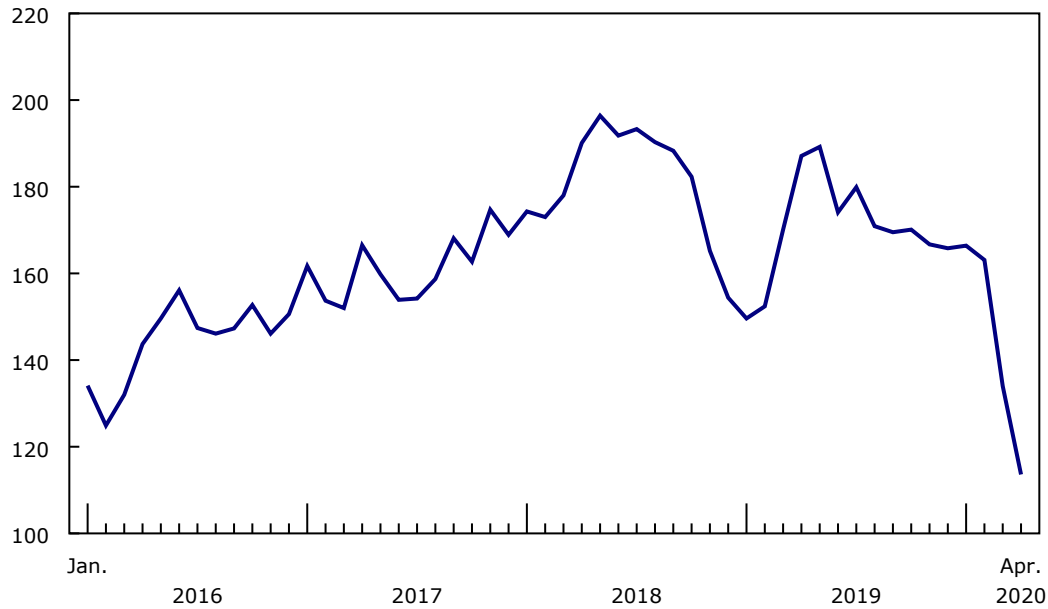
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### Gasoline prices continue to fall

Gasoline prices fell 39.3% on a year-over-year basis in April, the largest year-over-year decline on record. Globally, demand for oil remained low as a result of limited travel, temporary business closures, and lower levels of international trade. An oversupply in the oil market as a result of tensions between major oil-producing countries also contributed to lower prices at the gas pump.

### Chart 3 Gasoline prices continue to fall

index (2002=100)



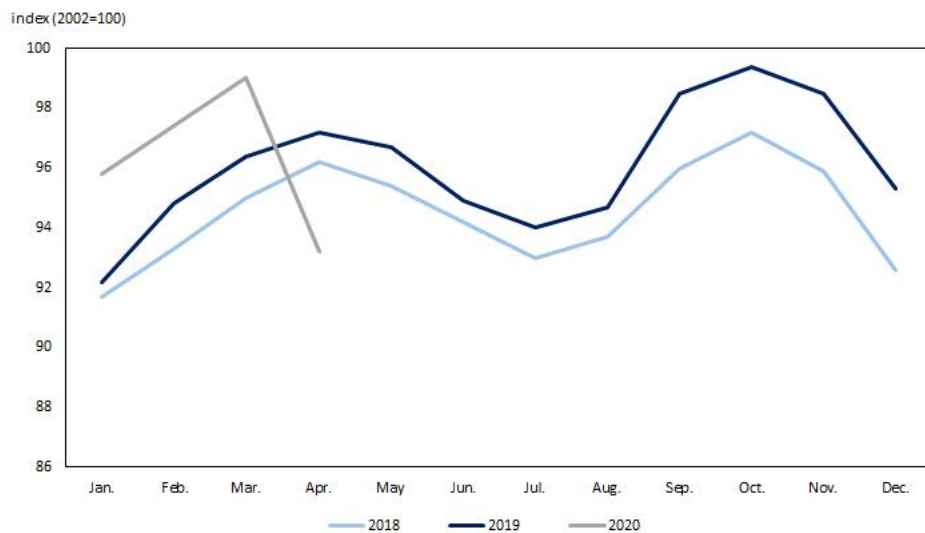
Source(s): Table [18-10-0004-01](#).

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### Clothing and footwear prices fall

The clothing and footwear component fell 5.9% on a monthly basis in April 2020, the largest monthly decline in that component on record. In-person shopping for non-essential goods was suspended in many provinces throughout April, leaving clothing retailers with higher inventories since most clothing is typically purchased in-store. As a result, many retailers applied large discounts to online prices to avoid having leftover seasonal stock.

### Infographic 3 – Clothing and footwear price index drops in April



#### Consumers pay more for food in April

**Higher sales** for dry and preserved foods coincided with higher prices for these goods in April, as demand remained high. Year over year, prices for rice (+9.2%), eggs (+8.8%) and margarine (+7.9%) posted significant increases. These increases coincided with higher demand for non-perishable food products as consumers were encouraged to limit grocery shopping trips as a result of physical distancing measures.

Higher sales and supply issues, including a slowdown in cross-border shipping due to COVID-19, contributed to higher prices for pork (+9.0%) and beef (+8.5%) this April compared with April 2019. Canadian meat processing plants have cut production and some have closed temporarily to protect workers during the pandemic.

#### Prices for household cleaning products and toilet paper surge

On a monthly basis, the household cleaning products index rose 4.6%. The paper supplies index, which includes toilet paper, increased 6.0%, the largest monthly increase in this index on record. The price increases correspond to higher demand for cleaning products and household supplies in response to COVID-19.

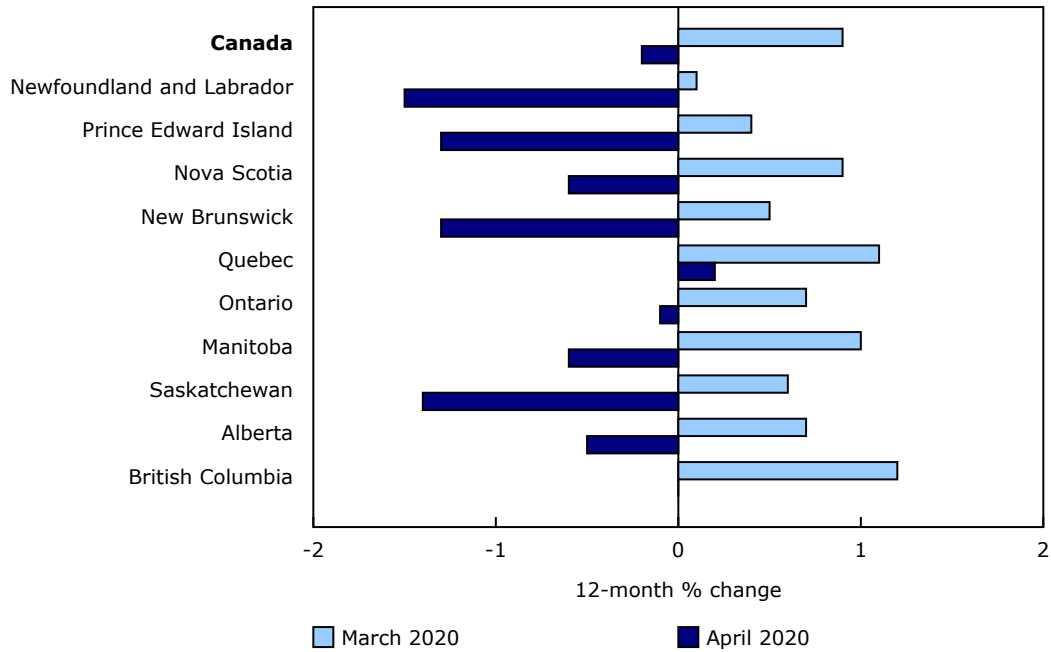
#### Consumers pay less for traveller accommodation in April

As physical distancing measures limited travel to and within Canada, traveller accommodation prices fell 9.8% in April on a year-over-year basis, the largest decline since 2011. While prices fell in all provinces, there were notable declines in locations near major tourist attractions, including Niagara Falls and the Rocky Mountains.

As a result of international travel advisories, travel tours, among other services, were unavailable to consumers in April. A general imputation strategy for services not available to consumers resulted in prices for these trips departing in April being replaced with an imputed movement from the all-items CPI. As a result of this treatment, the travel tours index was up 8.9% compared with April 2019, when prices declined following the peak travel season in February and March.

## Regional Highlights

### Chart 4 The Consumer Price Index turns negative in eight provinces



Source(s): Table 18-10-0004-01.

### Electricity prices decrease the most in Ontario

Consumers paid 4.1% less for electricity compared with April 2019. Electricity price decreases were most pronounced in Ontario, falling 12.6% on a year-over-year basis. The decline was largely due to the provincial government's 45-day suspension of time-of-use rates instated on March 24.

## Note to readers

### Impact of COVID-19 on CPI collection and calculation

Statistics Canada continues to monitor the impacts of the novel coronavirus (also known as COVID-19) on Canada's Consumer Price Index (CPI).

During the month of April, measures were in place across the country to restrict the movement of people and order the temporary closure of businesses. Subsequent in-person field collection was conducted via telephone or Internet, supplementing prices collected via web scraping, transaction data and administrative data. Due to the impact of COVID-19 on product availability in the month of April 2020, select sub-components of the CPI received temporary special imputations.

Some goods and services were unavailable for consumption in April. The following sub-indexes were imputed from the monthly change in the all-items index: some components of child care services; housekeeping services; personal care services; travel tours; spectator entertainment; and use of recreational facilities. These imputations have the effect of removing the impact of these goods and services on the CPI.

Although prices for airfares were collected prior to the suspension of flights, prices for suspended flights are excluded from the April CPI calculation because passengers were ultimately unable to consume them. As a result, select sub-components of the air transportation index were imputed from the parent index.

The indexes, beer served in licensed establishments, wine served in licensed establishments, and liquor served in licensed establishments were imputed from indexes to which consumers likely redirected these expenditures: beer purchased from stores, wine purchased from stores, and liquor purchased from stores.

Where prices were missing due to high levels of out-of-stock products or the temporary closure of businesses, they were imputed with the average price movement of available prices for those items.

Detailed documentation describing the methods and approaches used in the compilation of the April 2020 CPI is available in the article "Technical Supplement for the April 2020 Consumer Price Index," which is published as part of the Prices Analytical Series ([62F0014M](#)).

### Cellular services index

The cellular services index is available upon request. For more information, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; [STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca](mailto:STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca)).

### Real-time data tables

Real-time data table 18-10-0259-01 will be updated on June 1.

### Next release

The Consumer Price Index for May will be released on June 17.

**Table 1**  
**Consumer Price Index, major components and special aggregates, Canada – Not seasonally adjusted**

	Relative importance <sup>1,2</sup>	April 2019	March 2020	April 2020	March to April 2020	April 2019 to April 2020
	%	(2002=100)			% change	
<b>All-items</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>136.0</b>	<b>136.6</b>	<b>135.7</b>	<b>-0.7</b>	<b>-0.2</b>
Food	16.48	149.0	152.8	154.0	0.8	3.4
Shelter	27.36	144.1	146.5	146.0	-0.3	1.3
Household operations, furnishings and equipment	12.80	123.8	123.7	124.2	0.4	0.3
Clothing and footwear	5.17	97.2	99.0	93.2	-5.9	-4.1
Transportation	19.95	143.0	138.9	136.7	-1.6	-4.4
Gasoline	3.13	187.1	134.0	113.6	-15.2	-39.3
Health and personal care	4.79	127.1	128.6	128.7	0.1	1.3
Recreation, education and reading	10.24	115.8	116.0	115.0	-0.9	-0.7
Alcoholic beverages, tobacco products and recreational cannabis	3.21	171.3	171.5	172.1	0.3	0.5
<b>Special aggregates</b>						
All-items excluding food	83.52	133.4	133.5	132.3	-0.9	-0.8
All-items excluding food and energy	77.01	130.1	132.2	131.8	-0.3	1.3
All-items excluding alcoholic beverages, tobacco products and smokers' supplies and recreational cannabis	96.79	134.8	135.5	134.6	-0.7	-0.1
All-items excluding energy	93.50	133.5	135.8	135.7	-0.1	1.6
All-items excluding gasoline	96.87	134.2	136.3	136.0	-0.2	1.3
Energy <sup>3</sup>	6.50	168.2	140.6	128.3	-8.7	-23.7
Goods	44.29	123.7	122.0	120.2	-1.5	-2.8
Durable goods	12.94	91.8	92.2	92.5	0.3	0.8
Semi-durable goods	6.63	99.3	100.7	96.1	-4.6	-3.2
Non-durable goods	24.72	149.4	144.7	142.5	-1.5	-4.6
Services	55.71	148.1	151.1	151.1	0.0	2.0

1. 2017 Consumer Price Index (CPI) basket weights at December 2018 prices, Canada, effective with the January 2019 CPI.

2. Figures may not add up to 100% as a result of rounding.

3. The special aggregate "energy" comprises electricity, natural gas, fuel oil and other fuels, gasoline, and fuel, parts and accessories for recreational vehicles.

Source(s): Tables 18-10-0004-01 and 18-10-0007-01.

**Table 2**  
**Consumer Price Index for the provinces and for Whitehorse, Yellowknife and Iqaluit – Not seasonally adjusted**

	Relative importance <sup>1,2</sup>	April 2019	March 2020	April 2020	March to April 2020	April 2019 to April 2020
	%	(2002=100)			% change	
<b>Canada</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>136.0</b>	<b>136.6</b>	<b>135.7</b>	<b>-0.7</b>	<b>-0.2</b>
Newfoundland and Labrador	1.31	139.7	139.2	137.6	-1.1	-1.5
Prince Edward Island	0.33	137.8	137.5	136.0	-1.1	-1.3
Nova Scotia	2.31	137.4	138.0	136.6	-1.0	-0.6
New Brunswick	1.76	136.4	136.6	134.6	-1.5	-1.3
Quebec	20.72	131.5	132.5	131.7	-0.6	0.2
Ontario	39.83	137.4	137.9	137.3	-0.4	-0.1
Manitoba	3.16	137.1	137.4	136.3	-0.8	-0.6
Saskatchewan	2.98	140.6	140.0	138.7	-0.9	-1.4
Alberta	12.15	143.7	144.1	143.0	-0.8	-0.5
British Columbia	15.27	131.2	132.3	131.2	-0.8	0.0
Whitehorse	0.08	132.2	135.1	133.6	-1.1	1.1
Yellowknife	0.07	138.4	140.0	137.8	-1.6	-0.4
Iqaluit (Dec. 2002=100)	0.03	131.3	132.7	132.4	-0.2	0.8

1. 2017 Consumer Price Index (CPI) basket weights at December 2018 prices, effective with the January 2019 CPI.

2. Figures may not add up to 100% as a result of rounding.

Source(s): Tables 18-10-0004-01 and 18-10-0007-01.



**Table 3**  
**Consumer Price Index, major components and special aggregates – Seasonally adjusted<sup>1</sup>**

	February 2020	March 2020	April 2020	February to March 2020	March to April 2020
	(2002=100)			% change	
<b>All-items</b>	<b>137.6</b>	<b>136.3</b>	<b>135.4</b>	<b>-0.9</b>	<b>-0.7</b>
Food	152.2	152.4	154.1	0.1	1.1
Shelter	146.7	146.5	146.0	-0.1	-0.3
Household operations, furnishings and equipment	123.2	123.6	123.9	0.3	0.2
Clothing and footwear	98.3	98.2	91.3	-0.1	-7.0
Transportation	144.9	138.9	135.1	-4.1	-2.7
Health and personal care	128.8	128.7	128.6	-0.1	-0.1
Recreation, education and reading	116.6	116.1	116.1	-0.4	0.0
Alcoholic beverages, tobacco products and recreational cannabis	171.6	171.5	171.7	-0.1	0.1
<b>Special aggregates</b>					
All-items excluding food	134.8	133.2	131.8	-1.2	-1.1
All-items excluding food and energy <sup>2</sup>	131.9	131.9	131.8	0.0	-0.1

1. A seasonally adjusted series is one from which seasonal movements have been eliminated. Each month, the previous month's seasonally adjusted index is subject to revision. On an annual basis, the seasonally adjusted values for the last three years are revised with the release of January data. Users employing Consumer Price Index (CPI) data for indexation purposes are advised to use the unadjusted indexes. For more information on the availability and uses of seasonally adjusted CPI data, please see the "Definitions, data sources and methods" section of survey [2301](#).

2. The special aggregate "energy" comprises electricity, natural gas, fuel oil and other fuels, gasoline, and fuel, parts and accessories for recreational vehicles.

Source(s): Table [18-10-0006-01](#).

**Table 4**  
**Consumer Price Index statistics, preferred measures of core inflation – Bank of Canada definitions, year-over-year percent change, Canada<sup>1,2</sup>**

	January 2020	February 2020	March 2020	April 2020
	% change			
CPI-common <sup>3,5</sup>	1.8	1.8	1.7	1.6
CPI-median <sup>4,6</sup>	2.1	2.0	2.0	2.0
CPI-trim <sup>4,7</sup>	2.1	2.0	1.8	1.8

1. For more information on these measures of core inflation, please consult the [methodology](#) and [general information](#) documents found in our Definitions, data sources and methods - record number [2301](#).

2. The Bank of Canada's preferred measures of core inflation, CPI-common, CPI-median and CPI-trim, are subject to revision. In the case of CPI-median and CPI-trim, this results from the fact that these measures are based on seasonally adjusted price index series. In the case of CPI-common, revisions are due to the statistical technique used, as the factor model is estimated over all available historical data. The table 18-10-0259-01 contains the historical release data for these three measures and will be updated every month.

3. This measure is based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) series adjusted to remove the effect of changes in indirect taxes.

4. This measure is based on CPI series that have been treated to remove the effect of changes in indirect taxes, and that have been seasonally adjusted.

5. CPI-common is a measure of core inflation that tracks common price changes across categories in the CPI basket.

6. CPI-median is a measure of core inflation corresponding to the price change located at the 50th percentile (in terms of CPI basket weights) of the distribution of price changes in a given month.

7. CPI-trim is a measure of core inflation that excludes CPI components whose rates of change in a given month are located in the tails of the distribution of price changes.

Source(s): Table [18-10-0256-01](#).

**Table 5**  
**Main contributors to the 12-month and 1-month change in the Consumer Price Index**

April 2019 to April 2020

	% change
<b>Main contributors to the 12-month change</b>	
<b>Main upward contributors</b>	
Passenger vehicle insurance premiums	7.7
Rent	2.3
Purchase of passenger vehicles	1.9
Mortgage interest cost	4.0
Meat	6.7
<b>Main downward contributors</b>	
Gasoline	-39.3
Telephone services	-6.9
Electricity	-4.1
Traveller accommodation	-9.8
Men's clothing	-7.4

March to April 2020

	% change
<b>Main contributors to the 1-month change, not seasonally adjusted</b>	
<b>Main upward contributors</b>	
Fresh fruit	6.1
Air transportation	3.4
Food purchased from restaurants	0.7
Paper, plastic and aluminum foil supplies	5.4
Dairy products	1.4
<b>Main downward contributors</b>	
Gasoline	-15.2
Men's clothing	-9.4
Women's clothing	-5.7
Electricity	-4.5
Traveller accommodation	-7.2

Source(s): Table [18-10-0004-01](#).

**Available tables:** [18-10-0001-01](#), [18-10-0002-01](#), [18-10-0004-01](#), [18-10-0006-01](#) and [18-10-0256-01](#).

**Definitions, data sources and methods:** survey number [2301](#).

The [Consumer Price Index Data Visualization Tool](#) is available on the Statistics Canada website.

More information about the concepts and use of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) is available in *The Canadian Consumer Price Index Reference Paper* ([62-553-X](#)).

For information on the history of the CPI in Canada, consult the publication *Exploring the First Century of Canada's Consumer Price Index* ([62-604-X](#)).

Two videos, "[An Overview of Canada's Consumer Price Index \(CPI\)](#)" and "[The Consumer Price Index and Your Experience of Price Change](#)," are available on Statistics Canada's YouTube channel.

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; [STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca](mailto:STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca)) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; [STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca](mailto:STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca)).