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The 2010 Holiday Season

The holiday season is a time for gathering and celebrating with friends and family, gift-giving, reflection and thanks. To commemorate this time of year, the U.S. Census Bureau presents the following holiday-related facts and figures from its data collection.

Rush to the Stores

\$27.4 billion

Retail sales by the nation's department stores (including leased departments) in December 2009. This represented a 45 percent jump from the previous month (when retail sales, many holiday-related, registered \$18.9 billion). No other month-to-month increase in department store sales last year was as large.

Other U.S. retailers with sizable jumps in sales between November and December 2009 were book stores (98 percent); clothing stores (36 percent); jewelry stores (135 percent); radio, TV and other electronics stores (42 percent); and sporting goods stores (71 percent).

Source: Service Sector Statistics <<http://www.census.gov/retail>>

14%

The percentage of total 2009 sales for department stores (including leased departments) in December. For jewelry stores, the percentage was 21 percent.

Source: Service Sector Statistics <<http://www.census.gov/retail>>

21%

The growth in inventories by our nation's department stores (excluding leased departments) from Aug. 31 to Nov. 30, 2009. Thanks to the holiday crowds, inventories plummeted by 23 percent in December.

Source: Service Sector Statistics <<http://www.census.gov/retail>>

Note: Leased departments are separately owned businesses operated as departments or concessions of other service establishments or of retail businesses, such as a separately owned shoeshine parlor in a barber shop, or a beauty shop in a department store. Also, retail sales estimates have not been adjusted to account for seasonal or pricing variations.

\$30 billion

Value of retail sales by electronic shopping and mail-order houses in December 2009 — the highest total for any month last year.

Source: Service Sector Statistics <<http://www.census.gov/retail>>

21,895

The number of electronic shopping and mail-order houses in business in 2008. These businesses, which employed 332,405 workers, are a popular source of holiday gifts.

If you're not sure where to do your shopping, choices of retail establishments abound: In 2008, there were 155,578 clothing and clothing accessories stores; 8,813 department stores; 9,211 hobby, toy and game shops; 29,390 gift, novelty and souvenir shops; 22,116 sporting goods stores; 26,683 jewelry stores; and 9,708 book stores across the nation. The figures shown are for locations with paid employees.

Source: County Business Patterns <<http://www.census.gov/econ/cbp/index.html>>

Christmas Trees and Decorations

\$488.5 million

The value of U.S. imports of Christmas tree ornaments from China between January and August 2010. China was the leading country of origin for such items. Similarly, China was the leading foreign source of artificial Christmas trees shipped to the United States (\$28.2 million worth) during the same period.

Source: Foreign Trade Statistics <<http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/www/>>

Where the Toys are ... Made

98

Number of establishments around the country that primarily manufactured dolls and stuffed toys in 2008. California led the nation with 18 locations.

Source: County Business Patterns <<http://www.census.gov/econ/cbp/index.html>>

614

The number of locations that primarily produced games, toys and children's vehicles in 2008; they employed 9,163 workers. California led the nation with 99 establishments.

Source: County Business Patterns <<http://www.census.gov/econ/cbp/index.html>>

\$5.1 billion

The value of U.S. toy imports including stuffed toys (including dolls), puzzles and electric trains from China between January and August 2010. China was the leading country of origin for stuffed toys coming into this country, as well as for a number of other popular holiday gifts. These include roller skates (\$37 million), sports footwear (\$218 million) and basketballs (\$32 million). China leads Thailand as the leading supplier of ice skates (\$9 million versus \$6 million), with Canada ranking third (\$4 million).

Source: Foreign Trade Statistics <<http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/www/>>

Holiday Names

Place names associated with the holiday season include North Pole, Alaska (population 2,226 in 2009); Santa Claus, Ind. (2,303); Santa Claus, Ga. (247); Noel, Mo. (1,615); and — if you know about reindeer — the village of Rudolph, Wis. (418) and Dasher, Ga. (821). There is Snowflake, Ariz. (5,686) and a dozen places named Holly, including Holly Springs, Miss., and Mount Holly, N.C.

Source: Population estimates <<http://www.census.gov/popest/estimates.html>>

Hanukkah and Kwanzaa

50.9%

Proportion of the nation's spuds produced in Idaho and Washington in 2009. Potato latkes are always a crowd pleaser during Hanukkah.

Source: National Agriculture Statistics Service <<http://www.nass.usda.gov/>>

\$1.2 billion

The value of product shipments of candles in 2008 by the nation's manufacturers. Many of these candles are lit during Hanukkah and Kwanzaa celebrations.

Source: Annual Survey of Manufacturers

<http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DatasetMainPageServlet?_program=EAS&_submenuId=&_lang=en&_ts=>>

New Year's Eve and Day

More than 311 million

The nation's projected population as we ring in the New Year.

Source: Population projections

<<http://www.census.gov/population/www/projections/2008projections.html>>.

A list of observances typically covered by the Census Bureau's *Facts for Features* series:

African-American History Month (February)

Super Bowl

Valentine's Day (Feb. 14)

Women's History Month (March)

Irish-American Heritage Month (March)/

St. Patrick's Day (March 17)

Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month (May)

Older Americans Month (May)

Cinco de Mayo (May 5)

Mother's Day

Hurricane Season Begins (June 1)

Father's Day

The Fourth of July (July 4)

Anniversary of Americans with Disabilities Act (July 26)

Back to School (August)

Labor Day

Grandparents Day

Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15-Oct. 15)

Unmarried and Single Americans Week

Halloween (Oct. 31)

American Indian/Alaska Native Heritage Month
(November)

Veterans Day (Nov. 11)

Thanksgiving Day

The Holiday Season (December)

Editor's note: The preceding data were collected from a variety of sources and may be subject to sampling variability and other sources of error. Facts for Features are customarily released about two months before an observance in order to accommodate magazine production timelines. Questions or comments should be directed to the Census Bureau's Public Information Office: telephone: 301-763-3030; fax: 301-763-3762; or e-mail: <pio@census.gov>.