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Facts for
Features

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Photos

The 2007 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.

It's in the Mail

20 billion

Pieces of mail the U.S. Postal Service expects to deliver between Thanksgiving and Christmas this year. The busiest mailing day is set for Dec. 17, as more than three times the average daily volume of cards and letters should be mailed (more than 275 million versus 82 million).

<<http://www.usps.com/communications/newsroom/welcome.htm>>

Rush to the Stores

\$31.4 billion

Retail sales by the nation's department stores (including leased departments) in December 2006. This represented a 44 percent jump from the previous month (when retail sales, many holiday-related, registered \$21.8 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 2006 were book stores (86 percent); clothing stores (49 percent); jewelry stores (155 percent); radio, TV and other electronics stores (60 percent); and sporting goods stores (65 percent).

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

14 percent

The proportion of total 2006 sales for department stores (including leased departments) in December. For jewelry stores, the percentage was 22 percent.

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

28 percent

The proportion of growth in inventories by our nation's department stores (excluding leased departments) through Aug. 31 to Nov. 30, 2006. Thanks to the holiday crowds, inventories plummeted by 23 percent in December.

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

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 shoe-shine 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.

1.7 million

The number of people employed at department stores in December 2006. Retail employment typically swells during the holiday season, last year rising by an estimated 40,600 from November and 174,700 from October.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics <<http://www.bls.gov>>

\$21 billion

Value of retail sales by electronic shopping and mail-order houses in December 2006 — the highest total for any month last year.

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

\$35.3 billion

The value of total retail e-commerce sales for the fourth quarter of 2006. This amount represented 3.4 percent of total retail sales during the period and exceeded e-commerce sales for all other quarters of the year. E-commerce sales were up 24 percent from the fourth quarter of 2005.

Source: Service Sector Statistics <<http://www.census.gov/mrts/www/ecommm.html>>

15,924

The number of electronic shopping and mail-order houses in business in 2005. These businesses, which employed 253,677 workers, are a popular source of holiday gifts. Their sales: \$162 billion, of which 40.5 percent were attributable to e-commerce. California led the nation in the number of these establishments and their employees, with 2,383 and 30,800, respectively.

Source: County Business Patterns <http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/county_business_patterns/010192.html> and Annual Trade Survey <<http://www.census.gov/eos/www/2005/table6.xls>>

If you're not sure where to do your shopping, choices of retail establishments abound: In 2005, there were 150,580 clothing and clothing accessories stores; 9,589 department stores; 9,612

hobby, toy and game shops; 33,238 gift, novelty and souvenir shops; 23,195 sporting goods stores; 29,624 jewelry stores; and 11,077 book stores across the nation. The figures shown are for locations with paid employees.

Source: County Business Patterns <http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/county_business_patterns/010192.html>

48,695

The number of malls and shopping centers dotting the U.S. landscape as of 2005, a total that increased by approximately 12,000 since 1990.

Source: Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2007, Table 1035

<<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/tables/07s1035.xls>>

Christmas Trees and Decorations

\$512 million

The gross earnings of Christmas tree farmers in 2006, with North Carolina (\$134 million) as the top producer. Oregon was next at \$121 million in sales.

Source: USDA Economic Research Service

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/data/FarmIncome/receipts/2000_06/CR0006US.xls>

\$249 million

Christmas tree sales of the 17 surveyed states in 2006, with Oregon as the top seller. Note that only growers with at least \$10,000 in annual sales were surveyed.

Source: USDA Floriculture and Nursery Corps Yearbook

<<http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/flo/2007/09Sep/FLO2007.pdf>>

\$142.6 million

The value of U.S. imports of Christmas tree ornaments from China between January and June 2007. 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 (\$13.4 million worth) during the same period.

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

Where the Toys are ... Made

104

Number of establishments around the country that primarily manufactured dolls and stuffed toys in 2005; they employed 2,480 people. California led the nation with 18 locations.

Source: County Business Patterns <<http://www.census.gov>

/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/county_business_patterns/010192.html>

707

The number of locations that primarily produced games, toys and children's vehicles in 2005; they employed 15,381 workers. California led the nation with 115 establishments.

Source: County Business Patterns <http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/county_business_patterns/010192.html>

\$3.3 billion

Total value of shipments for dolls, toys and games by manufacturers in 2005.

Source: Annual Survey of Manufacturers <<http://www.census.gov/mcd/asm-as2.html>>

\$3.3 billion

The value of U.S. toy imports including stuffed toys (excluding dolls), puzzles and electric trains from China between January and June 2007. 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 (\$79 million), sports footwear (\$193 million), golf equipment (\$36 million) and basketballs (\$23 million). China leads Canada as the leading supplier of ice skates (\$6.6 million versus \$3.8 million), with Thailand ranking third (\$2.8 million).

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

Holiday Names

Places whose names are associated with the holiday season include North Pole, Alaska (population 1,828 in 2006); Santa Claus, Ind. (2,324); Santa Claus, Ga. (245); Noel, Mo. (1,555); and — if you know about reindeer — the village of Rudolph, Wis. (419) and Dasher, Ga. (803). There is Snowflake, Ariz. (5,157) and a dozen places named Holly, including Holly Springs, Miss., and Mount Holly, N.C.

Source: Population estimates <<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/population/010315.html>>

Hanukkah and Kwanzaa

Nearly one-half

Proportion of the nation's spuds produced in Idaho and Washington in 2006. Potato latkes are always a crowd pleaser during Hanukkah.

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

\$1.3 billion

The value of product shipments of candles in 2002 by the nation's manufacturers. Many of these candles are lit during Hanukkah and Kwanzaa celebrations.

Source: 2002 Economic Census
<<http://www.census.gov/econ/census02/guide/SUBSUMM.HTM>>

\$161 million

The value of product shipments of candles in 2002 by manufacturers in Texas. The Lone Star State led the country in candle shipments.

Source: 2002 Economic Census at

<<http://www.census.gov/econ/census02/guide/SUBSUMM.HTM>>

New Year's Eve and Day

73,685

The estimated July 1, 2006, population of Champaign, Ill., a place whose name alone may get you into a celebratory mood.

Source: Population Estimates <<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/population/010315.html>>

\$475 million

U.S. manufacturers shipments of effervescent wines (including sparkling wines, such as champagne) in 2002.

Source: 2002 Economic Census at

<<http://www.census.gov/econ/census02/guide/SUBSUMM.HTM>>

More than 303 million

The nation's projected population as we ring in the New Year. This compares with fewer than 175 million 50 years earlier (1958) and less than 90 million a century earlier (1908).

Source: National estimates <<http://www.census.gov/popest/archives/pre-1980/PE-11.html>>

A list of observances covered by the Census Bureau's *Facts for Features* series in 2007:

African-American History Month (February)	Labor Day (Sept. 3)
Super Bowl XLI (Feb. 4)	Grandparents Day (Sept. 9)
Valentine's Day (Feb. 14)	Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15-Oct. 15)
Women's History Month (March)	Unmarried and Single Americans Week (Sept. 16-22)
Irish-American Heritage Month (March)/ St. Patrick's Day (March 17)	Launch of Sputnik: 50th Anniversary (Oct. 4)
Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month (May)	Halloween (Oct. 31)
Older Americans Month (May)	American Indian/Alaska Native Heritage Month (November)
Cinco de Mayo (May 5)	The 2008 Presidential Election
Mother's Day (May 13)	Veterans Day (Nov. 11)
Hurricane Season Begins (June 1)	Thanksgiving Day (Nov. 22)
Father's Day (June 17)	The Holiday Season (December)
The Fourth of July (July 4)	
Anniversary of Americans with Disabilities Act (July 26)	
Back to School (August)	

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.