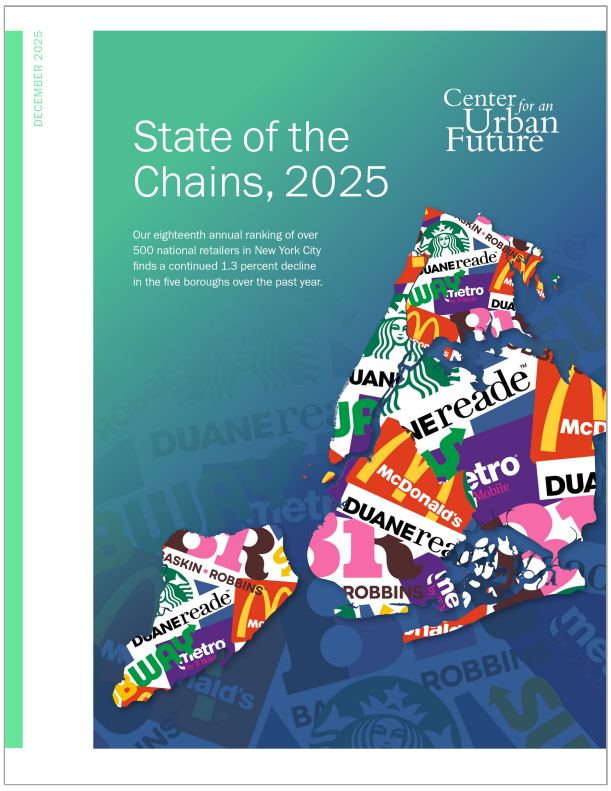


Report - December 2025

State of the Chains, 2025

Our eighteenth annual ranking of over 500 national retailers in New York City finds a 1.3 percent continued decrease in chain stores across the five boroughs over the past year.

by Sophia Annabelle Klein, Rachel Neches, and Jonathan Bowles

Read the full report by clicking here (PDF).

Our eighteenth annual ranking of more than 500 national retailers in New York City finds that the number of chain stores across the five boroughs declined for the sixth time in the past eight years. Overall, the number of chains decreased by 1.3 percent—or 112 store locations—since December 2024. The pullback was driven by the city's largest retailers and other long-established chains, many of whom have downsized or shut down entirely in recent years even as low vacancies persist in many of the city's retail corridors.

Seven of the city's ten largest retailers reduced their footprint over the past year, with a combined loss of 92 stores. Starbucks led the way, shedding 42 stores in the city since December 2024. But many other well-known chains that have had a presence in the city for more than a decade are also retrenching. Retailers with store declines of at least 7 percent over the past year include Claire's (-50 percent), Baked by Melissa (-27.3 percent), Staples (-14.3 percent), Edible Arrangements (-13.6 percent), Paper Source (-13.3 percent), Old Navy (-13 percent), Juice Press (-11.5 percent), Krispy Kreme (-10 percent), Banana Republic (-8.3 percent), Tim Horton's (-8.3 percent), Duane Reade (-7.9 percent), GNC (-7.3 percent), and Children's Place (-7.1 percent).

This year, 18 retailers closed all of their New York City locations—more than any other year except 2020, when the pandemic prompted over two dozen retailers to shutter. Many are long-established brands like Rite Aid (which closed all 46 stores in the city that had remained at the end of last year), Rent-A-Center (which shuttered its 19 stores), Party City (-11), and Forever 21 (-6).

This year, 4 retailers have at least 200 stores in the city, down from 8 in 2019. The number of chains with 100 or more store locations has also declined, from 15 in 2019 to 12 this year.

Roughly six years after the onset of the pandemic, New York City's retail ecosystem continues to undergo a dramatic transformation. Nearly one-in-five of the retailers that we tracked in our 2019 State of the Chains report (58 of 317) have since closed all of their New York City locations. Of the 17 largest retailers tracked in December 2019, all but two have fewer stores today, with two chains having closed completely (Rite Aid and Sprint). These 17 stores have a combined loss of 1,037 locations in New York City—an average loss of 61 stores. A handful of retailers stand out for their store losses, including:

- Metro by T-Mobile (the #2 retailer from 2019): A net loss of 246 stores
- Duane Reade (#4): -143 stores
- Rite Aid (#12): -119 stores
- T-Mobile (#6): -98 stores
- Sprint (#17): -89 stores

While many long-established chain retailers have scaled back in New York, dozens of newer chains have filled the void. Indeed, 22 retailers that weren't even in our 2019 State the Chains report now have 15 or more stores in NYC. These newer chains include Five Below (with 37 store locations in the city), Blank Street Coffee (36), Naya (31), Van Leeuwen (30), Ideal Food Basket (28), Club Pilates (27), Orange Theory (27), Wonder (25), Baya Bar (25), Playa Bowls (25), Maman (23), 7th Street Burger (21), Chip City (19), 787 Coffee (18), Dos Toros (18), Pandora Jewelry (18), Jersey Mike's (17), Le Cafe Coffee (16), Aesop (16), Cava (15), Moge Tee (15), and [solidcore] (15).

These and other newer chains accounted for significant share of the growth in chains over the past year. Among the newer chains expanding in the past year:

- Club Pilates: +13 (from 14 stores to 27)
- Naya: +10 (from 21 stores to 31)
- Maman: +7 (from 16 stores to 23)
- Van Leeuwen: +7 (from 23 to 30)
- Wonder: +7 (from 16 to 23)
- Miniso: +4 (from 3 to 7)
- Popup Bagels: +3 (from 3 to 6)
- La Maison du Chocolat: +3 (from 3 to 6)
- Chop & Go : +3 (from 4 to 7)
- Raising Cane's: +3 (from 7 to 10)
- 7th Street Burger: +3 (from 18 to 21)

There are other clear signs of strength in New York's chain retail sector. This year, 114 retailers added locations, with 59

companies adding at least two locations, and 15 adding five or more. Growth was largely driven by food retailers; 45 out of the 59 stores that added at least two stores sell food and beverages. Indeed, food chains make up a record 55.8 percent of all chain stores in our report (4,636 out of 8,314). This is only the second time in 18 years that food chains have made up more than half of the stores in our report; the only other time was last year, when food chains accounted for 50.2 percent of all chains. A decade ago (2015), food chains comprised 45.9 percent of all chains in our report (3,286 out of 7,149).

The food chains that experienced cumulative growth this year include fast-casual restaurants (+45, from 851 stores to 896), grocers (+17, from 377 stores to 394), pizza chains (+16, from 237 stores to 253), retail bakeries (+13, from 173 stores to 186), ice cream shops (+9, from 315 stores to 324), and fast-casual bakeries (+9, from 95 stores to 104). In addition to the newer expanding food chains mentioned above, several other food-related chains saw notable increases:

- Auntie Anne’s: +9 (from 32 stores to 41)
- Pizza Hut: +8 (from 41 stores to 49)
- Chick-fil-A: +7 (from 23 to 30)
- Wingstop: +7 (from 40 to 47)
- Carvel: +6 (from 71 to 77)
- Little Caesar's: +6 (from 19 to 25)

Despite recent concerns about declining demand for bowl-based meals — often dubbed “slop bowls”— among younger customers, the data tells a different story. Nearly a dozen bowl-oriented chains are expanding in the city:

- Naya: +10 (from 21 stores to 31)
- Chipotle: +5 (from 111 stores to 116)
- Sweetgreen: +3 (from 38 stores to 41)
- Just Salad: +3 (from 37 stores to 40)
- Chop & Go: +3 (from 4 stores to 7)
- Cava: +2 (from 13 stores to 15)
- Qdoba: +2 (from 8 stores to 10)
- Chop’t: +1 (from 23 stores to 24)
- Fresh & Co: +1 (from 7 stores to 8)
- Poke Bowl: +1 (from 11 stores to 12)

In addition to food chains, fitness and health clubs saw net growth, adding 18 stores in total this year (+6.5 percent). These include:

- Club Pilates: +14 (from 13 stores to 27)
- SLT NYC: +3 (from 11 stores to 14)
- StretchLab: +2 (from 9 stores to 11)
- Planet Fitness: +1 (from 46 stores to 47)
- [solidcore]: +1 (from 14 stores to 15)
- CorePower Yoga: +1 (from 12 stores to 13)
- Barry's: +1 (from 8 stores to 9)

Merchandise retailers suffered the biggest losses and accounted for an outsized share of the city's chain store declines, continuing a trend that has been playing out since 2017, when e-commerce began affecting retailers selling clothing, accessories, shoes, cosmetics, shoes, and more recently cell phones and pharmacy staples. Pharmacies contracted by 62 stores: Rite Aid closed all 46 remaining locations completely, Duane Reade reduced its footprint by 15 stores (from 189 to 174), and CVS declined by 2 stores (from 160 to 158).[1]

Cell phone retailers declined across the board; every mobile communications chain we tracked experienced losses this year. Among them, Metro by T-Mobile had a net decline of 17 stores (from 239 stores to 222), T-Mobile reduced its footprint by 9 stores (from 156 stores to 147), AT&T shed 2 stores (from 100 stores to 98), and Verizon Wireless had a net decline of 1 store (from 92 to 91).

In addition to pharmacies and cell phone stores, most merchandise retailers lost ground:

- Clothing & accessories: -40 (from 732 stores to 692)
- Discount retail: -7 (from 175 stores to 168)
- Department stores: -5 (from 116 stores to 111)
- Office supplies: -4 (from 33 stores to 29)
- Vitamin & supplements: -4 (from 62 stores to 58)

Chains Decline in Every Borough

While all boroughs had a net decline this year, the Bronx had the largest percentage decline (-2.5 percent or a net loss of 23 stores), closely followed by Staten Island (-2.4 percent or a net loss of 12 stores), Brooklyn (-2.2 percent or a net loss of 40 stores), Manhattan (-1 percent or a net loss of 35 stores), and Queens (-0.1 percent or a net loss of 2 stores).

Starbucks Struggles, Dunkin' Maintains Dominance

Dunkin' is again the retailer with the most stores in New York City (623 stores), a title it has held all eighteen years that we have been tracking chain store trends. While Dunkin' closed 3 stores in the last year, its position as the coffee sector's leader has only been further cemented by the contraction of Starbucks, even taking its #1 spot as Manhattan's top retailer. Today, Dunkin' is the top retailer in every borough.

Overall, coffee shops in our report registered a net decline of 51 stores, shrinking by 4.4 percent. In addition to Starbucks's net reduction of 42 stores, other coffee retailers that reduced its store footprint include:

- Joe Coffee: -4 (from 24 stores to 20)
- Blue Bottle: -3 (from 19 stores to 16)

- Bluestone Lane: -1 (from 13 stores to 12)
- Cafe Grumpy: -1 (from 10 stores to 9)
- La Colombe: -1 (from 9 stores to 8)

Of the three coffee retailers that grew this year, two were Yemeni-owned, including Moka & Co. (+2) and Mokafé (+1).

Retailers with Increases, Decreases, and No Change

Over the past year, 114 chains had a net gain in store locations, 133 had a net decline, and 258 registered no change in stores.

Fewer Chains Than Before the Pandemic

Many national retailers continue to trail their pre-pandemic store levels. Of the chains we tracked in 2019, the number of their New York City locations is now 17.6 percent below 2019 levels—a loss of 1,397 stores. Of the 317 retailers tracked in 2019, 58—or 18 percent—have since closed all of their New York City locations. More than half the retailers that were featured in our 2019 State of the Chains report have fewer locations today than they did before the pandemic.

Some of the notable contractions since 2019 include:

- Metro by T-Mobile (-246, from 468 in 2019 to 222 in 2025)
- Duane Reade (-143, from 317 in 2019 to 174 in 2025)
- Rite Aid (-119, from 119 in 2019 to 0 in 2025)
- T-Mobile (-98, from 245 in 2019 to 147 in 2025)
- Sprint (-89, from 89 in 2019 to 0 in 2025)
- Subway (-83, from 287 in 2019 to 204 in 2025)
- Starbucks (-65, from 351 in 2019 to 286 in 2025)
- GNC (-61, from 99 in 2019 to 38 in 2025)
- Baskin-Robbins (-46, from 217 in 2019 to 171 in 2025)
- Modell’s (-43, from 43 in 2019 to 0 in 2025)
- 7-Eleven (-42, from 141 in 2019 to 99 in 2025)

The losses since 2019 span multiple major categories: cell phone retailers have contracted by 407 stores since 2019 (a 42.2 percent drop), pharmacies have declined by 274 stores (45.2 percent), clothing and accessories chains by 247 stores (32.3 percent), and vitamin and supplement retailers by 76 stores (56.7 percent). Together, these declines are a clear result of the growing competition from e-commerce.

New Chains Added to This Year’s Report

This year's State of the Chains report includes data on 64 retailers that we did not track in previous years, our attempt to keep pace with the changing retail landscape across the five boroughs. The retailers added this year include fitness clubs such as Barry's, CorePower Yoga, SLT, and [solidcore], food retailers such as 7th Street Burger, Vanessa's Dumplings, Pio Pio, Empanada Mama, and Wonder, coffee shops such as Qahwah House, Moka & Co., and Mokafé, and merchandise retailers such as HOKA, Studs, Acne Studios, and Miniso. (We added these 64 retailers last year, but this year's report is the first time we have been able to track year-over-year trends for them.) For next year's report we have added an additional 50+ chains (which we will begin to measure in 2026).

Retailers Shedding the Most Stores Since Last Year

Aside from retailers who closed completely, no retailers contracted more than Starbucks, which closed 42 stores over the past year, bringing its store total down from 328 stores to 286. Metro by T-Mobile dropped the second-most store locations, closing 17 locations and dropping from 239 stores to 222. Following Metro by T-Mobile, Duane Reade closed 15 locations (from 189 to 174) and Baskin-Robbins closed 10 locations (from 181 to 171).

Retailers Shutting Down Completely

Eighteen retailers shut down all their remaining New York City locations this year, including: Art of Shaving, Totto Ramen, Helzberg's Diamonds, Naturalizer Shoes, Sprinkles, Tortazo, Vineyard Vines, Mrs. Fields, Umami Burger, Deep Indian Kitchen, Fuku, Invicta, Fresca Bowl & Poke Mahi, Intermix, Forever 21, Party City, Rent-A-Center, and Rite Aid.

Borough Trends

This year, Dunkin' overtook Starbucks for the #1 spot as Manhattan's top retailer, with 169 locations. Dunkin' is now the top retailer in every borough, with 189 locations in Queens, 169 locations in Manhattan, 134 locations in Brooklyn, 91 locations in the Bronx, and 40 locations in Staten Island. Excluding Dunkin', Manhattan's three largest retailers are Starbucks, Duane Reade, and Subway; in Brooklyn, they are Metro by T-Mobile, Popeye's and McDonald's; in Queens, they are Baskin-Robbins, Subway, and Metro by T-Mobile; in the Bronx, they are Metro by T-Mobile, McDonald's and Popeye's; and in Staten Island, they are CVS, Starbucks, and Subway.

Where the Change is Occurring

Of all chain retail locations in New York City, 39.7 percent are located within Manhattan. Queens ranks second with 21.8 percent, followed by Brooklyn which has 21.7 percent of total chain stores. The Bronx holds 11 percent, and 5.8 percent are in Staten Island.

Neighborhood trends

The geography of retail change shifted compared to previous years. For the first time since 2019, Queens led the city in chain store performance, experiencing only a two-store net decline and emerging as the only borough with multiple neighborhoods posting strong gains. Of the seven zip codes that saw the highest net increases, six were located in Queens, reflecting the borough's fast-growing residential population and expanding commercial corridors. More than any other part of the city, western and central Queens saw meaningful expansion:

- 11101 (Long Island City): +7 stores
- 11375 (Forest Hills): +6 stores
- 11385 (Ridgewood): +4 stores
- 11105 (Astoria): +4 stores

- 11426 (Bellerose): +3 stores
- 11354 (Flushing): +3 stores

Other neighborhoods saw larger-scale declines, including:

- 11217 (Park Slope): -10 stores
- 11373 (Corona/Elmhurst): -10 stores
- 10001 (Garment District/Koreatown): -7 stores
- 10314 (New Springville): -7 stores
- 10022 (Midtown East): -6 stores
- 10023 (Upper West Side): -6 stores
- 10013 (TriBeCa/Chinatown): -5 stores
- 10031 (Washington Heights): -5 stores
- 10458 (Fordham / Bronx Park): -5 stores

The zip codes with the most chain stores in the city are:

- 10001 (Garment District/Koreatown): -7 stores (230 stores to 223)
- 10003 (East Village): -1 store (193 to 192)
- 11201 (Brooklyn Heights): +1 store (188 to 189)
- 10314 (New Springville): -7 stores (190 to 183)
- 10019 (Midtown West): +5 stores (178 to 183)
- 10012 (Greenwich Village/SoHo): -3 stores (161 to 158)
- 10036 (Midtown West): +0 stores (152 to 152)

And among major commercial hubs:

- FiDi gained 5 stores (from 122 stores to 127)[2]
- Midtown lost 6 stores (from 824 stores to 818)[3]
- Garment District/Koreatown fell by 4 stores (from 259 stores to 255)[4]

Methodology

Every year since 2008, the Center for an Urban Future (CUF) has released a report analyzing the change in national retailers across New York City. The report tallies the number of chain retailer store locations throughout the city and records trends by retailer, borough, and zip code, and makes comparisons across years.

CUF defines a national retailer as one that has at least two locations in New York City and at least one location outside the city limits. Every year we add new retailers to our list, and all of the retailers met these criteria the year they were added. Some have reduced their footprint in New York City over the years and are now down to one location, and although such retailers would no longer meet the criteria for inclusion, we maintain them for the sake of continuity.

We only remove a retailer from the list on the year after the one in which it closed all locations in New York City, if it remains at zero open locations. This year, we removed TGI Fridays, BCBG Max Azria, Sam Ash Music Stores, La Perla, Oakley,

Billabong, Chinah, Everytable, Amazon Go, and Beatnic.

We obtain the data on the number of locations for each retailer from the store locators on each retailer's website, except in cases where the companies were on the verge of closure and had shut down their websites or otherwise did not have a website.

For mobile communications stores, we count only those locations that operate under the retailer's brand whether they are authorized retailers or company-owned stores.

This data for this report was compiled between October 6, 2025, and November 13, 2025. Year-over-year growth in chains is calculated based on the national retailers we included in last year's report.

Retailers added this year are not yet included to ensure an accurate comparison. Each year we add new national retailers to our ranking. This year we will be adding over 50 chains, including Adobo Mexican Grill, All'Antico Vinaio, Amorino, Anine Bing, Anita La Mamma del Gelato, Apollo Bagels, Away, Ayat, Banter by Piercing Pagoda, Boba Guys, Bode, Bon Bon, Book Culture, Boqueria, Caffe Vita, Calzedonia, Casper, CityPickle, Dave's Hot Chicken, F45 Training, Faherty, Famous Rotisserie & Grill, For Five, Ganni, Glow Bar, Ground Central, Guac Time, GW (Great Wall) Supermarket, Gyu-Kaku, Heyday, HEYTEA, Hole in the Wall, I'Milky, Joe & the Juice, La Cabra, Ladurée, Life Time Fitness, Luckin Coffee, Mad for Chicken, Matto Espresso, Meet Fresh, One Medical, PureGym, Restore Hyper Wellness, Sezanne, SixtySixty Glasses, Skims, Somedays, Tend, The Face Shop, Theory, Wagamama, WatchHouse, Westville, Wilson, Wolford, and Xing Fu Tang.

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[1] When referring to changes in store counts by category, growth or decline reflects the net change in locations.

[2] In this definition, the Financial District includes zip codes 10005, 10006, 10270, 10271, 10279, 10281, 10282, 10285, 10286, 10004

[3] In this definition, Midtown includes zip codes 10020, 10103, 10104, 10105, 10107, 10110, 10111, 10112, 10129, 10153, 10165, 10166, 10167, 10168, 10169, 10170, 10173, 10174, 10175, 10176, 10017, 10022, 10018, 10019, 10036

[4] In this definition, Garment District/Koreatown includes zip codes 10001, 10118, 10119, 10120, 10121, 10122, 10123, 10010

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