

FOR WIRE TRANSMISSION 8:30 A.M. ET, Tuesday, January 15, 2002

ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES DECEMBER 2001

The Census Bureau of the Department of Commerce announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for December, adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$295.1 billion, a decrease of 0.1 percent ($\pm 1.0\%$) from the previous month, but up 4.1 percent ($\pm 1.7\%$) from December 2000. Total sales for the October through December period were up 5.0 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) from the same period a year ago. Total sales for the 12 months of 2001 were up 3.4 percent ($\pm 0.6\%$) from 2000. The October to November 2001 percent change was revised from -3.7 percent ($\pm 1.0\%$) to -3.0 percent ($\pm 0.3\%$).

Retail trade sales were down 0.3 percent ($\pm 1.0\%$) from November, but were 3.8 percent ($\pm 1.7\%$) above last year. Motor vehicle and parts dealers were up 11.7 percent ($\pm 3.5\%$) from last year and sales of health and personal care stores were up 8.4 percent ($\pm 3.6\%$) from December 2000. Sales of gasoline stations decreased 16.7 percent ($\pm 4.8\%$) from December a year ago and nonstore retailers were down 12.1 percent ($\pm 9.4\%$) from last year.

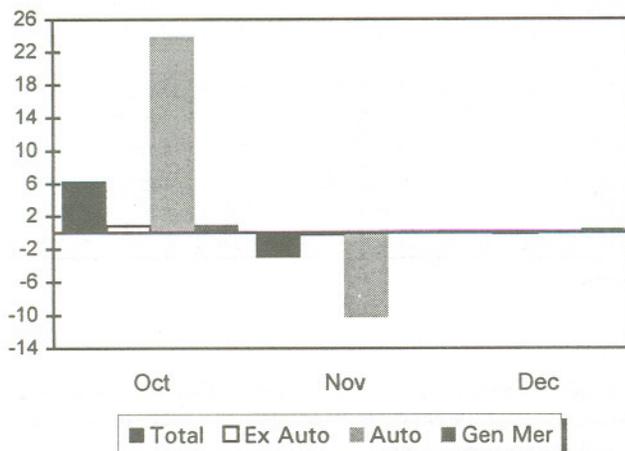
The scheduled release dates for 2002 are as follows: January 15, February 13, March 13, April 12, May 14, June 13, July 12, August 13, September 13, October 11, November 14, December 12.

The advance estimates are based on a small subsample of the Bureau's full retail and food services sample. Estimates from the advance and the subsequent full survey can differ because of the earlier reporting in the advance and because of sampling variability present in both surveys.

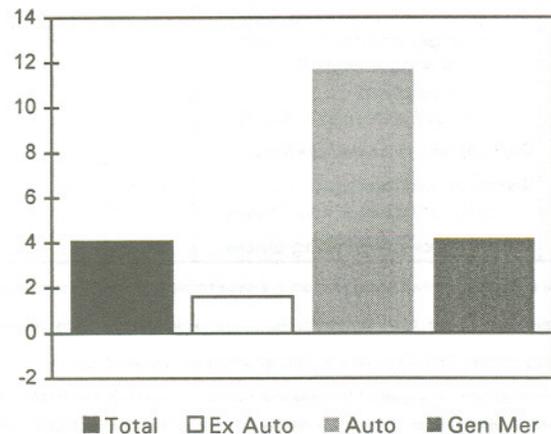
Percent Change in Retail and Food Services Sales

(Data adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes)

From Previous Month



From Previous Year



The Advance Monthly Sales for Retail and Food Services for January is scheduled to be released February 13, 2002 at 8:30 a.m.

Address inquiries concerning this report to Scott Scheleur, Service Sector Statistics Division, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC 20233. Telephone: 301-457-2713 or 301-457-2666.

This report is available the day of issue through the Department of Commerce's online Economic Bulletin Board. For information call 202-482-1986. The data are also available on the Internet - <http://www.census.gov/svsd/www/advtable.html>.

Table 1. Estimated Advance Monthly Sales for Retail and Food Services, by Kind of Business

(In Millions of Dollars and Annual Percent Change)

| NAICS code | Kind of Business | Not Adjusted | | | | | | | Adjusted ¹ | | | | |
|------------|---|----------------|-------------|-----------------------|----------|----------|---------|---------|-----------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| | | 12 Month Total | | 2001 | | | 2000 | | 2001 | | | 2000 | |
| | | 2001 | % Chg. 2000 | Dec. ² (a) | Nov. (p) | Oct. (r) | Dec. | Nov. | Dec. ² (a) | Nov. (p) | Oct. (r) | Dec. (r) | Nov. (r) |
| | Retail & food services, | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | total | 3,503,602 | 3.4 | 338,720 | 298,562 | 303,646 | 329,118 | 285,240 | 295,108 | 295,423 | 304,657 | 283,604 | 283,399 |
| | Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ... | 2,625,299 | 2.7 | 272,331 | 227,933 | 217,794 | 269,269 | 223,248 | 218,395 | 218,598 | 218,972 | 214,929 | 215,409 |
| | Retail | 3,183,232 | 3.3 | 311,255 | 272,652 | 276,890 | 303,104 | 260,698 | 267,643 | 268,433 | 277,928 | 257,898 | 257,565 |
| | GAFO ³ | (*) | (*) | (*) | 86,072 | 71,683 | 117,893 | 83,119 | (*) | 76,008 | 75,125 | 72,752 | 73,757 |
| 441 | Motor vehicle & parts dealers | 878,303 | 5.6 | 66,389 | 70,629 | 85,852 | 59,849 | 61,992 | 76,713 | 76,825 | 85,685 | 68,675 | 67,990 |
| 4411, 4412 | Auto & other motor veh. dealers .. | 805,675 | 6.3 | 60,982 | 64,777 | 79,571 | 54,090 | 56,039 | 70,745 | 70,872 | 79,651 | 62,388 | 61,922 |
| 44111 | New car dealers | (*) | (*) | (*) | 56,472 | 70,515 | 46,956 | 48,793 | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) |
| 4413 | Auto parts, acc. & tire stores..... | (*) | (*) | (*) | 5,852 | 6,281 | 5,759 | 5,953 | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) |
| 442 | Furniture & home furn. stores | 92,049 | 0.4 | 9,433 | 8,552 | 7,671 | 8,617 | 8,383 | 7,947 | 7,839 | 7,506 | 7,247 | 7,684 |
| 4421 | Furniture stores | (*) | (*) | (*) | 4,551 | 4,054 | 4,343 | 4,398 | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) |
| 4422 | Home furnishings stores | (*) | (*) | (*) | 4,001 | 3,617 | 4,274 | 3,985 | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) |
| 443 | Electronics & appliance stores | 88,205 | 0.7 | 12,452 | 8,463 | 6,811 | 11,241 | 7,786 | 7,883 | 7,732 | 7,431 | 7,172 | 7,196 |
| 44311, 13 | Appl., T.V. & camera..... | (*) | (*) | (*) | 6,233 | 4,810 | 8,654 | 5,741 | (*) | 5,468 | 5,368 | 5,106 | 5,103 |
| 44312 | Computer & software stores..... | (*) | (*) | (*) | 2,230 | 2,001 | 2,587 | 2,045 | (*) | 2,264 | 2,063 | 2,066 | 2,093 |
| 444 | Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers..... | 292,257 | 5.4 | 21,271 | 23,440 | 25,936 | 20,847 | 21,909 | 23,903 | 24,365 | 24,453 | 23,382 | 22,988 |
| 4441 | Building mat. & sup. dealers | (*) | (*) | (*) | 21,089 | 23,264 | 17,901 | 19,258 | (*) | 21,519 | 21,481 | 20,204 | 19,813 |
| 445 | Food & beverage stores..... | 480,702 | 3.3 | 44,729 | 40,901 | 39,990 | 44,032 | 39,319 | 40,628 | 40,593 | 40,503 | 39,640 | 39,216 |
| 4451 | Grocery stores | 434,365 | 3.0 | 39,188 | 36,900 | 36,276 | 38,867 | 35,547 | 36,624 | 36,680 | 36,642 | 35,955 | 35,476 |
| 4453 | Beer, wine & liquor stores | (*) | (*) | (*) | 2,679 | 2,479 | 3,410 | 2,572 | (*) | 2,549 | 2,532 | 2,446 | 2,490 |
| 446 | Health & personal care stores | 172,105 | 8.6 | 17,074 | 14,482 | 14,804 | 15,812 | 13,345 | 14,770 | 14,717 | 14,789 | 13,631 | 13,617 |
| 44611 | Pharmacies & drug stores | (*) | (*) | (*) | 12,479 | 12,844 | 13,790 | 11,468 | (*) | 12,721 | 12,767 | 11,627 | 11,678 |
| 447 | Gasoline stations | 237,901 | -2.5 | 16,652 | 17,382 | 19,301 | 20,192 | 20,122 | 16,940 | 17,683 | 18,960 | 20,334 | 20,723 |
| 448 | Clothing & clothing accessories stores | 169,326 | 0.5 | 24,659 | 15,525 | 13,416 | 25,068 | 15,761 | 14,228 | 13,873 | 14,047 | 14,287 | 14,206 |
| 44811 | Men's clothing stores | (*) | (*) | (*) | 974 | 864 | 1,517 | 1,019 | (*) | 854 | 871 | 888 | 896 |
| 44812 | Women's clothing stores | (*) | (*) | (*) | 2,788 | 2,602 | 3,978 | 2,900 | (*) | 2,589 | 2,607 | 2,688 | 2,703 |
| 44814 | Family clothing stores | (*) | (*) | (*) | 5,647 | 4,691 | 8,345 | 5,840 | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) |
| 4482 | Shoe stores | (*) | (*) | (*) | 1,762 | 1,632 | 2,398 | 1,791 | (*) | 1,809 | 1,797 | 1,842 | 1,850 |
| 451 | Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores..... | 87,423 | 9.8 | 13,467 | 8,634 | 6,631 | 12,105 | 7,255 | 7,540 | 7,800 | 7,520 | 6,627 | 6,671 |
| 452 | General merchandise stores..... | 418,103 | 2.5 | 57,158 | 41,041 | 33,686 | 55,505 | 40,166 | 35,305 | 35,138 | 35,090 | 33,886 | 34,418 |
| 4521 | Department stores (ex. L.D.)..... | 236,791 | 0.0 | 34,671 | 23,905 | 18,395 | 34,026 | 23,816 | 19,952 | 19,832 | 19,589 | 19,406 | 19,900 |
| 4521 | Department stores (incl. L.D.) ⁴ | (*) | (*) | (*) | 24,329 | 18,734 | 34,731 | 24,335 | (*) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) |
| 4529 | Other general merch. stores..... | (*) | (*) | (*) | 17,136 | 15,291 | 21,479 | 16,350 | (*) | 15,306 | 15,501 | 14,480 | 14,518 |
| 45291 | Warehouse clubs & superstores | (*) | (*) | (*) | 13,341 | 12,159 | 17,158 | 13,101 | (*) | 11,912 | 12,269 | 11,601 | 11,604 |
| 45299 | All oth. gen. merch. stores..... | (*) | (*) | (*) | 3,795 | 3,132 | 4,321 | 3,249 | (*) | 3,394 | 3,232 | 2,879 | 2,914 |
| 453 | Miscellaneous store retailers | 111,745 | 2.9 | 11,611 | 9,595 | 9,409 | 11,351 | 9,150 | 9,268 | 9,416 | 9,421 | 8,781 | 9,064 |
| 454 | Nonstore retailers | 155,113 | -4.4 | 16,360 | 14,008 | 13,383 | 18,485 | 15,510 | 12,518 | 12,452 | 12,523 | 14,236 | 13,792 |
| 4541 | Elect. shopping & m/o houses | (*) | (*) | (*) | 10,119 | 9,372 | 12,884 | 10,860 | (*) | 8,861 | 8,767 | 9,467 | 9,460 |
| 722 | Food services & drinking places ... | 320,370 | 4.7 | 27,465 | 25,910 | 26,756 | 26,014 | 24,542 | 27,465 | 26,990 | 26,729 | 25,706 | 25,834 |

(*) Advance estimates are not available from the subsample panel for these business classifications.

(NA) Not available. (a) Advance estimates. (p) Preliminary. (r) Revised.

Note: Totals include data for business classifications not shown separately.

(1) Data are concurrently adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes. Concurrent seasonal adjustment uses all available unadjusted estimates as input to the X-12-ARIMA program and the factors derived from the program are used in calculating all seasonally adjusted data shown in this publication. Factors and explanatory material are released on the Internet at <http://www.census.gov/mrts/www/mrts.html>.

(2) Advance estimates are based on early reporting by a small subsample of the full survey panel. All other estimates are based on the full sample.

(3) GAFO represents stores which specialize in department store types of merchandise (furniture & home furnishings (442), electronics & appliances(443), clothing & accessories(448), sporting goods, hobby, book, music (451), general merchandise(452), office supplies, stationery, and gift stores(4532)).

(4) Includes data for leased departments operated within department stores. Data for this line not included in broader kind-of-business totals.

Table 2. Percent Change in Estimated Advance Monthly Sales for Retail and Food Services, by Kind of Business

(Adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes)

| NAICS code | Kind of Business | Percent Change ¹ | | | | | |
|------------|---|-----------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | | Dec. 2001 Advance from -- | | Nov. 2001 Preliminary from -- | | Oct. 2001 through Dec. 2001 from -- | |
| | | Nov. 2001 (p) | Dec. 2000 (r) | Oct. 2001 (r) | Nov. 2000 (r) | Jul. 2001 through Sept. 2001 | Oct. 2000 through Dec. 2000 |
| | Retail & food services, | | | | | | |
| | total | -0.1 | 4.1 | -3.0 | 4.2 | 2.7 | 5.0 |
| | Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) | -0.1 | 1.6 | -0.2 | 1.5 | -0.2 | 1.5 |
| | Retail | -0.3 | 3.8 | -3.4 | 4.2 | 2.9 | 5.0 |
| 441 | Motor vehicle & parts dealers | -0.1 | 11.7 | -10.3 | 13.0 | 11.8 | 16.2 |
| 4411, 4412 | Auto & other motor veh. dealers | -0.2 | 13.4 | -11.0 | 14.5 | 13.1 | 18.0 |
| 442 | Furniture & home furn. stores | 1.4 | 9.7 | 4.4 | 2.0 | 2.5 | 3.0 |
| 443 | Electronics & appliance stores | 2.0 | 9.9 | 4.1 | 7.4 | 5.8 | 6.4 |
| 444 | Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers..... | -1.9 | 2.2 | -0.4 | 6.0 | -0.7 | 4.7 |
| 445 | Food & beverage stores..... | 0.1 | 2.5 | 0.2 | 3.5 | 0.9 | 3.1 |
| 4451 | Grocery stores | -0.2 | 1.9 | 0.1 | 3.4 | 0.9 | 2.8 |
| 446 | Health & personal care stores | 0.4 | 8.4 | -0.5 | 8.1 | 1.9 | 8.3 |
| 447 | Gasoline stations | -4.2 | -16.7 | -6.7 | -14.7 | -11.2 | -13.5 |
| 448 | Clothing & clothing accessories stores | 2.6 | -0.4 | -1.2 | -2.3 | 0.7 | -1.6 |
| 451 | Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores..... | -3.3 | 13.8 | 3.7 | 16.9 | 4.2 | 14.5 |
| 452 | General merchandise stores..... | 0.5 | 4.2 | 0.1 | 2.1 | 0.9 | 2.8 |
| 4521 | Department stores (ex. L.D.)..... | 0.6 | 2.8 | 1.2 | -0.3 | 1.2 | 0.3 |
| 453 | Miscellaneous store retailers | -1.6 | 5.5 | -0.1 | 3.9 | -0.9 | 3.9 |
| 454 | Nonstore retailers | 0.5 | -12.1 | -0.6 | -9.7 | -1.9 | -10.4 |
| 722 | Food services & drinking places | 1.8 | 6.8 | 1.0 | 4.5 | 1.0 | 5.0 |

(p) Preliminary. (r) Revised.

(1) Percent change rounded to nearest tenth.

Official Business

Penalty for Private Use, \$300

Reliability of Estimates

The Advance estimates are based on a small subsample of the Bureau's full retail sales sample. Estimates from the Advance and the subsequent full survey can differ because of the earlier reporting in the Advance and because of sampling variability present in each survey. The margin of sampling error, as used on page 1, gives a range about the estimate which is a 90% confidence interval. If, for example, the trend estimate is +1.2% and the standard error is 0.9%, then the margin of sampling error is $\pm 1.65 \times 0.9\%$ or $\pm 1.5\%$, and the 90% confidence interval is -0.3% to +2.7%. If the interval contains 0, it is uncertain whether there was an increase or decrease. For monthly level, the coefficient of variation (CV) is given. The resulting confidence interval is the estimated value $\pm 1.65 \times CV \times$ (the estimated value). Estimates of sampling variability are given in Table 3.

Estimates from the Advance and the full survey are subject to nonsampling

errors. Such errors can occur because of nonresponse, insufficient coverage of the universe of retail businesses, and response errors. Additionally, estimates of sales prior to March 2001 have been restated from SIC-based estimates. The restatement methodology may have introduced additional nonsampling error. Precautionary steps are taken to minimize nonsampling errors, but their magnitude is not directly measured.

Preliminary estimates for the current month and final estimates for the previous month based on the full sample will be published next month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report. This report will provide sales estimates in greater detail and additional measures of sampling variability. It will also present a description of revisions, the techniques used in developing the estimates, and an explanation of confidence intervals and sampling variability (Appendix B, Reliability of Estimates).

Table 3. Measures of Variability of and Revision to Advance Estimates for Level and Trend

| NAICS Code | Kind of Business | Level of sales: Median CV ⁽²⁾ for Current Mo. (%) | Trend (percent change): Median standard error ⁽²⁾ for | | | Revision for month-to-month change ⁽¹⁾ | |
|------------|--|--|---|-------------------------------------|---|---|--------------------------------|
| | | | Current Mo. to Previous Mo. | Current Qtr. to Previous Qtr. | Current Mo. to Current Mo. Last Yr. | Average revision | Median absolute revision |
| | Retail & food services, | | | | | | |
| | total | 0.7 | 0.6 | 0.3 | 1.0 | 0.1 | 0.3 |
| | Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) .. | 0.7 | 0.6 | 0.4 | 1.0 | 0.1 | 0.2 |
| | Retail | 0.7 | 0.6 | 0.3 | 1.0 | 0.1 | 0.3 |
| 441 | Motor vehicle & parts dealers | 1.8 | 1.5 | 0.7 | 2.1 | 0.2 | 0.7 |
| 4411, 4412 | Auto & other motor veh. dealers | 2.0 | 1.7 | 0.7 | 2.3 | 0.2 | 0.7 |
| 442 | Furniture & home furn. stores..... | 3.6 | 2.0 | 1.0 | 5.0 | 0.2 | 1.1 |
| 443 | Electronics & appliance stores | 1.2 | 0.7 | 1.1 | 1.6 | 0.5 | 0.6 |
| 444 | Building material & garden eq. &.. | | | | | | |
| | supplies dealers..... | 1.9 | 1.2 | 0.7 | 3.6 | 0.1 | 0.4 |
| 445 | Food & beverage stores..... | 0.7 | 0.4 | 0.2 | 0.8 | 0.1 | 0.2 |
| 4451 | Grocery stores | 0.8 | 0.3 | 0.2 | 0.9 | 0.1 | 0.2 |
| 446 | Health & personal care stores | 2.1 | 0.5 | 0.9 | 2.2 | -0.1 | 0.4 |
| 447 | Gasoline stations | 1.8 | 1.2 | 0.5 | 2.9 | -0.4 | 0.8 |
| 448 | Clothing & clothing accessories | | | | | | |
| | stores | 1.5 | 1.1 | 0.6 | 2.1 | -0.1 | 0.4 |
| 451 | Sporting goods, hobby, book & | | | | | | |
| | music stores..... | 2.4 | 2.4 | 2.3 | 3.1 | 0.2 | 1.2 |
| 452 | General merchandise stores..... | 0.2 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.3 | -0.1 | 0.4 |
| 4521 | Department stores (ex. L.D.)..... | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | -0.2 | 0.5 |
| 453 | Miscellaneous store retailers | 3.5 | 4.0 | 1.5 | 11.9 | 0.7 | 0.9 |
| 454 | Nonstore retailers | 5.3 | 2.5 | 2.2 | 5.7 | 0.2 | 0.6 |
| 722 | Food services & drinking places .. | 2.4 | 1.4 | 1.1 | 2.8 | 0.4 | 0.8 |



(1) These columns measure the difference between the estimates of trend for the same pair of data months, i.e. the difference between the Advance/Preliminary ratio and the Preliminary/Final ratio estimates. These revisions combine data from the SIC-based and NAICS-based samples.

(2) Medians are based on the period February 2001 to present.