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ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES APRIL 2011

Notice of Revision: Monthly retail sales and inventories were revised based on the results of the 2009 Annual Retail Trade Survey. The Annual Revision of Monthly Retail and Food Services showing revised estimates can be found on our website at <http://www.census.gov/retail/mrts/www/benchmark/2011/html/annrev11.html>.

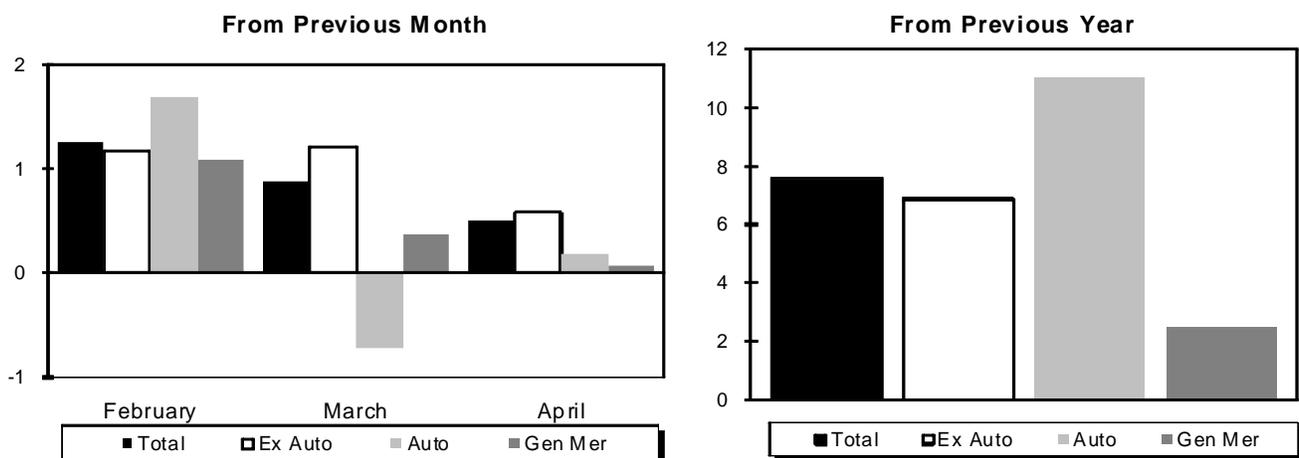
The U.S. Census Bureau announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for April, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$389.4 billion, an increase of 0.5 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$)* from the previous month, and 7.6 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$) above April 2010. Total sales for the February through April 2011 period were up 8.1 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) from the same period a year ago. The February to March 2011 percent change was revised from +0.4 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$)* to +0.9 percent ($\pm 0.4\%$).

Retail trade sales were up 0.6 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) from March 2011, and 7.9 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$) above last year. Gasoline stations sales were up 21.8 percent ($\pm 1.7\%$) from April 2010 and nonstore retailers sales were up 15.5 percent ($\pm 3.1\%$) from last year.

The advance estimates are based on a subsample of the Census Bureau's full retail and food services sample. A stratified random sampling method is used to select approximately 5,000 retail and food services firms whose sales are then weighted and benchmarked to represent the complete universe of over three million retail and food services firms. Responding firms account for approximately 65% of the MARTS dollar volume estimate. For an explanation of the measures of sampling variability included in this report, please see the Reliability of Estimates section on the last page of this publication.

Percent Change in Retail and Food Services Sales

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



The Advance Monthly Sales for Retail and Food Services for May is scheduled to be released June 14, 2011 at 8:30 a.m. EDT.

For information, visit the Census Bureau's Web site at <<http://www.census.gov/retail>>.

* The 90 percent confidence interval includes zero. The Census Bureau does not have sufficient statistical evidence to conclude that the actual change is different than zero.

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

(Total sales estimates are shown in millions of dollars and are based on data from the Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey, Monthly Retail Trade Survey, and administrative records.)

NAICS ¹ code	Kind of Business	Not Adjusted							Adjusted ²				
		4 Month Total		2011			2010		2011			2010	
		2011	% Chg. 2010	Apr. ³ (a)	Mar. (p)	Feb. (r)	Apr.	Mar.	Apr. ³ (a)	Mar. (p)	Feb. (r)	Apr. (r)	Mar. (r)
	Retail & food services,												
	total	1,471,037	8.1	390,415	394,585	343,955	362,038	365,498	389,355	387,371	384,044	361,942	359,877
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	1,202,625	6.7	319,276	318,715	280,777	297,491	297,866	321,169	319,310	315,499	300,534	298,914
	Retail	1,313,321	8.4	348,476	352,813	306,748	322,599	326,034	348,677	346,658	343,733	323,276	321,187
	GAFO⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	93,951	85,219	88,208	91,292	(*)	97,226	96,443	94,272	94,395
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	268,412	14.6	71,139	75,870	63,178	64,547	67,632	68,186	68,061	68,545	61,408	60,963
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	243,324	15.8	64,630	68,810	57,265	57,984	61,018	61,670	61,438	61,975	54,961	54,676
44111	New car dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	55,992	46,391	46,802	49,719	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,060	5,913	6,563	6,614	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	27,757	0.1	7,048	7,669	6,638	6,980	7,531	7,442	7,526	7,351	7,386	7,456
4421	Furniture stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,324	3,924	3,760	4,183	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,345	2,714	3,220	3,348	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	Electronics & appliance stores	31,002	0.4	7,245	8,252	7,887	7,176	7,942	8,419	8,604	8,364	8,341	8,341
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,261	6,191	5,612	6,176	(*)	6,646	6,490	6,556	6,563
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,991	1,696	1,564	1,766	(*)	1,958	1,874	1,785	1,778
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	87,287	2.8	27,497	24,547	17,618	29,140	23,203	24,496	24,461	23,865	25,446	23,289
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	19,640	14,723	22,444	19,607	(*)	19,660	19,196	20,667	19,725
445	Food & beverage stores	195,947	4.7	50,985	50,129	46,008	47,230	48,279	51,134	50,519	50,401	48,248	48,504
4451	Grocery stores	177,249	5.0	45,934	45,300	41,477	42,247	43,445	45,980	45,300	45,084	43,065	43,358
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,350	3,104	3,376	3,258	(*)	3,606	3,665	3,528	3,511
446	Health & personal care stores	90,433	5.7	22,690	23,834	21,483	21,698	22,670	22,781	22,851	22,685	21,829	21,509
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	19,858	17,966	18,383	19,262	(*)	19,131	19,032	18,401	18,327
447	Gasoline stations	166,213	16.9	46,836	44,394	36,767	38,553	37,412	45,783	44,572	42,802	37,576	37,790
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	66,150	5.4	18,559	18,123	15,799	17,087	17,431	18,734	18,683	18,495	17,787	17,878
44811	Men's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	646	536	669	602	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
44812	Women's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,248	2,601	3,268	3,202	(*)	3,194	3,188	3,077	3,118
44814	Family clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,080	5,949	6,824	6,975	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,298	2,078	2,168	2,288	(*)	2,278	2,264	2,181	2,211
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores	25,935	4.7	6,455	6,848	5,862	6,104	6,520	7,196	7,332	7,337	6,992	6,958
452	General merchandise stores	191,726	2.7	50,394	50,234	46,293	48,229	49,102	52,106	52,070	51,877	50,835	50,834
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	53,224	-2.1	14,310	14,100	12,806	14,309	14,751	15,347	15,385	15,463	15,654	15,959
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) ⁵	(*)	(*)	(*)	14,370	13,044	14,510	14,968	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	36,134	33,487	33,920	34,351	(*)	36,685	36,414	35,181	34,875
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	31,601	29,436	29,542	30,043	(*)	32,115	31,857	30,709	30,501
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,533	4,051	4,378	4,308	(*)	4,570	4,557	4,472	4,374
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	35,778	7.7	9,279	9,476	8,833	8,806	8,976	9,749	9,659	9,897	9,169	9,184
454	Nonstore retailers	126,681	13.9	30,349	33,437	30,382	27,049	29,336	32,651	32,320	32,114	28,259	28,481
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses	(*)	(*)	(*)	24,656	21,645	20,721	21,905	(*)	24,656	24,402	21,629	21,905
722	Food services & drinking places ...	157,716	5.2	41,939	41,772	37,207	39,439	39,464	40,678	40,713	40,311	38,666	38,690

(*) Advance estimates are not available for this kind of business.

(NA) Not available (S) Suppressed (a) Advance estimate (p) Preliminary estimate (r) Revised estimate

(1) For a full description of the NAICS codes used in this table, see <http://www.census.gov/eos/www/naics>

(2) Estimates are concurrently adjusted for seasonal variation and for 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. The factors derived from the program are used in calculating all seasonally adjusted estimates shown in this table. Year-to-date seasonally adjusted sales estimates are not tabulated. Adjustment factors and explanatory material can be found on the Internet at <http://www.census.gov/retail>

(3) Advance estimates are based on early reports obtained from a small sample of firms selected from the larger Monthly Retail Trade Survey (MRTS) sample. All other estimates are from the MRTS sample

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

(5) Estimates include data for leased departments operated within department stores. Data for this line are not included in broader kind-of-business totals.

Note: Table 3 provides estimated measures of sampling variability. Additional information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, sample design, and definitions may be found at <http://www.census.gov/retail>

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

(Estimates are shown as percents and are based on data from the Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey, Monthly Retail Trade Survey, and administrative records.)

NAICS code	Kind of Business	Percent Change ¹					
		Apr. 2011 Advance from --		Mar. 2011 Preliminary from --		Feb. 2011 through Apr. 2011 from --	
		Mar. 2011 (p)	Apr. 2010 (r)	Feb. 2011 (r)	Mar. 2010 (r)	Nov. 2010 through Jan. 2011	Feb. 2010 through Apr. 2010
	Retail & food services, total	0.5	7.6	0.9	7.6	2.7	8.1
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	0.6	6.9	1.2	6.8	2.8	6.8
	Retail	0.6	7.9	0.9	7.9	2.8	8.4
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	0.2	11.0	-0.7	11.6	2.5	14.6
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	0.4	12.2	-0.9	12.4	2.8	15.9
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	-1.1	0.8	2.4	0.9	1.7	0.2
443	Electronics & appliance stores	-2.2	0.9	2.9	3.2	1.8	0.5
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers.....	0.1	-3.7	2.5	5.0	0.0	3.0
445	Food & beverage stores.....	1.2	6.0	0.2	4.2	2.3	4.6
4451	Grocery stores	1.5	6.8	0.5	4.5	2.4	4.9
446	Health & personal care stores	-0.3	4.4	0.7	6.2	0.9	5.5
447	Gasoline stations	2.7	21.8	4.1	17.9	8.9	18.3
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	0.3	5.3	1.0	4.5	2.5	5.1
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores.....	-1.9	2.9	-0.1	5.4	1.7	5.1
452	General merchandise stores.....	0.1	2.5	0.4	2.4	1.2	2.3
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	-0.2	-2.0	-0.5	-3.6	-0.3	-2.3
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	0.9	6.3	-2.4	5.2	1.6	7.9
454	Nonstore retailers	1.0	15.5	0.6	13.5	3.4	14.6
722	Food services & drinking places	-0.1	5.2	1.0	5.2	2.6	5.1

(p) Preliminary estimate (r) Revised estimate

(1) Estimates shown in this table are derived from adjusted estimates provided in Table 1 of this report.

Note: Table 3 provides estimated measures of sampling variability. Additional information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, sample design, and definitions may be found at <http://www.census.gov/retail>.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Survey Description

The U.S. Census Bureau conducts the Advance Monthly Retail Trade and Food Services Survey (MARTS) to provide an early estimate of monthly sales by kind of business for retail and food service firms located in the United States. Each month, questionnaires are mailed to a probability sample of approximately 5,000 employer firms selected from the larger Monthly Retail Trade Survey (MRTS). Firms responding to MARTS account for approximately 65% of the total national sales estimate. Advance sales estimates are computed using a link relative estimator. The change in sales from the previous month is estimated using only units that have reported data for both the current and

previous month. There is no imputation or adjustment for nonrespondents in MARTS. The total sales estimate is derived by multiplying this ratio by the preliminary sales estimate for the previous month (derived from the larger MRTS sample). Detailed industry estimates are summed to derive total estimates at broad industry levels. The monthly estimates are adjusted using annual survey estimates and for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences. Additional information on MARTS and MRTS can be found on the Census Bureau website at: <http://www.census.gov/retail>.

Official Business

Penalty for Private Use, \$300

Reliability of Estimates

Because the estimates presented in this report are based on a sample survey, they contain sampling error and nonsampling error.

Sampling error is the difference between the estimate and the result that would be obtained from a complete enumeration of the sampling frame conducted under the same survey conditions. This error occurs because only a subset of the entire sampling frame is measured in a sample survey. Standard errors and coefficients of variation (CV), as given in Table 3 of this report, are estimated measures of sampling variation.

The margin of sampling error, as used on page 1, gives a range about the estimate which is a 90 percent confidence interval. If, for example, the percent change estimate is +1.2 percent and its estimated standard error is 0.9 percent, then the margin of sampling error is $\pm 1.65 \times 0.9$ percent or ± 1.5 percent, and the 90 percent confidence interval is -0.3 percent to +2.7 percent. If the interval contains 0, then one does not have sufficient evidence to conclude at the 90 percent

confidence level that the change is different from zero and therefore the change is not statistically significant. Estimated changes shown in the text are statistically significant unless otherwise noted. For a monthly total, the median estimated coefficient of variation is given. The resulting confidence interval is the estimated value $\pm 1.65 \times CV \times$ (the estimated monthly total). The Census Bureau recommends that individuals using estimates in this report incorporate this information into their analyses, as sampling error could affect the conclusions drawn from the estimates.

Nonsampling error encompasses all other factors that contribute to the total error of a sample survey estimate. This type of error can occur because of nonresponse, insufficient coverage of the universe of retail businesses, mistakes in the recording and coding of data, and other errors of collection, response, coverage, or processing. Although nonsampling error is not measured directly, the Census Bureau employs quality control procedures throughout the process to minimize this type of error.

Table 3. Estimated Measures of Sampling Variability and Revision to Advance Estimates Apr 2011

(Estimates are shown as percents and are based on data from the Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey and Monthly Retail Trade Survey)

NAICS Code	Kind of Business	Median CV ⁽¹⁾ for Current Mo. (%)	Median standard error ⁽¹⁾ for Percent change			Revision for month-to-month change ⁽²⁾	
			Previous Mo. to Current Mo.	Previous Qtr. to Current Qtr.	Current Mo. to same Mo. Last Yr.	Average revision	Median absolute revision
	Retail & food services,						
	total	0.7	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.1
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ..	0.6	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.2
	Retail	0.7	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.1
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	2.3	1.0	0.5	1.4	0.4	0.6
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	2.4	1.2	0.6	1.6	0.4	0.6
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	3.2	1.8	0.9	1.9	-0.2	0.9
443	Electronics & appliance stores	1.6	0.5	0.3	1.0	0.0	0.3
444	Building material & garden eq. &... supplies dealers	3.2	1.8	0.9	2.2	0.3	0.6
445	Food & beverage stores	1.2	0.2	0.3	0.6	0.0	0.2
4451	Grocery stores	1.3	0.2	0.3	0.6	0.0	0.2
446	Health & personal care stores	1.9	0.4	0.3	0.7	-0.1	0.3
447	Gasoline stations	2.5	0.5	0.3	1.0	0.3	0.4
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	2.6	0.6	0.6	0.9	0.1	0.7
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores	3.8	1.9	1.2	2.2	0.2	0.6
452	General merchandise stores	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	3.6	2.3	1.3	2.8	0.6	0.3
454	Nonstore retailers	2.2	0.9	0.7	1.9	0.2	0.5
722	Food services & drinking places ..	2.0	0.7	0.6	1.2	0.1	0.3



- (1) Estimated measures of sampling variability are based on estimates not adjusted for seasonal variation or holiday or trading-day differences. Medians are based on estimates for the most recent 12 months.
- (2) These columns provide measures of the difference between the advance-to-preliminary and preliminary-to-final estimates of month-to-month change for the same pair of months as measured by the Advance sample and MRTS sample. The average and median revisions are based on estimates for the most recent 12 months.

Note: Additional information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, sample design, and definitions may be found at <http://www.census.gov/retail>