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## ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES MARCH 2014

**Notice of Revision:** Monthly retail sales were revised on April 30, 2014 based on the results of the 2012 Annual Retail Trade Survey. This report no longer contains the most up to date estimates. The Annual Revision of Monthly Retail and Food Services showing revised estimates can be found on our website at [www.census.gov/retail/mrts/www/benchmark/2014/html/annrev14.html](http://www.census.gov/retail/mrts/www/benchmark/2014/html/annrev14.html)

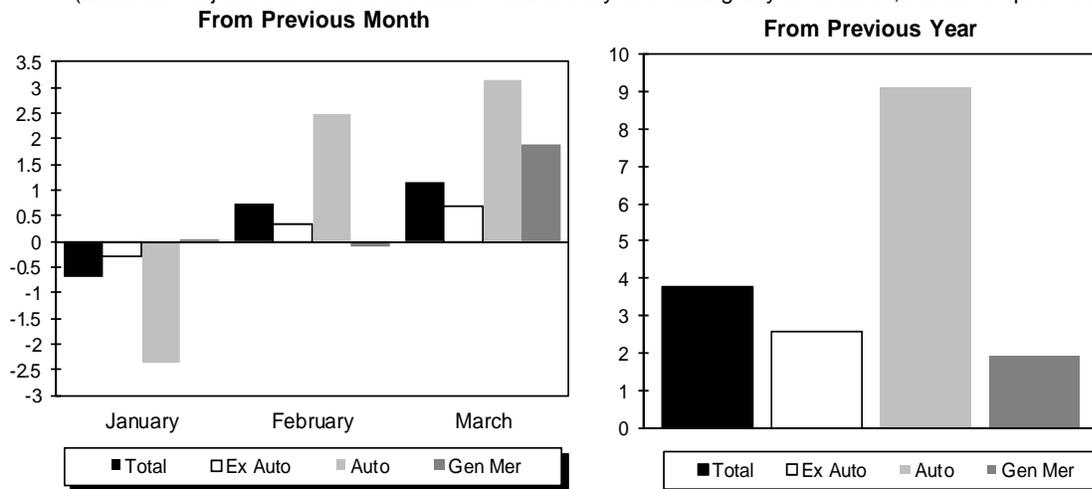
The U.S. Census Bureau announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for March, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$433.9 billion, an increase of 1.1 percent ( $\pm 0.5\%$ ) from the previous month, and 3.8 percent ( $\pm 0.7\%$ ) above March 2013. Total sales for the January 2014 through March 2014 period were up 2.5 percent ( $\pm 0.4\%$ ) from the same period a year ago. The January 2014 to February 2014 percent change was revised from +0.3 percent ( $\pm 0.5\%$ )\* to +0.7 percent ( $\pm 0.2\%$ ).

Retail trade sales were up 1.1 percent ( $\pm 0.5\%$ ) from February 2014, and 3.7 percent ( $\pm 0.7\%$ ) above last year. Auto and other motor vehicle dealers were up 9.5 percent ( $\pm 3.2\%$ ) from March 2013 and nonstore retailers were up 7.8 percent ( $\pm 2.5\%$ ) 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 4,900 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 60% 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 April is scheduled to be released May 13, 2014 at 8:30 a.m. EDT.

For customized retail time series estimates by industry, visit the Census Bureau's web site at [www.census.gov/timeseries](http://www.census.gov/timeseries).

To receive the latest updates on the nation's key economic indicators, download the America's Economy app for Apple and Android smartphones and tablets.

The U.S. Census Bureau updated its Application Programming Interface (API) with monthly and quarterly economic indicators. The API allows developers to combine Census Bureau statistics with other data sets to create tools for research on a variety of topics. For more information, visit [www.census.gov/developers](http://www.census.gov/developers).

For additional survey information, visit [www.census.gov/retail](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 <sup>1</sup> code	Kind of Business	Not Adjusted							Adjusted <sup>2</sup>				
		3 Month Total		2014			2013		2014			2013	
		2014	% Chg. 2013	Mar. <sup>3</sup> (a)	Feb. (p)	Jan. (r)	Mar.	Feb.	Mar. <sup>3</sup> (a)	Feb. (p)	Jan. (r)	Mar. (r)	Feb. (r)
	<b>Retail &amp; food services,</b>												
	<b>total</b> .....	1,214,835	2.2	438,675	386,277	389,883	427,702	379,466	433,907	429,023	425,894	418,104	421,615
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	977,032	1.5	347,779	310,403	318,850	344,395	306,586	349,776	347,444	346,299	341,007	343,398
	Retail .....	1,078,953	2.2	389,263	343,122	346,568	379,648	337,570	386,577	382,217	379,468	372,641	376,273
	<b>GAFO<sup>3</sup></b> .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	91,041	88,099	102,782	91,461	(*)	103,059	102,740	102,747	103,409
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers</b> .....	237,803	5.6	90,896	75,874	71,033	83,307	72,880	84,131	81,579	79,595	77,097	78,217
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	217,598	5.8	83,626	69,377	64,595	76,385	66,535	76,933	74,439	72,497	70,271	71,237
44111	New car dealers .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	56,374	54,548	62,547	54,179	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,497	6,438	6,922	6,345	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores</b> .....	23,439	-0.3	8,372	7,542	7,525	8,288	7,490	8,457	8,371	8,297	8,280	8,285
4421	Furniture stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,130	3,926	4,494	4,026	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,412	3,599	3,794	3,464	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores</b> .....	23,369	-1.5	7,754	7,890	7,725	7,910	7,944	8,226	8,360	8,325	8,285	8,463
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,966	5,659	5,897	6,029	(*)	6,273	6,232	6,260	6,366
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	(S)	(S)	2,013	1,915	(*)	(S)	(S)	2,025	2,097
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp; supplies dealers</b> .....	65,721	3.6	25,543	19,592	20,586	24,049	19,350	26,609	26,135	26,288	25,171	25,762
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	16,988	17,857	20,168	16,756	(*)	22,034	22,128	21,207	21,677
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores</b> .....	160,375	2.5	55,032	50,599	54,744	55,060	49,202	55,525	55,397	55,505	53,903	53,916
4451	Grocery stores .....	144,126	2.1	49,308	45,362	49,456	49,405	44,251	49,357	49,253	49,308	48,106	48,099
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,451	3,464	3,675	3,252	(*)	4,070	4,066	3,848	3,839
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores</b> .....	72,606	4.1	24,889	23,174	24,543	23,933	22,116	24,473	24,394	24,252	23,259	23,305
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	19,375	20,870	19,859	18,448	(*)	20,395	20,341	19,413	19,439
447	<b>Gasoline stations</b> .....	127,416	-2.6	45,451	40,045	41,920	47,282	41,958	45,001	45,609	45,565	46,537	47,843
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories stores</b> .....	54,079	-0.4	20,543	18,045	15,491	21,035	17,787	21,079	20,874	20,794	20,636	20,560
44811	Men's clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	580	523	668	552	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
44812	Women's clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,875	2,507	3,772	2,830	(*)	3,451	3,361	3,429	3,381
44814	Family clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,525	5,894	8,289	6,515	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,443	1,829	2,642	2,242	(*)	2,607	2,526	2,433	2,408
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp; music stores</b> .....	19,258	-6.3	6,821	5,820	6,617	7,215	6,157	7,382	7,358	7,192	7,531	7,774
452	<b>General merchandise stores</b> .....	151,884	-0.1	55,247	48,840	47,797	55,348	49,249	55,845	54,805	54,855	54,787	55,150
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	36,280	-5.6	13,470	11,843	10,967	14,297	12,433	14,236	14,170	14,052	14,736	14,825
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) <sup>4</sup> .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	12,301	11,227	14,506	12,681	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	36,997	36,830	41,051	36,816	(*)	40,635	40,803	40,051	40,325
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	32,191	32,333	35,855	32,149	(*)	35,336	35,531	34,912	35,174
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,806	4,497	5,196	4,667	(*)	5,299	5,272	5,139	5,151
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers</b> .....	27,872	-1.1	9,626	9,140	9,106	10,020	9,139	10,300	10,431	10,503	10,480	10,338
454	<b>Nonstore retailers</b> .....	115,131	6.6	39,089	36,561	39,481	36,201	34,298	39,549	38,904	38,297	36,675	36,660
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses ....	(*)	(*)	(*)	26,589	28,566	27,719	25,461	(*)	30,284	29,694	28,874	28,867
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places</b> ...	135,882	2.8	49,412	43,155	43,315	48,054	41,896	47,330	46,806	46,426	45,463	45,342

(\*) Advance estimates are not available for this kind of business. (NA) Not available (a) Advance estimate (p) Preliminary estimate (r) Revised estimate

(S) Estimate does not meet publication standards because of high sampling variability (coefficient of variation is greater than 30%), poor response quality (total quantity response rate is less than 50%), or other concerns about the estimate's quality.

(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-13ARIMA-SEATS 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) 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).

(4) 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 <sup>1</sup>					
		Mar. 2014 Advance from --		Feb. 2014 Preliminary from --		Jan. 2014 through Mar. 2014 from --	
		Feb. 2014 (p)	Mar. 2013 (r)	Jan. 2014 (r)	Feb. 2013 (r)	Oct. 2013 through Dec. 2013	Jan. 2013 through Mar. 2013
	<b>Retail &amp; food services, total .....</b>	1.1	3.8	0.7	1.8	0.1	2.5
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ....	0.7	2.6	0.3	1.2	0.2	1.8
	Retail .....	1.1	3.7	0.7	1.6	0.1	2.4
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers .....</b>	3.1	9.1	2.5	4.3	-0.5	5.5
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	3.4	9.5	2.7	4.5	-0.6	5.7
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores .....</b>	1.0	2.1	0.9	1.0	-2.4	0.1
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores .....</b>	-1.6	-0.7	0.4	-1.2	-1.7	-1.3
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp; supplies dealers.....</b>	1.8	5.7	-0.6	1.4	1.6	3.5
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores.....</b>	0.2	3.0	-0.2	2.7	1.1	3.3
4451	Grocery stores .....	0.2	2.6	-0.1	2.4	1.0	2.9
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores .....</b>	0.3	5.2	0.6	4.7	0.3	4.4
447	<b>Gasoline stations .....</b>	-1.3	-3.3	0.1	-4.7	0.8	-2.5
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories stores .....</b>	1.0	2.1	0.4	1.5	-1.2	1.1
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp; music stores.....</b>	0.3	-2.0	2.3	-5.4	-4.7	-5.1
452	<b>General merchandise stores.....</b>	1.9	1.9	-0.1	-0.6	0.1	0.4
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.5	-3.4	0.8	-4.4	-2.1	-5.1
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers .....</b>	-1.3	-1.7	-0.7	0.9	-2.2	0.2
454	<b>Nonstore retailers .....</b>	1.7	7.8	1.6	6.1	1.3	6.2
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places ....</b>	1.1	4.1	0.8	3.2	-0.2	3.0

(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>.

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## 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  $\pm 1.753 \times 0.9$  percent or  $\pm 1.6$  percent, and the 90 percent confidence interval is -0.4 percent to +2.8 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  $\pm 1.753 \times CV \times$  (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 Mar. 2014**

(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 <sup>(1)</sup> for Current Mo. (%)	Median standard error <sup>(1)</sup> for Percent change			Revision for month-to-month change <sup>(2)</sup>	
			Previous Mo. to Current Mo.	Previous Qtr. to Current Qtr.	Current Mo. to same Mo. Last Yr.	Average revision	Median absolute revision
	<b>Retail &amp; food services,</b>						
	<b>total</b> .....	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.2
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ..	0.5	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.1
	<b>Retail</b> .....	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.2
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers</b> .....	1.8	1.2	0.5	1.7	0.3	0.4
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	1.7	1.3	0.6	1.8	0.3	0.4
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores</b> .....	2.4	1.2	0.9	1.7	-0.2	0.5
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores</b> .....	2.5	0.5	0.5	0.9	-0.1	0.6
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp;... supplies dealers</b> .....	1.9	1.0	0.7	1.6	0.1	0.6
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores</b> .....	2.2	0.2	0.3	0.4	-0.1	0.2
4451	Grocery stores .....	2.4	0.2	0.3	0.3	-0.1	0.2
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores</b> .....	2.0	0.4	0.4	1.0	0.0	0.3
447	<b>Gasoline stations</b> .....	1.8	0.4	0.4	0.9	-0.1	0.2
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories stores</b> .....	2.5	0.4	0.6	1.2	-0.1	0.4
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp; music stores</b> .....	1.7	0.7	0.9	1.2	-0.4	0.3
452	<b>General merchandise stores</b> .....	0.6	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.2
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-0.1	0.2
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers</b> .....	3.1	1.8	1.2	2.1	0.6	0.7
454	<b>Nonstore retailers</b> .....	1.4	0.6	0.7	1.4	0.0	0.3
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places</b> ..	2.1	0.8	1.0	1.4	0.0	0.4

(1) Estimated measures of sampling variability are based on estimates not adjusted for seasonal variation or holiday or trading day variation. 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.