

U.S. Census Bureau News

U.S. Department of Commerce • Washington, D.C. 20233

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2015, AT 8:30 A.M. EST

Rebecca DeNale / Paul Bucchioni
Economic Indicators Division
(301) 763-2713

CB15-201

ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES NOVEMBER 2015

SPECIAL NOTICE: The advance estimates in this report are the first estimates from a new sample. The new sample for the Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey is selected about once every two and a half years. For further information on the sample revision, see our website at http://www.census.gov/retail/marts_sample_revision_faqs.html.

The U.S. Census Bureau announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for November, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$448.1 billion, an increase of 0.2 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$)* from the previous month, and 1.4 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$) above November 2014. Total sales for the September 2015 through November 2015 period were up 1.7 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) from the same period a year ago. The September 2015 to October 2015 percent change was unrevised from +0.1 percent ($\pm 0.2\%$)*.

Retail trade sales were up 0.2 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$)* from October 2015, and up 0.7 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$)* above last year. Nonstore retailers were up 7.3 percent ($\pm 1.2\%$) from November 2014 and food services and drinking places were up 6.5 percent ($\pm 3.7\%$) from last year.

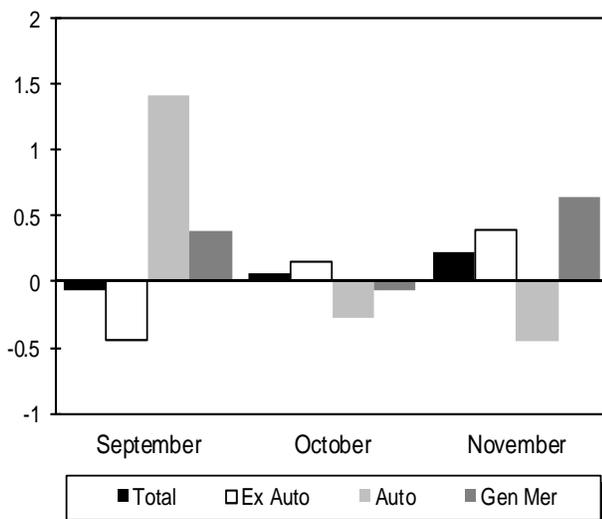
The scheduled release dates for 2016 are as follows: January 15, February 12, March 15, April 13, May 13, June 14, July 15, August 12, September 15, October 14, November 15, December 14.

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 4,700 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. 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.

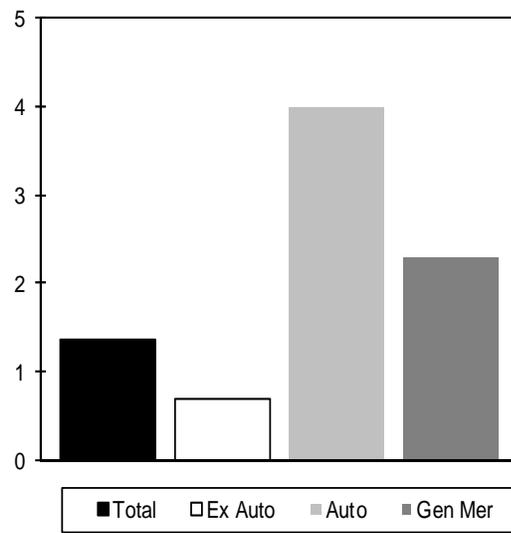
Percent Change in Retail and Food Services Sales

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

From Previous Month



From Previous Year



The Advance Monthly Sales for Retail and Food Services for December is scheduled to be released January 15, 2016 at 8:30 a.m. EST.

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

To learn more about this release and the other indicators the U.S. Census Bureau publishes, join us for the Investigating Economic Indicators Webinar Series. For more information, visit <http://www.census.gov/econ/webinar>.

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.

For additional survey information, visit 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					
		11 Month Total		2015			2014		2015			2014	
		2015	% Chg. 2014	Nov. ³ (a)	Oct. (p)	Sept. (r)	Nov.	Oct.	Nov. ³ (a)	Oct. (p)	Sept. (r)	Nov. (r)	Oct. (r)
	Retail & food services,												
	total	4,804,236	2.0	443,714	444,984	430,169	437,196	437,277	448,117	447,125	446,855	442,129	439,749
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	3,792,831	0.8	360,082	353,771	338,500	357,040	351,578	354,434	353,022	352,499	352,029	351,473
	Retail	4,236,277	1.3	393,511	391,002	379,473	389,581	387,116	395,160	394,562	394,429	392,426	390,183
	GAFO⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	103,445	98,171	115,295	100,820	(*)	105,687	105,810	104,314	104,012
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	1,011,405	6.9	83,632	91,213	91,669	80,156	85,699	93,683	94,103	94,356	90,100	88,276
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	931,347	7.5	76,659	83,666	84,441	73,128	78,165	86,328	86,881	87,142	82,631	81,168
44111	New car dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	71,500	72,056	63,290	66,143	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,547	7,228	7,028	7,534	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	93,108	5.6	9,200	8,787	8,790	8,767	8,254	8,779	8,805	8,764	8,326	8,279
4421	Furniture stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,774	4,955	4,673	4,428	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,013	3,835	4,094	3,826	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	Electronics & appliance stores	90,738	-1.8	10,662	8,155	8,243	10,857	8,400	8,746	8,693	8,701	8,954	9,015
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,915	6,028	7,794	6,154	(*)	6,340	6,365	6,594	6,646
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	305,651	3.9	26,372	28,538	27,404	25,345	27,808	27,869	27,942	27,695	27,280	26,833
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	25,023	24,298	22,044	24,398	(*)	24,084	23,798	23,451	23,126
445	Food & beverage stores	618,844	2.8	56,690	57,260	55,323	56,263	56,122	57,237	56,815	56,903	56,044	56,021
4451	Grocery stores	553,122	2.5	50,480	51,093	49,368	50,178	50,183	50,990	50,587	50,634	49,978	49,983
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,293	4,094	4,137	4,092	(*)	4,255	4,251	4,112	4,108
446	Health & personal care stores	284,541	4.3	25,644	26,880	25,955	24,518	25,971	26,629	26,640	26,512	25,727	25,562
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	22,680	21,658	20,285	21,765	(*)	22,323	22,191	21,263	21,213
447	Gasoline stations	401,153	-19.8	31,892	35,874	35,553	39,730	44,942	34,478	34,762	35,097	43,044	43,633
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	221,173	2.2	22,927	20,644	19,071	23,300	20,117	21,313	21,147	21,262	21,245	20,903
44811	Men's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	805	750	880	832	(*)	771	788	817	812
44812	Women's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,844	3,549	4,365	3,940	(*)	3,776	3,768	3,961	3,901
44814	Family clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	8,388	7,481	9,478	7,968	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,661	2,565	2,864	2,581	(*)	2,852	2,866	2,813	2,808
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores	76,054	5.7	8,125	6,758	7,125	7,740	6,416	7,572	7,509	7,500	7,187	7,209
452	General merchandise stores	598,348	1.1	62,970	56,151	52,209	62,077	54,645	57,205	56,833	56,870	55,925	55,868
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	142,116	-1.9	16,517	12,997	12,082	16,997	13,191	13,728	13,728	13,720	14,068	13,969
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) ⁵	(*)	(*)	(*)	13,152	12,220	17,320	13,467	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	43,154	40,127	45,080	41,454	(*)	43,105	43,150	41,857	41,899
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	37,352	34,745	39,281	35,923	(*)	37,315	37,400	36,371	36,396
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,802	5,382	5,799	5,531	(*)	5,790	5,750	5,486	5,503
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	108,397	4.2	9,566	10,650	9,965	9,290	10,572	9,999	9,931	9,964	9,770	9,908
454	Nonstore retailers	426,865	6.0	45,831	40,092	38,166	41,538	38,170	41,650	41,382	40,805	38,824	38,676
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses	(*)	(*)	(*)	34,542	33,198	34,966	31,641	(*)	35,795	35,279	32,316	32,221
722	Food services & drinking places ...	567,959	8.1	50,203	53,982	50,696	47,615	50,161	52,957	52,563	52,426	49,703	49,566

(*) 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) 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					
		Nov. 2015 Advance from --		Oct. 2015 Preliminary from --		Sep. 2015 through Nov. 2015 from --	
		Oct. 2015 (p)	Nov. 2014 (r)	Sep. 2015 (r)	Oct. 2014 (r)	Jun. 2015 through Aug. 2015	Sep. 2014 through Nov. 2014
	Retail & food services,						
	total	0.2	1.4	0.1	1.7	0.3	1.7
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts)	0.4	0.7	0.1	0.4	-0.1	0.6
	Retail	0.2	0.7	0.0	1.1	0.2	1.1
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	-0.4	4.0	-0.3	6.6	1.8	6.3
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	-0.6	4.5	-0.3	7.0	2.0	6.8
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	-0.3	5.4	0.5	6.4	1.7	6.1
443	Electronics & appliance stores	0.6	-2.3	-0.1	-3.6	0.9	-3.2
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	-0.3	2.2	0.9	4.1	0.4	3.2
445	Food & beverage stores	0.7	2.1	-0.2	1.4	0.2	1.9
4451	Grocery stores	0.8	2.0	-0.1	1.2	0.2	1.7
446	Health & personal care stores	0.0	3.5	0.5	4.2	1.0	3.7
447	Gasoline stations	-0.8	-19.9	-1.0	-20.3	-7.3	-20.5
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	0.8	0.3	-0.5	1.2	-0.6	1.5
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores	0.8	5.4	0.1	4.2	1.7	5.3
452	General merchandise stores	0.7	2.3	-0.1	1.7	0.9	2.1
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.0	-2.4	0.1	-1.7	-1.1	-1.9
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	0.7	2.3	-0.3	0.2	-1.9	1.5
454	Nonstore retailers	0.6	7.3	1.4	7.0	2.0	6.9
722	Food services & drinking places	0.7	6.5	0.3	6.0	1.3	6.6

(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

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 $\pm 1.753 \times 0.9$ percent or ± 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 Nov. 2015

(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	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.2
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ..	0.6	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.1
	Retail	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.2
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	1.5	1.1	0.6	1.6	0.1	0.2
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	1.5	1.2	0.6	1.7	0.1	0.2
442	Furniture & home furn. stores.....	2.4	1.3	0.7	1.5	0.4	0.5
443	Electronics & appliance stores	2.6	0.5	0.5	1.3	-0.1	0.3
444	Building material & garden eq. &....						
	supplies dealers.....	2.0	1.3	0.8	1.4	0.2	0.5
445	Food & beverage stores.....	1.4	0.3	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.2
4451	Grocery stores	1.5	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.2
446	Health & personal care stores	2.3	0.5	0.5	1.1	0.0	0.2
447	Gasoline stations	1.8	0.5	0.4	0.9	-0.2	0.8
448	Clothing & clothing accessories						
	stores	2.1	0.5	0.5	1.0	0.0	0.3
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book &						
	music stores.....	2.3	0.6	0.9	1.2	-0.1	0.4
452	General merchandise stores.....	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.3
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.3
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	2.5	1.9	1.1	2.6	-0.1	1.5
454	Nonstore retailers	1.3	0.4	0.4	0.7	0.0	0.3
722	Food services & drinking places ..	2.1	1.0	0.8	2.1	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.