

# U.S. Census Bureau News

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## ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES January 2005

**Intention to Revise Retail Estimates:** Monthly retail sales estimates will be revised based on the results of the 2003 Annual Retail Trade Survey and the preliminary results of the 2002 Census of Retail Trade. Revised unadjusted and corresponding adjusted data are scheduled for release on March 31, 2005.

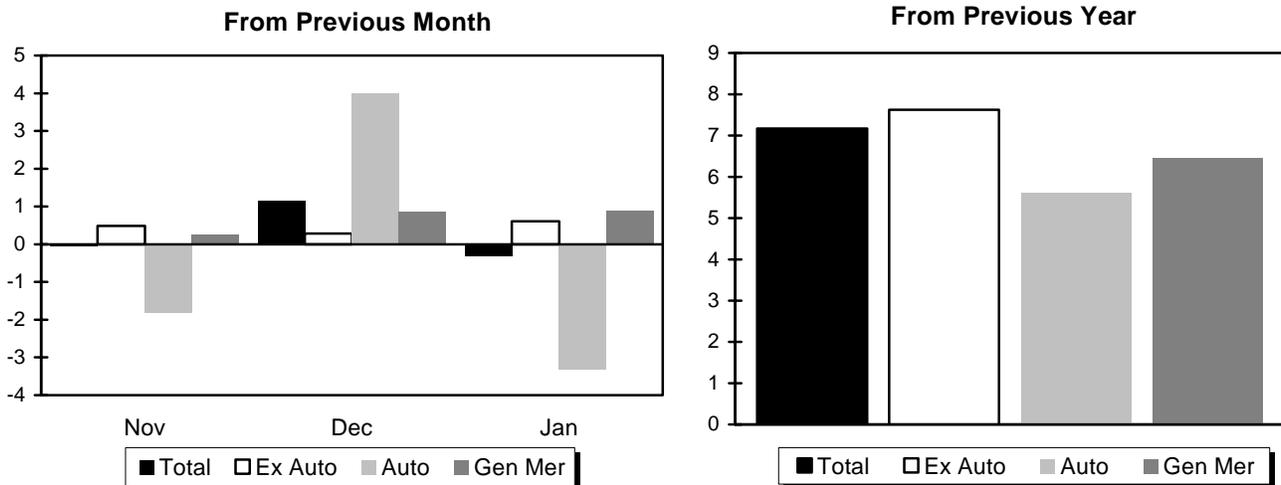
The U.S. Census Bureau announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for January, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$347.7 billion, a decrease of 0.3 percent ( $\pm 0.7\%$ )\* from the previous month, but up 7.2 percent ( $\pm 1.0\%$ ) from January 2004. Total sales for the November 2004 through January 2005 period were up 7.6 percent ( $\pm 0.7\%$ ) from the same period a year ago. The November to December 2004 percent change was revised from +1.2 percent ( $\pm 0.2\%$ ) to +1.1 percent ( $\pm 0.4\%$ ).

Retail trade sales were down 0.4 percent ( $\pm 0.7\%$ )\* from December 2004, but were 7.1 percent ( $\pm 1.0\%$ ) above last year. Gasoline station sales were up 17.3 percent ( $\pm 2.8\%$ ) from January 2004 and sales of building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers were up 14.1 percent ( $\pm 2.3\%$ ) 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 February is scheduled to be released March 15, 2005 at 8:30 a.m. EST.

For information, visit the Census Bureau's Web site at <<http://www.census.gov/retail>>. This report is also available the day of issue through the Department of Commerce's STAT-USA (202-482-1986).

\* The 90 percent confidence interval includes zero. The Census Bureau does not have sufficient statistical evidence to conclude that the actual change is different from 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>				
		1 Month Total		2005	2004			2003	2005	2004			2003
		2005	% Chg. 2004	Jan. <sup>3</sup> (a)	Dec. (p)	Nov. (r)	Jan.	Dec.	Jan.3 (a)	Dec. (p)	Nov. (r)	Jan. (r)	Dec. (r)
	<b>Retail &amp; food services,</b>												
	<b>total</b> .....	308,076	4.5	308,076	406,329	342,523	294,797	371,745	347,665	348,767	344,877	324,420	320,943
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	241,094	5.4	241,094	327,194	271,226	228,732	299,880	268,515	266,899	266,141	249,472	245,532
	Retail .....	276,618	4.4	276,618	372,135	310,900	265,064	340,752	313,730	315,078	311,555	292,856	290,012
	<b>GAFO<sup>4</sup></b> .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	135,774	94,343	71,941	128,415	(*)	86,359	86,173	83,569	82,478
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers</b> .....	66,982	1.4	66,982	79,135	71,297	66,065	71,865	79,150	81,868	78,736	74,948	75,411
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	60,317	0.8	60,317	71,984	64,338	59,846	65,299	71,550	74,364	71,487	68,084	68,448
44111	New car dealers .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	61,124	54,083	50,665	56,208	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,151	6,959	6,219	6,566	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores</b> .....	7,774	-0.2	7,774	10,664	9,596	7,793	10,182	8,764	8,777	8,732	8,517	8,429
4421	Furniture stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,351	5,080	4,436	4,981	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,313	4,516	3,357	5,201	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores</b> .....	7,759	-1.2	7,759	13,795	9,487	7,854	13,403	8,401	8,449	8,542	8,323	8,280
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	10,523	6,975	5,533	10,085	(*)	6,097	6,113	5,930	5,870
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,272	2,512	2,321	3,318	(*)	2,352	2,429	2,393	2,410
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp; supplies dealers</b> .....	24,885	10.8	24,885	29,119	30,149	22,465	25,425	31,877	31,960	31,409	27,943	27,935
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	26,409	27,514	20,623	23,055	(*)	28,366	27,848	24,728	24,711
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores</b> .....	43,953	2.4	43,953	49,692	44,394	42,902	46,347	45,151	45,004	44,903	43,218	42,663
4451	Grocery stores .....	40,205	3.0	40,205	43,185	39,745	39,050	40,279	40,652	40,435	40,268	38,779	38,324
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,996	2,905	2,406	3,849	(*)	2,792	2,826	2,756	2,753
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores</b> .....	16,770	1.4	16,770	19,568	16,882	16,535	19,002	17,218	17,120	17,174	16,635	16,625
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	16,525	14,400	14,177	16,188	(*)	14,496	14,590	14,135	14,138
447	<b>Gasoline stations</b> .....	25,334	14.6	25,334	26,922	27,142	22,102	21,786	28,149	27,641	28,243	23,998	22,765
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories stores</b> .....	12,024	2.1	12,024	28,453	17,228	11,773	26,890	16,238	15,953	15,985	15,640	15,417
44811	Men's clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,730	1,108	756	1,530	(*)	994	997	931	911
44812	Women's clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,619	3,182	2,343	4,465	(*)	3,029	3,036	2,966	3,003
44814	Family clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	9,829	6,633	3,972	9,052	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,565	1,843	1,492	2,519	(*)	1,931	1,926	1,945	1,942
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp; music stores</b> .....	6,381	-1.8	6,381	12,305	7,561	6,501	12,126	6,803	6,761	6,793	6,793	6,711
452	<b>General merchandise stores</b> .....	36,835	6.1	36,835	65,734	47,085	34,725	60,817	43,590	43,204	42,839	40,947	40,337
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	14,083	0.7	14,083	31,757	20,622	13,981	30,735	18,039	17,983	17,918	17,787	17,711
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) <sup>5</sup> .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	32,112	20,839	14,139	31,138	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	33,977	26,463	20,744	30,082	(*)	25,221	24,921	23,160	22,626
45291	Warehouse clubs & superstores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	28,396	22,530	17,932	24,912	(*)	21,627	21,355	19,705	19,207
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,581	3,933	2,812	5,170	(*)	3,594	3,566	3,455	3,419
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers</b> .....	8,671	2.9	8,671	11,915	9,602	8,425	11,263	9,588	9,504	9,511	9,006	8,890
454	<b>Nonstore retailers</b> .....	19,250	7.4	19,250	24,833	20,477	17,924	21,646	18,801	18,837	18,688	16,888	16,549
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses ....	(*)	(*)	(*)	16,075	12,840	10,577	14,427	(*)	11,742	11,620	10,760	10,593
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places</b> ...	31,458	5.8	31,458	34,194	31,623	29,733	30,993	33,935	33,689	33,322	31,564	30,931

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

(NA) Not available. (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/epcd/www/naics.html>

(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/mrts/www/mrts.html>

(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/mrts/www/mrts.html>

**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>					
		Jan. 2005 Advance from --		Dec. 2004 Preliminary from --		Nov. 2004 through Jan. 2005 from --	
		Dec. 2004 (p)	Jan. 2004 (r)	Nov. 2004 (r)	Dec. 2003 (r)	Aug. 2004 through Oct. 2004	Nov. 2003 through Jan. 2004
	<b>Retail &amp; food services, total .....</b>	-0.3	7.2	1.1	8.7	1.8	7.6
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ....	0.6	7.6	0.3	8.7	2.0	8.3
	Retail .....	-0.4	7.1	1.1	8.6	1.8	7.6
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers .....</b>	-3.3	5.6	4.0	8.6	1.4	5.5
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	-3.8	5.1	4.0	8.6	1.0	5.2
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores .....</b>	-0.1	2.9	0.5	4.1	-0.2	3.5
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores .....</b>	-0.6	0.9	-1.1	2.0	-0.4	2.2
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp; supplies dealers.....</b>	-0.3	14.1	1.8	14.4	2.0	13.3
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores.....</b>	0.3	4.5	0.2	5.5	1.3	5.1
4451	Grocery stores .....	0.5	4.8	0.4	5.5	1.6	5.2
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores .....</b>	0.6	3.5	-0.3	3.0	0.7	3.5
447	<b>Gasoline stations .....</b>	1.8	17.3	-2.1	21.4	4.4	21.3
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories stores .....</b>	1.8	3.8	-0.2	3.5	1.7	3.9
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp; music stores.....</b>	0.6	0.1	-0.5	0.7	-1.1	0.9
452	<b>General merchandise stores.....</b>	0.9	6.5	0.9	7.1	2.2	6.7
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.3	1.4	0.4	1.5	1.2	1.4
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers .....</b>	0.9	6.5	-0.1	6.9	3.0	6.7
454	<b>Nonstore retailers .....</b>	-0.2	11.3	0.8	13.8	2.4	13.1
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places ....</b>	0.7	7.5	1.1	8.9	2.5	7.9

(p) Preliminary estimates. (r) Revised estimates.

(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/mrts/www/mrts.html>.

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/mrts/www/mrts.html>.

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  $\pm 1.5$  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 statistical 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**

(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>						
	total .....	0.7	0.4	0.2	0.6	0.2	0.1
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ..	0.6	0.3	0.2	0.5	0.2	0.2
	<b>Retail</b> .....	0.6	0.4	0.2	0.6	0.2	0.2
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers</b> .....	1.7	1.4	0.7	1.8	0.4	0.3
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	1.8	1.5	0.8	1.9	0.4	0.3
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores</b> .....	3.8	1.4	1.2	2.0	0.1	0.9
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores</b> .....	2.0	0.6	0.4	1.2	0.0	0.2
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp;... supplies dealers</b> .....	1.9	1.0	0.6	1.4	0.3	0.4
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores</b> .....	0.8	0.3	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.2
4451	Grocery stores .....	0.8	0.3	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.1
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores</b> .....	3.2	0.5	0.4	1.0	0.1	0.4
447	<b>Gasoline stations</b> .....	1.6	0.7	0.6	1.7	0.5	0.4
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories stores</b> .....	1.5	0.7	0.5	0.9	-0.1	0.4
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp; music stores</b> .....	2.8	1.7	1.3	2.0	-0.1	0.5
452	<b>General merchandise stores</b> .....	0.3	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.1
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers</b> .....	3.5	3.1	2.2	4.1	0.4	0.9
454	<b>Nonstore retailers</b> .....	4.3	1.8	0.9	2.2	0.2	0.6
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places</b> ..	2.4	0.7	0.6	1.3	0.3	0.4

(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 differences 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/mrts/www/mrts.html>

