

U.S. Census Bureau News

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2011, AT 8:30 A.M. EST

Timothy Winters / Ian Thomas
Service Sector Statistics Division
(301) 763-2713

CB11-203

ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES NOVEMBER 2011

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 \$399.3 billion, an increase of 0.2 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$)* from the previous month and 6.7 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$) above November 2010. Total sales for the September through November 2011 period were up 7.4 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) from the same period a year ago. The September to October 2011 percent change was revised from +0.5 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$)* to +0.6 percent ($\pm 0.3\%$).

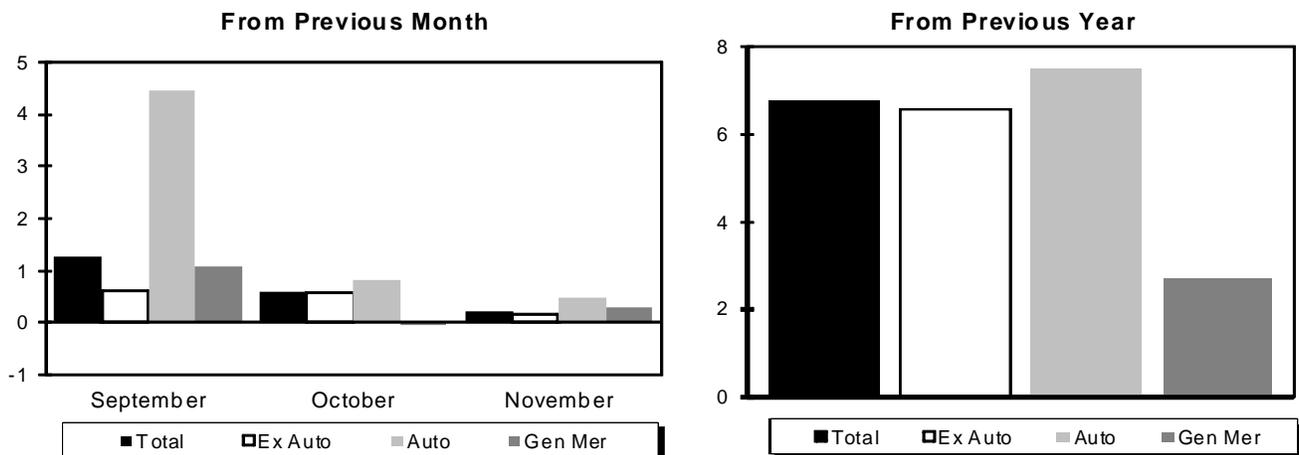
Retail trade sales were up 0.3 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$)* from October 2011, and 6.8 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$) above last year. Nonstore retailers sales were up 13.9 percent ($\pm 2.3\%$) from November 2010 and gasoline stations sales were up 12.9 percent ($\pm 1.7\%$) from last year.

The scheduled release dates for 2012 are as follows: January 12, February 14, March 13, April 16, May 15, June 13, July 16, August 14, September 14, October 15, November 14, December 13.

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 December is scheduled to be released January 12, 2012 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>. 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		2011			2010		2011			2010	
		2011	% Chg. 2010	Nov. ³ (a)	Oct. (p)	Sept. (r)	Nov.	Oct.	Nov. ³ (a)	Oct. (p)	Sept. (r)	Nov. (r)	Oct. (r)
	Retail & food services,												
	total	4,228,832	7.8	397,814	386,894	382,347	372,533	361,750	399,349	398,466	396,049	374,105	370,676
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	3,481,640	7.4	334,112	320,891	315,037	313,615	300,321	329,172	328,619	326,758	308,820	305,822
	Retail	3,778,771	8.1	358,381	344,675	341,118	335,293	321,844	357,488	356,499	354,319	334,656	331,514
	GAFO⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	94,086	92,213	104,184	90,681	(*)	99,198	99,082	96,213	94,780
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	747,192	9.9	63,702	66,003	67,310	58,918	61,429	70,177	69,847	69,291	65,285	64,854
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	672,839	10.5	57,157	59,010	60,243	52,523	54,734	63,437	62,978	62,363	58,685	58,290
44111	New car dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	49,750	50,325	43,652	45,127	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,993	7,067	6,395	6,695	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	80,684	1.5	8,222	7,219	7,676	7,872	7,026	7,599	7,567	7,585	7,282	7,273
4421	Furniture stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,824	4,127	4,084	3,788	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,395	3,549	3,788	3,238	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	Electronics & appliance stores	88,102	0.9	10,239	7,640	7,641	9,609	7,399	8,848	8,669	8,390	8,315	8,391
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,804	5,928	7,477	5,680	(*)	6,671	6,594	6,418	6,506
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,836	1,713	2,132	1,719	(*)	1,998	1,796	1,897	1,885
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	277,139	5.9	25,058	25,665	24,892	23,603	24,196	25,643	25,709	25,361	24,146	24,411
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	20,966	20,967	19,442	19,784	(*)	20,656	20,436	19,481	19,492
445	Food & beverage stores	558,293	5.5	51,721	51,308	50,448	49,199	48,945	51,891	51,980	51,637	49,627	49,194
4451	Grocery stores	501,882	5.7	46,157	45,973	45,235	43,923	43,740	46,436	46,579	46,300	44,412	44,004
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,657	3,659	3,608	3,577	(*)	3,713	3,703	3,576	3,573
446	Health & personal care stores	249,172	4.8	22,673	22,833	22,476	22,075	22,023	23,136	23,157	23,076	22,457	22,313
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	19,167	18,685	18,659	18,572	(*)	19,341	19,243	18,867	18,703
447	Gasoline stations	489,773	18.4	42,138	44,971	45,322	37,515	38,954	45,019	45,061	45,232	39,867	38,993
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	195,703	5.6	20,767	18,118	17,768	20,024	17,433	19,102	19,012	19,158	18,422	18,062
44811	Men's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	732	693	715	678	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
44812	Women's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,129	3,087	3,396	3,100	(*)	3,177	3,176	3,142	3,112
44814	Family clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,262	6,875	8,460	7,047	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,135	2,171	2,232	2,100	(*)	2,291	2,327	2,243	2,225
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores	76,937	6.0	8,075	6,418	7,219	7,534	6,150	7,611	7,586	7,567	7,162	7,102
452	General merchandise stores	556,746	3.6	57,861	51,564	48,791	56,136	49,588	53,480	53,322	53,353	52,066	51,001
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	157,864	-1.0	18,204	14,358	13,666	18,532	14,503	15,300	15,249	15,421	15,772	15,324
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) ⁵	(*)	(*)	(*)	14,629	13,926	18,822	14,712	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	37,206	35,125	37,604	35,085	(*)	38,073	37,932	36,294	35,677
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	32,564	30,775	32,747	30,632	(*)	33,365	33,270	31,793	31,193
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,642	4,350	4,857	4,453	(*)	4,708	4,662	4,501	4,484
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	109,031	8.1	10,014	10,533	10,437	9,437	9,922	10,253	10,381	10,338	9,523	9,724
454	Nonstore retailers	349,999	13.1	37,911	32,403	31,138	33,371	28,779	34,729	34,208	33,331	30,504	30,196
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses	(*)	(*)	(*)	24,574	23,934	26,200	22,146	(*)	26,143	25,516	23,519	23,410
722	Food services & drinking places ...	450,061	5.5	39,433	42,219	41,229	37,240	39,906	41,861	41,967	41,730	39,449	39,162

(*) 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					
		Nov. 2011 Advance from --		Oct. 2011 Preliminary from --		Sep. 2011 through Nov. 2011 from --	
		Oct. 2011 (p)	Nov. 2010 (r)	Sep. 2011 (r)	Oct. 2010 (r)	Jun. 2011 through Aug. 2011	Sep. 2010 through Nov. 2010
	Retail & food services, total	0.2	6.7	0.6	7.5	2.1	7.4
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts)	0.2	6.6	0.6	7.5	1.5	7.3
	Retail	0.3	6.8	0.6	7.5	2.1	7.5
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	0.5	7.5	0.8	7.7	4.8	8.1
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	0.7	8.1	1.0	8.0	5.3	8.6
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	0.4	4.4	-0.2	4.0	2.1	4.0
443	Electronics & appliance stores	2.1	6.4	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.0
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers.....	-0.3	6.2	1.4	5.3	1.7	6.1
445	Food & beverage stores.....	-0.2	4.6	0.7	5.7	0.5	5.2
4451	Grocery stores	-0.3	4.6	0.6	5.9	0.4	5.4
446	Health & personal care stores	-0.1	3.0	0.4	3.8	0.7	3.5
447	Gasoline stations	-0.1	12.9	-0.4	15.6	0.9	15.9
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	0.5	3.7	-0.8	5.3	0.8	5.7
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores.....	0.3	6.3	0.3	6.8	2.2	6.9
452	General merchandise stores.....	0.3	2.7	-0.1	4.6	1.3	4.0
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.3	-3.0	-1.1	-0.5	-0.5	-0.9
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	-1.2	7.7	0.4	6.8	1.4	7.4
454	Nonstore retailers	1.5	13.9	2.6	13.3	4.1	12.5
722	Food services & drinking places	-0.3	6.1	0.6	7.2	2.0	6.8

(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 Nov. 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	0.1	0.2
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ..	0.6	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.2
	Retail	0.8	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.1
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	2.4	1.0	0.5	1.3	0.2	0.6
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	2.5	1.1	0.6	1.5	0.2	0.7
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	3.2	1.5	0.9	1.7	0.1	0.5
443	Electronics & appliance stores	1.6	0.6	0.4	0.9	-0.1	0.4
444	Building material & garden eq. & ...						
	supplies dealers	3.4	1.7	1.1	1.7	0.0	0.3
445	Food & beverage stores	1.2	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.1
4451	Grocery stores	1.3	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.2
446	Health & personal care stores	1.8	0.4	0.4	1.0	-0.1	0.4
447	Gasoline stations	2.5	0.5	0.4	1.0	0.0	0.4
448	Clothing & clothing accessories						
	stores	2.6	0.7	0.6	0.9	0.0	0.4
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores	3.9	1.7	1.3	2.2	0.3	0.7
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	4.0	2.4	1.3	3.0	0.3	0.6
454	No-store retailers	2.2	1.1	0.8	1.4	0.1	0.4
722	Food services & drinking places ..	2.0	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.2	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 revisions are based on estimates for the most recent 12 months.