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## ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES OCTOBER 2015

**SPECIAL NOTICE:** Beginning with the December 11, 2015 release for the November 2015 data, the estimates will be based on a new sample. A new sample for the Advanced Monthly Retail Trade Survey is selected about once every two and a half to three years. For further information on the sample revision, see our website at [http://www.census.gov/retail/marts\\_sample\\_revision\\_faqs.html](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 October, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$447.3 billion, an increase of 0.1 percent ( $\pm 0.5\%$ )\* from the previous month, and 1.7 percent ( $\pm 0.7\%$ ) above October 2014. Total sales for the August 2015 through October 2015 period were up 2.0 percent ( $\pm 0.5\%$ ) from the same period a year ago. The August 2015 to September 2015 percent change was revised from +0.1 percent ( $\pm 0.5\%$ )\* to virtually unchanged ( $\pm 0.2\%$ )\*.

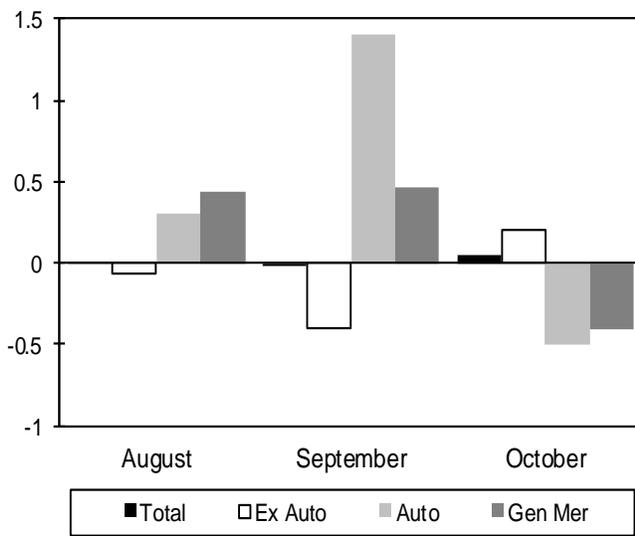
Retail trade sales were virtually unchanged ( $\pm 0.5\%$ )\* from September 2015, and up 1.2 percent ( $\pm 0.7\%$ ) above last year. Nonstore retailers were up 7.1 percent from October 2014 ( $\pm 1.4\%$ ) and motor vehicle and parts dealers were up 6.2 percent ( $\pm 2.8\%$ ) from last year.

*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.*

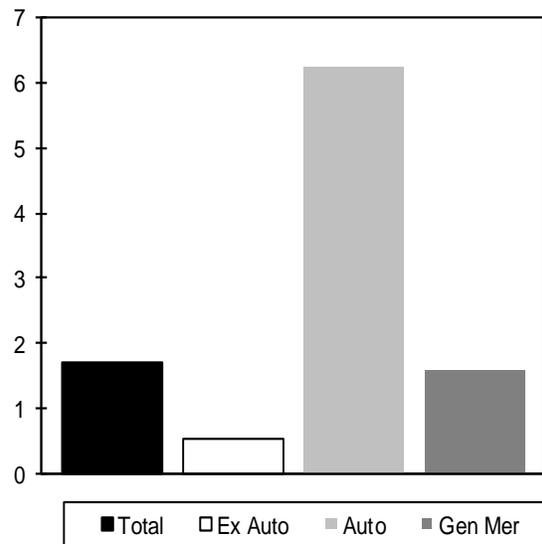
### Percent Change in Retail and Food Services Sales

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

#### From Previous Month



#### From Previous Year



The Advance Monthly Sales for Retail and Food Services for November is scheduled to be released December 11, 2015 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](http://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](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>					
		10 Month Total		2015			2014		2015			2014	
		2015	% Chg. 2014	Oct. <sup>3</sup> (a)	Sep. (p)	Aug. (r)	Oct.	Sep.	Oct. <sup>3</sup> (a)	Sep. (p)	Aug. (r)	Oct. (r)	Sep. (r)
	<b>Retail &amp; food services,</b>												
	<b>total</b> .....	4,360,708	2.1	445,189	430,150	456,415	437,277	420,516	447,255	447,031	447,133	439,829	437,428
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	3,433,395	0.8	354,353	338,564	357,457	351,578	335,829	353,392	352,692	354,099	351,482	350,363
	Retail .....	3,843,639	1.3	391,508	379,840	403,339	387,116	373,426	394,934	394,950	394,944	390,214	388,478
	<b>GAFO<sup>4</sup></b> .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	98,339	107,850	100,820	95,340	(*)	105,855	105,489	103,879	103,357
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers</b> .....	927,313	7.1	90,836	91,586	98,958	85,699	84,687	93,863	94,339	93,034	88,347	87,065
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	854,225	7.7	83,288	84,356	91,478	78,165	77,580	86,668	87,145	85,814	81,253	79,979
44111	New car dealers .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	71,939	77,934	66,143	65,320	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,230	7,480	7,534	7,107	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores</b> .....	83,747	5.5	8,695	8,721	8,874	8,254	8,203	8,747	8,712	8,658	8,312	8,236
4421	Furniture stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,906	4,878	4,428	4,544	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,815	3,996	3,826	3,659	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores</b> .....	80,040	-1.9	8,131	8,231	8,240	8,400	8,509	8,633	8,665	8,634	8,993	9,033
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,016	6,264	6,154	6,265	(*)	6,319	6,315	6,631	6,651
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp; supplies dealers</b> .....	279,322	3.9	28,563	27,422	27,935	27,808	26,617	27,978	27,741	27,835	26,823	26,795
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	24,302	24,706	24,398	23,737	(*)	23,802	23,940	23,148	23,181
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores</b> .....	562,392	3.0	57,370	55,451	57,386	56,122	53,633	56,817	57,002	57,049	55,898	55,716
4451	Grocery stores .....	502,967	2.8	51,284	49,502	51,184	50,183	48,034	50,676	50,719	50,778	49,884	49,725
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,093	4,250	4,092	3,861	(*)	4,255	4,254	4,100	4,094
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores</b> .....	258,969	4.3	26,972	25,935	26,105	25,971	25,077	26,731	26,546	26,503	25,562	25,615
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	21,645	21,709	21,765	20,785	(*)	22,155	22,107	21,234	21,253
447	<b>Gasoline stations</b> .....	369,473	-19.8	35,962	35,677	39,880	44,942	45,062	35,085	35,394	36,858	43,889	44,572
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories stores</b> .....	198,653	2.8	20,923	19,199	22,157	20,117	18,564	21,339	21,349	21,381	20,861	20,652
44811	Men's clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	748	774	832	766	(*)	782	811	815	806
44812	Women's clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,578	3,795	3,940	3,664	(*)	3,786	3,857	3,909	3,877
44814	Family clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,535	8,502	7,968	7,132	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,565	3,615	2,581	2,485	(*)	2,860	2,844	2,815	2,777
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp; music stores</b> .....	67,996	5.9	6,815	7,135	8,162	6,416	6,652	7,522	7,495	7,400	7,185	7,047
452	<b>General merchandise stores</b> .....	535,397	1.0	56,063	52,316	57,312	54,645	50,691	56,678	56,914	56,651	55,793	55,663
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	126,181	-1.4	13,319	12,342	13,724	13,191	12,140	13,969	13,934	13,876	13,904	13,923
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) <sup>5</sup> .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	12,480	13,914	13,467	12,334	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	39,974	43,588	41,454	38,551	(*)	42,980	42,775	41,889	41,740
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	34,591	38,066	35,923	33,472	(*)	37,235	36,993	36,396	36,225
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,383	5,522	5,531	5,079	(*)	5,745	5,782	5,493	5,515
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers</b> .....	99,175	4.7	10,990	9,969	10,612	10,572	9,724	10,161	9,983	10,256	9,897	9,768
454	<b>Nonstore retailers</b> .....	381,162	5.6	40,188	38,198	37,718	38,170	36,007	41,380	40,810	40,685	38,654	38,316
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses ....	(*)	(*)	(*)	33,231	33,070	31,641	30,207	(*)	35,315	35,181	32,155	31,730
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places</b> ...	517,069	8.2	53,681	50,310	53,076	50,161	47,090	52,321	52,081	52,189	49,615	48,950

(\*) 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 <sup>1</sup>					
		Oct. 2015 Advance from --		Sep. 2015 Preliminary from --		Aug. 2015 through Oct. 2015 from --	
		Sep. 2015 (p)	Oct. 2014 (r)	Aug. 2015 (r)	Sep. 2014 (r)	May 2015 through Jul. 2015	Aug. 2014 through Oct. 2014
	<b>Retail &amp; food services, total .....</b>	0.1	1.7	0.0	2.2	0.5	2.0
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ....	0.2	0.5	-0.4	0.7	0.2	0.8
	Retail .....	0.0	1.2	0.0	1.7	0.5	1.4
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers .....</b>	-0.5	6.2	1.4	8.4	1.6	6.6
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	-0.5	6.7	1.6	9.0	1.8	7.1
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores .....</b>	0.4	5.2	0.6	5.8	0.7	5.2
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores .....</b>	-0.4	-4.0	0.4	-4.1	0.1	-3.5
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp; supplies dealers.....</b>	0.9	4.3	-0.3	3.5	1.3	3.9
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores.....</b>	-0.3	1.6	-0.1	2.3	0.3	2.2
4451	Grocery stores .....	-0.1	1.6	-0.1	2.0	0.3	2.0
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores .....</b>	0.7	4.6	0.2	3.6	1.8	4.1
447	<b>Gasoline stations .....</b>	-0.9	-20.1	-4.0	-20.6	-5.3	-19.4
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories stores .....</b>	0.0	2.3	-0.1	3.4	-0.3	2.6
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp; music stores.....</b>	0.4	4.7	1.3	6.4	1.2	5.0
452	<b>General merchandise stores.....</b>	-0.4	1.6	0.5	2.2	1.0	1.7
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.3	0.5	0.4	0.1	0.2	-0.4
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers .....</b>	1.8	2.7	-2.7	2.2	0.7	3.2
454	<b>Nonstore retailers .....</b>	1.4	7.1	0.3	6.5	1.8	6.7
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places ....</b>	0.5	5.5	-0.2	6.4	0.8	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

### 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 4,900 employer firms selected from the larger Monthly Retail Trade Survey (MRTS). Firms responding to MARTS account for approximately 60% 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

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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 Oct. 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 <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 .....	0.5	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
	<b>Retail .....</b>	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.2
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers .....</b>	1.5	1.2	0.6	1.6	0.1	0.3
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	1.5	1.3	0.6	1.7	0.1	0.3
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores.....</b>	2.5	1.3	0.7	1.7	0.4	0.5
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores .....</b>	2.6	0.5	0.5	1.3	0.0	0.3
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp;....</b>						
	<b>supplies dealers.....</b>	2.0	1.4	0.8	1.4	0.2	0.5
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores.....</b>	1.4	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.2
4451	Grocery stores .....	1.5	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.2
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores .....</b>	2.3	0.4	0.5	1.1	0.0	0.3
447	<b>Gasoline stations .....</b>	1.8	0.5	0.4	0.9	-0.2	0.8
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories</b>						
	<b>stores .....</b>	2.1	0.5	0.5	1.1	0.0	0.2
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp;</b>						
	<b>music stores.....</b>	2.3	0.6	0.9	1.1	0.0	0.4
452	<b>General merchandise stores.....</b>	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.3
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers .....</b>	2.6	1.8	1.2	2.6	0.2	1.2
454	<b>Nonstore retailers .....</b>	1.3	0.4	0.4	0.8	0.0	0.3
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places ..</b>	2.2	0.9	0.8	2.0	0.1	0.5

(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.