

U.S. Census Bureau News

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2016, AT 8:30 A.M. EDT

Rebecca DeNale
Economic Indicators Division
(301) 763-2713

CB16-174

ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES SEPTEMBER 2016

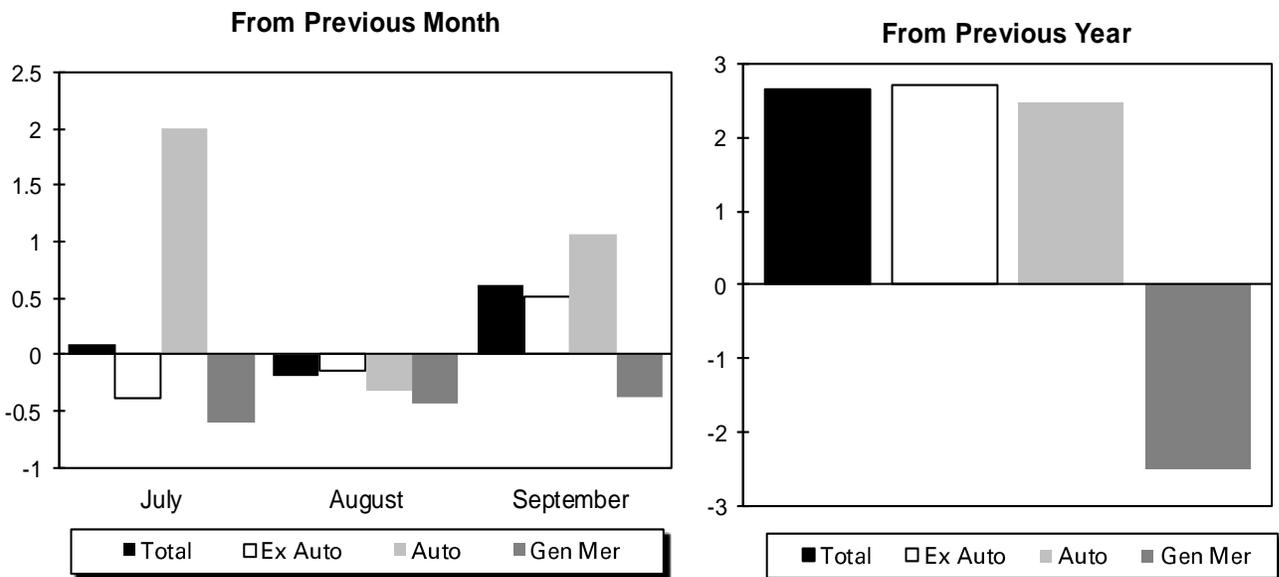
The U.S. Census Bureau announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for September, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$459.8 billion, an increase of 0.6 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) from the previous month, and 2.7 percent ($\pm 0.9\%$) above September 2015. Total sales for the July 2016 through September 2016 period were up 2.4 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) from the same period a year ago. The July 2016 to August 2016 percent change was revised from down 0.3 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$)* to down 0.2 percent ($\pm 0.2\%$)*.

Retail trade sales were up 0.6 ($\pm 0.5\%$) from August 2016, and up 2.2 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$) from last year. Nonstore retailers were up 10.6 percent ($\pm 1.6\%$) from September 2015, while Food services and drinking places were up 6.1 percent ($\pm 3.3\%$) 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 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)



The Advance Monthly Sales for Retail and Food Services for October is scheduled to be released November 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				
		9 Month Total		2016			2015		2016			2015	
		2016	% Chg. 2015	Sep. ³ (a)	Aug. (p)	Jul. (r)	Sep.	Aug.	Sep. ³ (a)	Aug. (p)	Jul. (r)	Sep. (r)	Aug. (r)
	Retail & food services,												
	total	4,037,659	2.9	445,444	471,379	461,994	430,917	456,340	459,821	456,976	457,849	447,860	447,738
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	3,188,996	2.9	352,737	369,187	363,980	340,802	359,052	365,138	363,295	363,856	355,467	356,335
	Retail	3,544,852	2.5	391,068	416,006	405,715	380,320	403,316	404,222	401,824	403,103	395,482	395,446
	GAFO⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	106,288	102,142	98,009	107,880	(*)	104,658	105,011	105,964	105,822
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	848,663	3.2	92,707	102,192	98,014	90,115	97,288	94,683	93,681	93,993	92,393	91,403
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	782,923	3.4	85,448	94,445	90,709	82,903	89,824	87,460	86,488	86,803	85,203	84,184
44111	New car dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	79,496	75,860	70,223	75,943	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,747	7,305	7,212	7,464	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	79,187	3.8	9,153	9,368	8,997	8,847	9,028	9,089	8,999	9,042	8,847	8,851
4421	Furniture stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,928	4,821	4,999	4,919	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,440	4,176	3,848	4,109	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	Electronics & appliance stores	70,928	-2.8	8,152	8,377	7,924	8,413	8,469	8,443	8,517	8,486	8,778	8,765
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,454	6,134	6,173	6,417	(*)	6,390	6,363	6,457	6,436
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	266,719	6.7	29,062	30,239	30,347	27,377	27,916	29,434	29,019	29,239	27,881	28,072
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	27,081	26,972	24,325	24,744	(*)	25,286	25,518	24,013	24,259
445	Food & beverage stores	523,005	2.1	57,351	59,032	60,337	56,109	58,233	58,730	58,685	58,526	57,797	57,708
4451	Grocery stores	469,193	2.1	51,353	52,778	53,756	50,244	52,120	52,508	52,411	52,241	51,638	51,553
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,387	4,655	4,091	4,248	(*)	4,361	4,367	4,239	4,244
446	Health & personal care stores	247,500	7.6	27,574	28,663	27,295	26,072	25,713	28,108	28,239	28,197	26,658	26,078
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	24,030	23,109	22,025	21,563	(*)	23,839	23,848	22,452	22,048
447	Gasoline stations	301,353	-9.4	34,673	36,005	36,916	35,574	39,786	33,860	33,062	33,530	35,048	36,771
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	179,068	0.5	19,542	22,112	20,381	19,080	22,197	21,398	21,388	21,281	21,257	21,356
44811	Men's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	682	640	683	705	(*)	727	717	714	746
44812	Women's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,417	3,157	3,212	3,434	(*)	3,473	3,443	3,443	3,504
44814	Family clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	8,543	8,435	7,752	8,813	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,702	2,905	2,542	3,571	(*)	2,938	2,908	2,847	2,803
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores	65,376	4.6	7,262	8,359	7,396	7,292	8,345	7,742	7,634	7,826	7,741	7,670
452	General merchandise stores	478,595	-0.4	50,818	54,890	54,710	51,588	56,674	55,140	55,350	55,597	56,562	56,336
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	106,702	-4.8	11,370	12,650	11,836	12,023	13,653	12,803	12,893	12,969	13,676	13,709
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) ⁵	(*)	(*)	(*)	13,031	12,021	12,185	13,822	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	42,240	42,874	39,565	43,021	(*)	42,457	42,628	42,886	42,627
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	36,581	37,164	34,148	37,463	(*)	36,581	36,760	37,117	36,801
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,659	5,710	5,417	5,558	(*)	5,876	5,868	5,769	5,826
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	92,880	4.3	10,663	11,017	10,629	9,991	10,685	10,605	10,415	10,506	10,038	10,404
454	Nonstore retailers	391,578	11.0	44,111	45,752	42,769	39,862	38,982	46,990	46,835	46,880	42,482	42,032
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses	(*)	(*)	(*)	40,541	37,797	34,783	34,231	(*)	41,117	41,084	36,885	36,455
722	Food services & drinking places ...	492,807	6.4	54,376	55,373	56,279	50,597	53,024	55,599	55,152	54,746	52,378	52,292

(*) 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					
		Sep. 2016 Advance from --		Aug. 2016 Preliminary from --		Jul. 2016 through Sep. 2016 from --	
		Aug. 2016 (p)	Sep. 2015 (r)	Jul. 2016 (r)	Aug. 2015 (r)	Apr. 2016 through Jun. 2016	Jul. 2015 through Sep. 2015
	Retail & food services, total	0.6	2.7	-0.2	2.1	0.7	2.4
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts)	0.5	2.7	-0.2	2.0	0.3	2.3
	Retail	0.6	2.2	-0.3	1.6	0.7	1.9
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	1.1	2.5	-0.3	2.5	2.3	2.9
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	1.1	2.6	-0.4	2.7	2.5	3.2
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	1.0	2.7	-0.5	1.7	-0.2	2.2
443	Electronics & appliance stores	-0.9	-3.8	0.4	-2.8	-0.4	-3.6
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers.....	1.4	5.6	-0.8	3.4	1.3	4.4
445	Food & beverage stores.....	0.1	1.6	0.3	1.7	-0.1	1.6
4451	Grocery stores	0.2	1.7	0.3	1.7	-0.1	1.6
446	Health & personal care stores	-0.5	5.4	0.1	8.3	1.3	7.4
447	Gasoline stations	2.4	-3.4	-1.4	-10.1	-0.3	-8.1
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	0.0	0.7	0.5	0.1	0.5	0.1
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores.....	1.4	0.0	-2.5	-0.5	-2.2	0.7
452	General merchandise stores.....	-0.4	-2.5	-0.4	-1.8	-1.0	-1.9
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	-0.7	-6.4	-0.6	-6.0	-2.3	-5.9
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	1.8	5.6	-0.9	0.1	-0.7	2.7
454	Nonstore retailers	0.3	10.6	-0.1	11.4	1.4	11.3
722	Food services & drinking places	0.8	6.1	0.7	5.5	1.2	5.6

(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 4,700 employer firms selected from the larger Monthly Retail Trade Survey (MRTS). 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 $\pm 1.753 \times 0.9$ 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 Sep. 2016

(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	0.5	0.0	0.1
	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	0.1
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	1.2	1.0	0.4	1.2	0.1	0.6
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	1.3	1.0	0.4	1.3	0.1	0.6
442	Furniture & home furn. stores.....	2.5	1.2	0.9	1.4	0.0	0.2
443	Electronics & appliance stores	3.0	0.6	0.7	2.1	-0.1	0.3
444	Building material & garden eq. &....						
	supplies dealers.....	2.1	1.1	0.7	1.2	-0.2	0.5
445	Food & beverage stores.....	1.4	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.2
4451	Grocery stores	1.4	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.2
446	Health & personal care stores	2.2	0.5	0.4	1.3	0.1	0.3
447	Gasoline stations	1.8	0.5	0.4	0.8	0.1	0.5
448	Clothing & clothing accessories						
	stores	2.2	0.6	0.4	0.8	0.0	0.4
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book &						
	music stores.....	2.2	0.9	0.8	1.2	0.1	0.3
452	General merchandise stores.....	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.1	-0.1	0.2
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-0.1	0.2
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	2.9	2.2	1.3	2.4	0.2	1.1
454	Nonstore retailers	1.5	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.1	0.4
722	Food services & drinking places ..	2.3	0.9	0.6	1.9	0.1	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.