

# U.S. Census Bureau News

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2012, AT 8:30 A.M. EST

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CB12-233

## ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES NOVEMBER 2012

**Notice:** For information on Hurricane Sandy's impact on the compilation of this report, please see the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\) on our website](#).

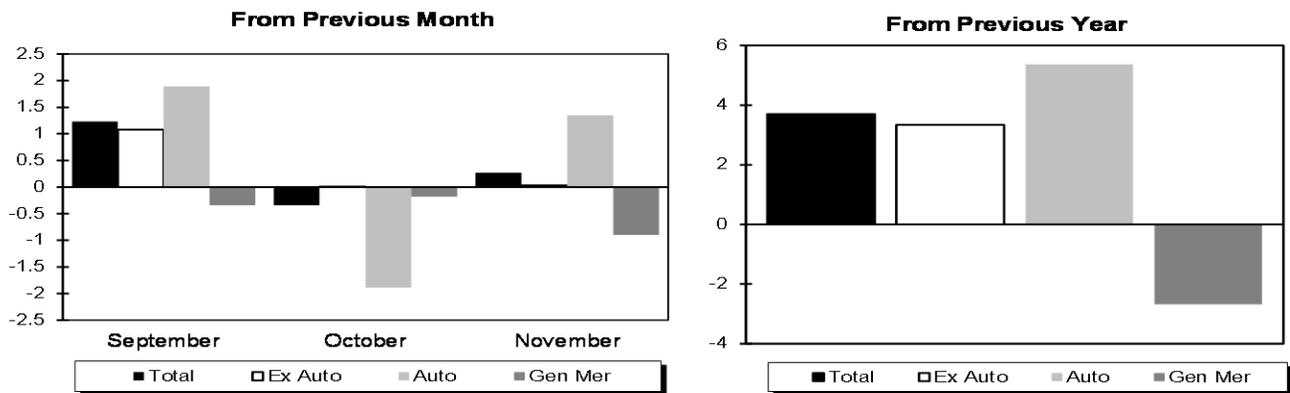
The U.S. Census Bureau announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for November, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$412.4 billion, an increase of 0.3 percent ( $\pm 0.5\%$ )\* from the previous month and 3.7 percent ( $\pm 0.7\%$ ) above November 2011. Total sales for the September through November 2012 period were up 4.3 percent ( $\pm 0.5\%$ ) from the same period a year ago. The September to October 2012 percent change was unrevised from -0.3 percent ( $\pm 0.2\%$ ).

Retail trade sales were up 0.2 percent ( $\pm 0.5\%$ )\* from October 2012 and 3.4 percent ( $\pm 0.8\%$ ) above last year. Nonstore retailers were up 11.1 percent ( $\pm 2.8\%$ ) from November 2011 and sporting goods, hobby, book and music stores were up 7.1 percent ( $\pm 4.8\%$ ) from last year.

The scheduled release dates for 2013 are as follows: January 15, February 13, March 13, April 12, May 13, June 13, July 15, August 13, September 13, October 11, November 14, December 12.

*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 15, 2013 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 receive the latest updates on the nation's key economic indicators, download the America's Economy app for Apple and Android smartphones and tablets.

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>					
		11 Month Total		2012			2011		2012			2011	
		2012	% Chg. 2011	Nov. <sup>3</sup> (a)	Oct. (p)	Sept. (r)	Nov.	Oct.	Nov. <sup>3</sup> (a)	Oct. (p)	Sept. (r)	Nov. (r)	Oct. (r)
	<b>Retail &amp; food services,</b>												
	<b>total</b> .....	4,418,874	5.5	414,571	404,373	391,105	395,724	384,345	412,403	411,308	412,705	397,678	396,633
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	3,603,573	4.9	346,050	331,872	319,583	330,984	317,494	336,805	336,717	336,676	325,930	325,254
	Retail .....	3,935,161	5.2	371,821	360,301	347,544	355,969	341,995	367,639	366,881	368,346	355,430	354,410
	<b>GAFO<sup>4</sup></b> .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	93,932	91,848	107,147	93,453	(*)	99,545	99,599	98,826	98,615
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers</b> .....	815,301	8.0	68,521	72,501	71,522	64,740	66,851	75,598	74,591	76,029	71,748	71,379
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	738,565	8.7	61,917	65,179	64,778	57,946	59,790	68,797	67,683	69,133	64,744	64,429
44111	New car dealers .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	54,772	54,370	49,240	50,532	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,322	6,744	6,794	7,061	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores</b> .....	86,079	8.2	8,641	7,620	7,814	8,110	7,098	8,031	7,954	7,998	7,565	7,543
4421	Furniture stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,864	4,233	4,185	3,784	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,756	3,581	3,925	3,314	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores</b> .....	86,445	-0.8	9,986	7,280	7,436	9,969	7,695	8,439	8,235	8,334	8,525	8,761
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,411	5,521	7,340	5,643	(*)	6,114	6,148	6,263	6,413
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,869	1,915	2,629	2,052	(*)	2,121	2,186	2,262	2,348
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp; supplies dealers</b> .....	272,297	6.0	24,601	25,762	23,353	23,222	24,018	25,030	24,645	24,940	23,747	24,144
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	22,049	20,165	19,764	20,390	(*)	20,801	20,810	19,943	20,268
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores</b> .....	576,812	3.5	53,609	52,924	51,689	51,730	51,298	53,386	53,538	53,243	51,895	51,747
4451	Grocery stores .....	518,451	3.3	47,804	47,519	46,475	46,338	46,057	47,804	48,048	47,765	46,571	46,428
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,676	3,551	3,725	3,593	(*)	3,740	3,711	3,677	3,651
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores</b> .....	249,921	1.2	22,582	22,949	21,468	22,468	22,622	22,903	22,767	22,790	22,880	23,013
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	19,328	17,714	19,048	19,214	(*)	18,930	18,825	19,260	19,311
447	<b>Gasoline stations</b> .....	503,885	4.1	43,296	47,894	46,481	42,312	44,421	45,431	47,326	46,856	45,061	44,288
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories stores</b> .....	208,195	6.3	22,614	18,990	18,392	20,787	18,095	20,362	20,177	20,109	19,141	19,034
44811	Men's clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	734	712	766	740	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
44812	Women's clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,482	3,337	3,505	3,180	(*)	3,557	3,505	3,291	3,242
44814	Family clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,431	7,069	8,587	7,209	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,168	2,237	2,326	2,129	(*)	2,393	2,421	2,319	2,307
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp; music stores</b> .....	77,900	6.5	8,063	6,498	7,027	7,472	6,051	7,635	7,600	7,491	7,130	7,169
452	<b>General merchandise stores</b> .....	559,979	1.0	57,072	50,170	48,153	57,735	51,324	51,953	52,427	52,522	53,381	53,004
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	157,303	-0.7	18,079	13,941	13,564	18,244	14,425	14,964	15,092	15,216	15,436	15,333
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) <sup>5</sup> .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	14,161	13,784	18,551	14,661	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	36,229	34,589	39,491	36,899	(*)	37,335	37,306	37,945	37,671
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	31,271	30,022	34,461	32,467	(*)	32,271	32,282	33,296	33,130
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,958	4,567	5,030	4,432	(*)	5,064	5,024	4,649	4,541
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers</b> .....	110,092	7.4	10,205	10,675	9,947	9,487	9,810	10,343	10,204	10,231	9,692	9,693
454	<b>Nonstore retailers</b> .....	388,255	11.9	42,631	37,038	34,262	37,937	32,712	38,528	37,417	37,803	34,665	34,635
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses ....	(*)	(*)	(*)	28,866	27,363	29,606	25,047	(*)	29,335	29,807	26,576	26,674
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places</b> ...	483,713	7.4	42,750	44,072	43,561	39,755	42,350	44,764	44,427	44,359	42,248	42,223

(\*) 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-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>					
		Nov. 2012 Advance from --		Oct. 2012 Preliminary from --		Sep. 2012 through Nov. 2012 from --	
		Oct. 2012 (p)	Nov. 2011 (r)	Sep. 2012 (r)	Oct. 2011 (r)	Jun. 2012 through Aug. 2012	Sep. 2011 through Nov. 2011
	<b>Retail &amp; food services, total .....</b>	0.3	3.7	-0.3	3.7	2.0	4.3
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ....	0.0	3.3	0.0	3.5	2.0	3.8
	Retail .....	0.2	3.4	-0.4	3.5	2.1	4.1
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers .....</b>	1.4	5.4	-1.9	4.5	2.3	6.3
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	1.6	6.3	-2.1	5.1	2.6	7.2
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores .....</b>	1.0	6.2	-0.6	5.4	0.0	6.1
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores .....</b>	2.5	-1.0	-1.2	-6.0	2.1	-2.1
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp; supplies dealers.....</b>	1.6	5.4	-1.2	2.1	4.1	4.4
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores.....</b>	-0.3	2.9	0.6	3.5	1.2	3.3
4451	Grocery stores .....	-0.5	2.6	0.6	3.5	1.2	3.2
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores .....</b>	0.6	0.1	-0.1	-1.1	0.0	-0.5
447	<b>Gasoline stations .....</b>	-4.0	0.8	1.0	6.9	5.3	4.2
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories stores .....</b>	0.9	6.4	0.3	6.0	1.4	5.7
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp; music stores.....</b>	0.5	7.1	1.5	6.0	1.4	5.6
452	<b>General merchandise stores.....</b>	-0.9	-2.7	-0.2	-1.1	-0.6	-1.7
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	-0.8	-3.1	-0.8	-1.6	-1.1	-2.1
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers .....</b>	1.4	6.7	-0.3	5.3	1.2	5.9
454	<b>Nonstore retailers .....</b>	3.0	11.1	-1.0	8.0	3.8	11.7
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places ....</b>	0.8	6.0	0.2	5.2	1.6	5.8

(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

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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  $\pm 1.65 \times 0.9$  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 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. 2012**

(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 .....	0.8	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.2
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ..	0.7	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.1
	<b>Retail .....</b>	0.9	0.3	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.1
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers .....</b>	2.5	1.0	0.5	1.2	0.0	0.4
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	2.5	1.1	0.6	1.3	-0.1	0.4
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores.....</b>	3.2	1.4	0.8	1.8	0.3	0.4
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores .....</b>	1.5	0.6	0.7	1.1	-0.7	0.6
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp;....</b>						
	<b>supplies dealers.....</b>	3.1	1.5	1.0	2.3	0.1	0.7
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores.....</b>	1.3	0.2	0.3	0.6	-0.1	0.1
4451	Grocery stores .....	1.4	0.2	0.3	0.6	0.0	0.2
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores .....</b>	1.7	0.3	0.3	0.7	-0.1	0.3
447	<b>Gasoline stations .....</b>	2.5	0.5	0.4	1.0	-0.2	0.5
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories</b>						
	<b>stores .....</b>	2.7	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.0	0.3
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp;</b>						
	<b>music stores.....</b>	4.9	1.6	1.3	2.9	0.0	0.6
452	<b>General merchandise stores.....</b>	0.5	0.1	0.1	0.3	-0.2	0.2
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-0.2	0.2
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers .....</b>	3.3	2.3	1.3	3.0	0.4	0.7
454	<b>Nonstore retailers .....</b>	2.3	1.0	0.6	1.7	0.3	0.3
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places ..</b>	2.1	0.7	0.5	1.2	0.1	0.3

(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.