

U.S. Census Bureau News

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2016, AT 8:30 A.M. EDT

Rebecca DeNale
Economic Indicators Division
(301) 763-2713

CB16-156

ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES AUGUST 2016

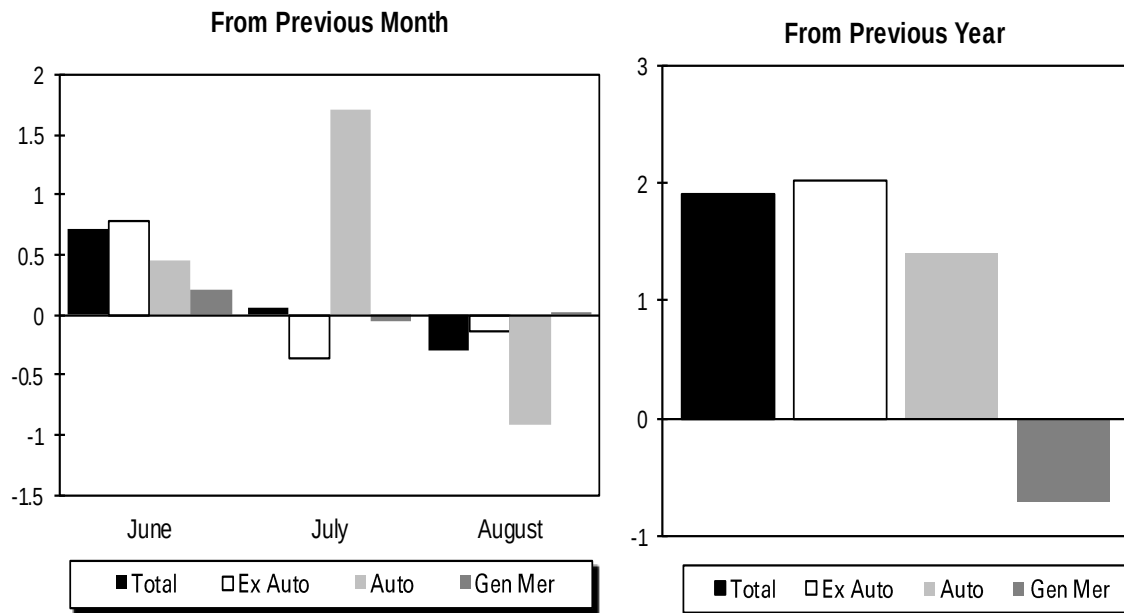
The U.S. Census Bureau announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for August, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, were \$456.3 billion, a decrease of 0.3 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$)* from the previous month, and 1.9 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$) above August 2015. Total sales for the June 2016 through August 2016 period were up 2.4 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) from the same period a year ago. The June 2016 to July 2016 percent change was revised from virtually unchanged ($\pm 0.5\%$)* to up 0.1 percent ($\pm 0.2\%$)*.

Retail trade sales were down 0.5 ($\pm 0.5\%$)* from July 2016, and up 1.4 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$) from last year. Nonstore retailers were up 10.9 percent ($\pm 1.4\%$) from August 2015, while Health and Personal Care Stores were up 7.8 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 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 September is scheduled to be released October 14, 2016 at 8:30 a.m. EDT.

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				
		8 Month Total		2016			2015		2016			2015	
		2016	% Chg. 2015	Aug. ³ (a)	Jul. (p)	Jun. (r)	Aug.	Jul.	Aug. ³ (a)	Jul. (p)	Jun. (r)	Aug. (r)	Jul. (r)
	Retail & food services,												
	total	3,590,943	2.9	470,250	461,851	464,102	456,340	457,710	456,321	457,669	457,409	447,806	447,112
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	2,836,246	2.8	369,137	364,017	367,568	359,052	360,510	363,459	363,952	365,265	356,238	356,379
	Retail	3,152,238	2.4	414,710	405,465	409,191	403,316	404,727	401,057	402,872	402,608	395,566	395,117
	GAFO ⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	102,155	101,448	107,880	102,594	(*)	105,260	105,723	105,804	105,850
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	754,697	3.1	101,113	97,834	96,534	97,288	97,200	92,862	93,717	92,144	91,568	90,733
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	696,261	3.3	93,423	90,517	88,822	89,824	89,387	85,709	86,536	84,916	84,342	83,383
44111	New car dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	75,675	73,080	75,943	74,878	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,317	7,712	7,464	7,813	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	70,053	3.8	9,372	9,012	8,955	9,028	8,995	8,986	9,048	9,147	8,842	8,845
4421	Furniture stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,820	4,848	4,919	4,788	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,192	4,107	4,109	4,207	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	Electronics & appliance stores	62,741	-2.8	8,340	7,926	7,880	8,469	8,290	8,511	8,499	8,504	8,783	8,840
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,135	6,043	6,417	6,228	(*)	6,377	6,388	6,430	6,434
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers.....	237,294	6.6	29,892	30,331	34,371	27,916	30,676	28,695	29,107	29,321	28,071	28,066
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	26,956	29,285	24,744	26,960	(*)	25,382	25,554	24,235	24,223
445	Food & beverage stores.....	465,667	2.1	59,033	60,349	59,037	58,233	59,550	58,710	58,535	58,785	57,704	57,692
4451	Grocery stores	417,916	2.1	52,848	53,762	52,745	52,120	53,116	52,481	52,247	52,535	51,553	51,569
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,662	4,388	4,248	4,524	(*)	4,369	4,336	4,244	4,228
446	Health & personal care stores	219,736	7.7	28,471	27,297	27,894	25,713	25,809	28,189	28,229	28,091	26,158	25,965
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	23,111	23,394	21,563	21,806	(*)	23,875	23,678	22,026	21,872
447	Gasoline stations	266,862	-10.2	36,294	36,809	37,255	39,786	41,517	33,115	33,372	34,273	36,602	37,470
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	159,328	0.1	22,033	20,262	19,883	22,197	20,499	21,316	21,173	21,307	21,384	21,407
44811	Men's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	639	720	705	654	(*)	712	729	744	733
44812	Women's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,160	3,259	3,434	3,225	(*)	3,442	3,460	3,515	3,498
44814	Family clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	8,414	7,977	8,813	8,513	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,827	2,633	3,571	2,809	(*)	2,856	2,903	2,812	2,843
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores.....	58,267	5.5	8,505	7,403	7,650	8,345	7,185	7,739	7,850	8,019	7,656	7,627
452	General merchandise stores.....	428,496	-0.1	55,503	54,816	54,481	56,674	54,829	55,907	55,902	55,931	56,307	56,343
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	95,554	-4.5	12,769	11,939	12,308	13,653	12,555	13,018	13,094	13,142	13,705	13,725
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) ⁵	(*)	(*)	(*)	12,123	12,543	13,822	12,721	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	42,877	42,173	43,021	42,274	(*)	42,808	42,789	42,602	42,618
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	37,164	36,323	37,463	36,631	(*)	36,942	36,951	36,764	36,889
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,713	5,850	5,558	5,643	(*)	5,866	5,838	5,838	5,729
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	82,015	3.8	10,800	10,644	10,986	10,685	10,580	10,293	10,543	10,514	10,339	10,261
454	Nonstore retailers	347,082	11.0	45,354	42,782	44,265	38,982	39,597	46,734	46,897	46,572	42,152	41,868
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses	(*)	(*)	(*)	37,832	38,743	34,231	34,529	(*)	41,122	40,654	36,572	36,118
722	Food services & drinking places ...	438,705	6.4	55,540	56,386	54,911	53,024	52,983	55,264	54,797	54,801	52,240	51,995

(*) 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					
		Aug. 2016 Advance from --		Jul. 2016 Preliminary from --		Jun. 2016 through Aug. 2016 from --	
		Jul. 2016 (p)	Aug. 2015 (r)	Jun. 2016 (r)	Jul. 2015 (r)	Mar. 2016 through May 2016	Jun. 2015 through Aug. 2015
	Retail & food services, total	-0.3	1.9	0.1	2.4	1.2	2.4
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts)	-0.1	2.0	-0.4	2.1	1.0	2.4
	Retail	-0.5	1.4	0.1	2.0	1.2	1.9
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	-0.9	1.4	1.7	3.3	1.9	2.1
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	-1.0	1.6	1.9	3.8	2.1	2.4
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	-0.7	1.6	-1.1	2.3	0.8	2.8
443	Electronics & appliance stores	0.1	-3.1	-0.1	-3.9	-0.2	-4.3
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers.....	-1.4	2.2	-0.7	3.7	0.4	4.6
445	Food & beverage stores.....	0.3	1.7	-0.4	1.5	0.5	1.8
4451	Grocery stores	0.4	1.8	-0.5	1.3	0.5	1.8
446	Health & personal care stores	-0.1	7.8	0.5	8.7	2.1	8.4
447	Gasoline stations	-0.8	-9.5	-2.6	-10.9	2.2	-9.9
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	0.7	-0.3	-0.6	-1.1	0.4	-0.5
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores.....	-1.4	1.1	-2.1	2.9	0.4	4.0
452	General merchandise stores.....	0.0	-0.7	-0.1	-0.8	-0.1	-0.7
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	-0.6	-5.0	-0.4	-4.6	-0.9	-4.7
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	-2.4	-0.4	0.3	2.7	-1.0	2.1
454	Nonstore retailers	-0.3	10.9	0.7	12.0	2.6	11.9
722	Food services & drinking places	0.9	5.8	0.0	5.4	1.2	5.7

(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 Aug. 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	0.4	0.0	0.2
	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	0.2
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	1.2	1.0	0.4	1.2	0.0	0.5
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	1.3	1.0	0.4	1.3	0.1	0.6
442	Furniture & home furn. stores.....	2.6	1.3	0.8	1.4	0.0	0.3
443	Electronics & appliance stores	2.9	0.5	0.7	1.9	-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	0.2
447	Gasoline stations	1.9	0.5	0.4	0.8	0.1	0.4
448	Clothing & clothing accessories						
	stores	2.2	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.0	0.4
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book &						
	music stores.....	2.3	0.9	0.9	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	1.1	2.4	0.1	0.8
454	Nonstore retailers	1.4	0.4	0.4	0.8	0.1	0.4
722	Food services & drinking places ..	2.3	1.0	0.6	2.0	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.