

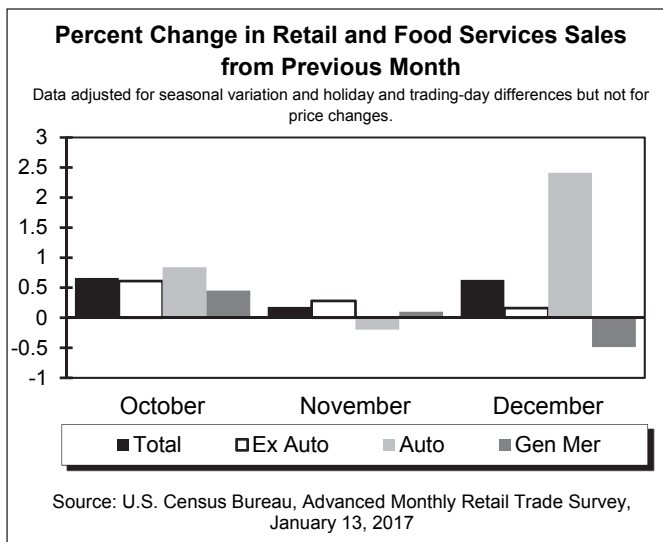
FOR RELEASE AT 8:30 AM EST, FRIDAY, JANUARY 13, 2017

ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES, DECEMBER 2016

Release Number: CB17-07

January 13, 2017 — The U.S. Census Bureau announced the following advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for December 2016:

ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES		
December 2016	\$469.1 billion	+0.6%
November 2016 (revised)	\$466.2 billion	+0.2%*
Next release: February 15, 2017		
* The 90 percent confidence interval includes zero. There is insufficient statistical evidence to conclude that the actual change is different from zero.		
Data adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences but not for price changes. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Advanced Monthly Retail Trade Survey, January 13, 2017.		



Advance Estimates of U.S. Retail and Food Services

Advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for December 2016, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$469.1 billion, an increase of 0.6 percent (± 0.5 percent) from the previous month, and 4.1 percent (± 0.9 percent) above December 2015. Total sales for the 12 months of 2016 were up 3.3 percent (± 0.6 percent) from 2015. Total sales for the October 2016 through December 2016 period were up 4.1 percent (± 0.7 percent) from the same period a year ago. The October 2016 to November 2016 percent change was revised from up 0.1 percent (± 0.5 percent)* to up 0.2 percent (± 0.2 percent)*.

Retail trade sales were up 0.8 percent (± 0.5 percent) from November 2016, and up 4.3 percent (± 0.7 percent) from last year. Nonstore retailers were up 13.2 percent (± 1.8 percent) from December 2015, while Miscellaneous stores were up 7.1 percent (± 4.6 percent) from last year.

General Information

With the release of the December 2016 Advance Monthly Retail Trade Report on January 13, 2017, the presentation of the release changed. The text portion of the release has been removed from the

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Excel file. The layout and format of the tables did not change, though some explanatory notes moved to the text portion of the document. The full text and tables are still available as a PDF.

The January 2017 Advance Monthly Retail report is scheduled for release on February 15, 2017 at 8:30 a.m. EST. View the full schedule in the Economic Briefing Room:

<www.census.gov/economic-indicators/>. The full text and tables of this release can be found at <www.census.gov/retail/>.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

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.

Survey Description

The U.S. Census Bureau conducts the Advance Monthly Retail Trade and Food Services Survey 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. Advance sales estimates are computed using a link relative estimator. For each detailed industry, we compute a ratio of current-to-previous month weighted sales using data from units for which we have obtained usable responses for both the current and previous month. For each detailed industry, the advance total sales estimates for the current month is computed by multiplying this ratio by the preliminary sales estimate for the previous month (derived from the larger MRTS) at the appropriate industry level. Total estimates for broader industries are computed as the sum of the detailed industry estimates. The link relative estimate is used because imputation is not performed for most nonrespondents in MARTS. For a limited number of nonresponding companies that have influential effects on the estimates, sales may be estimated based on historical performance of that company. The monthly estimates are benchmarked to the annual survey estimates from the Annual Retail Trade Survey once available. The estimates are adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading day differences. Additional information on MARTS and MRTS can be found on the Census Bureau website at: <www.census.gov/retail/>.

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

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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.

America's Economy Mobile App

The America's Economy app provides real-time updates for 19 key economic indicators released from the Census Bureau, Bureau of Labor Statistics, and Bureau of Economic Analysis.

[<www.census.gov/mobile/economy/>](http://www.census.gov/mobile/economy/)

API

The Census Bureau's application programming interface lets developers create custom apps to reach new users and makes key demographic, socio-economic and housing statistics more accessible than ever before.

[<www.census.gov/developers/>](http://www.census.gov/developers/)

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* The 90 percent confidence interval includes zero. There is insufficient statistical evidence to conclude that the actual change is different from zero.

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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				
		12 Month Total		2016			2015		2016			2015	
		2016	% Chg. 2015	Dec. ³ (a)	Nov. (p)	Oct. (r)	Dec.	Nov.	Dec. ³ (a)	Nov. (p)	Oct. (r)	Dec. (r)	Nov. (r)
	Retail & food services,												
	total	5,504,106	3.3	541,175	468,555	453,530	518,253	444,507	469,092	466,167	465,321	450,484	448,724
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	4,374,882	3.1	442,014	379,736	362,258	425,937	361,230	370,393	369,793	368,755	358,085	355,823
	Retail	4,845,272	2.9	483,786	415,466	397,886	463,668	394,341	413,644	410,284	410,119	396,546	395,806
	GAFO⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	114,589	100,690	150,000	114,880	(*)	104,478	104,554	105,968	105,514
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	1,129,224	3.8	99,161	88,819	91,272	92,316	83,277	98,699	96,374	96,566	92,399	92,901
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	1,042,231	4.1	92,223	81,797	83,954	85,451	76,339	91,310	89,201	89,313	85,195	85,582
44111	New car dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	70,030	70,765	74,187	65,723	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,022	7,318	6,865	6,938	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	109,379	3.8	11,183	9,870	8,921	10,762	9,323	9,235	9,190	9,187	8,953	8,930
4421	Furniture stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,077	4,731	5,076	4,887	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,793	4,190	5,686	4,436	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	Electronics & appliance stores	101,186	-3.2	12,622	10,159	7,677	12,933	10,391	8,251	8,289	8,282	8,454	8,602
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,343	5,650	9,105	7,412	(*)	6,165	6,148	6,258	6,330
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers.....	352,266	5.9	27,276	29,095	29,010	27,044	26,889	29,998	29,835	29,651	29,237	28,432
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	25,992	25,790	23,672	23,792	(*)	26,123	25,946	25,564	24,732
445	Food & beverage stores.....	706,886	2.4	65,139	59,339	58,972	62,673	57,444	59,272	59,456	59,459	57,841	57,925
4451	Grocery stores	631,133	2.3	56,119	52,793	52,769	54,146	51,355	52,942	52,952	53,034	51,715	51,821
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,571	4,337	5,834	4,241	(*)	4,517	4,448	4,265	4,249
446	Health & personal care stores	335,757	7.4	32,007	27,832	27,944	30,387	25,713	28,501	28,429	28,341	26,844	26,673
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	23,287	23,706	25,180	21,637	(*)	23,811	23,801	22,583	22,468
447	Gasoline stations	404,777	-6.3	33,850	33,121	36,056	31,512	31,872	35,858	35,160	35,177	33,739	33,942
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	256,902	0.8	34,232	23,326	20,306	33,123	23,007	21,410	21,400	21,410	21,212	21,305
44811	Men's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	751	715	1,040	743	(*)	712	710	707	713
44812	Women's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,720	3,315	4,984	3,776	(*)	3,382	3,379	3,515	3,480
44814	Family clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	9,489	8,405	12,565	9,811	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,909	2,602	3,938	2,800	(*)	2,924	2,882	2,885	2,834
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores.....	92,746	2.6	12,502	8,139	6,746	12,897	8,115	7,582	7,564	7,675	7,864	7,773
452	General merchandise stores.....	668,284	-0.8	75,127	60,520	54,221	76,391	61,397	55,081	55,352	55,295	56,676	56,111
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	155,471	-5.6	21,729	15,205	11,872	23,425	16,301	12,547	12,620	12,649	13,705	13,571
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) ⁵	(*)	(*)	(*)	15,720	12,096	23,820	16,557	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	45,315	42,349	52,966	45,096	(*)	42,732	42,646	42,971	42,540
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	39,102	36,554	45,266	39,039	(*)	36,854	36,775	37,164	36,760
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,213	5,795	7,700	6,057	(*)	5,878	5,871	5,807	5,780
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	127,380	5.2	12,321	10,723	11,290	11,683	9,738	10,789	10,896	10,896	10,075	10,166
454	Nonstore retailers	560,485	11.4	68,366	54,523	45,471	61,947	47,175	48,968	48,339	48,180	43,252	43,046
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses	(*)	(*)	(*)	48,736	39,810	55,765	41,688	(*)	42,713	42,351	37,781	37,591
722	Food services & drinking places ...	658,834	6.0	57,389	53,089	55,644	54,585	50,166	55,448	55,883	55,202	53,938	52,918

(*) 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.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey, January 13, 2017. 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 www.census.gov/retail/how_surveys_are_collected.html.

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					
		Dec. 2016 Advance from --		Nov. 2016 Preliminary from --		Oct. 2016 through Dec. 2016 from --	
		Nov. 2016 (p)	Dec. 2015 (r)	Oct. 2016 (r)	Nov. 2015 (r)	Jul. 2016 through Sep. 2016	Oct. 2015 through Dec. 2015
	Retail & food services,						
	total	0.6	4.1	0.2	3.9	1.6	4.1
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	0.2	3.4	0.3	3.9	1.4	3.8
	Retail	0.8	4.3	0.0	3.7	1.8	4.0
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	2.4	6.8	-0.2	3.7	2.8	5.2
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	2.4	7.2	-0.1	4.2	2.9	5.6
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	0.5	3.1	0.0	2.9	1.1	2.9
443	Electronics & appliance stores	-0.5	-2.4	0.1	-3.6	-1.8	-3.7
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers.....	0.5	2.6	0.6	4.9	1.9	4.3
445	Food & beverage stores.....	-0.3	2.5	0.0	2.6	1.0	2.8
4451	Grocery stores	0.0	2.4	-0.2	2.2	0.9	2.5
446	Health & personal care stores	0.3	6.2	0.3	6.6	0.4	6.6
447	Gasoline stations	2.0	6.3	0.0	3.6	5.3	4.0
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	0.0	0.9	0.0	0.4	0.2	1.0
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores.....	0.2	-3.6	-1.4	-2.7	-1.4	-2.1
452	General merchandise stores.....	-0.5	-2.8	0.1	-1.4	-0.1	-1.9
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	-0.6	-8.4	-0.2	-7.0	-2.0	-7.6
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	-1.0	7.1	0.0	7.2	2.5	7.9
454	Nonstore retailers	1.3	13.2	0.3	12.3	2.9	12.8
722	Food services & drinking places	-0.8	2.8	1.2	5.6	0.8	4.4

(p) Preliminary estimate (r) Revised estimate

(1) Estimates shown in this table are derived from adjusted estimates provided in Table 1 of this report.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey, January 13, 2017. 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

<www.census.gov/retail/how_surveys_are_collected.html>.

Table 3. Estimated Measures of Sampling Variability and Revision to Advance Estimates Dec. 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	0.2
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ..	0.7	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.2
	Retail	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.2
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	1.3	0.9	0.4	1.1	0.1	0.6
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	1.4	1.0	0.4	1.2	0.1	0.6
442	Furniture & home furn. stores.....	2.4	1.1	0.8	1.3	0.0	0.4
443	Electronics & appliance stores	3.0	0.6	0.6	2.1	-0.2	0.3
444	Building material & garden eq. &.....						
	supplies dealers.....	2.1	0.9	0.7	1.1	-0.2	0.7
445	Food & beverage stores.....	1.4	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.2
4451	Grocery stores	1.5	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.2
446	Health & personal care stores	2.3	0.4	0.5	1.4	0.1	0.3
447	Gasoline stations	1.8	0.5	0.3	0.8	0.3	0.5
448	Clothing & clothing accessories						
	stores	2.3	0.6	0.4	0.7	0.0	0.2
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book &						
	music stores.....	2.2	0.9	0.8	1.2	0.0	0.4
452	General merchandise stores.....	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.1	-0.2	0.2
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	3.1	2.4	1.3	2.6	0.3	0.7
454	Nonstore retailers	1.6	0.5	0.4	1.0	0.2	0.3
722	Food services & drinking places ..	2.3	1.0	0.7	1.6	0.2	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.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey, January 13, 2017. Additional information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, sample design, and definitions may be found at <www.census.gov/retail/how_surveys_are_collected.html>.