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ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES OCTOBER 2012

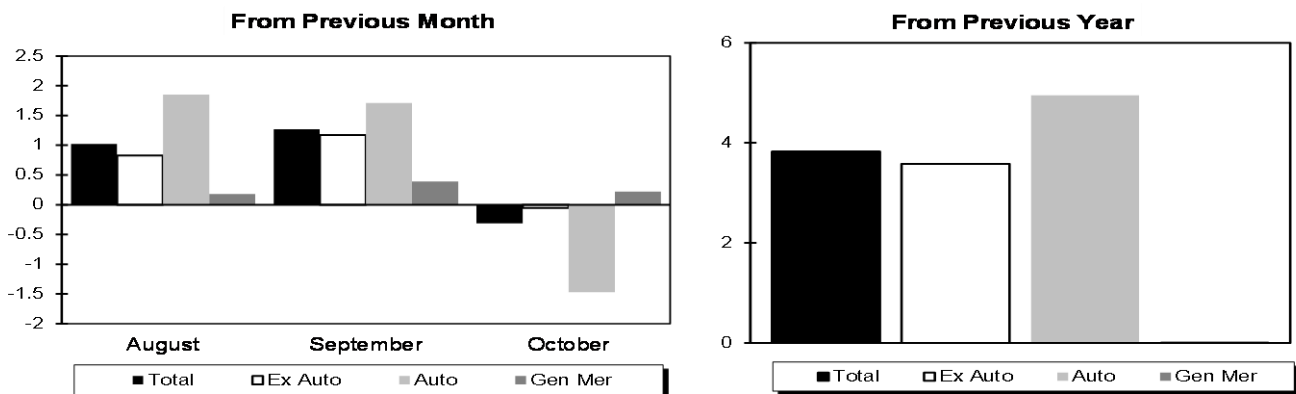
Notice: For information on Hurricane Sandy's impact on the compilation of this report, please see the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\) on our website](#).

The U.S. Census Bureau announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for October, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$411.6 billion, a decrease of 0.3 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$)* from the previous month, but 3.8 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$) above October 2011. Total sales for the August through October 2012 period were up 4.7 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) from the same period a year ago. The August to September 2012 percent change was revised from 1.1 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) to 1.3 percent ($\pm 0.2\%$).

Retail trade sales were down 0.3 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$)* from September 2012, but 3.8 percent ($\pm 0.8\%$) above last year. Gasoline stations sales were up 7.7 percent ($\pm 1.7\%$) from October 2011 and nonstore retailers were up 7.2 percent ($\pm 3.0\%$) 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 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 November is scheduled to be released December 13, 2012 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 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>.

* 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				
		10 Month Total		2012			2011		2012			2011	
		2012	% Chg. 2011	Oct. ³ (a)	Sep. (p)	Aug. (r)	Oct.	Sep.	Oct. ³ (a)	Sep. (p)	Aug. (r)	Oct. (r)	Sep. (r)
	Retail & food services,												
	total	4,004,836	5.5	404,763	391,248	422,692	384,345	379,330	411,591	412,869	407,696	396,407	391,539
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	3,257,821	4.9	331,957	319,796	341,731	317,494	311,306	336,814	336,975	333,078	325,160	321,889
	Retail	3,564,460	5.3	361,175	347,790	377,199	341,995	338,059	367,563	368,659	363,826	354,142	349,809
	GAFO⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	92,023	101,686	93,453	91,623	(*)	99,823	99,391	98,500	98,479
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	747,015	8.3	72,806	71,452	80,961	66,851	68,024	74,777	75,894	74,618	71,247	69,650
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	676,835	8.9	65,455	64,689	73,497	59,790	60,866	67,829	68,965	67,802	64,290	62,619
44111	New car dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	54,275	61,148	50,532	51,006	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,763	7,464	7,061	7,158	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	77,433	8.4	7,613	7,816	8,489	7,098	7,556	7,938	7,984	8,001	7,535	7,503
4421	Furniture stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,237	4,495	3,784	4,085	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,579	3,994	3,314	3,471	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	Electronics & appliance stores	76,542	-0.8	7,368	7,431	8,080	7,695	7,578	8,150	8,232	8,099	8,633	8,271
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,518	6,170	5,643	5,763	(*)	6,097	6,109	6,376	6,319
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,913	1,910	2,052	1,815	(*)	2,135	1,990	2,257	1,952
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	247,347	5.9	25,434	23,332	25,238	24,018	23,299	24,318	24,798	24,286	24,142	23,549
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	20,176	22,141	20,390	20,396	(*)	20,715	20,577	20,228	19,879
445	Food & beverage stores	523,445	3.5	53,162	51,693	53,990	51,298	50,360	53,776	53,345	52,705	51,744	51,457
4451	Grocery stores	470,858	3.3	47,730	46,475	48,471	46,057	45,229	48,261	47,863	47,289	46,428	46,199
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,555	3,799	3,593	3,597	(*)	3,707	3,656	3,655	3,652
446	Health & personal care stores	227,494	1.4	23,102	21,470	23,080	22,622	22,265	22,851	22,792	22,874	22,966	22,930
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	17,718	19,031	19,214	18,736	(*)	18,829	18,936	19,330	19,315
447	Gasoline stations	460,908	4.3	48,184	46,510	49,407	44,421	44,738	47,849	47,170	46,003	44,421	44,604
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	185,462	5.9	18,850	18,413	20,679	18,095	17,818	20,077	20,094	20,017	19,036	19,199
44811	Men's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	682	644	740	698	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
44812	Women's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,336	3,282	3,180	3,177	(*)	3,497	3,473	3,242	3,265
44814	Family clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,065	8,358	7,209	6,854	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,236	3,047	2,129	2,163	(*)	2,412	2,409	2,307	2,323
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores	69,718	6.2	6,375	7,031	8,594	6,051	6,899	7,500	7,464	7,428	7,195	7,224
452	General merchandise stores	503,639	1.4	50,749	48,306	52,376	51,324	48,615	53,023	52,907	52,702	53,008	53,198
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	139,274	-0.6	14,033	13,522	15,192	14,425	13,730	15,211	15,264	15,291	15,348	15,463
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) ⁵	(*)	(*)	(*)	13,741	15,433	14,661	13,956	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	34,784	37,184	36,899	34,885	(*)	37,643	37,411	37,660	37,735
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	30,209	32,378	32,467	30,686	(*)	32,588	32,410	33,096	33,210
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,575	4,806	4,432	4,199	(*)	5,055	5,001	4,564	4,525
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	99,923	7.5	10,698	9,960	10,676	9,810	9,768	10,244	10,257	10,265	9,659	9,686
454	Nonstore retailers	345,534	11.8	36,834	34,376	35,629	32,712	31,139	37,060	37,722	36,828	34,556	32,538
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses	(*)	(*)	(*)	27,448	28,469	25,047	24,087	(*)	29,802	28,991	26,589	24,909
722	Food services & drinking places ...	440,376	7.2	43,588	43,458	45,493	42,350	41,271	44,028	44,210	43,870	42,265	41,730

(*) 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 ¹					
		Oct. 2012 Advance from --		Sep. 2012 Preliminary from --		Aug. 2012 through Oct. 2012 from --	
		Sep. 2012 (p)	Oct. 2011 (r)	Aug. 2012 (r)	Sep. 2011 (r)	May 2012 through Jul. 2012	Aug. 2011 through Oct. 2011
	Retail & food services, total	-0.3	3.8	1.3	5.4	2.0	4.7
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts)	0.0	3.6	1.2	4.7	1.9	3.9
	Retail	-0.3	3.8	1.3	5.4	2.2	4.6
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	-1.5	5.0	1.7	9.0	2.4	8.4
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	-1.6	5.5	1.7	10.1	2.7	9.5
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	-0.6	5.3	-0.2	6.4	-0.2	6.6
443	Electronics & appliance stores	-1.0	-5.6	1.6	-0.5	-0.7	-3.1
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers.....	-1.9	0.7	2.1	5.3	2.8	2.9
445	Food & beverage stores.....	0.8	3.9	1.2	3.7	1.1	3.2
4451	Grocery stores	0.8	3.9	1.2	3.6	1.3	3.1
446	Health & personal care stores	0.3	-0.5	-0.4	-0.6	0.0	-0.4
447	Gasoline stations	1.4	7.7	2.5	5.8	7.4	5.5
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	-0.1	5.5	0.4	4.7	1.2	5.4
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores.....	0.5	4.2	0.5	3.3	-0.7	3.8
452	General merchandise stores.....	0.2	0.0	0.4	-0.5	0.5	-0.3
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	-0.3	-0.9	-0.2	-1.3	0.1	-0.8
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	-0.1	6.1	-0.1	5.9	2.3	6.0
454	Nonstore retailers	-1.8	7.2	2.4	15.9	2.7	11.3
722	Food services & drinking places	-0.4	4.2	0.8	5.9	0.6	5.4

(p) Preliminary estimate (r) Revised estimate

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

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 ± 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 Oct. 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 ⁽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	0.8	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
	Retail	0.9	0.3	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.1
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	2.5	1.0	0.5	1.3	0.0	0.4
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	2.6	1.1	0.6	1.4	0.0	0.4
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	3.1	1.4	0.8	1.8	0.3	0.4
443	Electronics & appliance stores	1.5	0.6	0.6	1.1	-0.8	0.6
444	Building material & garden eq. &... supplies dealers	3.1	1.5	1.0	2.2	0.0	0.6
445	Food & beverage stores	1.3	0.2	0.3	0.5	-0.1	0.1
4451	Grocery stores	1.3	0.2	0.3	0.5	-0.1	0.2
446	Health & personal care stores	1.7	0.3	0.3	0.7	-0.1	0.3
447	Gasoline stations	2.5	0.5	0.4	1.0	-0.1	0.4
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	2.7	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.0	0.2
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores	4.9	1.6	1.4	2.9	-0.2	0.6
452	General merchandise stores	0.5	0.1	0.1	0.3	-0.2	0.1
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-0.2	0.1
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	3.3	2.3	1.4	3.0	0.4	0.7
454	Nonstore retailers	2.3	1.0	0.6	1.8	0.3	0.3
722	Food services & drinking places ..	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.