

U.S. Census Bureau News

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2016 AT 10:00 A.M. EST

Rebecca DeNale (Retail): (301) 763-2713
William Abriatis (Wholesale): (301) 763-6856
Adriana Stoica (Manufacturing): (301) 763-4832

CB16-186

MANUFACTURING AND TRADE INVENTORIES AND SALES SEPTEMBER 2016

Sales. The U.S. Census Bureau announced today that the combined value of distributive trade sales and manufacturers' shipments for September, adjusted for seasonal and trading-day differences but not for price changes, was estimated at \$1,314.6 billion, up 0.7 percent ($\pm 0.2\%$) from August 2016 and was up 0.8 percent ($\pm 0.4\%$) from September 2015.

Inventories. Manufacturers' and trade inventories, adjusted for seasonal variations but not for price changes, were estimated at an end-of-month level of \$1,818.7 billion, up 0.1 percent ($\pm 0.1\%$)* from August 2016 and were up 0.6 percent ($\pm 0.6\%$)* from September 2015.

Inventories/Sales Ratio. The total business inventories/sales ratio based on seasonally adjusted data at the end of September was 1.38. The September 2015 ratio was 1.39.

Total Business Inventories/Sales Ratios: 2007 to 2016

(Data adjusted for seasonal, holiday and trading-day differences but not for price changes)



The Manufacturing and Trade Inventories and Sales Report for October 2016 is scheduled to be released December 14, 2016 at 10:00 a.m. EST.

For additional information on this report, including customizable time series estimates by industry, visit www.census.gov/mtis.

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.

* The 90 percent confidence interval includes zero. The Census Bureau does not have sufficient statistical evidence to conclude that the actual change is different from zero.

Table 1. Estimated Monthly Sales and Inventories for Manufacturers, Retailers, and Merchant Wholesalers
(In millions of dollars)

	Sales			Inventories			Inventories/Sales Ratios		
	Sep. 2016	Aug. 2016	Sep. 2015	Sep. 2016	Aug. 2016	Sep. 2015	Sep. 2016	Aug. 2016	Sep. 2015
	(p)	(r)	(r)	(p)	(r)	(r)	(p)	(r)	(r)
Adjusted¹									
Total business.....	1,314,648	1,305,941	1,304,568	1,818,731	1,816,874	1,808,016	1.38	1.39	1.39
Manufacturers ²	463,012	459,111	465,982	621,350	621,552	633,129	1.34	1.35	1.36
Retailers ³	406,691	402,695	395,317	607,205	605,873	584,256	1.49	1.50	1.48
Merchant wholesalers ⁴	444,945	444,135	443,269	590,176	589,449	590,631	1.33	1.33	1.33
Not Adjusted									
Total business.....	1,334,703	1,363,268	1,321,843	1,816,511	1,797,603	1,806,316	1.36	1.32	1.37
Manufacturers ²	484,622	480,925	487,337	621,341	626,826	633,336	1.28	1.30	1.30
Retailers ³	393,467	416,217	380,320	608,742	591,641	586,222	1.55	1.42	1.54
Merchant wholesalers ⁴	456,614	466,126	454,186	586,428	579,136	586,758	1.28	1.24	1.29

See footnotes and notes at the end of Table 3.

(p) Preliminary estimate.
(r) Revised estimate.

Table 2. Percent Changes for Sales and Inventories — Manufacturers, Retailers, and Merchant Wholesalers

	Adjusted						Not Adjusted					
	Sales			Inventories			Sales			Inventories		
	Sep. 16/ Aug. 16	Aug. 16/ Jul. 16	Sep. 16/ Sep. 15	Sep. 16/ Aug. 16	Aug. 16/ Jul. 16	Sep. 16/ Sep. 15	Sep. 16/ Aug. 16	Aug. 16/ Jul. 16	Sep. 16/ Sep. 15	Sep. 16/ Aug. 16	Aug. 16/ Jul. 16	Sep. 16/ Sep. 15
Total business.....	0.7	0.3	0.8	0.1	0.2	0.6	-2.1	7.7	1.0	1.1	0.0	0.6
Manufacturers ²	0.8	0.2	-0.6	0.0	0.1	-1.9	0.8	10.2	-0.6	-0.9	0.3	-1.9
Retailers ³	1.0	-0.1	2.9	0.2	0.6	3.9	-5.5	2.6	3.5	2.9	0.9	3.8
Merchant wholesalers ⁴	0.2	0.7	0.4	0.1	-0.1	-0.1	-2.0	10.1	0.5	1.3	-1.0	-0.1

Table 3. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales, Inventories, and Inventories/Sales Ratios, By Kind of Business

(In millions of dollars)

NAICS Code	Kind of Business	Sales			Inventories ³			Percent Change			Inventories/Sales Ratios		
		Sep. 2016	Aug. 2016	Sep. 2015	Sep. 2016	Aug. 2016	Sep. 2015	Sep. 16/ Aug. 16	Aug. 16/ Jul. 16	Sep. 16/ Sep. 15	Sep. 16 (p)	Aug. 16 (r)	Sep. 15 (r)
		(p)	(r)	(r)	(p)	(r)	(r)						
	Adjusted ¹												
	Retail trade, total.....	406,691	402,695	395,317	607,205	605,873	584,256	0.2	0.6	3.9	1.49	1.50	1.48
	Total (excl. motor veh. & parts).....	310,902	308,694	303,003	393,097	393,231	387,770	0.0	0.3	1.4	1.26	1.27	1.28
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers.....	95,789	94,001	92,314	214,108	212,642	196,486	0.7	1.3	9.0	2.24	2.26	2.13
442,3	Furniture,home furn., elect. & appl. stores.....	17,517	17,497	17,643	27,158	27,324	27,569	-0.6	0.2	-1.5	1.55	1.56	1.56
444	Building materials, garden equip & supplies.....	29,594	29,073	27,857	53,867	53,835	51,818	0.1	0.6	4.0	1.82	1.85	1.86
445	Food & beverage stores.....	59,155	58,793	57,791	45,879	45,765	44,831	0.2	0.3	2.3	0.78	0.78	0.78
448	Clothing & clothing access. stores.....	21,430	21,377	21,233	53,839	53,875	53,287	-0.1	0.0	1.0	2.51	2.52	2.51
452	General merchandise stores.....	54,784	55,269	56,592	80,680	81,181	82,902	-0.6	-0.4	-2.7	1.47	1.47	1.46
4521	Dept. strs. (excl. leased depts.).....	12,748	12,846	13,659	27,054	27,267	29,059	-0.8	-1.7	-6.9	2.12	2.12	2.13
	Not Adjusted												
	Retail trade, total.....	393,467	416,217	380,320	608,742	591,641	586,222	2.9	0.9	3.8	1.55	1.42	1.54
	Total (excl. motor veh. & parts).....	299,605	313,943	290,205	401,987	388,895	396,595	3.4	1.4	1.4	1.34	1.24	1.37
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers.....	93,862	102,274	90,115	206,755	202,746	189,627	2.0	-0.1	9.0	2.20	1.98	2.10
442,3	Furniture,home furn., elect. & appl. stores.....	17,285	17,748	17,260	27,239	26,778	27,597	1.7	0.8	-1.3	1.58	1.51	1.60
444	Building materials, garden equip & supplies.....	29,194	30,257	27,377	53,221	52,651	51,144	1.1	1.0	4.1	1.82	1.74	1.87
445	Food & beverage stores.....	57,813	59,036	56,109	46,010	44,959	44,954	2.3	0.0	2.3	0.80	0.76	0.80
448	Clothing & clothing access. stores.....	19,573	22,086	19,080	56,477	54,252	55,951	4.1	2.0	0.9	2.89	2.46	2.93
452	General merchandise stores.....	50,417	54,859	51,588	84,425	79,173	86,883	6.6	1.7	-2.8	1.67	1.44	1.68
4521	Dept. strs. (excl. leased depts.).....	11,339	12,628	12,023	29,029	26,176	31,209	10.9	0.3	-7.0	2.56	2.07	2.60

(p) Preliminary estimate.

(r) Revised estimate.

¹ Adjusted for seasonal variations and, in the case of sales, for trading-day differences and holiday variations. Concurrent seasonal adjustment is being used to adjust all sales, shipment and inventory estimates. Concurrent seasonal adjustment uses all available unadjusted estimates as input to the X-13ARIMA-SEATS program. The factors derived from the program are applied to the current and previous month estimates and for retail and wholesale estimates a year ago as well. For retail sales, concurrent seasonal adjustment is also used to adjust the advance estimates (published one month before the preliminary estimates) and the estimates one year before the advance month. This explains the revision to retail estimates from a year ago.

² Manufacturers sales refer to the value of shipments by manufacturers. The shipments data from individual manufacturers are adjusted prior to tabulation for the number of trading days as well as for any variations in the length of the reporting period.

³ Adjusted and not adjusted inventories for aggregate levels retail trade total, total excluding motor vehicles and parts, and motor vehicle and parts dealers are revised from the Advance Economic Indicators Report.

⁴ The 2007 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) defines merchant wholesalers as including manufacturers' sales branches and offices. However, the estimates included in this release exclude manufacturers' sales branches and offices. Note that this is not a change in coverage from prior releases and is consistent with the description used in the Monthly Wholesale Trade Survey data products.

Note: U.S. and group totals include kinds of business not shown. The Manufacturing and Trade Inventory and Sales estimates are based on data from three surveys: the Monthly Retail Trade Survey, the Monthly Wholesale Trade Survey, and the Manufacturers' Shipments, Inventories, and Orders Survey. The sampling variability for retailers and merchant wholesalers can be used to construct a 90 percent confidence interval for the estimates. Over all possible samples, 90 percent of such intervals will cover the true estimate. These intervals are given in parentheses for the estimates on the front page. If, for example, the estimate is up 0.8 percent and the margin of sampling error is ± 1.2 percent, the 90 percent confidence interval is -0.4 percent to +2.0 percent. If the range contains 0, it is uncertain whether there was an increase or decrease. Measures of reliability for Retail and Wholesale sales and inventory levels and changes are included in the detailed monthly press releases for those Industries. Manufacturers do not contribute to estimates of sampling variability because the manufacturer's mail panel is not a probability sample from a known frame and standard errors of the industry estimates cannot be calculated. Estimates from all three surveys are also subject to nonsampling errors, which can arise in any stage of the survey. Such errors include coverage error (failure to accurately represent all population units in the sample) response errors, coding errors, and nonresponse. Although no direct measurement of these errors has been obtained, precautionary steps were taken in all phases of the collection, processing, and tabulation of the data to minimize their influence.