ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES, JANUARY 2019
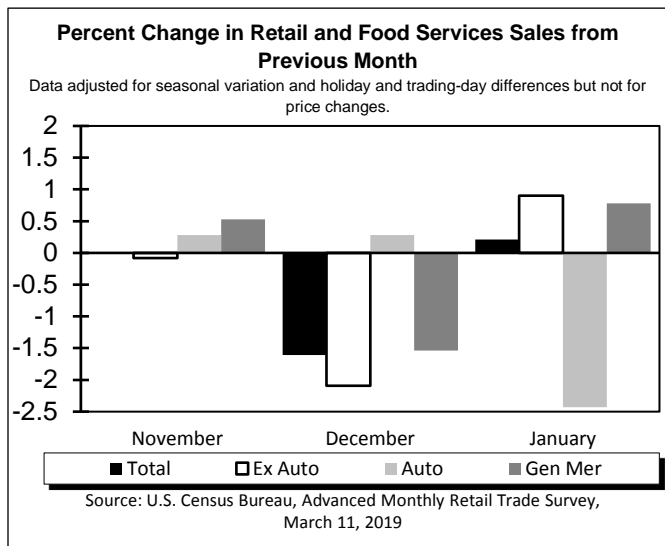
March 11, 2019 — The U.S. Census Bureau announced the following advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for January 2019:

ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES		
January 2019	**$504.4 billion**	**0.2%***
December 2018 (revised)	**$503.4 billion**	**-1.6%**
Next release: April 1, 2019		

* 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, March 11, 2019.

Percent Change in Retail and Food Services Sales from Previous Month
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, March 11, 2019

Advance Estimates of U.S. Retail and Food Services

Advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for January 2019, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were $504.4 billion, an increase of 0.2 percent (±0.5 percent)* from the previous month, and 2.3 percent (±0.7 percent) above January 2018. Total sales for the November 2018 through January 2019 period were up 2.6 percent (±0.5 percent) from the same period a year ago. The November 2018 to December 2018 percent change was revised from down 1.2 percent (±0.5 percent) to down 1.6 percent (±0.3 percent).

Retail trade sales were up 0.2 percent (±0.5 percent)* from December 2018, and 1.9 percent (±0.5 percent) above last year. Building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers were up 8.7 percent (±2.3 percent) from January 2018, while nonstore retailers were up 7.3 percent (±2.1 percent) from last year.

General Information

Data collection and processing were delayed for this indicator release due to the lapse in federal funding from December 22, 2018 through January 25, 2019. Processing and data quality were monitored throughout and response rates were at or above normal levels for this release.

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The U.S. Census Bureau updated its 2019 economic indicator release calendar to include January-March 2019 releases following the recent lapse in federal funding. Please refer to <www.census.gov/economic-indicators> for the latest information on the rescheduled release dates.

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 5,500 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 5,500 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 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 ±1.753 x 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 ±1.753 x CV x (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.

RESOURCES

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/>

FRED Mobile App

Receive the latest updates on the nation's key economic indicators by downloading the FRED App <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/fred-mobile/> for both Apple and Android devices. FRED, the signature database of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, now incorporates the Census Bureau's 13 economic indicators.

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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.

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]				
		1 Month Total		2019	2018			2017	2019	2018			2017
		2019	% Chg. 2018	Jan.[3] (a)	Dec. (p)	Nov. (r)	Jan.	Dec.	Jan.[3] (a)	Dec. (p)	Nov. (r)	Jan. (r)	Dec. (r)
	Retail & food services, total	**456,426**	**2.6**	**456,426**	**565,105**	**524,571**	**444,738**	**561,418**	**504,440**	**503,380**	**511,595**	**493,177**	**495,221**
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	366,726	3.2	366,726	461,620	426,954	355,463	460,243	402,835	399,245	407,748	391,782	393,481
	Total (excl. gasoline stations)	420,035	3.2	420,035	526,879	482,623	406,915	522,772	464,229	462,365	468,080	451,198	453,844
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts & gasoline stations)	330,335	4.0	330,335	423,394	385,006	317,640	421,597	362,624	358,230	364,233	349,803	352,104
	Retail	400,245	2.2	400,245	503,368	466,816	391,584	501,921	443,638	442,972	451,245	435,464	437,791
	GAFO[4]	(*)	(*)	(*)	149,833	123,977	91,395	151,702	(*)	108,889	110,809	108,476	108,339
441	**Motor vehicle & parts dealers**	**89,700**	**0.5**	**89,700**	**103,485**	**97,617**	**89,275**	**101,175**	**101,605**	**104,135**	**103,847**	**101,395**	**101,740**
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	82,602	0.3	82,602	96,492	89,989	82,350	94,085	93,973	96,492	96,142	93,900	93,991
44111	New car dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	83,374	76,251	69,088	80,990	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores...........	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,993	7,628	6,925	7,090	(*)	7,643	7,705	7,495	7,749
442	**Furniture & home furn. stores**	**8,794**	**-2.5**	**8,794**	**11,318**	**10,978**	**9,016**	**11,636**	**9,771**	**9,885**	**10,016**	**10,040**	**10,005**
4421	Furniture stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,589	5,684	4,808	5,471	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,729	5,294	4,208	6,165	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	**Electronics & appliance stores**	**7,384**	**-3.2**	**7,384**	**11,764**	**10,207**	**7,632**	**12,053**	**8,026**	**8,052**	**8,153**	**8,296**	**8,188**
444	**Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers**...................................	**28,038**	**10.4**	**28,038**	**29,376**	**32,071**	**25,391**	**28,901**	**34,334**	**33,222**	**33,042**	**31,578**	**32,710**
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	25,748	28,471	22,624	25,122	(*)	29,061	28,817	27,423	28,259
445	**Food & beverage stores**........................	**61,951**	**4.0**	**61,951**	**67,443**	**63,018**	**59,562**	**66,958**	**63,051**	**62,382**	**62,563**	**61,081**	**61,386**
4451	Grocery stores	56,171	4.3	56,171	58,269	55,763	53,836	57,847	56,227	55,547	55,652	54,325	54,728
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,370	5,130	3,965	6,241	(*)	4,844	4,858	4,732	4,647
446	**Health & personal care stores**	**28,618**	**2.4**	**28,618**	**31,414**	**29,222**	**27,939**	**31,178**	**29,054**	**28,610**	**29,281**	**28,250**	**28,292**
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	25,210	24,028	23,742	25,142	(*)	23,627	24,173	23,530	23,453
447	**Gasoline stations**	**36,391**	**-3.8**	**36,391**	**38,226**	**41,948**	**37,823**	**38,646**	**40,211**	**41,015**	**43,515**	**41,979**	**41,377**
448	**Clothing & clothing accessories stores**	**16,484**	**2.1**	**16,484**	**35,218**	**26,265**	**16,143**	**34,399**	**22,644**	**22,944**	**23,218**	**22,283**	**22,072**
44811	Men's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,147	905	608	1,015	(*)	864	872	763	745
44812	Women's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,520	4,143	2,378	4,629	(*)	3,378	3,572	3,303	3,342
44814	Family clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	13,913	11,061	6,377	13,742	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,405	3,411	2,044	4,076	(*)	3,204	3,233	2,962	2,924
451	**Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, & book stores**	**5,450**	**-6.2**	**5,450**	**8,878**	**7,000**	**5,813**	**10,776**	**6,250**	**5,962**	**6,346**	**6,659**	**6,934**
452	**General merchandise stores**..................	**52,338**	**3.2**	**52,338**	**79,559**	**67,045**	**50,715**	**79,710**	**60,137**	**59,674**	**60,606**	**58,816**	**58,796**
4521	Department stores	9,135	-2.5	9,135	20,679	15,219	9,374	21,616	12,128	12,121	12,502	12,505	12,479
4529	Other general merch. stores....	(*)	(*)	(*)	58,880	51,826	41,341	58,094	(*)	47,553	48,104	46,311	46,317
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters................................	(*)	(*)	(*)	49,908	43,865	35,456	49,371	(*)	40,477	40,767	39,396	39,560
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores............	(*)	(*)	(*)	8,972	7,961	5,885	8,723	(*)	7,076	7,337	6,915	6,757
453	**Miscellaneous store retailers**	**9,207**	**-5.1**	**9,207**	**11,434**	**11,553**	**9,699**	**11,870**	**10,667**	**10,657**	**11,250**	**11,147**	**10,940**
454	**Nonstore retailers**	**55,890**	**6.3**	**55,890**	**75,253**	**69,892**	**52,576**	**74,619**	**57,888**	**56,434**	**59,408**	**53,940**	**55,351**
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses	(*)	(*)	(*)	67,599	62,639	44,176	66,981	(*)	49,669	52,549	47,197	48,607
722	**Food services & drinking places**	**56,181**	**5.7**	**56,181**	**61,737**	**57,755**	**53,154**	**59,497**	**60,802**	**60,408**	**60,350**	**57,713**	**57,430**

(*) 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, musical instrument, and book (451), general merchandise (452), office supply, stationery, and gift stores (4532).

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey, March 11, 2019. 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]					
		Jan. 2019 Advance from --		Dec. 2018 Preliminary from --		Nov. 2018 through Jan. 2019 from --	
		Dec. 2018 (p)	Jan. 2018 (r)	Nov. 2018 (r)	Dec. 2017 (r)	Aug. 2018 through Oct. 2018	Nov. 2017 through Jan. 2018
	Retail & food services, total	**0.2**	**2.3**	**-1.6**	**1.6**	**-0.4**	**2.6**
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts)	0.9	2.8	-2.1	1.5	-0.7	3.0
	Total (excl. gasoline stations)	0.4	2.9	-1.2	1.9	0.1	2.8
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts & gasoline stations)	1.2	3.7	-1.6	1.7	0.0	3.2
	Retail	0.2	1.9	-1.8	1.2	-0.4	2.3
441	**Motor vehicle & parts dealers**	**-2.4**	**0.2**	**0.3**	**2.4**	**0.7**	**1.4**
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ...	-2.6	0.1	0.4	2.7	0.8	1.5
442	**Furniture & home furn. stores**	**-1.2**	**-2.7**	**-1.3**	**-1.2**	**-2.5**	**-1.5**
443	**Electronics & appliance stores**	**-0.3**	**-3.3**	**-1.2**	**-1.7**	**-2.3**	**-2.0**
444	**Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers**............................	**3.3**	**8.7**	**0.5**	**1.6**	**1.5**	**4.1**
445	**Food & beverage stores**...........................	**1.1**	**3.2**	**-0.3**	**1.6**	**0.6**	**2.6**
4451	Grocery stores	1.2	3.5	-0.2	1.5	0.7	2.7
446	**Health & personal care stores**	**1.6**	**2.8**	**-2.3**	**1.1**	**-0.2**	**2.4**
447	**Gasoline stations**	**-2.0**	**-4.2**	**-5.7**	**-0.9**	**-6.4**	**0.7**
448	**Clothing & clothing accessories stores**	**-1.3**	**1.6**	**-1.2**	**4.0**	**-0.1**	**3.3**
451	**Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, & book stores**	**4.8**	**-6.1**	**-6.1**	**-14.0**	**-4.2**	**-10.2**
452	**General merchandise stores**....................	**0.8**	**2.2**	**-1.5**	**1.5**	**0.1**	**2.5**
4521	Department stores	0.1	-3.0	-3.0	-2.9	-1.4	-2.1
453	**Miscellaneous store retailers**	**0.1**	**-4.3**	**-5.3**	**-2.6**	**-0.3**	**-1.0**
454	**Nonstore retailers**	**2.6**	**7.3**	**-5.0**	**2.0**	**0.0**	**6.6**
722	**Food services & drinking places**	**0.7**	**5.4**	**0.1**	**5.2**	**-0.5**	**5.3**

(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, March 11, 2019. 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 Jan. 2019

(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	0.7	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.2
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts)	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.2
	Total (excl. gasoline stations)	0.6	0.3	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.2
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts & gasoline stations)	0.7	0.3	0.2	0.6	0.1	0.1
	Retail, total	0.5	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.1
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	1.1	1.0	0.4	0.7	-0.1	0.4
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers	1.1	1.0	0.4	0.8	-0.1	0.4
442	Furniture & home furn. stores.................	2.1	1.2	0.8	2.5	0.2	0.5
443	Electronics & appliance stores	1.4	0.6	0.6	0.8	-0.3	0.9
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers......................................	1.7	0.9	0.5	1.3	-0.1	0.4
445	Food & beverage stores...........................	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.6	0.1	0.2
4451	Grocery stores	0.7	0.2	0.2	0.6	0.1	0.2
446	Health & personal care stores	1.7	0.4	0.5	1.5	0.0	0.4
447	Gasoline stations	1.6	0.4	0.4	0.5	-0.1	0.6
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	1.8	0.6	0.7	1.5	0.3	0.8
451	Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, & book stores	3.2	0.8	1.0	1.5	-0.3	1.0
452	General merchandise stores....................	0.6	0.1	0.1	0.3	-0.1	0.1
4521	Department stores	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	3.5	2.6	1.5	2.1	-0.5	1.6
454	Nonstore retailers	1.2	0.6	0.4	1.2	0.1	0.4
722	Food services & drinking places	3.4	1.0	0.9	2.8	0.5	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 period January 2018 - present. For measures of sampling variability where there are not enough months collected on the new sample basis to calculate medians, the last available medians from the prior sample are provided.

(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 with exception to the following: Total (excl. gasoline stations), Total (excl. motor vehicles & parts & gasoline stations), Electronics & appliance stores, and Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, & book stores which are based on estimates from April 2018 to present until we have 12 months of revisions.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey, March 11, 2019. 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>.