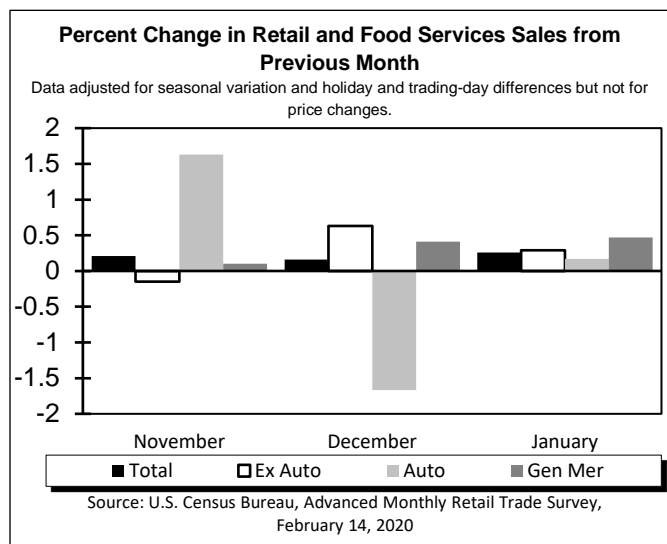# ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES, JANUARY 2020

Release Number: CB20-22

Intention to Revise: Monthly retail sales estimates will be revised based on the results of the 2018 Annual Retail Trade Survey and the Service Annual Survey. Revised not adjusted estimates and corresponding adjusted estimates are scheduled for release on April 27, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. EDT.

February 14, 2020 — The U.S. Census Bureau announced the following advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for January 2020:

ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES		
January 2020	$529.8 billion	0.3%*
December 2019 (revised)	$528.4 billion	0.2%*

Next release: March 17, 2020

* 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, February 14, 2020.

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, February 14, 2020

Advance Estimates of U.S. Retail and Food Services

Advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for January 2020, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were $529.8 billion, an increase of 0.3 percent (±0.4 percent)* from the previous month, and 4.4 percent (±0.7 percent) above January 2019. Total sales for the November 2019 through January 2020 period were up 4.4 percent (±0.5 percent) from the same period a year ago. The November 2019 to December 2019 percent change was revised from up 0.3 percent (±0.4 percent)* to up 0.2 percent (±0.2 percent)*.

Retail trade sales were up 0.1 percent (±0.4 percent)* from December 2019, and 4.0 percent (±0.7 percent) above last year. Gasoline stations were up 10.4 percent (±1.2 percent) from January 2019, and nonstore retailers were up 8.4 percent (±1.4 percent) from last year.

General Information

The February 2020 Advance Monthly Retail report is scheduled for release on March 17, 2020 at 8:30 a.m.

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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 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.

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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.

Weather Information

For information on the impact of weather events on the compilation of this report, please see the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on our website at:
<www.census.gov/retail/marts_weather_faqs.html>

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.

United States Census Bureau

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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]				
		1 Month Total		2020	2019			2018	2020	2019			2018
		2020	% Chg. 2019	Jan.[3] (a)	Dec. (p)	Nov. (r)	Jan.	Dec.	Jan.[3] (a)	Dec. (p)	Nov. (r)	Jan. (r)	Dec. (r)
	Retail & food services, total	480,162	4.6	480,162	595,536	537,427	459,143	563,497	529,766	528,367	527,518	507,545	500,728
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	386,574	4.3	386,574	490,458	434,831	370,778	461,535	423,282	422,060	419,404	406,820	398,055
	Total (excl. gasoline stations)	440,110	4.1	440,110	554,074	495,573	422,920	525,663	485,607	483,975	483,875	467,564	460,307
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts & gasoline stations)	346,522	3.6	346,522	448,996	392,977	334,555	423,701	379,123	377,668	375,761	366,839	357,634
	Retail	418,479	4.1	418,479	529,635	474,437	402,128	500,260	463,226	462,598	462,513	445,572	438,731
	GAFO[4]	(*)	(*)	(*)	148,612	121,344	91,793	147,712	(*)	109,530	108,808	108,079	107,763
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	93,588	5.9	93,588	105,078	102,596	88,365	101,962	106,484	106,307	108,114	100,725	102,673
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	86,055	6.0	86,055	97,612	94,672	81,196	94,861	98,349	98,201	99,970	93,008	94,861
44111	New car dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	84,740	80,732	68,138	82,315	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores............	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,466	7,924	7,169	7,101	(*)	8,106	8,144	7,717	7,812
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	8,752	2.0	8,752	11,023	10,749	8,581	10,937	9,746	9,686	9,843	9,577	9,619
4421	Furniture stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,411	5,769	4,638	5,444	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,612	4,980	3,943	5,493	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	Electronics & appliance stores	7,506	-2.9	7,506	11,828	10,014	7,730	11,961	8,054	8,096	8,063	8,321	8,187
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers.....................................	26,896	-1.4	26,896	29,090	30,257	27,277	28,181	32,806	32,144	31,719	33,228	31,556
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	25,860	27,114	24,334	24,892	(*)	28,606	28,127	29,283	27,969
445	Food & beverage stores........................	65,166	2.9	65,166	70,182	66,506	63,327	68,541	65,908	65,802	65,459	64,397	63,387
4451	Grocery stores	59,302	3.0	59,302	60,948	59,258	57,585	59,536	59,066	58,887	58,555	57,643	56,647
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,624	5,311	4,135	6,446	(*)	5,049	5,029	4,905	4,902
446	Health & personal care stores	28,724	-1.9	28,724	32,457	28,779	29,290	31,436	28,956	29,083	29,188	29,526	28,449
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	25,974	23,513	24,704	25,273	(*)	24,006	24,067	24,387	23,576
447	Gasoline stations	40,052	10.6	40,052	41,462	41,854	36,223	37,834	44,159	44,392	43,643	39,981	40,421
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	16,290	-0.7	16,290	35,198	25,169	16,410	34,706	22,271	22,994	22,384	22,268	22,495
44811	Men's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	974	811	666	1,023	(*)	744	754	807	765
44812	Women's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,428	3,767	2,498	4,472	(*)	3,312	3,313	3,450	3,313
44814	Family clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	14,362	11,151	6,604	13,628	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,452	3,243	2,281	4,415	(*)	3,259	3,158	3,213	3,199
451	Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, & book stores	5,471	-1.5	5,471	9,188	7,017	5,557	9,111	6,376	6,367	6,368	6,492	6,215
452	General merchandise stores..................	53,105	3.3	53,105	78,151	65,955	51,427	77,853	60,188	59,906	59,659	58,952	58,804
4521	Department stores	8,456	-3.9	8,456	18,304	13,276	8,796	19,398	10,960	10,951	11,022	11,598	11,585
4529	Other general merch. stores....	(*)	(*)	(*)	59,847	52,679	42,631	58,455	(*)	48,955	48,637	47,354	47,219
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters................................	(*)	(*)	(*)	50,937	45,082	36,408	49,492	(*)	41,923	41,550	40,274	40,139
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores............	(*)	(*)	(*)	8,910	7,597	6,223	8,963	(*)	7,032	7,087	7,080	7,080
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	10,178	9.7	10,178	12,723	12,036	9,281	11,860	11,794	11,532	11,701	10,767	10,868
454	Nonstore retailers	62,751	7.0	62,751	93,255	73,505	58,660	75,878	66,484	66,289	66,372	61,338	56,057
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses	(*)	(*)	(*)	84,572	65,815	50,032	67,709	(*)	58,853	58,816	54,089	48,923
722	Food services & drinking places	61,683	8.2	61,683	65,901	62,990	57,015	63,237	66,540	65,769	65,005	61,973	61,997

(*) 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, February 14, 2020. 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. 2020 Advance from --		Dec. 2019 Preliminary from --		Nov. 2019 through Jan. 2020 from --	
		Dec. 2019 (p)	Jan. 2019 (r)	Nov. 2019 (r)	Dec. 2018 (r)	Aug. 2019 through Oct. 2019	Nov. 2018 through Jan. 2019
	Retail & food services, total	**0.3**	**4.4**	**0.2**	**5.5**	**0.5**	**4.4**
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts)	0.3	4.0	0.6	6.0	0.4	4.1
	Total (excl. gasoline stations)	0.3	3.9	0.0	5.1	0.3	4.2
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts & gasoline stations)	0.4	3.3	0.5	5.6	0.1	3.9
	Retail	0.1	4.0	0.0	5.4	0.4	4.1
441	**Motor vehicle & parts dealers**	**0.2**	**5.7**	**-1.7**	**3.5**	**0.9**	**5.3**
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ...	0.2	5.7	-1.8	3.5	0.9	5.4
442	**Furniture & home furn. stores**	**0.6**	**1.8**	**-1.6**	**0.7**	**-1.0**	**1.4**
443	**Electronics & appliance stores**	**-0.5**	**-3.2**	**0.4**	**-1.1**	**-0.8**	**-2.5**
444	**Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers**......................................	**2.1**	**-1.3**	**1.3**	**1.9**	**1.4**	**0.4**
445	**Food & beverage stores**...........................	**0.2**	**2.3**	**0.5**	**3.8**	**0.6**	**3.0**
4451	Grocery stores	0.3	2.5	0.6	4.0	0.7	3.2
446	**Health & personal care stores**	**-0.4**	**-1.9**	**-0.4**	**2.2**	**-2.0**	**-0.3**
447	**Gasoline stations**	**-0.5**	**10.4**	**1.7**	**9.8**	**2.8**	**6.7**
448	**Clothing & clothing accessories stores**	**-3.1**	**0.0**	**2.7**	**2.2**	**0.6**	**-0.1**
451	**Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, & book stores**	**0.1**	**-1.8**	**0.0**	**2.4**	**-2.8**	**0.0**
452	**General merchandise stores**....................	**0.5**	**2.1**	**0.4**	**1.9**	**0.5**	**1.3**
4521	Department stores	0.1	-5.5	-0.6	-5.5	-1.8	-6.1
453	**Miscellaneous store retailers**	**2.3**	**9.5**	**-1.4**	**6.1**	**1.3**	**7.5**
454	**Nonstore retailers**	**0.3**	**8.4**	**-0.1**	**18.3**	**-0.9**	**11.5**
722	**Food services & drinking places**	**1.2**	**7.4**	**1.2**	**6.1**	**0.8**	**6.1**

(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, February 14, 2020. 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. 2020

(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	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.1
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts)	0.8	0.2	0.1	0.4	0.1	0.1
	Total (excl. gasoline stations)	0.7	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.1
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts & gasoline stations)	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.1
	Retail, total	**0.5**	**0.2**	**0.2**	**0.4**	**0.0**	**0.1**
441	**Motor vehicle & parts dealers**	**1.3**	**0.9**	**0.5**	**1.1**	**0.1**	**0.4**
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers	1.4	0.9	0.5	1.2	0.1	0.4
442	**Furniture & home furn. stores**................	**2.4**	**1.2**	**0.7**	**1.6**	**-0.1**	**0.4**
443	**Electronics & appliance stores**	**1.2**	**0.5**	**0.4**	**0.9**	**-0.2**	**0.2**
444	**Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers**....................................	**1.3**	**0.7**	**0.4**	**1.0**	**0.1**	**0.5**
445	**Food & beverage stores**...........................	**0.7**	**0.2**	**0.2**	**0.4**	**0.1**	**0.3**
4451	Grocery stores	0.7	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.3
446	**Health & personal care stores**	**1.9**	**0.4**	**0.4**	**0.9**	**-0.1**	**0.2**
447	**Gasoline stations**	**1.4**	**0.4**	**0.3**	**0.7**	**0.1**	**0.5**
448	**Clothing & clothing accessories stores**	**1.8**	**0.6**	**0.6**	**0.9**	**0.0**	**0.5**
451	**Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, & book stores**	**1.8**	**0.7**	**0.9**	**2.4**	**-0.3**	**0.7**
452	**General merchandise stores**....................	**0.8**	**0.1**	**0.1**	**0.2**	**0.0**	**0.1**
4521	Department stores	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-0.1	0.1
453	**Miscellaneous store retailers**	**4.0**	**1.7**	**1.5**	**2.7**	**0.5**	**1.4**
454	**Nonstore retailers**	**1.2**	**0.4**	**0.4**	**0.8**	**-0.1**	**0.4**
722	**Food services & drinking places**	**3.3**	**0.9**	**0.7**	**1.9**	**0.3**	**0.3**

(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, February 14, 2020. 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>.