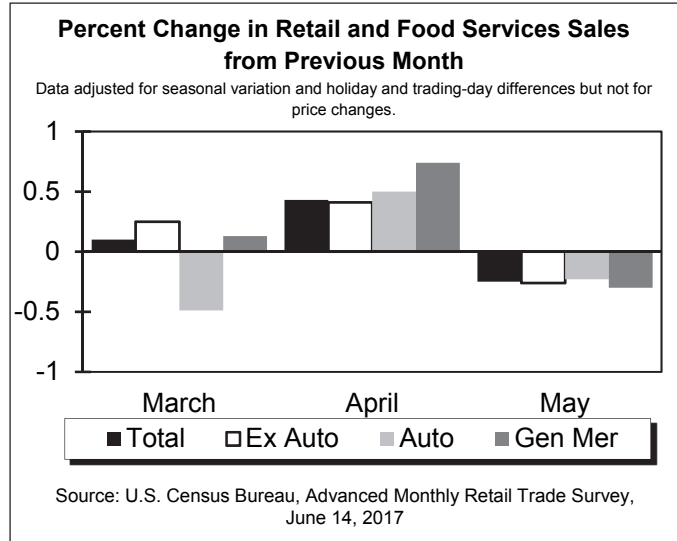


## ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES, MAY 2017

Release Number: CB17-92

**June 14, 2017** — The U.S. Census Bureau announced the following advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for May 2017:

ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES		
May 2017	\$473.8 billion	-0.3%*
April 2017 (revised)	\$475.0 billion	0.4%
Next release: July 14, 2017		
<small>* 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, June 14, 2017.</small>		



### Advance Estimates of U.S. Retail and Food Services

Advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for May 2017, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$473.8 billion, a decrease of 0.3 percent ( $\pm 0.5$  percent)\* from the previous month, and 3.8 percent ( $\pm 0.9$  percent) above May 2016. Total sales for the March 2017 through May 2017 period were up 4.4 percent ( $\pm 0.7$  percent) from the same period a year ago. The March 2017 to April 2017 percent change was unrevised at 0.4 percent ( $\pm 0.1$  percent).

Retail trade sales were down 0.3 percent ( $\pm 0.5$  percent)\* from April 2017, and up 4.0 percent ( $\pm 0.7$  percent) from last year. Building Material and Garden Equipment and Supplies Dealers were up 10.8 percent ( $\pm 1.8$  percent) from May 2016, while Nonstore Retailers were up 10.2 percent ( $\pm 1.8$  percent) from last year.

### General Information

The June 2017 Advance Monthly Retail report is scheduled for release on July 14, 2017 at 8:30 a.m. EDT. View the full schedule in the Economic Briefing Room: <[www.census.gov/economic-indicators/](http://www.census.gov/economic-indicators/)>. The full text and tables of this release can be found at <[www.census.gov/retail/](http://www.census.gov/retail/)>.

### EXPLANATORY NOTES

The advance estimates are based on a subsample of the Census Bureau's full retail and food services

#### Data Inquiries

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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](http://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  $\pm 1.753 \times 0.9$  percent or  $\pm 1.6$  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).

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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 <sup>1</sup> code	Kind of Business	Not Adjusted						Adjusted <sup>2</sup>					
		5 Month Total		2017			2016		2017			2016	
		2017	% Chg. 2016	May <sup>3</sup> (a)	Apr. (p)	Mar. (r)	May	Apr.	May <sup>3</sup> (a)	Apr. (p)	Mar. (r)	May (r)	Apr. (r)
	<b>Retail &amp; food services,</b>												
	<b>total</b> .....	2,291,670	3.9	495,814	467,843	484,550	471,434	452,609	473,808	475,009	472,991	456,384	454,231
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	1,811,039	4.0	392,022	370,618	378,604	373,630	355,999	377,126	378,103	376,566	363,187	361,264
	Retail .....	2,011,868	4.1	437,288	410,352	425,295	413,968	395,883	417,695	418,865	416,718	401,550	399,739
	<b>GAFO<sup>4</sup></b> .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	100,754	103,122	103,642	98,468	(*)	106,174	105,558	105,196	104,905
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers</b> .....	480,631	3.7	103,792	97,225	105,946	97,804	96,610	96,682	96,906	96,425	93,197	92,967
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	443,944	4.1	96,013	89,845	97,894	90,188	89,102	89,231	89,398	88,914	85,730	85,511
44111	New car dealers .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	72,817	79,710	74,647	73,115	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,380	8,052	7,616	7,508	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores</b> .....	44,811	3.4	9,568	8,762	9,797	8,964	8,632	9,549	9,514	9,539	9,147	9,105
4421	Furniture stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,608	5,292	4,859	4,653	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,154	4,505	4,105	3,979	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores</b> .....	36,755	-1.8	7,414	7,089	7,824	7,466	6,965	8,087	8,324	8,148	8,236	8,137
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,260	5,637	5,713	5,335	(*)	6,088	5,921	6,176	6,125
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp; supplies dealers</b> .....	152,893	7.7	39,507	33,930	31,454	34,608	32,342	31,024	31,025	30,835	27,994	28,621
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	27,803	26,868	28,911	26,944	(*)	26,863	26,628	24,668	24,971
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores</b> .....	290,489	1.9	61,156	58,717	59,485	59,344	56,375	59,675	59,628	59,538	58,280	58,015
4451	Grocery stores .....	261,134	1.7	54,619	52,619	53,481	53,132	50,627	53,235	53,204	53,162	52,090	51,925
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,183	4,184	4,357	4,075	(*)	4,517	4,456	4,370	4,308
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores</b> .....	135,608	-0.4	28,210	26,790	28,479	27,598	27,063	27,630	27,619	27,410	27,515	27,475
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	22,251	23,232	23,088	22,648	(*)	22,728	22,533	22,882	22,900
447	<b>Gasoline stations</b> .....	181,513	12.3	39,763	37,654	37,253	37,337	33,975	36,920	37,843	37,859	34,764	33,873
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories stores</b> .....	97,548	-0.1	21,943	20,983	21,066	21,494	20,311	21,664	21,589	21,536	21,441	21,246
44811	Men's clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	804	765	777	734	(*)	760	792	723	719
44812	Women's clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,530	3,364	3,569	3,534	(*)	3,330	3,266	3,364	3,401
44814	Family clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	8,185	8,119	8,256	7,795	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,996	3,145	2,888	2,850	(*)	3,002	3,036	3,005	2,960
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp; music stores</b> .....	31,900	-4.1	6,672	6,424	6,750	6,874	6,687	7,197	7,242	7,212	7,554	7,472
452	<b>General merchandise stores</b> .....	267,530	0.6	57,038	55,348	55,442	56,308	53,481	56,928	57,100	56,679	56,191	56,303
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	55,536	-4.7	12,099	11,771	11,943	12,492	11,868	12,506	12,626	12,586	12,993	13,067
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) <sup>5</sup> .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	12,049	12,213	12,816	12,159	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	43,577	43,499	43,816	41,613	(*)	44,474	44,093	43,198	43,236
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	37,472	37,413	37,833	36,037	(*)	38,276	37,983	37,384	37,422
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,105	6,086	5,983	5,576	(*)	6,198	6,110	5,814	5,814
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers</b> .....	51,054	4.2	11,698	10,344	10,504	11,201	10,154	10,787	10,928	10,843	10,430	10,602
454	<b>Nonstore retailers</b> .....	241,136	11.0	50,527	47,086	51,295	44,970	43,288	51,552	51,147	50,694	46,801	45,923
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses ....	(*)	(*)	(*)	41,302	44,061	38,847	37,272	(*)	44,942	44,416	40,256	39,651
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places</b> ...	279,802	2.7	58,526	57,491	59,255	57,466	56,726	56,113	56,144	56,273	54,834	54,492

(\*) 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, June 14, 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](http://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 <sup>1</sup>					
		May 2017 Advance from --		Apr. 2017 Preliminary from --		Mar. 2017 through May 2017 from --	
		Apr. 2017 (p)	May 2016 (r)	Mar. 2017 (r)	Apr. 2016 (r)	Dec. 2016 through Feb. 2017	Mar. 2016 through May 2016
	<b>Retail &amp; food services, total .....</b>	-0.3	3.8	0.4	4.6	0.3	4.4
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) .....	-0.3	3.8	0.4	4.7	0.9	4.4
	Retail .....	-0.3	4.0	0.5	4.8	0.3	4.6
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers .....</b>	-0.2	3.7	0.5	4.2	-1.7	4.2
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .....	-0.2	4.1	0.5	4.5	-1.7	4.5
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores .....</b>	0.4	4.4	-0.3	4.5	2.6	4.8
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores .....</b>	-2.8	-1.8	2.2	2.3	2.8	-0.2
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp; supplies dealers.....</b>	0.0	10.8	0.6	8.4	0.8	7.7
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores.....</b>	0.1	2.4	0.2	2.8	1.0	3.0
4451	Grocery stores .....	0.1	2.2	0.1	2.5	0.8	2.8
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores .....</b>	0.0	0.4	0.8	0.5	1.4	0.5
447	<b>Gasoline stations .....</b>	-2.4	6.2	0.0	11.7	-1.2	10.8
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories stores .....</b>	0.3	1.0	0.2	1.6	0.7	1.3
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp; music stores.....</b>	-0.6	-4.7	0.4	-3.1	0.2	-3.9
452	<b>General merchandise stores.....</b>	-0.3	1.3	0.7	1.4	0.5	1.1
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	-1.0	-3.7	0.3	-3.4	0.1	-3.7
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers .....</b>	-1.3	3.4	0.8	3.1	0.9	4.0
454	<b>Nonstore retailers .....</b>	0.8	10.2	0.9	11.4	2.7	11.4
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places .....</b>	-0.1	2.3	-0.2	3.0	0.3	3.1

(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, June 14, 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](http://www.census.gov/retail/how_surveys_are_collected.html)>.

**Table 3. Estimated Measures of Sampling Variability and Revision to Advance Estimates May 2017**

(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 <sup>(1)</sup> for Current Mo. (%)	Median standard error <sup>(1)</sup> for Percent change			Revision for month-to-month change <sup>(2)</sup>	
			Previous Mo. to Current Mo.	Previous Qtr. to Current Qtr.	Current Mo. to same Mo. Last Yr.	Average revision	Median absolute revision
	<b>Retail &amp; food services, total .....</b>	0.6	0.3	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.2
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ..	0.7	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.1
	<b>Retail .....</b>	0.6	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.2
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers .....</b>	1.3	1.0	0.4	1.2	0.1	0.6
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	1.4	1.0	0.4	1.3	0.1	0.6
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores.....</b>	2.7	1.1	0.8	1.4	0.2	0.9
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores .....</b>	2.8	0.6	0.6	2.0	-0.1	0.4
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp;....</b>						
	supplies dealers.....	2.2	0.8	0.7	1.0	0.2	0.6
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores.....</b>	1.5	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.2
4451	Grocery stores .....	1.6	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.2
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores .....</b>	2.9	0.4	0.7	2.9	0.1	0.3
447	<b>Gasoline stations .....</b>	1.8	0.5	0.3	0.8	0.2	0.3
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories stores .....</b>	2.4	0.6	0.4	0.7	0.0	0.2
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp; music stores.....</b>	2.5	1.3	0.7	1.2	-0.1	0.4
452	<b>General merchandise stores.....</b>	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.2
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers .....</b>	2.9	2.7	1.3	2.7	0.0	0.8
454	<b>Nonstore retailers .....</b>	1.7	0.5	0.4	1.0	0.1	0.4
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places ..</b>	2.2	1.1	0.7	1.4	0.1	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, June 14, 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](http://www.census.gov/retail/how_surveys_are_collected.html)>.