

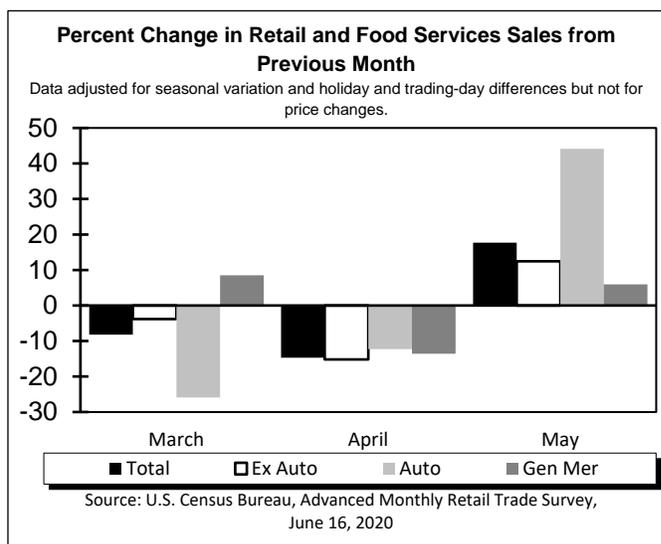
ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES, MAY 2020

Release Number: CB20-85

Statement Regarding COVID-19 Impact: Due to recent events surrounding COVID-19, many businesses are operating on a limited capacity or have ceased operations completely. The Census Bureau has monitored response and data quality and determined estimates in this release meet publication standards. For more information on the compilation of this month's report, see <[COVID-19 FAQs](#)>.

June 16, 2020 — The U.S. Census Bureau announced the following advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for May 2020:

ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES		
May 2020	\$485.5 billion	17.7%
April 2020 (revised)	\$412.6 billion	-14.7%
Next release: July 16, 2020		
<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 16, 2020.</small>		



Advance Estimates of U.S. Retail and Food Services

Advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for May 2020, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$485.5 billion, an increase of 17.7 percent (± 0.5 percent) from the previous month, but 6.1 percent (± 0.7 percent) below May 2019. Total sales for the March 2020 through May 2020 period were down 10.5 percent (± 0.5 percent) from the same period a year ago. The March 2020 to April 2020 percent change was revised from down 16.4 percent (± 0.5 percent) to down 14.7 percent (± 0.2 percent).

Retail trade sales were up 16.8 percent (± 0.5 percent) from April 2020, but 1.4 percent (± 0.7 percent) below last year. Nonstore retailers were up 30.8 percent (± 1.4 percent) from May 2019, while building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers were up 16.4 percent (± 1.9 percent) from last year.

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General Information

The June 2020 Advance Monthly Retail report is scheduled for release on July 16, 2020 at 8:30 a.m. EDT. 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

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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 ± 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). 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

Quarterly Services Survey

Did you know? Services make up roughly 2/3 of the personal consumption expenditures component of the U.S. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) measured by the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA). Quarterly Services Survey (QSS) revenue data is the largest input into what is commonly referred to as consumer spending. Learn about historical revenue trends for certain industries going back 15 years and other data, such as in-patient days and discharges for hospitals, by visiting <<https://www.census.gov/services/index.html>>.

API

The Census Bureau's application programming interface lets developers create custom apps to reach new

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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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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				
		5 Month Total		2020			2019		2020			2019	
		2020	% Chg. 2019	May ³ (a)	Apr. (p)	Mar. (r)	May	Apr.	May ³ (a)	Apr. (p)	Mar. (r)	May (r)	Apr. (r)
	Retail & food services,												
	total	2,358,235	-4.7	504,802	410,190	481,513	547,130	509,413	485,545	412,576	483,949	516,965	515,088
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	1,909,858	-3.2	400,118	340,301	398,836	435,358	406,257	386,924	344,151	405,952	414,355	413,009
	Total (excl. gasoline stations)	2,191,474	-3.6	473,133	383,887	447,927	500,912	466,269	456,140	386,508	449,466	474,485	472,159
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts & gasoline stations)	1,743,097	-1.7	368,449	313,998	365,250	389,140	363,113	357,519	318,083	371,469	371,875	370,080
	Retail	2,116,588	-2.2	463,355	380,178	434,185	479,466	445,959	446,918	382,654	438,221	453,251	452,012
	GAFO⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	68,250	94,807	110,244	102,862	(*)	71,439	98,312	108,747	108,962
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	448,377	-10.5	104,684	69,889	82,677	111,772	103,156	98,621	68,425	77,997	102,610	102,079
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	410,993	-11.0	96,170	63,001	75,298	103,357	95,035	90,216	61,705	70,902	94,649	94,094
44111	New car dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	50,027	59,312	83,481	76,429	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,888	7,379	8,415	8,121	(*)	6,720	7,095	7,961	7,985
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	37,955	-18.1	7,730	3,896	7,881	10,069	9,360	7,722	4,071	7,897	9,843	9,853
4421	Furniture stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,932	4,288	5,342	4,863	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,964	3,593	4,727	4,497	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	Electronics & appliance stores	29,701	-19.3	5,236	3,242	6,269	7,574	6,900	5,679	3,774	6,641	8,101	8,042
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	167,426	6.7	42,523	36,765	33,087	38,372	35,122	36,319	32,746	33,544	31,204	31,750
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	30,725	28,830	33,158	30,152	(*)	28,344	29,509	27,794	27,996
445	Food & beverage stores	349,893	13.1	75,278	70,183	79,859	65,842	61,781	72,590	71,186	81,607	63,408	63,326
4451	Grocery stores	315,597	13.6	67,216	63,292	72,608	58,830	55,315	64,755	63,931	73,714	56,622	56,502
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,207	5,521	5,109	4,580	(*)	5,569	6,021	4,922	4,925
446	Health & personal care stores	144,410	-2.4	26,956	26,636	32,025	30,847	29,671	26,983	26,878	31,552	30,065	29,820
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	24,733	27,839	25,717	24,806	(*)	24,758	27,700	24,871	24,732
447	Gasoline stations	166,761	-16.7	31,669	26,303	33,586	46,218	43,144	29,405	26,068	34,483	42,480	42,929
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	57,400	-42.9	8,419	2,723	10,833	22,938	21,416	8,116	2,818	11,362	22,148	22,245
44811	Men's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	82	267	747	737	(*)	74	283	665	675
44812	Women's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	496	1,564	3,807	3,604	(*)	471	1,542	3,458	3,426
44814	Family clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	710	4,264	9,403	8,770	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	398	1,730	3,254	3,243	(*)	400	1,691	3,280	3,313
451	Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, & book stores	26,848	-9.9	6,832	3,446	5,190	6,445	6,191	6,936	3,686	5,557	6,610	6,671
452	General merchandise stores	285,459	2.6	61,686	54,116	62,961	60,695	56,815	59,530	56,180	64,986	59,542	59,703
4521	Department stores	39,679	-21.0	8,386	5,804	7,871	11,299	10,456	8,472	6,188	8,607	11,412	11,478
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	48,312	55,090	49,396	46,359	(*)	49,992	56,379	48,130	48,225
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	40,843	47,185	42,167	39,548	(*)	42,501	48,246	41,219	41,282
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,469	7,905	7,229	6,811	(*)	7,491	8,133	6,911	6,943
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	47,666	-8.3	9,468	7,436	9,741	12,563	10,736	8,611	7,577	10,230	11,161	11,083
454	Nonstore retailers	354,692	16.6	82,874	75,543	70,076	66,131	61,667	86,406	79,245	72,365	66,079	64,511
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses	(*)	(*)	(*)	70,053	62,588	58,855	54,612	(*)	73,585	65,332	58,738	57,185
722	Food services & drinking places	241,647	-22.3	41,447	30,012	47,328	67,664	63,454	38,627	29,922	45,728	63,714	63,076

(*) 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, June 16, 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					
		May 2020 Advance from --		Apr. 2020 Preliminary from --		Mar. 2020 through May 2020 from --	
		Apr. 2020 (p)	May 2019 (r)	Mar. 2020 (r)	Apr. 2019 (r)	Dec. 2019 through Feb. 2020	Mar. 2019 through May 2019
	Retail & food services,						
	total	17.7	-6.1	-14.7	-19.9	-12.7	-10.5
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts)	12.4	-6.6	-15.2	-16.7	-10.2	-8.1
	Total (excl. gasoline stations)	18.0	-3.9	-14.0	-18.1	-11.2	-8.8
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts & gasoline stations)	12.4	-3.9	-14.4	-14.1	-8.2	-5.6
	Retail	16.8	-1.4	-12.7	-15.3	-8.6	-6.4
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	44.1	-3.9	-12.3	-33.0	-22.4	-20.3
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ...	46.2	-4.7	-13.0	-34.4	-23.7	-21.4
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	89.7	-21.5	-48.4	-58.7	-34.4	-33.2
443	Electronics & appliance stores	50.5	-29.9	-43.2	-53.1	-33.8	-33.6
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	10.9	16.4	-2.4	3.1	2.6	8.5
445	Food & beverage stores	2.0	14.5	-12.8	12.4	16.6	18.7
4451	Grocery stores	1.3	14.4	-13.3	13.1	17.4	19.4
446	Health & personal care stores	0.4	-10.3	-14.8	-9.9	-4.9	-4.9
447	Gasoline stations	12.8	-30.8	-24.4	-39.3	-29.0	-29.4
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	188.0	-63.4	-75.2	-87.3	-66.9	-66.6
451	Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, & book stores	88.2	4.9	-33.7	-44.7	-19.4	-18.6
452	General merchandise stores	6.0	0.0	-13.6	-5.9	0.7	1.1
4521	Department stores	36.9	-25.8	-28.1	-46.1	-29.6	-32.2
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	13.6	-22.8	-25.9	-31.6	-25.3	-20.1
454	Nonstore retailers	9.0	30.8	9.5	22.8	16.4	22.8
722	Food services & drinking places	29.1	-39.4	-34.6	-52.6	-41.7	-39.7

(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 16, 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 May 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	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.1
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts)	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.1
	Total (excl. gasoline stations)	0.7	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.1
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts & gasoline stations)	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.2	0.1
	Retail, total	0.6	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.2
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	1.4	1.0	0.5	1.1	0.2	0.4
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers	1.5	1.1	0.5	1.2	0.2	0.4
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	2.5	1.2	0.8	1.6	1.5	0.4
443	Electronics & appliance stores	1.3	0.6	0.5	0.8	1.9	0.4
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	1.4	0.7	0.4	1.1	0.2	0.8
445	Food & beverage stores	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.2	0.3
4451	Grocery stores	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.2	0.3
446	Health & personal care stores	1.9	0.4	0.4	0.9	0.1	0.4
447	Gasoline stations	1.4	0.4	0.4	0.7	0.5	0.5
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	2.1	0.8	0.6	1.0	0.7	0.7
451	Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, & book stores	1.8	0.9	1.0	2.8	0.6	0.9
452	General merchandise stores	0.8	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.7	0.2
4521	Department stores	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-0.2	0.1
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	4.3	2.5	1.6	3.5	0.0	1.4
454	Nonstore retailers	1.3	0.5	0.4	0.8	-0.1	0.4
722	Food services & drinking places	3.1	1.0	0.7	1.9	-0.6	0.6

(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 16, 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>.