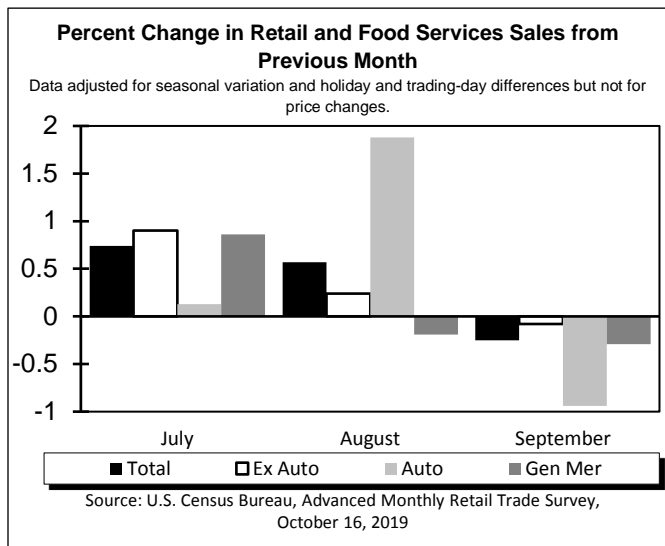


ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES, SEPTEMBER 2019

Release Number: CB19-154

October 16, 2019 — The U.S. Census Bureau announced the following advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for September 2019:

ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES		
September 2019	\$525.6 billion	-0.3%*
August 2019 (revised)	\$526.9 billion	0.6%
Next release: November 15, 2019		
<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, October 16, 2019.</small>		



Advance Estimates of U.S. Retail and Food Services

Advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for September 2019, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$525.6 billion, a decrease of 0.3 percent (± 0.5 percent)* from the previous month, but 4.1 percent (± 0.7 percent) above September 2018. Total sales for the July 2019 through September 2019 period were up 4.0 percent (± 0.5 percent) from the same period a year ago. The July 2019 to August 2019 percent change was revised from up 0.4 percent (± 0.5 percent)* to up 0.6 percent (± 0.2 percent).

Retail trade sales were down 0.3 percent (± 0.4 percent)* from August 2019, but 4.0 percent (± 0.5 percent) above last year. Nonstore retailers were up 12.9 percent (± 1.4 percent) from September 2018, and miscellaneous stores were up 9.3 percent (± 4.6 percent) from last year.

General Information

The October 2019 Advance Monthly Retail report is scheduled for release on November 15, 2019 at 8:30 a.m. 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/.

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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

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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

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.

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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					
		9 Month Total		2019			2018		2019			2018	
		2019	% Chg. 2018	Sep. ³ (a)	Aug. (p)	Jul. (r)	Sep.	Aug.	Sep. ³ (a)	Aug. (p)	Jul. (r)	Sep. (r)	Aug. (r)
	Retail & food services,												
	total	4,577,476	3.4	499,369	547,674	532,996	481,094	523,933	525,560	526,889	523,922	504,848	504,897
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	3,637,331	3.3	398,201	431,635	422,547	384,778	415,396	420,260	420,590	419,589	405,096	405,551
	Total (excl. gasoline stations)	4,192,405	3.7	456,655	501,547	486,482	437,161	476,746	483,311	484,336	480,814	461,436	461,246
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts & gasoline stations)	3,252,260	3.7	355,487	385,508	376,033	340,845	368,209	378,011	378,037	376,481	361,684	361,900
	Retail	4,001,864	3.3	436,684	479,538	466,814	420,602	458,781	460,399	461,874	458,974	442,741	441,704
	GAFO⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	114,202	106,625	100,886	111,994	(*)	109,554	109,870	108,412	108,735
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	940,145	3.5	101,168	116,039	110,449	96,316	108,537	105,300	106,299	104,333	99,752	99,346
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	867,923	3.5	93,222	107,402	102,036	88,738	100,234	97,208	98,174	96,351	91,956	91,622
44111	New car dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	90,123	84,384	74,305	83,392	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	8,637	8,413	7,578	8,303	(*)	8,125	7,982	7,796	7,724
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	85,265	-0.2	9,655	10,239	9,879	9,546	10,170	9,852	9,789	9,791	9,741	9,704
4421	Furniture stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,693	5,493	5,430	5,606	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,546	4,386	4,116	4,564	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	Electronics & appliance stores	68,237	-3.9	7,679	8,162	7,733	7,809	8,439	8,187	8,187	8,200	8,343	8,507
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	287,450	0.7	30,891	33,086	34,371	30,142	33,022	31,818	32,137	31,426	31,608	31,592
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	29,923	30,931	27,060	29,799	(*)	28,607	27,891	27,926	27,954
445	Food & beverage stores	576,175	3.1	63,271	67,268	66,721	61,664	64,109	65,677	65,712	65,624	63,241	63,037
4451	Grocery stores	517,414	3.2	56,746	60,176	59,628	55,237	57,318	58,743	58,823	58,747	56,480	56,360
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,267	5,241	4,646	4,951	(*)	5,031	5,001	4,860	4,811
446	Health & personal care stores	262,623	3.7	28,538	29,758	29,293	27,392	29,418	29,820	29,639	29,709	28,986	29,040
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	24,557	24,354	22,639	24,461	(*)	24,606	24,575	24,084	24,243
447	Gasoline stations	385,071	-0.1	42,714	46,127	46,514	43,933	47,187	42,249	42,553	43,108	43,412	43,651
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	188,226	-0.1	20,111	23,844	21,714	20,260	23,381	22,810	22,526	22,684	22,473	22,487
44811	Men's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	700	660	789	724	(*)	751	761	787	778
44812	Women's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,321	3,209	3,176	3,351	(*)	3,396	3,439	3,419	3,437
44814	Family clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	10,006	9,155	8,241	9,474	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,129	3,285	2,783	3,798	(*)	3,208	3,275	3,130	2,988
451	Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, & book stores	55,203	-3.8	5,989	7,352	6,358	5,990	7,256	6,489	6,495	6,514	6,393	6,479
452	General merchandise stores	510,765	1.6	54,662	61,529	58,177	54,765	59,769	59,712	59,885	59,997	58,925	59,019
4521	Department stores	93,145	-4.8	9,719	11,529	10,591	10,487	12,081	11,143	11,306	11,448	11,863	11,940
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	50,000	47,586	44,278	47,688	(*)	48,579	48,549	47,062	47,079
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	42,952	40,632	37,698	40,889	(*)	41,380	41,335	40,062	40,127
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,048	6,954	6,580	6,799	(*)	7,199	7,214	7,000	6,952
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	98,626	3.1	11,362	12,216	11,622	10,319	11,332	11,666	11,605	11,313	10,674	10,708
454	Nonstore retailers	544,078	12.4	60,644	63,918	63,983	52,466	56,161	66,819	67,047	66,275	59,193	58,134
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses	(*)	(*)	(*)	57,194	57,385	46,560	49,969	(*)	59,515	58,796	52,197	51,198
722	Food services & drinking places	575,612	4.1	62,685	68,136	66,182	60,492	65,152	65,161	65,015	64,948	62,107	63,193

(*) 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, October 16, 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					
		Sep. 2019 Advance from --		Aug. 2019 Preliminary from --		Jul. 2019 through Sep. 2019 from --	
		Aug. 2019 (p)	Sep. 2018 (r)	Jul. 2019 (r)	Aug. 2018 (r)	Apr. 2019 through Jun. 2019	Jul. 2018 through Sep. 2018
	Retail & food services,						
	total	-0.3	4.1	0.6	4.4	1.5	4.0
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts)	-0.1	3.7	0.2	3.7	1.4	3.7
	Total (excl. gasoline stations)	-0.2	4.7	0.7	5.0	1.7	4.5
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts & gasoline stations)	0.0	4.5	0.4	4.5	1.7	4.3
	Retail	-0.3	4.0	0.6	4.6	1.4	4.0
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	-0.9	5.6	1.9	7.0	1.7	5.3
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ...	-1.0	5.7	1.9	7.2	1.7	5.4
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	0.6	1.1	0.0	0.9	0.3	0.7
443	Electronics & appliance stores	0.0	-1.9	-0.2	-3.8	0.8	-3.0
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	-1.0	0.7	2.3	1.7	2.0	0.2
445	Food & beverage stores	-0.1	3.9	0.1	4.2	1.7	4.0
4451	Grocery stores	-0.1	4.0	0.1	4.4	1.8	4.1
446	Health & personal care stores	0.6	2.9	-0.2	2.1	-0.3	2.6
447	Gasoline stations	-0.7	-2.7	-1.3	-2.5	-1.2	-1.7
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	1.3	1.5	-0.7	0.2	1.2	0.1
451	Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, & book stores	-0.1	1.5	-0.3	0.2	-0.7	0.5
452	General merchandise stores	-0.3	1.3	-0.2	1.5	0.3	1.5
4521	Department stores	-1.4	-6.1	-1.2	-5.3	-1.5	-5.6
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	0.5	9.3	2.6	8.4	3.3	8.5
454	Nonstore retailers	-0.3	12.9	1.2	15.3	4.3	14.2
722	Food services & drinking places	0.2	4.9	0.1	2.9	1.7	3.7

(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, October 16, 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 September 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	0.1	0.1
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts)	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.2
	Total (excl. gasoline stations)	0.7	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.2
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts & gasoline stations)	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.2
	Retail, total	0.5	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.1
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	1.3	0.9	0.4	1.1	0.1	0.5
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers	1.4	1.0	0.4	1.1	0.1	0.5
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	2.4	1.3	0.8	1.7	0.0	0.5
443	Electronics & appliance stores	1.2	0.5	0.4	0.9	-0.1	0.4
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	1.4	0.8	0.4	1.1	0.2	0.8
445	Food & beverage stores	0.7	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.2	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	1.0	0.1	0.3
447	Gasoline stations	1.4	0.4	0.3	0.7	-0.1	0.5
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	1.8	0.6	0.7	0.9	0.1	0.5
451	Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, & book stores	2.5	0.8	1.1	1.6	-0.3	0.6
452	General merchandise stores	0.7	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.2
4521	Department stores	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	4.2	1.9	1.4	2.6	0.8	1.2
454	Nonstore retailers	1.2	0.4	0.4	0.8	0.1	0.5
722	Food services & drinking places	3.5	0.9	0.7	1.9	0.2	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, October 16, 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>.