
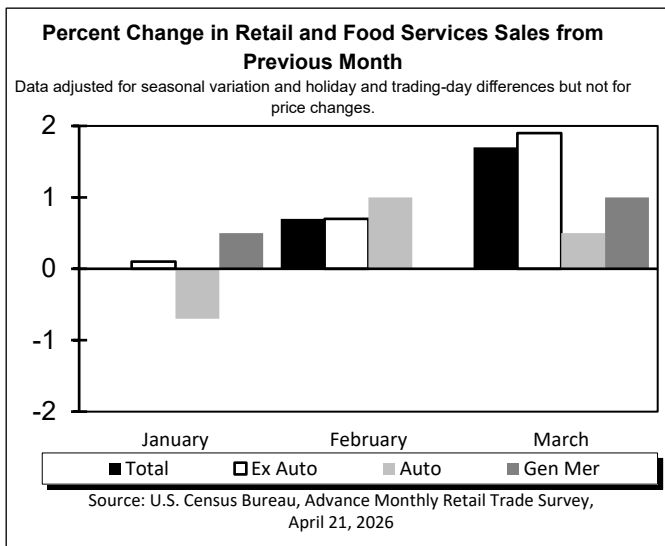


ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES, MARCH 2026

Release Number: CB26-63

April 21, 2026 — The U.S. Census Bureau announced the following advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for March 2026:

 ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES		
March 2026	\$752.1 billion	1.7%
February 2026 (revised)	\$739.8 billion	0.7%
Next release: May 14, 2026		
<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, Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey, April 21, 2026</small>		



Advance Estimates of U.S. Retail and Food Services

Advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for March 2026, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$752.1 billion, up 1.7 percent (± 0.4 percent) from the previous month, and up 4.0 percent (± 0.5 percent) from March 2025. Total sales for the January 2026 through March 2026 period were up 3.7 percent (± 0.4 percent) from the same period a year ago. The January 2026 to February 2026 percent change was revised from up 0.6 percent (± 0.4 percent) to up 0.7 percent (± 0.2 percent).

Retail trade sales were up 1.9 percent (± 0.5 percent) from February 2026, and up 4.2 percent (± 0.5 percent) from last year. Nonstore retailers were up 10.1 percent (± 1.8 percent) from last year, while food services and drinking places were up 2.4 percent (± 1.9 percent) from March 2025.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Release Schedule

The April 2026 Advance Monthly Retail report is scheduled for release on May 14, 2026 at 8:30 a.m. EDT. View the full schedule in the Economic Briefing Room: <https://www.census.gov/economic-indicators/>. The full text and tables of this release can be found at <https://www.census.gov/retail/index.html>.

Data Inquiries

Economic Indicators Division, Retail Indicator Branch
301-763-2713
eid.retail.indicator.branch@census.gov

Media Inquiries

Public Information Office
301-763-3030
pio@census.gov

Special Notice

The Annual Retail Trade Survey (ARTS) has transitioned to the Annual Integrated Economic Survey (AIES). As a result of this transition and the associated changes to data processing and integration, the Annual Revision Report for the Monthly Retail Trade Survey (MRTS) will be delayed. An updated release schedule will be provided once it becomes available.

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 4,800 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. For more information on how data is collected for the Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey (MARTS), see our methodology page at https://www.census.gov/retail/marts/how_surveys_are_collected.html.

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, letters are mailed to a probability sample of approximately 4,800 employer firms selected from the larger Monthly Retail Trade Survey (MRTS). 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.

The Census Bureau has reviewed this data product to ensure appropriate access, use, and disclosure avoidance protection of the confidential source data (Project No. P-7504206, Disclosure Review Board (DRB) approval number: CBDRB-FY26-003).

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U.S. CENSUS BUREAU
census.gov

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 ± 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.

Statement Regarding Natural Disasters

For information on the impact of natural disasters 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.

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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				
		3 Month Total		2026			2025		2026			2025	
		2026	% Chg. 2025	Mar. ³ (a)	Feb. (p)	Jan. (r)	Mar.	Feb.	Mar. ³ (a)	Feb. (p)	Jan. (r)	Mar. (r)	Feb. (r)
	Retail & food services,												
	total	2,089,026	3.8	759,588	655,064	674,374	726,888	630,744	752,063	739,772	734,503	723,350	711,575
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	1,690,462	4.7	610,666	528,537	551,259	574,454	508,568	612,436	600,787	596,884	580,773	577,763
	Total (excl. gasoline stations)	1,937,610	3.7	699,804	609,944	627,862	676,367	585,394	691,492	687,307	682,708	672,060	658,842
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts & gasoline stations)	1,539,046	4.6	550,882	483,417	504,747	523,933	463,218	551,865	548,322	545,089	529,483	525,030
	Retail	1,802,038	3.8	656,061	563,690	582,287	624,954	543,970	651,843	639,691	634,949	625,525	616,636
	GAFO⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	115,527	118,798	128,550	112,525	(*)	135,373	134,528	132,108	131,557
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	398,564	0.3	148,922	126,527	123,115	152,434	122,176	139,627	138,985	137,619	142,577	133,812
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	365,260	0.0	136,739	116,105	112,416	140,668	112,221	127,913	127,169	126,027	131,098	122,512
44111	New car dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	96,721	96,046	118,056	94,762	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	10,422	10,699	11,766	9,955	(*)	11,816	11,592	11,479	11,300
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	31,497	-2.8	11,504	9,986	10,007	11,549	10,444	11,301	11,059	11,070	11,390	11,566
4421	Furniture stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,559	5,387	6,352	5,802	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	Electronics & appliance stores	21,981	5.3	7,639	6,980	7,362	7,199	6,630	7,982	7,914	7,857	7,586	7,526
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	108,402	4.0	41,882	32,784	33,736	39,789	31,549	41,615	41,312	41,065	40,547	39,683
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	28,194	29,201	33,963	27,387	(*)	35,420	35,310	35,122	34,320
445	Food & beverage stores	243,622	0.4	83,143	75,943	84,536	83,083	76,398	84,549	83,967	84,988	84,572	84,458
4451	Grocery stores	221,785	0.5	75,501	68,951	77,333	75,242	69,309	76,341	75,687	76,643	76,156	76,080
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,033	5,231	5,613	5,037	(*)	5,956	6,006	5,978	5,947
446	Health & personal care stores	113,925	2.0	39,986	36,154	37,785	38,832	35,484	39,866	39,686	38,913	39,224	38,865
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	31,110	32,790	33,126	30,579	(*)	34,074	33,357	33,733	33,456
447	Gasoline stations	151,416	5.6	59,784	45,120	46,512	50,521	45,350	60,571	52,465	51,795	51,290	52,733
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	69,648	7.1	26,682	22,444	20,522	24,941	20,653	27,837	27,829	27,080	25,958	25,599
44811	Men's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
44812	Women's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,286	1,994	3,081	2,323	(*)	2,738	2,677	2,827	2,809
44814	Family clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	9,835	9,353	11,191	8,633	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,734	2,268	3,222	2,468	(*)	3,359	3,287	3,196	3,036
451	Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, & book stores	22,101	7.2	8,127	6,814	7,160	7,721	6,205	8,457	8,454	8,394	8,145	7,689
452	General merchandise stores	216,744	2.5	77,287	67,546	71,911	75,038	66,830	78,565	77,778	77,802	76,621	76,837
4522	Department stores	7,353	-4.3	2,970	2,374	2,009	2,933	2,525	3,289	3,157	3,049	3,263	3,318
4523	Gen. merchandise stores incl. warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	65,172	69,902	72,105	64,305	(*)	74,621	74,753	73,358	73,519
452311	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	57,192	61,454	63,421	56,585	(*)	65,288	65,377	64,322	64,521
452319	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,980	8,448	8,684	7,720	(*)	9,333	9,376	9,036	8,998
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	44,134	12.0	15,927	14,115	14,092	14,440	12,389	16,041	16,189	15,842	14,610	14,341
454	Nonstore retailers	380,004	9.7	135,178	119,277	125,549	119,407	109,862	135,432	134,053	132,524	123,005	123,527
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses	(*)	(*)	(*)	110,211	116,107	111,839	101,494	(*)	126,244	124,846	116,016	116,259
722	Food services & drinking places	286,988	3.8	103,527	91,374	92,087	101,934	86,774	100,220	100,081	99,554	97,825	94,939

(*) 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) Estimates include data only for businesses with paid employees. Prior to the benchmark report released in April 2025, the Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey estimates included nonemployers.

For a full description of the NAICS codes used in this table, see <<https://www.census.gov/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, April 21, 2026. (Project No. P-7504206 / Approval CDBRB-FY26-003), 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					
		Mar. 2026 Advance from --		Feb. 2026 Preliminary from --		Jan. 2026 through Mar. 2026 from --	
		Feb. 2026 (p)	Mar. 2025 (r)	Jan. 2026 (r)	Feb. 2025 (r)	Oct. 2025 through Dec. 2025	Jan. 2025 through Mar. 2025
	Retail & food services,						
	total	1.7	4.0	0.7	4.0	1.2	3.7
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts)	1.9	5.5	0.7	4.0	1.4	4.5
	Total (excl. gasoline stations)	0.6	2.9	0.7	4.3	0.9	3.6
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts & gasoline stations)	0.6	4.2	0.6	4.4	1.1	4.4
	Retail	1.9	4.2	0.7	3.7	1.4	3.7
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	0.5	-2.1	1.0	3.9	0.3	0.6
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ...	0.6	-2.4	0.9	3.8	0.2	0.4
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	2.2	-0.8	-0.1	-4.4	0.4	-2.9
443	Electronics & appliance stores	0.9	5.2	0.7	5.2	2.3	5.1
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	0.7	2.6	0.6	4.1	2.6	3.8
445	Food & beverage stores	0.7	0.0	-1.2	-0.6	-0.6	0.2
4451	Grocery stores	0.9	0.2	-1.2	-0.5	-0.6	0.3
446	Health & personal care stores	0.5	1.6	2.0	2.1	-1.9	2.2
447	Gasoline stations	15.5	18.1	1.3	-0.5	4.5	4.8
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	0.0	7.2	2.8	8.7	1.1	6.8
451	Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, & book stores	0.0	3.8	0.7	9.9	1.2	6.7
452	General merchandise stores	1.0	2.5	0.0	1.2	0.8	1.8
4522	Department stores	4.2	0.8	3.5	-4.9	-4.7	-4.0
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	-0.9	9.8	2.2	12.9	3.9	11.6
454	Nonstore retailers	1.0	10.1	1.2	8.5	3.2	9.6
722	Food services & drinking places	0.1	2.4	0.5	5.4	0.0	3.8

(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, April 21, 2026. (Project No. P-7504206 / Approval CBDRB-FY26-003),

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 Mar. 2026

(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	1.0	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.1
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts)	1.3	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.1
	Total (excl. gasoline stations)	1.0	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.1
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts & gasoline stations)	1.3	0.3	0.1	0.4	0.0	0.1
	Retail, total	0.9	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.1
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	1.7	0.7	0.4	0.8	0.0	0.1
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers	2.0	0.8	0.4	0.9	0.0	0.2
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	2.6	1.8	0.8	1.9	-0.6	0.5
443	Electronics & appliance stores	2.3	1.1	0.7	1.2	0.3	0.3
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	3.6	0.9	0.5	1.1	0.0	0.1
445	Food & beverage stores	0.6	0.2	0.1	0.4	0.0	0.2
4451	Grocery stores	0.6	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.2
446	Health & personal care stores	3.9	0.5	0.3	0.7	0.1	0.1
447	Gasoline stations	1.5	0.4	0.2	0.5	0.2	0.3
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	3.2	1.1	0.6	1.1	0.2	0.4
451	Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, & book stores	3.4	1.2	0.8	1.5	-0.1	0.8
452	General merchandise stores	1.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0
4522	Department stores	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-0.2	0.2
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	4.7	2.5	1.5	2.9	0.0	0.9
454	Nonstore retailers	2.7	0.3	0.4	1.0	-0.1	0.4
722	Food services & drinking places	3.3	0.9	0.6	1.1	0.1	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, April 21, 2026. (Project No. P-7504206 / Approval CBDRB-FY26-003), 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>.