

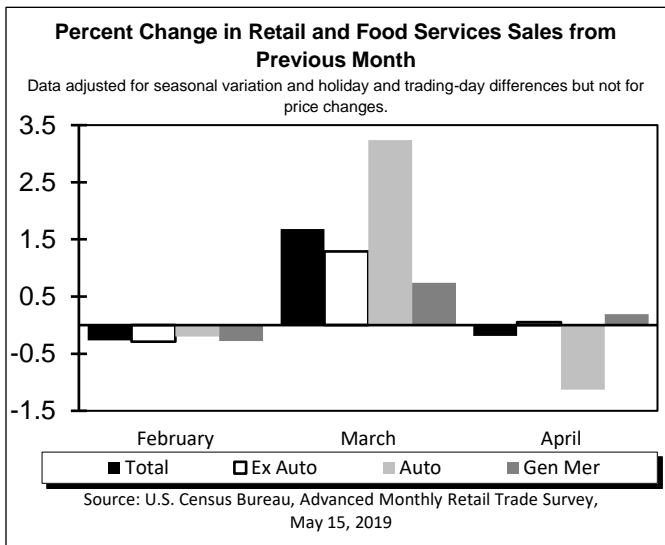
ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES, APRIL 2019

Release Number: CB19-61

Intention to Revise: Monthly retail sales estimates will be revised based on the results of the 2017 Annual Retail Trade Survey. Revised not adjusted estimates and corresponding adjusted estimates are scheduled for release on June 25, 2019 at 10:00 a.m. EDT.

May 15, 2019 — The U.S. Census Bureau announced the following advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for April 2019:

ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES		
April 2019	\$513.4 billion	-0.2%*
March 2019 (revised)	\$514.3 billion	1.7%
Next release: June 14, 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, May 15, 2019.</small>		



Advance Estimates of U.S. Retail and Food Services

Advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for April 2019, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$513.4 billion, a decrease of 0.2 percent (± 0.5 percent)* from the previous month, but 3.1 percent (± 0.7 percent) above April 2018. Total sales for the February 2019 through April 2019 period were up 3.0 percent (± 0.7 percent) from the same period a year ago. The February 2019 to March 2019 percent change was revised from up 1.6 percent (± 0.5 percent) to up 1.7 percent (± 0.2 percent).

Retail trade sales were down 0.2 percent (± 0.5 percent)* from March 2019, but 2.8 percent (± 0.5 percent) above last year. Nonstore retailers were up 9.0 percent (± 1.2 percent) from April 2018, while sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, and book stores were down 8.5 percent (± 2.6 percent) from last year.

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

General Information

The May 2019 Advance Monthly Retail report is scheduled for release on June 14, 2019 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

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



U.S. Department of Commerce
Economics and Statistics Administration
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU
census.gov

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.

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.

###

* The 90 percent confidence interval includes zero. There is insufficient statistical evidence to conclude that the actual change is different from zero.

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



U.S. Department of Commerce
Economics and Statistics Administration
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU
census.gov

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					
		4 Month Total		2019			2018		2019			2018	
		2019	% Chg. 2018	Apr. ³ (a)	Mar. (p)	Feb. (r)	Apr.	Mar.	Apr. ³ (a)	Mar. (p)	Feb. (r)	Apr. (r)	Mar. (r)
	Retail & food services,												
	total	1,934,005	3.0	507,985	520,027	446,545	483,951	511,626	513,356	514,329	505,817	497,828	495,668
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	1,533,483	3.3	402,551	406,764	354,700	382,729	400,119	409,052	408,833	403,636	395,798	394,309
	Total (excl. gasoline stations)	1,775,680	3.2	463,857	477,840	411,003	442,242	470,378	469,491	471,237	464,101	455,993	453,792
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts & gasoline stations)	1,375,158	3.5	358,423	364,577	319,158	341,020	358,871	365,187	365,741	361,920	353,963	352,433
	Retail	1,695,756	2.8	445,980	455,100	390,960	424,946	449,698	451,904	453,019	445,135	439,695	437,080
	GAFO⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	107,764	93,039	100,373	109,698	(*)	109,879	108,739	109,414	109,037
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	400,522	1.9	105,434	113,263	91,845	101,222	111,507	104,304	105,496	102,181	102,030	101,359
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	370,262	1.7	97,350	105,097	84,907	93,801	103,569	96,386	97,583	94,446	94,557	93,898
44111	New car dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	85,562	69,829	76,368	84,914	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	8,166	6,938	7,421	7,938	(*)	7,913	7,735	7,473	7,461
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	37,190	-1.4	9,462	10,098	8,704	9,527	10,353	10,034	10,038	9,936	10,355	10,081
4421	Furniture stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,632	4,739	5,184	5,807	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,466	3,965	4,343	4,546	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	Electronics & appliance stores	29,063	-2.8	6,849	7,690	6,978	7,090	7,899	7,955	8,061	7,966	8,312	8,202
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	121,427	3.7	35,498	31,856	25,678	34,377	31,962	32,366	32,986	32,723	31,987	31,904
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	27,739	22,629	29,275	27,482	(*)	28,985	28,608	28,230	27,816
445	Food & beverage stores	243,065	2.3	61,666	62,881	56,340	58,982	63,179	63,056	62,945	62,016	61,793	61,486
4451	Grocery stores	218,473	2.5	55,162	56,403	50,560	52,836	56,455	56,173	56,067	55,197	55,038	54,652
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,620	4,073	4,317	4,629	(*)	4,899	4,866	4,754	4,772
446	Health & personal care stores	115,530	4.2	29,400	29,727	27,465	27,710	29,104	29,548	29,609	29,437	28,508	28,284
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	24,313	22,902	23,084	23,958	(*)	24,534	24,442	23,603	23,488
447	Gasoline stations	158,325	1.0	44,128	42,187	35,542	41,709	41,248	43,865	43,092	41,716	41,835	41,876
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	79,211	0.6	21,811	22,332	18,461	20,988	22,699	22,827	22,878	22,401	22,790	22,350
44811	Men's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	775	621	864	801	(*)	809	781	837	799
44812	Women's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,660	2,717	3,460	3,540	(*)	3,523	3,422	3,457	3,305
44814	Family clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	8,995	7,028	8,108	9,091	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,514	2,877	2,829	3,209	(*)	3,306	3,247	3,026	2,896
451	Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, & book stores	22,515	-7.3	5,872	6,073	5,031	6,159	6,804	6,300	6,287	6,305	6,889	6,950
452	General merchandise stores	220,386	1.8	56,956	59,401	51,903	54,532	59,736	60,295	60,179	59,734	58,697	59,069
4521	Department stores	40,920	-4.0	10,994	11,229	9,594	11,178	12,072	12,121	12,041	12,047	12,494	12,502
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	48,172	42,309	43,354	47,664	(*)	48,138	47,687	46,203	46,567
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	41,056	36,137	36,905	40,721	(*)	40,892	40,649	39,386	39,767
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,116	6,172	6,449	6,943	(*)	7,246	7,038	6,817	6,800
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	38,713	-3.3	10,345	10,148	8,994	10,296	10,583	10,644	10,644	10,501	10,822	10,864
454	Nonstore retailers	229,809	10.4	58,559	59,444	54,019	52,354	54,624	60,710	60,804	60,219	55,677	54,655
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses	(*)	(*)	(*)	52,171	46,786	45,811	47,350	(*)	54,175	53,592	48,839	48,218
722	Food services & drinking places	238,249	4.7	62,005	64,927	55,585	59,005	61,928	61,452	61,310	60,682	58,133	58,588

(*) 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, May 15, 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					
		Apr. 2019 Advance from --		Mar. 2019 Preliminary from --		Feb. 2019 through Apr. 2019 from --	
		Mar. 2019 (p)	Apr. 2018 (r)	Feb. 2019 (r)	Mar. 2018 (r)	Nov. 2018 through Jan. 2019	Feb. 2018 through Apr. 2018
	Retail & food services,						
	total	-0.2	3.1	1.7	3.8	0.7	3.0
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts)	0.1	3.3	1.3	3.7	0.8	3.1
	Total (excl. gasoline stations)	-0.4	3.0	1.5	3.8	0.5	3.1
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts & gasoline stations)	-0.2	3.2	1.1	3.8	0.5	3.2
	Retail	-0.2	2.8	1.8	3.6	0.7	2.7
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	-1.1	2.2	3.2	4.1	0.5	2.6
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ...	-1.2	1.9	3.3	3.9	0.3	2.4
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	0.0	-3.1	1.0	-0.4	0.6	-1.5
443	Electronics & appliance stores	-1.3	-4.3	1.2	-1.7	-1.3	-3.2
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	-1.9	1.2	0.8	3.4	-2.5	1.6
445	Food & beverage stores	0.2	2.0	1.5	2.4	-0.1	1.8
4451	Grocery stores	0.2	2.1	1.6	2.6	-0.1	1.9
446	Health & personal care stores	-0.2	3.6	0.6	4.7	1.5	4.6
447	Gasoline stations	1.8	4.9	3.3	2.9	3.2	2.1
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	-0.2	0.2	2.1	2.4	-1.1	0.2
451	Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, & book stores	0.2	-8.5	-0.3	-9.5	1.6	-9.0
452	General merchandise stores	0.2	2.7	0.7	1.9	0.1	1.9
4521	Department stores	0.7	-3.0	0.0	-3.7	-1.3	-3.5
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	0.0	-1.6	1.4	-2.0	-2.3	-2.8
454	Nonstore retailers	-0.2	9.0	1.0	11.3	3.5	10.4
722	Food services & drinking places	0.2	5.7	1.0	4.6	1.3	4.9

(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, May 15, 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 Apr. 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	0.1	0.4	0.1	0.2
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts)	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.3
	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	0.5	0.1	0.2
	Retail, total	0.5	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.2
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	1.2	0.9	0.4	1.0	-0.1	0.5
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers	1.2	1.0	0.4	1.1	-0.1	0.5
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	2.2	1.3	0.7	2.1	0.1	0.5
443	Electronics & appliance stores	1.2	0.5	0.6	0.9	-0.2	0.9
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	1.4	0.9	0.5	1.1	0.1	0.4
445	Food & beverage stores	0.7	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.3
4451	Grocery stores	0.6	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.3
446	Health & personal care stores	1.8	0.4	0.4	1.2	0.2	0.4
447	Gasoline stations	1.6	0.4	0.3	0.6	0.0	0.6
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	1.9	0.6	0.5	0.9	0.3	0.8
451	Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, & book stores	3.6	0.8	0.9	1.5	-0.3	0.6
452	General merchandise stores	0.7	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.1
4521	Department stores	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	3.5	2.4	1.4	2.0	-0.1	1.2
454	Nonstore retailers	1.2	0.6	0.3	0.7	0.2	0.4
722	Food services & drinking places	3.5	0.9	0.7	2.1	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 with exception to the following: Total (excl. gasoline stations), Total (excl. motor vehicles & parts & gasoline stations), Electronics & appliance stores, and Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, & book stores which are based on estimates from April 2018 to present until we have 12 months of revisions.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey, May 15, 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>.