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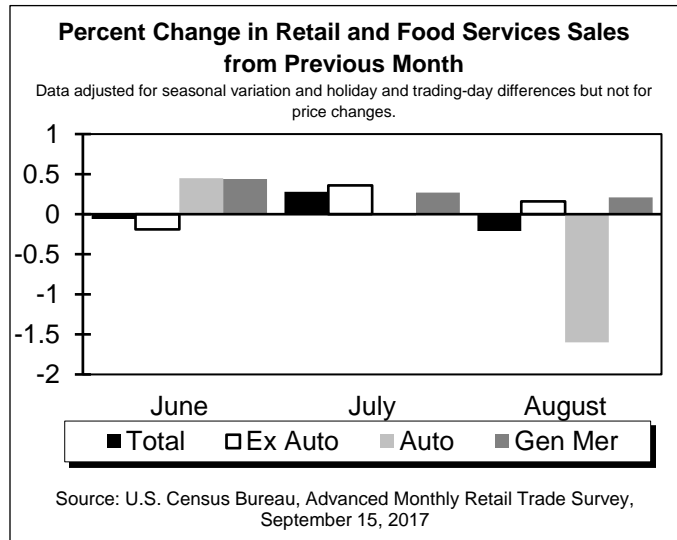
## ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES, AUGUST 2017

Release Number: CB17-153

**Notice:** For information on the impact of Hurricanes Harvey and Irma on the compilation of this report, please see the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\) on our website](#).

**September 15, 2017** — The U.S. Census Bureau announced the following advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for August 2017:

ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES		
August 2017	\$474.8 billion	-0.2%*
July 2017 (revised)	\$475.8 billion	+0.3%
Next release: October 13, 2017		
* 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, September 15, 2017.		



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

Advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for August 2017, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$474.8 billion, a decrease of 0.2 percent ( $\pm 0.5$  percent)\* from the previous month, and 3.2 percent ( $\pm 0.7$  percent) above August 2016. Total sales for the June 2017 through August 2017 period were up 3.2 percent ( $\pm 0.7$  percent) from the same period a year ago. The June 2017 to July 2017 percent change was revised from up 0.6 percent ( $\pm 0.5$  percent) to up 0.3 percent ( $\pm 0.1$  percent).

Retail trade sales were down 0.3 percent ( $\pm 0.5$  percent)\* from July 2017, and up 3.3 percent ( $\pm 0.7$  percent) from last year. Nonstore Retailers were up 8.4 percent ( $\pm 1.6$  percent) from August 2016, while Building Materials and Garden Equipment and Supplies Dealers were up 7.5 percent ( $\pm 1.9$  percent) from last year.

### General Information

The September 2017 Advance Monthly Retail report is scheduled for release on October 13, 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/).

#### Data Inquiries

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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 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

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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.

### **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>					
		8 Month Total		2017			2016		2017			2016	
		2017	% Chg. 2016	Aug. <sup>3</sup> (a)	Jul. (p)	Jun. (r)	Aug.	Jul.	Aug. <sup>3</sup> (a)	Jul. (p)	Jun. (r)	Aug. (r)	Jul. (r)
	<b>Retail &amp; food services,</b>												
	<b>total</b> .....	3,742,569	3.8	489,851	476,699	483,261	473,169	463,245	474,841	475,830	474,488	460,244	459,744
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	2,949,775	3.7	384,711	374,337	380,443	369,961	364,485	377,993	377,407	376,043	364,789	364,969
	Retail .....	3,290,526	3.9	432,745	419,479	425,838	417,702	406,853	418,244	419,400	418,025	404,943	404,835
	<b>GAFO<sup>4</sup></b> .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	102,536	102,988	106,629	102,144	(*)	106,270	106,172	104,682	104,960
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers</b> .....	792,794	3.9	105,140	102,362	102,818	103,208	98,760	96,848	98,423	98,445	95,455	94,775
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	732,691	4.3	97,184	94,778	94,991	95,198	91,198	89,488	90,958	91,075	87,983	87,354
44111	New car dealers .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	77,859	76,540	79,744	76,002	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,584	7,827	8,010	7,562	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores</b> .....	73,896	4.0	10,073	9,405	9,572	9,513	9,124	9,630	9,587	9,639	9,138	9,188
4421	Furniture stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,924	4,939	4,958	4,863	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,481	4,633	4,555	4,261	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores</b> .....	59,723	-1.8	7,851	7,436	7,625	8,122	7,655	7,932	7,991	8,069	8,221	8,177
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,578	5,726	6,302	5,947	(*)	5,823	5,921	6,178	6,163
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp; supplies dealers</b> .....	253,290	7.1	32,530	32,652	36,288	30,078	30,194	31,121	31,274	30,986	28,950	28,966
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	28,509	30,948	26,967	26,873	(*)	26,972	26,888	25,345	25,376
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores</b> .....	471,131	1.9	60,273	60,587	59,636	58,607	59,897	59,595	59,433	59,310	58,360	58,201
4451	Grocery stores .....	422,140	1.7	53,843	53,951	53,107	52,414	53,385	53,152	52,997	52,895	52,153	51,981
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,729	4,606	4,421	4,692	(*)	4,512	4,494	4,390	4,402
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores</b> .....	217,938	0.0	28,017	26,683	27,551	27,922	26,564	27,685	27,651	27,606	27,536	27,527
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	21,989	22,691	22,994	22,158	(*)	22,669	22,782	22,744	22,890
447	<b>Gasoline stations</b> .....	297,804	8.1	39,593	38,477	38,648	37,157	38,162	36,626	35,726	35,985	34,437	35,172
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories stores</b> .....	161,056	0.5	22,589	20,698	20,427	22,248	20,487	21,620	21,831	21,726	21,499	21,369
44811	Men's clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	677	783	680	640	(*)	762	773	726	713
44812	Women's clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,081	3,211	3,343	3,095	(*)	3,342	3,331	3,390	3,328
44814	Family clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	8,476	8,141	8,545	8,430	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,921	2,709	3,834	3,008	(*)	2,962	2,977	3,033	3,017
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp; music stores</b> .....	53,128	-4.6	7,872	6,579	6,780	8,009	7,089	7,079	7,074	7,092	7,177	7,486
452	<b>General merchandise stores</b> .....	437,459	1.3	57,487	56,068	56,290	55,753	55,263	57,493	57,375	57,223	56,103	56,182
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	91,705	-3.3	12,558	11,628	11,748	12,551	11,771	12,651	12,670	12,551	12,758	12,817
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) <sup>5</sup> .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	11,900	12,030	12,941	11,967	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	44,440	44,542	43,202	43,492	(*)	44,705	44,672	43,345	43,365
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	38,366	38,283	37,533	37,751	(*)	38,443	38,475	37,458	37,489
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,074	6,259	5,669	5,741	(*)	6,262	6,197	5,887	5,876
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers</b> .....	84,456	3.8	11,473	10,757	11,122	10,938	10,551	10,902	10,749	10,579	10,364	10,468
454	<b>Nonstore retailers</b> .....	387,851	10.5	49,847	47,775	49,081	46,147	43,107	51,713	52,286	51,365	47,703	47,324
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses ....	(*)	(*)	(*)	42,545	43,294	40,556	37,763	(*)	46,094	45,145	41,511	41,047
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places</b> ...	452,043	2.9	57,106	57,220	57,423	55,467	56,392	56,597	56,430	56,463	55,301	54,909

(\*) 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, September 15, 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

**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>					
		Aug. 2017 Advance from --		Jul. 2017 Preliminary from --		Jun. 2017 through Aug. 2017 from --	
		Jul. 2017 (p)	Aug. 2016 (r)	Jun. 2017 (r)	Jul. 2016 (r)	Mar. 2017 through May 2017	Jun. 2016 through Aug. 2016
	<b>Retail &amp; food services, total .....</b>	-0.2	3.2	0.3	3.5	0.2	3.2
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) .....	0.2	3.6	0.4	3.4	0.0	3.1
	Retail .....	-0.3	3.3	0.3	3.6	0.2	3.3
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers .....</b>	-1.6	1.5	0.0	3.8	0.8	3.6
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .....	-1.6	1.7	-0.1	4.1	1.0	4.0
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores .....</b>	0.4	5.4	-0.5	4.3	0.8	4.6
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores .....</b>	-0.7	-3.5	-1.0	-2.3	-2.5	-2.2
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp; supplies dealers.....</b>	-0.5	7.5	0.9	8.0	1.1	7.1
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores.....</b>	0.3	2.1	0.2	2.1	-0.3	1.9
4451	Grocery stores .....	0.3	1.9	0.2	2.0	-0.3	1.7
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores .....</b>	0.1	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.2	0.3
447	<b>Gasoline stations .....</b>	2.5	6.4	-0.7	1.6	-3.3	2.6
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories stores .....</b>	-1.0	0.6	0.5	2.2	0.7	1.4
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp; music stores.....</b>	0.1	-1.4	-0.3	-5.5	-1.5	-5.4
452	<b>General merchandise stores.....</b>	0.2	2.5	0.3	2.1	0.7	2.1
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	-0.1	-0.8	0.9	-1.1	-0.1	-1.9
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers .....</b>	1.4	5.2	1.6	2.7	-0.9	2.9
454	<b>Nonstore retailers .....</b>	-1.1	8.4	1.8	10.5	1.4	8.9
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places .....</b>	0.3	2.3	-0.1	2.8	0.4	2.6

(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, September 15, 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 August 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	0.4	0.1	0.3
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ..	0.7	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.1
	<b>Retail .....</b>	0.7	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.3
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers .....</b>	1.5	0.9	0.4	1.1	0.2	0.7
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	1.5	1.0	0.4	1.1	0.2	0.6
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores.....</b>	2.6	1.0	0.8	1.4	0.2	0.7
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores .....</b>	2.7	0.6	0.5	1.5	0.0	0.5
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp;....</b>						
	supplies dealers.....	2.4	0.8	0.7	1.1	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	0.0	0.2
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores .....</b>	2.9	0.4	0.6	2.9	0.0	0.3
447	<b>Gasoline stations .....</b>	1.8	0.5	0.3	0.8	0.0	0.4
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories</b>						
	stores .....	2.3	0.6	0.4	0.8	0.0	0.5
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp; music stores.....</b>	2.6	1.3	0.8	1.3	-0.2	0.4
452	<b>General merchandise stores.....</b>	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	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>	2.7	2.4	1.3	2.5	0.2	0.8
454	<b>Nonstore retailers .....</b>	1.7	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.2	0.5
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places ..</b>	2.3	1.1	0.7	1.4	0.2	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, September 15, 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)>.