

FOR WIRE TRANSMISSION 8:30 A.M. ET, Thursday, November 14, 2002

ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES OCTOBER 2002

The Census Bureau of the Department of Commerce announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for October, adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$301.7 billion, virtually unchanged ($\pm 1.0\%$) from the previous month, but down 0.7 percent ($\pm 1.1\%$) from October 2001. Total sales for the August through October 2002 period were up 3.2 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) from the same period a year ago. The August to September 2002 percent change was revised from -1.2 percent ($\pm 1.0\%$) to -1.3 percent ($\pm 0.2\%$).

Retail trade sales were up 0.1 percent ($\pm 1.1\%$) from September, but were 1.2 percent ($\pm 1.2\%$) below last year. Health and personal care stores were up 7.0 percent ($\pm 2.2\%$) from last year and sales of building materials and garden equipment and supplies dealers were up 6.4 percent ($\pm 2.9\%$) from October 2001.

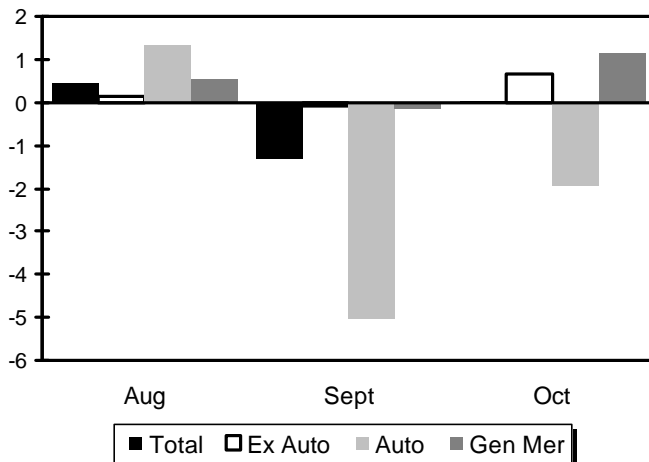
The scheduled release dates for 2003 are as follows: January 14, February 13, March 13, April 11, May 14, June 12, July 15, August 13, September 12, October 15, November 14, December 11.

The advance estimates are based on a subsample of the Bureau's full retail and food services sample. A stratified random sampling method is used to select approximately 5,000 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. Responding firms account for approximately 65% of the MARTS dollar volume estimate. For an explanation of the measures of sampling variability included in this report, please see the Reliability of Estimates section on the last page of this publication.

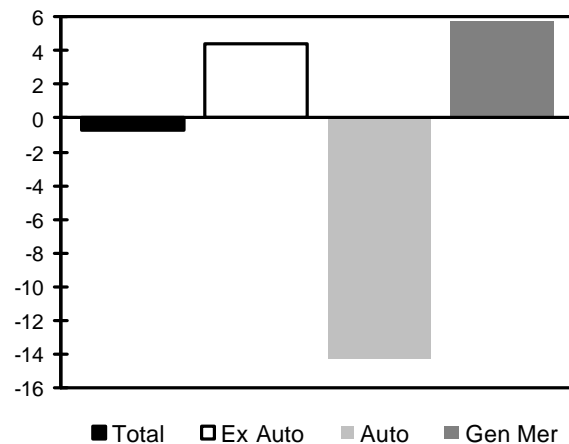
Percent Change in Retail and Food Services Sales

(Data adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes)

From Previous Month



From Previous Year



The Advance Monthly Sales for Retail and Food Services for November is scheduled to be released December 12, 2002 at 8:30 a.m.

Address inquiries concerning this report to Scott Scheleur, Service Sector Statistics Division, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC 20233. Telephone: 301-763-2713.

This report is available the day of issue through the Department of Commerce's online Economic Bulletin Board. For information call 202-482-1986. The data are also available on the Internet - <http://www.census.gov/retail>.

Table 1. Estimated Advance Monthly Sales for Retail and Food Services, by Kind of Business

(In Millions of Dollars and Annual Percent Change)

NAICS code	Kind of Business	Not Adjusted							Adjusted ¹				
		10 Month Total		2002			2001		2002			2001	
		2002	% Chg. 2001	Oct. ² (a)	Sept. (p)	Aug. (r)	Oct.	Sept.	Oct. ² (a)	Sept. (p)	Aug. (r)	Oct. (r)	Sept. (r)
	Retail & food services,												
	total	2,950,616	3.4	300,969	285,338	320,750	302,176	271,014	301,695	301,593	305,616	303,871	286,322
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	2,210,427	3.8	229,274	215,429	235,827	218,353	206,602	229,965	228,444	228,595	220,164	217,991
	Retail	2,669,384	3.2	272,870	257,871	290,546	275,416	244,987	273,819	273,479	277,519	277,218	260,006
	GAFO³	(*)	(*)	(*)	71,560	81,489	72,591	68,392	(*)	79,495	79,786	76,547	75,210
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	740,189	2.2	71,695	69,909	84,923	83,823	64,412	71,730	73,149	77,021	83,707	68,331
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	677,771	2.3	65,165	63,863	78,121	77,530	58,584	65,558	66,942	70,826	77,685	62,323
44111	New car dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	54,430	66,948	68,338	50,390	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,046	6,802	6,293	5,828	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	76,740	4.2	7,993	7,555	8,290	7,630	7,110	7,937	7,944	7,948	7,540	7,445
4421	Furniture stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,162	4,482	4,127	3,940	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,393	3,808	3,503	3,170	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	Electronics & appliance stores	71,896	7.4	7,116	7,064	7,759	6,768	6,544	7,788	7,779	7,783	7,368	7,171
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,938	5,466	4,747	4,562	(*)	5,618	5,578	5,322	5,149
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,126	2,293	2,021	1,982	(*)	2,161	2,205	2,046	2,022
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	266,748	5.6	28,026	25,757	27,490	26,347	23,443	26,611	26,476	26,397	24,999	24,428
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	23,131	24,533	23,383	20,931	(*)	22,993	22,737	21,691	21,207
445	Food & beverage stores	395,971	2.0	39,889	38,436	41,364	39,257	38,687	40,142	40,054	40,090	39,837	39,742
4451	Grocery stores	356,957	1.8	35,964	34,647	37,122	35,483	35,007	36,036	35,941	35,971	35,914	35,794
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,445	2,757	2,505	2,405	(*)	2,649	2,646	2,564	2,567
446	Health & personal care stores	151,198	8.5	15,661	14,705	15,395	14,673	13,278	15,724	15,660	15,488	14,702	14,247
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	12,457	12,885	12,491	11,258	(*)	13,309	13,068	12,429	12,092
447	Gasoline stations	193,830	-4.8	20,361	19,672	21,414	19,229	20,171	19,864	19,574	19,556	18,833	20,051
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	132,529	3.0	14,135	12,619	15,206	13,368	12,229	14,694	14,128	14,363	14,180	13,549
44811	Men's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	769	884	882	762	(*)	843	851	889	825
44812	Women's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,595	2,782	2,744	2,513	(*)	2,752	2,765	2,769	2,671
44814	Family clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,391	5,450	4,672	4,245	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,590	2,289	1,613	1,614	(*)	1,745	1,780	1,788	1,739
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores	67,040	5.9	6,645	6,860	7,836	6,432	6,563	7,492	7,497	7,477	7,268	7,080
452	General merchandise stores	353,765	7.3	37,198	33,898	38,350	34,916	32,641	38,753	38,316	38,370	36,656	36,393
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	172,489	-0.6	18,015	16,229	18,757	17,969	16,824	19,011	18,785	18,914	19,158	19,166
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) ⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	16,527	19,105	18,320	17,151	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	17,669	19,593	16,947	15,817	(*)	19,531	19,456	17,498	17,227
45291	Warehouse clubs & superstores	(*)	(*)	(*)	14,780	16,446	14,035	13,160	(*)	16,278	16,235	14,484	14,258
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,889	3,147	2,912	2,657	(*)	3,253	3,221	3,014	2,969
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	91,785	1.3	9,728	8,992	9,956	9,418	8,616	9,578	9,578	9,633	9,400	9,251
454	Nonstore retailers	127,693	1.1	14,423	12,404	12,563	13,555	11,293	13,506	13,324	13,393	12,728	12,318
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses	(*)	(*)	(*)	8,824	9,038	9,383	7,782	(*)	9,298	9,356	8,844	8,305
722	Food services & drinking places ...	281,232	5.4	28,099	27,467	30,204	26,760	26,027	27,876	28,114	28,097	26,653	26,316

(*) Advance estimates are not available from the subsample panel for these business classifications.

(NA) Not available. (a) Advance estimates. (p) Preliminary. (r) Revised.

Note: Totals include data for business classifications not shown separately.

(1) Data are concurrently adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes. Concurrent seasonal adjustment uses all available unadjusted estimates as input to the X-12-ARIMA program and the factors derived from the program are used in calculating all seasonally adjusted data shown in this publication. Factors and explanatory material are released on the Internet at <http://www.census.gov/mrts/www/mrts.html>.

(2) Advance estimates are based on early reporting by a small subsample of the full survey panel. All other estimates are based on the full sample.

(3) GAFO represents stores which specialize in department store types of merchandise (furniture & home furnishings (442), electronics & appliances(443), clothing & accessories(448), sporting goods, hobby, book, music (451), general merchandise(452), office supplies, stationery, and gift stores(453)).

(4) Includes data for leased departments operated within department stores. Data for this line not included in broader kind-of-business totals.

Table 2. Percent Change in Estimated Advance Monthly Sales for Retail and Food Services, by Kind of Business

(Adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes)

NAICS code	Kind of Business	Percent Change ¹					
		Oct. 2002 Advance from --		Sept. 2002 Preliminary from --		Aug. 2002 through Oct. 2002 from --	
		Sept. 2002 (p)	Oct. 2001 (r)	Aug. 2002 (r)	Sept. 2001 (r)	May 2002 through Jul. 2002	Aug. 2001 through Oct. 2001
	Retail & food services, total	0.0	-0.7	-1.3	5.3	0.8	3.2
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts)	0.7	4.5	-0.1	4.8	0.6	4.3
	Retail	0.1	-1.2	-1.5	5.2	1.0	3.0
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	-1.9	-14.3	-5.0	7.1	1.4	-0.2
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	-2.1	-15.6	-5.5	7.4	1.5	-0.4
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	-0.1	5.3	-0.1	6.7	0.6	5.3
443	Electronics & appliance stores	0.1	5.7	-0.1	8.5	0.2	6.9
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers.....	0.5	6.4	0.3	8.4	1.0	6.8
445	Food & beverage stores.....	0.2	0.8	-0.1	0.8	0.1	1.0
4451	Grocery stores	0.3	0.3	-0.1	0.4	0.0	0.7
446	Health & personal care stores	0.4	7.0	1.1	9.9	1.9	8.1
447	Gasoline stations	1.5	5.5	0.1	-2.4	1.4	0.9
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	4.0	3.6	-1.6	4.3	-0.4	3.0
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores.....	-0.1	3.1	0.3	5.9	1.6	3.8
452	General merchandise stores.....	1.1	5.7	-0.1	5.3	1.0	5.6
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	1.2	-0.8	-0.7	-2.0	-0.2	-1.6
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	0.0	1.9	-0.6	3.5	1.6	2.4
454	Nonstore retailers	1.4	6.1	-0.5	8.2	0.5	5.8
722	Food services & drinking places	-0.8	4.6	0.1	6.8	-0.5	5.1

(p) Preliminary. (r) Revised.

(1) Percent change rounded to nearest tenth.

Official Business

Penalty for Private Use, \$300

Source of Data and Reliability of Estimates

Source of Data: The Census Bureau conducts the Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey each month to provide an early indication of sales of retail and food service companies. The Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey is a voluntary survey of a sub-sample of about 5,000 firms selected from the Monthly Retail Trade Survey. Firms responding to this survey account for approximately 65% of the dollar volume estimate.

Reliability of Estimates: The reliability of the estimates is a function of sampling and nonsampling errors. The margin of sampling error, as included on page 1, gives a range about the estimate which is a 90% confidence

interval. If for example, the trend estimated is +1.2% and the standard error is 0.9%, then the margin of sampling error is $\pm 1.65 \times 0.9\%$ or $\pm 1.5\%$, and the 90% confidence interval is -0.3% to +2.7%. If the interval contains 0, it is uncertain whether there was an increase or decrease. For monthly level, the coefficient of variation (CV) is given. The resulting confidence interval is the estimated value $\pm 1.65 \times CV \times$ (the estimated value). Estimates of sampling variability are given in Table 3. Nonsampling error, on the other hand, can occur because of nonresponse, insufficient coverage of the universe of retail businesses, and response errors. Although not directly measured, precautionary steps are taken to minimize nonsampling error. Additional survey information is available at www.census.gov/svsd/www/advtable.html.

Table 3. Measures of Variability of and Revision to Advance Estimates for Level and Trend

NAICS Code	Kind of Business	Level of sales: Median CV ⁽²⁾ for Current Mo. (%)	Trend (percent change): Median standard error ⁽²⁾ for			Revision for month- to-month change ⁽¹⁾	
			Current Mo. to Previous Mo.	Current Qtr. to Previous Qtr.	Current Mo. to Current Mo. Last Yr.	Average revision	Median absolute revision
	Retail & food services,						
	total	0.7	0.6	0.2	0.6	0.0	0.2
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ..	0.7	0.5	0.3	0.6	0.1	0.2
	Retail	0.7	0.7	0.2	0.7	0.0	0.2
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	1.9	1.7	0.7	1.8	-0.3	0.7
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers	2.1	1.9	0.7	2.0	-0.3	0.7
442	Furniture & home furn. stores.....	4.0	1.9	1.0	2.4	0.3	0.8
443	Electronics & appliance stores	1.5	0.6	0.5	1.4	0.3	0.5
444	Building material & garden eq. &... supplies dealers.....	1.7	1.1	0.7	1.8	0.0	0.5
445	Food & beverage stores.....	0.6	0.3	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.2
4451	Grocery stores	0.8	0.3	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.2
446	Health & personal care stores	2.5	0.5	0.6	1.3	-0.1	0.4
447	Gasoline stations	1.8	0.8	0.6	1.2	0.1	0.7
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	1.4	0.7	0.5	1.0	-0.1	0.5
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores.....	2.7	2.3	1.5	2.6	-0.1	1.1
452	General merchandise stores.....	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.2
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	3.2	3.1	1.5	3.6	0.5	0.9
454	Nonstore retailers	7.2	3.8	1.3	4.2	0.0	1.0
722	Food services & drinking places ..	2.1	1.0	0.7	1.8	0.2	0.8



(1) These columns measure the difference between the estimates of trend for the same pair of data months, i.e. the difference between the Advance/Preliminary ratio and the Preliminary/Final ratio estimates. Revisions are based on estimates from the 12 most recent months.

(2) Medians are based on estimates from the 12 most recent months.