

FOR WIRE TRANSMISSION 8:30 A.M. ET, Thursday, February 13, 2003.

**ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL TRADE AND FOOD SERVICES
JANUARY 2003**

Intention to Revise Retail Estimates: Monthly retail sales estimates will be revised based on the results of the 2001 Annual Retail Trade Survey. Revised unadjusted and corresponding adjusted data are scheduled for release on April 30.

The Census Bureau of the Department of Commerce announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for January, adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$306.6 billion, a decrease of 0.9 percent ($\pm 0.9\%$) from the previous month, but up 3.9 percent ($\pm 1.1\%$) from January 2002. Total sales for the November 2002 through January 2003 period were up 3.6 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) from the same period a year ago. The November to December 2002 percent change was revised from +1.2 percent ($\pm 1.0\%$) to +2.0 percent ($\pm 0.4\%$).

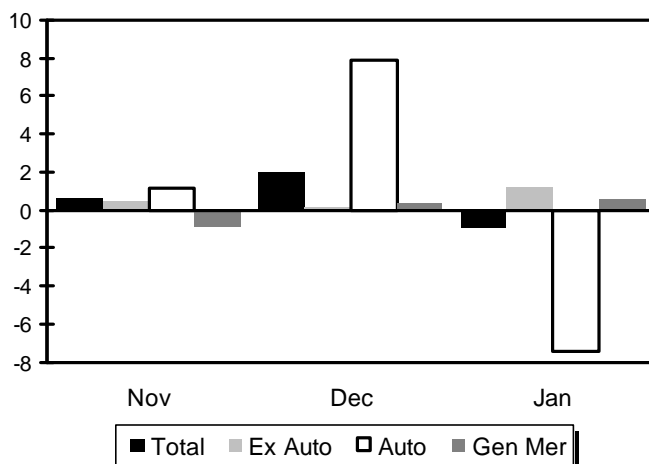
Retail trade sales were down 1.1 percent ($\pm 1.0\%$) from December, but were 3.5 percent ($\pm 1.1\%$) above last year. Gasoline stations were up 18.5 percent ($\pm 2.2\%$) from January 2002 and sales of building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers were up 7.3 percent ($\pm 2.4\%$) from last year.

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.

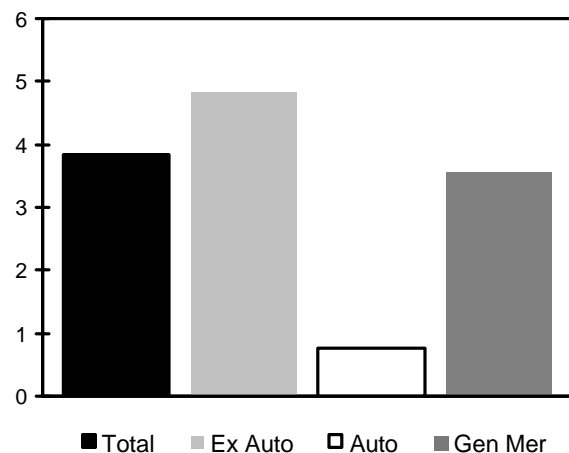
Percent Change in Retail Sales and Food Services Sales

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

From Previous Month



From Previous Year



The Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report for February is scheduled to be released March 13, 2003 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				
		1 month total		2003	2002			2001	2003	2002			2001
		2003	% Chg. 2002	Jan. ² (a)	Dec. (p)	Nov. (r)	Jan. (r)	Dec. (r)	Jan. ² (a)	Dec. (p)	Nov. (r)	Jan. (r)	Dec. (r)
	Retail & food services, total	277,094	4.6	277,094	351,432	303,240	264,922	337,272	306,570	309,454	303,385	295,195	295,789
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	212,512	5.8	212,512	282,819	237,903	200,789	272,732	234,652	231,738	231,364	223,815	221,822
	Retail	249,669	4.2	249,669	322,194	275,310	239,523	309,239	276,921	280,128	274,621	267,467	267,895
	GAFO ³	(*)	(*)	(*)	125,735	89,475	65,976	123,762	(*)	80,270	80,050	78,789	78,594
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	64,582	0.7	64,582	68,613	65,337	64,133	64,540	71,918	77,716	72,021	71,380	73,967
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	58,834	0.6	58,834	62,939	59,472	58,504	59,055	65,663	71,522	65,860	65,295	67,879
44111	New car dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	54,375	50,517	50,120	51,142	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,674	5,865	5,629	5,485	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	7,158	-0.2	7,158	9,531	8,941	7,170	9,319	7,857	7,962	8,062	7,888	7,811
4421	Furniture stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,680	4,817	4,130	4,811	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,851	4,124	3,040	4,508	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	Electronics & appliance stores	7,308	-0.6	7,308	12,513	8,556	7,350	12,387	7,700	7,810	7,781	7,699	7,798
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	9,637	6,385	5,090	9,406	(*)	5,626	5,581	5,444	5,517
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,876	2,171	2,260	2,981	(*)	2,184	2,200	2,255	2,281
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers.....	22,161	6.6	22,161	22,818	24,740	20,787	21,384	27,162	26,387	26,703	25,325	24,899
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	20,315	22,059	18,701	19,034	(*)	22,852	23,147	22,131	21,803
445	Food & beverage stores.....	40,213	4.0	40,213	43,829	41,070	38,651	44,358	41,170	40,114	40,660	40,071	40,085
4451	Grocery stores	36,635	3.9	36,635	37,964	36,832	35,270	38,624	37,005	35,917	36,540	36,063	36,030
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,724	2,766	2,216	3,689	(*)	2,693	2,624	2,601	2,627
446	Health & personal care stores	15,583	5.0	15,583	17,450	15,150	14,843	16,606	15,677	15,511	15,538	15,023	14,709
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	14,782	12,924	12,651	13,797	(*)	13,070	13,174	12,702	12,113
447	Gasoline stations	19,515	19.3	19,515	19,437	19,345	16,358	16,701	21,351	20,788	20,449	18,015	17,692
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	10,945	4.3	10,945	25,690	16,061	10,494	24,908	14,839	14,790	14,666	14,550	14,376
44811	Men's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,411	968	683	1,473	(*)	855	849	859	875
44812	Women's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,205	2,991	2,123	4,077	(*)	2,904	2,862	2,881	2,804
44814	Family clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	8,758	6,078	3,382	8,393	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,333	1,758	1,361	2,360	(*)	1,817	1,807	1,822	1,811
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores.....	6,787	-1.0	6,787	13,254	8,574	6,856	13,122	7,466	7,442	7,508	7,584	7,327
452	General merchandise stores.....	32,168	5.3	32,168	58,970	43,487	30,550	58,174	38,716	38,497	38,353	37,390	37,419
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	14,294	-3.3	14,294	31,845	21,592	14,789	33,323	18,256	18,277	18,306	19,242	19,280
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) ⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	32,431	21,995	15,074	33,901	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	27,125	21,895	15,761	24,851	(*)	20,220	20,047	18,148	18,139
45291	Warehouse clubs & superstores	(*)	(*)	(*)	22,184	18,236	13,197	20,002	(*)	16,986	16,792	15,014	14,949
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,941	3,659	2,564	4,849	(*)	3,234	3,255	3,134	3,190
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	8,489	-1.1	8,489	11,919	9,243	8,580	11,809	9,304	9,301	9,250	9,397	9,294
454	Nonstore retailers	14,760	7.3	14,760	18,170	14,806	13,751	15,931	13,761	13,810	13,630	13,145	12,518
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses	(*)	(*)	(*)	12,875	10,366	9,087	11,709	(*)	9,398	9,322	9,368	8,804
722	Food services & drinking places ...	27,425	8.0	27,425	29,238	27,930	25,399	28,033	29,649	29,326	28,764	27,728	27,894

(*) 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.

- 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>.
- 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.
- 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(4532)).
- 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					
		Jan. 2003 Advance from --		Dec. 2002 Preliminary from --		Nov. 2002 through Jan. 2003 from --	
		Dec. 2002 (p)	Jan. 2002 (r)	Nov. 2002 (r)	Dec. 2001 (r)	Aug. 2002 through Oct. 2002	Nov. 2001 through Jan. 2002
	Retail & food services, total	-0.9	3.9	2.0	4.6	1.2	3.6
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts)	1.3	4.8	0.2	4.5	1.5	4.8
	Retail	-1.1	3.5	2.0	4.6	1.0	3.3
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	-7.5	0.8	7.9	5.1	0.3	0.2
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	-8.2	0.6	8.6	5.4	0.3	0.0
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	-1.3	-0.4	-1.2	1.9	-0.2	1.8
443	Electronics & appliance stores	-1.4	0.0	0.4	0.2	-0.7	0.1
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers.....	2.9	7.3	-1.2	6.0	1.4	6.8
445	Food & beverage stores.....	2.6	2.7	-1.3	0.1	1.3	1.5
4451	Grocery stores	3.0	2.6	-1.7	-0.3	1.3	1.3
446	Health & personal care stores	1.1	4.4	-0.2	5.5	0.1	5.2
447	Gasoline stations	2.7	18.5	1.7	17.5	5.6	16.5
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	0.3	2.0	0.8	2.9	2.6	3.2
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores.....	0.3	-1.6	-0.9	1.6	0.0	0.2
452	General merchandise stores.....	0.6	3.5	0.4	2.9	0.2	3.4
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	-0.1	-5.1	-0.2	-5.2	-3.1	-5.1
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	0.0	-1.0	0.6	0.1	-2.9	-0.8
454	Nonstore retailers	-0.4	4.7	1.3	10.3	2.1	7.1
722	Food services & drinking places	1.1	6.9	2.0	5.1	3.8	6.5

(p) Preliminary. (r) Revised.

(1) Percent change rounded to nearest tenth.

Official Business

Penalty for Private Use, \$300

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	0.1	0.2
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ..	0.7	0.5	0.3	0.6	0.0	0.1
	Retail	0.8	0.6	0.2	0.7	0.1	0.2
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	1.9	1.6	0.7	1.8	0.3	0.8
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers	2.1	1.8	0.7	2.0	0.4	0.8
442	Furniture & home furn. stores.....	4.0	1.9	1.0	2.6	-0.1	0.6
443	Electronics & appliance stores	1.5	0.6	0.5	1.4	0.0	0.4
444	Building material & garden eq. &... supplies dealers.....	1.7	1.0	0.6	1.4	-0.1	0.5
445	Food & beverage stores.....	0.7	0.3	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.2
4451	Grocery stores	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.2
446	Health & personal care stores	2.6	0.6	0.6	1.4	0.0	0.3
447	Gasoline stations	1.8	0.7	0.6	1.3	0.4	0.6
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	1.5	0.7	0.5	1.0	0.2	0.5
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores.....	2.6	2.3	1.5	2.5	-0.1	0.8
452	General merchandise stores.....	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.2	-0.1	0.2
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-0.2	0.4
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	2.9	3.1	1.6	3.3	0.1	0.8
454	Nonstore retailers	7.2	3.8	1.3	4.1	-0.2	1.1
722	Food services & drinking places ..	2.1	1.0	0.7	1.7	0.0	0.6



(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.