

FOR WIRE TRANSMISSION 8:30 A.M. ET, Wednesday, August 13, 2003

## ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES JULY 2003

The Census Bureau of the Department of Commerce announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for July, adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$317.2 billion, an increase of 1.4 percent ( $\pm 0.9\%$ ) from the previous month and up 5.6 percent ( $\pm 1.0\%$ ) from July 2002. Total sales for the May through July 2003 period were up 5.4 percent ( $\pm 0.4\%$ ) from the same period a year ago. The May to June 2003 percent change was revised from +0.5 percent ( $\pm 0.9\%$ ) to +0.9 percent ( $\pm 0.1\%$ ).

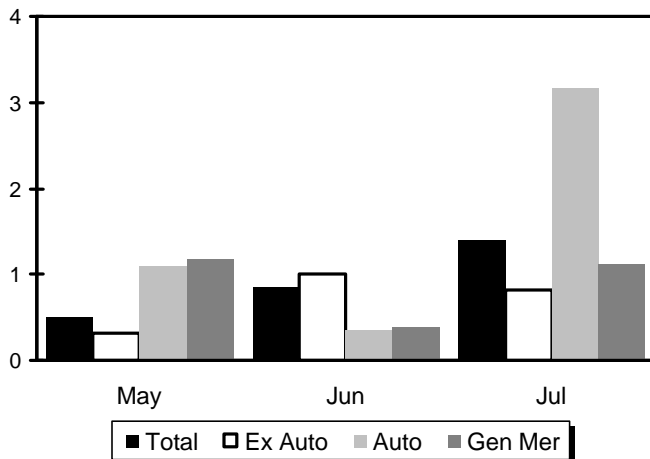
Retail trade sales were up 1.4 percent ( $\pm 0.9\%$ ) from June and were 5.3 percent ( $\pm 1.1\%$ ) above last year. Furniture and home furnishings stores were up 8.7 percent ( $\pm 4.1\%$ ) from July 2002 and sales of building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers were up 8.2 percent ( $\pm 2.2\%$ ) 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.*

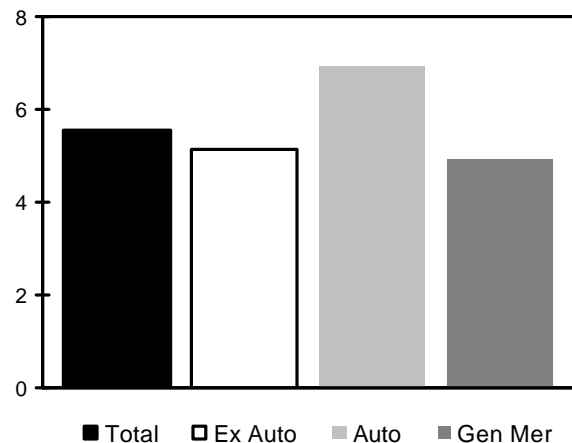
### Percent Change in Retail and Food Services Sales

(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 August is scheduled to be released September 12, 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 <sup>1</sup>				
		7 Month Total		2003			2002		2003			2002	
		2003	% Chg. 2002	July <sup>2</sup> (a)	June (p)	May (r)	July	June	July <sup>2</sup> (a)	June (p)	May (r)	July (r)	June (r)
	<b>Retail &amp; food services,</b>												
	<b>total</b> .....	2,130,067	5.0	326,060	315,464	326,654	306,129	299,179	317,194	312,859	310,214	300,466	298,026
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	1,596,891	4.5	240,077	235,296	244,468	226,611	225,415	239,092	237,150	234,773	227,433	227,341
	Retail .....	1,925,518	4.9	294,546	285,016	295,032	277,084	270,324	287,152	283,096	280,578	272,618	270,093
	<b>GAFO<sup>3</sup></b> .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	75,774	78,964	72,133	73,837	(*)	80,472	79,911	77,445	78,067
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers</b> .....	533,176	6.4	85,983	80,168	82,186	79,518	73,764	78,102	75,709	75,441	73,033	70,685
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	487,977	6.7	78,817	73,382	75,401	72,737	67,288	71,587	69,228	68,985	66,731	64,452
44111	New car dealers .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	61,404	62,792	62,833	57,333	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,786	6,785	6,781	6,476	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores</b> .....	54,646	3.5	8,414	8,067	8,380	7,724	7,556	8,422	8,377	8,272	7,747	7,846
4421	Furniture stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,314	4,556	4,264	4,255	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,753	3,824	3,460	3,301	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores</b> .....	49,249	2.0	7,466	7,278	7,195	6,963	7,015	7,896	7,805	7,755	7,416	7,544
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,200	5,223	5,049	5,000	(*)	5,652	5,628	5,388	5,441
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,078	1,972	1,914	2,015	(*)	2,153	2,127	2,028	2,103
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp; supplies dealers</b> .....	185,643	4.6	29,766	30,558	31,267	27,416	28,007	27,000	26,663	26,008	24,947	25,112
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	25,455	25,303	24,158	23,513	(*)	23,268	22,612	21,902	21,954
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores</b> .....	290,959	3.2	44,164	41,644	43,811	42,015	40,844	42,613	42,275	41,831	40,984	40,875
4451	Grocery stores .....	263,593	3.1	39,797	37,544	39,478	37,897	36,840	38,414	38,154	37,706	36,973	36,877
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,593	2,748	2,694	2,603	(*)	2,641	2,645	2,626	2,624
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores</b> .....	108,760	5.3	15,908	15,415	16,063	14,925	14,454	16,004	15,843	15,641	15,030	14,963
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	13,109	13,783	12,587	12,250	(*)	13,514	13,395	12,805	12,707
447	<b>Gasoline stations</b> .....	152,247	11.1	22,916	21,971	22,297	21,966	20,872	21,397	21,065	20,858	20,529	19,992
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories stores</b> .....	91,502	2.3	13,619	13,503	14,734	12,803	13,196	14,877	14,757	14,617	14,201	14,333
44811	Men's clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	806	832	725	795	(*)	836	833	829	825
44812	Women's clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,771	3,071	2,496	2,739	(*)	2,886	2,870	2,820	2,880
44814	Family clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,750	4,995	4,644	4,576	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,707	1,883	1,751	1,781	(*)	1,773	1,768	1,790	1,821
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp; music stores</b> .....	41,484	-1.6	5,940	6,120	6,010	6,089	6,160	6,682	6,785	6,656	6,826	6,740
452	<b>General merchandise stores</b> .....	253,327	3.8	37,757	37,831	39,423	35,499	37,038	39,741	39,304	39,155	37,878	38,236
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	113,687	-4.9	16,663	16,910	17,876	16,845	17,866	18,347	18,171	18,119	18,756	19,060
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) <sup>4</sup> .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	17,194	18,186	17,125	18,174	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	20,921	21,547	18,654	19,172	(*)	21,133	21,036	19,122	19,176
45291	Warehouse clubs & superstores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	17,757	18,215	15,822	16,226	(*)	17,864	17,788	16,128	16,145
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,164	3,332	2,832	2,946	(*)	3,269	3,248	2,994	3,031
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers</b> .....	58,472	0.0	8,625	8,475	9,203	8,530	8,436	8,764	8,740	8,804	8,717	8,794
454	<b>Nonstore retailers</b> .....	106,053	6.5	13,988	13,986	14,463	13,636	12,982	15,654	15,773	15,540	15,310	14,973
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	9,303	9,411	9,052	8,547	(*)	10,201	10,065	9,828	9,614
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places</b> ...	204,549	5.7	31,514	30,448	31,622	29,045	28,855	30,042	29,763	29,636	27,848	27,933

(\*) 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 <sup>1</sup>					
		July 2003 Advance from --		June 2003 Preliminary from --		May 2003 through July 2003 from --	
		Jun. 2003 (p)	Jul. 2002 (r)	May 2003 (r)	Jun. 2002 (r)	Feb. 2003 through Apr. 2003	May 2002 through Jul. 2002
	<b>Retail &amp; food services, total .....</b>	1.4	5.6	0.9	5.0	2.1	5.4
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ....	0.8	5.1	1.0	4.3	1.2	4.4
	Retail .....	1.4	5.3	0.9	4.8	2.0	5.2
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers .....</b>	3.2	6.9	0.4	7.1	5.1	8.6
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	3.4	7.3	0.4	7.4	5.5	9.1
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores .....</b>	0.5	8.7	1.3	6.8	5.2	6.6
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores .....</b>	1.2	6.5	0.6	3.5	4.1	4.4
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp; supplies dealers.....</b>	1.3	8.2	2.5	6.2	4.7	5.9
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores.....</b>	0.8	4.0	1.1	3.4	0.7	3.3
4451	Grocery stores .....	0.7	3.9	1.2	3.5	0.6	3.2
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores .....</b>	1.0	6.5	1.3	5.9	1.9	5.7
447	<b>Gasoline stations .....</b>	1.6	4.2	1.0	5.4	-6.5	4.6
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories stores .....</b>	0.8	4.8	1.0	3.0	2.1	3.9
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp; music stores.....</b>	-1.5	-2.1	1.9	0.7	0.0	-1.5
452	<b>General merchandise stores.....</b>	1.1	4.9	0.4	2.8	1.3	3.9
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	1.0	-2.2	0.3	-4.7	0.9	-3.5
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers .....</b>	0.3	0.5	-0.7	-0.6	2.1	0.5
454	<b>Nonstore retailers .....</b>	-0.8	2.2	1.5	5.3	-1.0	3.3
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places ....</b>	0.9	7.9	0.4	6.6	2.9	7.2

(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 estimate 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 <http://www.census.gov/retail>.

**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 <sup>(2)</sup> for Current Mo. (%)	Trend (percent change): Median standard error <sup>(2)</sup> for			Revision for month- to-month change <sup>(1)</sup>	
			Current Mo. to Previous Mo.	Current Qtr. to Previous Qtr.	Current Mo. to Current Mo. Last Yr.	Average revision	Median absolute revision
	<b>Retail &amp; food services,</b>						
	total .....	0.7	0.5	0.3	0.6	0.2	0.3
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ..	0.6	0.5	0.3	0.6	0.1	0.1
	<b>Retail .....</b>	0.8	0.5	0.3	0.6	0.2	0.3
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers .....</b>	2.0	1.6	0.7	1.9	0.7	1.1
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	2.1	1.7	0.8	2.0	0.7	1.2
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores.....</b>	3.8	1.9	1.1	2.6	0.3	0.9
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores .....</b>	1.6	0.6	0.4	1.1	0.1	0.6
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp;...</b>						
	supplies dealers.....	1.8	1.1	0.7	1.3	-0.1	0.6
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores.....</b>	0.7	0.3	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.2
4451	Grocery stores .....	0.9	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.2
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores .....</b>	2.8	0.6	0.4	1.3	0.0	0.3
447	<b>Gasoline stations .....</b>	1.9	0.7	0.6	1.4	0.4	0.5
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories</b>						
	stores .....	1.6	0.7	0.5	1.1	0.6	0.8
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp;</b>						
	music stores.....	2.4	1.8	1.5	2.1	-0.3	0.6
452	<b>General merchandise stores.....</b>	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.2	-0.1	0.2
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-0.3	0.3
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers .....</b>	2.9	2.7	1.5	3.2	0.3	0.6
454	<b>Nonstore retailers .....</b>	5.6	2.8	1.1	3.3	-0.2	0.8
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places ..</b>	2.1	1.0	0.9	1.8	0.1	0.7



(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.