

U.S. Census Bureau News

U.S. Department of Commerce • Washington, D.C. 20233

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FRIDAY, MAY 11, 2007, AT 8:30 A.M. EDT

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CB07-66

ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES April 2007

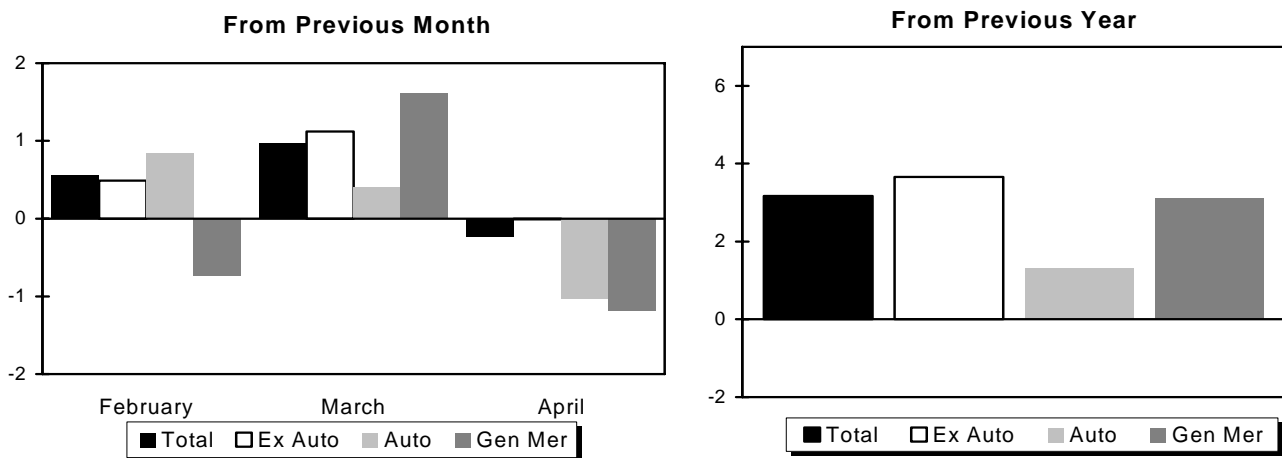
The U.S. Census Bureau announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for April, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$372.0 billion, a decrease of 0.2 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$)* from the previous month, but up 3.2 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$) from April 2006. Total sales for the February through April 2007 period were up 3.7 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) from the same period a year ago. The February to March 2007 percent change was revised from 0.7 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$)* to 1.0 percent ($\pm 0.3\%$).

Retail trade sales were down 0.2 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$)* from March 2007, but were 3.0 percent ($\pm 0.8\%$) above last year. Nonstore retailers were up 9.3 percent ($\pm 4.5\%$) from April 2006 and sales of health and personal care stores were up 8.1 percent ($\pm 1.7\%$) from last year.

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 5,000 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

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



The Advance Monthly Sales for Retail and Food Services for May is scheduled to be released June 13, 2007 at 8:30 a.m. EDT.

For information, visit the Census Bureau's Web site at <http://www.census.gov/retail>. This report is also available the day of issue through the Department of Commerce's STAT-USA (202-482-1986).

* The 90 percent confidence interval includes zero. The Census Bureau does not have sufficient statistical evidence to conclude that the actual change is different than zero.

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		2007			2006		2007			2006	
		2007	% Chg. 2006	Apr. ³ (a)	Mar. (p)	Feb. (r)	Apr.	Mar.	Apr. ³ (a)	Mar. (p)	Feb. (r)	Apr. (r)	Mar. (r)
	Retail & food services,												
	total	1,406,374	3.9	365,409	380,544	327,624	354,484	364,206	372,034	372,876	369,287	360,607	357,255
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	1,106,132	4.2	287,597	295,578	257,427	278,311	281,491	295,418	295,459	292,178	284,974	282,253
	Retail	1,264,139	3.7	328,775	342,022	294,356	319,125	328,162	335,216	336,013	332,929	325,494	322,295
	GAFO⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	94,392	83,015	87,157	88,077	(*)	97,971	96,415	93,549	92,242
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	300,242	2.8	77,812	84,966	70,197	76,173	82,715	76,616	77,417	77,109	75,633	75,002
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	276,442	3.0	71,766	78,366	64,671	70,146	76,233	70,497	71,113	70,989	69,520	68,864
44111	New car dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	63,816	53,428	56,547	62,526	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,600	5,526	6,027	6,482	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	38,966	5.0	9,664	10,414	9,249	9,136	9,995	10,585	10,456	10,357	10,007	10,045
4421	Furniture stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,631	5,324	4,903	5,417	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,783	3,925	4,233	4,578	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	Electronics & appliance stores	33,891	3.6	7,883	8,726	8,449	7,611	8,473	9,298	9,237	9,309	8,955	8,937
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,917	6,783	6,058	6,683	(*)	7,430	7,454	7,229	7,186
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,809	1,666	1,553	1,790	(*)	1,807	1,855	1,726	1,751
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	108,774	-4.0	32,118	29,944	22,771	33,377	31,481	28,761	29,429	29,143	30,609	30,778
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	25,727	20,479	27,828	27,980	(*)	25,599	25,440	27,123	27,539
445	Food & beverage stores	180,636	6.2	45,847	47,244	42,535	43,687	44,026	47,428	47,177	46,896	44,479	44,370
4451	Grocery stores	162,292	6.0	41,043	42,312	38,194	39,104	39,604	42,312	41,976	41,788	39,699	39,644
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,180	2,748	2,906	2,862	(*)	3,337	3,271	3,095	3,054
446	Health & personal care stores	77,625	7.7	19,389	20,239	18,450	17,833	19,089	19,724	19,555	19,442	18,253	18,372
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	17,040	15,631	15,085	16,002	(*)	16,544	16,471	15,472	15,476
447	Gasoline stations	127,219	1.3	35,377	34,148	28,292	34,696	32,690	35,061	34,458	33,403	34,558	32,854
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	65,053	6.6	17,369	18,266	15,307	16,975	16,493	18,502	18,884	18,471	17,671	17,374
44811	Men's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	811	691	758	721	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
44812	Women's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,467	2,665	3,442	3,250	(*)	3,389	3,331	3,269	3,205
44814	Family clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,217	5,457	6,534	6,291	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,363	1,913	2,388	2,174	(*)	2,305	2,224	2,253	2,165
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores	25,616	-0.5	6,282	6,856	5,647	6,331	6,678	7,347	7,404	7,203	7,336	7,314
452	General merchandise stores	172,863	4.8	44,822	46,397	40,844	44,047	43,066	47,388	47,961	47,201	45,954	44,994
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	61,074	-1.1	16,033	16,537	14,426	16,709	16,399	17,315	17,683	17,511	17,771	17,663
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) ⁵	(*)	(*)	(*)	16,995	14,806	17,186	16,858	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	29,860	26,418	27,338	26,667	(*)	30,278	29,690	28,183	27,331
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	26,305	23,438	23,981	23,338	(*)	26,598	26,188	24,697	23,863
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,555	2,980	3,357	3,329	(*)	3,680	3,502	3,486	3,468
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	37,546	2.5	9,653	9,927	8,849	9,148	9,524	10,275	10,233	9,932	9,865	9,803
454	Nonstore retailers	95,708	9.8	22,559	24,895	23,766	20,111	23,932	24,231	23,802	24,463	22,174	22,452
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses	(*)	(*)	(*)	16,086	14,400	13,603	15,446	(*)	16,038	15,982	14,883	15,158
722	Food services & drinking places ...	142,235	4.9	36,634	38,522	33,268	35,359	36,044	36,818	36,863	36,358	35,113	34,960

(*) Advance estimates are not available for this kind of business.

(NA) Not available. (S) Suppressed. (a) Advance estimate. (p) Preliminary estimate. (r) Revised estimate.

(1) For a full description of the NAICS codes used in this table, see <http://www.census.gov/epcd/www/naics.html>

(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-12 ARIMA 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/mrts/www/mrts.html>

(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.

Note: 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 <http://www.census.gov/mrts/www/mrts.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. 2007 Advance from --		Mar. 2007 Preliminary from --		Feb. 2007 through Apr. 2007 from --	
		Mar. 2007 (p)	Apr. 2006 (r)	Feb. 2007 (r)	Mar. 2006 (r)	Nov. 2006 through Jan. 2007	Feb. 2006 through Apr. 2006
	Retail & food services, total	-0.2	3.2	1.0	4.4	1.5	3.7
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	0.0	3.7	1.1	4.7	1.7	4.0
	Retail	-0.2	3.0	0.9	4.3	1.6	3.6
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	-1.0	1.3	0.4	3.2	0.6	2.8
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	-0.9	1.4	0.2	3.3	0.6	2.9
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	1.2	5.8	1.0	4.1	2.2	4.6
443	Electronics & appliance stores	0.7	3.8	-0.8	3.4	-0.6	4.0
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers.....	-2.3	-6.0	1.0	-4.4	-0.4	-5.4
445	Food & beverage stores.....	0.5	6.6	0.6	6.3	1.8	6.2
4451	Grocery stores	0.8	6.6	0.4	5.9	1.9	6.0
446	Health & personal care stores	0.9	8.1	0.6	6.4	1.3	7.3
447	Gasoline stations	1.7	1.5	3.2	4.9	5.6	2.3
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	-2.0	4.7	2.2	8.7	1.2	6.4
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores.....	-0.8	0.1	2.8	1.2	2.2	-0.1
452	General merchandise stores.....	-1.2	3.1	1.6	6.6	0.9	4.4
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	-2.1	-2.6	1.0	0.1	-1.0	-1.4
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	0.4	4.2	3.0	4.4	1.0	3.0
454	Nonstore retailers	1.8	9.3	-2.7	6.0	4.7	9.2
722	Food services & drinking places	-0.1	4.9	1.4	5.4	0.1	5.0

(p) Preliminary estimates (r) Revised estimates

(1) Estimates shown in this table are derived from adjusted estimates provided in Table 1 of this report.

Note: 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 <http://www.census.gov/mrts/www/mrts.html>.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Survey Description

The U.S. Census Bureau conducts the Advance Monthly Retail Trade and Food Services Survey (MARTS) 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 5,000 employer firms selected from the larger Monthly Retail Trade Survey (MRTS). Firms responding to MARTS account for approximately 65% of the total national sales estimate. Advance sales estimates are computed using a link relative estimator. The change in sales from the previous month is estimated using only units that have reported data for both the current and

previous month. There is no imputation or adjustment for nonrespondents in MARTS. The total sales estimate is derived by multiplying this ratio by the preliminary sales estimate for the previous month (derived from the larger MRTS sample). Detailed industry estimates are summed to derive total estimates at broad industry levels. The monthly estimates are adjusted using annual survey estimates and for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences. Additional information on MARTS and MRTS can be found on the Census Bureau website at: <http://www.census.gov/mrts/www/mrts.html>.

Official Business

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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 $\pm 1.65 \times 0.9$ percent or ± 1.5 percent, and the 90 percent confidence interval is -0.3 percent to +2.7 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 $\pm 1.65 \times CV \times$ (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.

Table 3. Estimated Measures of Sampling Variability and Revision to Advance Estimates

(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	0.5	0.4	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.3
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ..	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.2
	Retail	0.6	0.4	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.3
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	2.0	1.5	0.7	1.4	0.2	0.8
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	2.2	1.6	0.8	1.6	0.2	0.8
442	Furniture & home furn. stores.....	2.1	1.6	0.8	1.9	0.2	0.3
443	Electronics & appliance stores	1.3	0.6	0.9	1.0	0.0	0.4
444	Building material & garden eq. &.....						
	supplies dealers.....	2.3	1.3	0.7	1.2	-0.4	1.0
445	Food & beverage stores.....	0.6	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.0	0.2
4451	Grocery stores	0.8	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.0	0.2
446	Health & personal care stores	1.6	0.7	0.5	1.0	0.0	0.4
447	Gasoline stations	2.4	0.7	0.8	1.2	0.1	0.5
448	Clothing & clothing accessories						
	stores	1.7	0.6	0.7	0.9	0.1	0.2
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book &						
	music stores.....	2.6	1.3	1.1	2.1	0.0	0.4
452	General merchandise stores.....	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.2
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	3.5	3.0	1.9	3.1	0.2	0.7
454	Nonstore retailers	1.5	1.1	0.8	2.7	0.1	0.6
722	Food services & drinking places ..	1.5	0.8	0.8	1.1	0.1	0.3

(1) Estimated measures of sampling variability are based on estimates not adjusted for seasonal variation or holiday or trading-day differences. Medians are based on estimates for the period August 2006 to present.

(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 differences are based on estimates for the most recent 12 months.

Note: Additional information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, sample design, and definitions may be found at <http://www.census.gov/mrts/www/mrts.html>

