

Intention to Revise Retail Estimates: Monthly retail sales estimates will be revised based on the results of the 2000 Annual Retail Trade Survey. Revised unadjusted and corresponding adjusted data are scheduled for release on May 3.

FOR WIRE TRANSMISSION 8:30 A.M. ET, Wednesday, March 13, 2002.

**ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL TRADE AND FOOD SERVICES
FEBRUARY 2002**

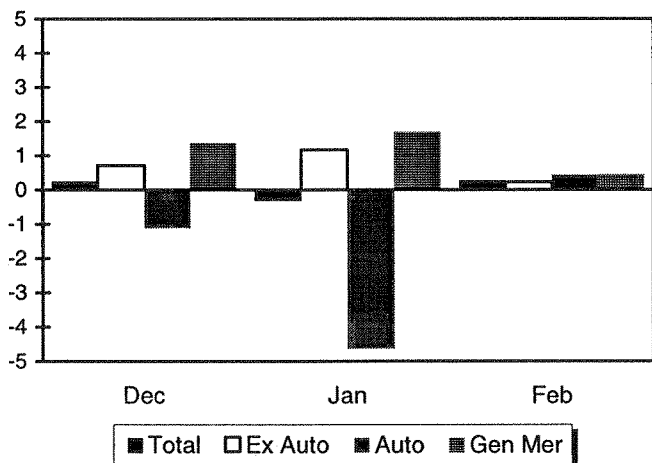
The Census Bureau of the Department of Commerce announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for February, adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$296.4 billion, an increase of 0.3 percent ($\pm 1.0\%$) from the previous month and up 2.9 percent ($\pm 1.7\%$) from February 2001. Total sales for the December 2001 through February 2002 period were up 3.3 percent ($\pm 0.3\%$) from the same period a year ago. The December 2001 to January 2002 percent change was revised from -0.2 percent ($\pm 1.0\%$) to -0.3 percent ($\pm 0.3\%$).

Retail trade sales were up 0.2 percent ($\pm 1.2\%$) from January and were 2.5 percent ($\pm 1.7\%$) above last year. Electronics and appliance stores were up 8.4 percent ($\pm 2.6\%$) from February 2001 and sales of health and personal care stores were up 8.1 percent ($\pm 3.6\%$) from last year. Sales of gasoline stations decreased 13.0 percent ($\pm 4.8\%$) from February a year ago.

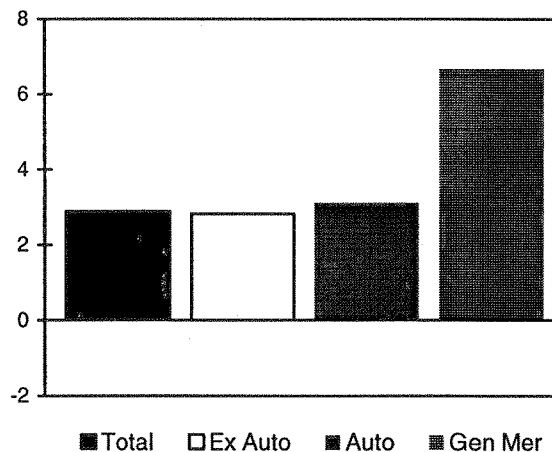
The advance estimates are based on a small subsample of the Bureau's full retail sales and food services sample. Estimates from the advance and the subsequent full survey can differ because of the earlier reporting in the advance and because of sampling variability present in both surveys. For an explanation 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 March is scheduled to be released April 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: 301-457-2713 or 301-457-2666.

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/svsd/www/advtable.html>.

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				
		2 month total		2002		2001			2002		2001		
		2002	% Chg. 2001	Feb. ² (a)	Jan. (p)	Dec. (r)	Feb.	Jan.	Feb. ² (a)	Jan. (p)	Dec. (r)	Feb. (r)	Jan. (r)
	Retail & food services,												
	total	529,327	3.0	263,404	265,923	339,371	255,884	257,934	296,414	295,605	296,560	288,095	287,727
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	395,969	2.9	195,599	200,370	273,240	190,196	194,787	223,635	223,139	220,569	217,512	217,804
	Retail	478,412	2.7	237,820	240,592	311,260	231,868	233,740	268,453	267,951	268,194	261,848	261,111
	GAFO ³	(*)	(*)	(*)	64,864	123,289	61,876	61,060	(*)	77,949	77,432	74,124	74,357
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	133,358	3.5	67,805	65,553	66,131	65,688	63,147	72,779	72,466	75,991	70,583	69,923
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	122,438	3.7	62,505	59,933	60,656	60,366	57,748	66,708	66,371	69,961	64,494	63,951
44111	New car dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	51,652	52,817	52,019	49,878	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,620	5,475	5,322	5,399	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	14,476	4.0	7,249	7,227	9,376	6,836	7,079	8,081	7,959	7,939	7,638	7,805
4421	Furniture stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,053	4,729	3,842	3,963	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,174	4,647	2,994	3,116	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	Electronics & appliance stores	14,422	7.6	7,030	7,392	12,459	6,472	6,926	7,717	7,635	7,887	7,118	7,159
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,154	9,467	4,503	4,843	(*)	5,460	5,533	5,043	5,119
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,238	2,992	1,969	2,083	(*)	2,175	2,354	2,075	2,040
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	40,960	4.9	20,157	20,803	21,510	19,411	19,644	24,772	24,868	24,197	23,906	23,594
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	18,590	18,922	16,881	17,147	(*)	22,052	21,429	20,662	20,389
445	Food & beverage stores	76,060	3.3	36,760	39,300	45,115	35,911	37,715	40,764	40,841	40,781	39,822	39,581
4451	Grocery stores	69,364	3.3	33,387	35,977	39,492	32,679	34,484	36,810	36,937	36,771	36,030	35,772
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,189	3,611	2,083	2,138	(*)	2,557	2,589	2,480	2,509
446	Health & personal care stores	29,281	8.9	14,311	14,970	16,729	13,212	13,665	15,096	15,106	14,623	13,966	13,817
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	13,026	14,219	11,350	11,809	(*)	13,105	11,999	11,985	11,856
447	Gasoline stations	32,032	-13.5	15,614	16,418	16,766	17,971	19,065	17,927	17,924	17,196	20,609	20,723
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	22,258	2.0	11,757	10,501	24,971	11,625	10,204	14,593	14,606	14,401	14,523	14,357
44811	Men's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	669	1,444	696	729	(*)	834	851	909	916
44812	Women's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,997	3,879	2,211	1,998	(*)	2,717	2,664	2,806	2,752
44814	Family clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,392	8,429	3,598	3,306	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,376	2,387	1,477	1,351	(*)	1,842	1,842	1,826	1,836
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores	13,113	10.7	6,073	7,040	13,410	5,666	6,178	7,649	7,776	7,557	7,027	6,975
452	General merchandise stores	59,088	7.1	29,937	29,151	57,297	27,929	27,236	36,509	36,348	35,744	34,227	34,520
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	32,672	5.7	16,599	16,073	34,711	15,749	15,171	20,480	20,542	20,305	19,545	19,768
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) ⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	16,365	35,268	16,061	15,468	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	13,078	22,586	12,180	12,065	(*)	15,806	15,439	14,682	14,752
45291	Warehouse clubs & superstores	(*)	(*)	(*)	10,380	17,353	9,625	9,608	(*)	12,446	12,017	11,596	11,646
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,698	5,233	2,555	2,457	(*)	3,360	3,422	3,086	3,106
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	17,442	4.6	8,836	8,606	11,747	8,493	8,189	9,441	9,346	9,387	9,129	9,025
454	Nonstore retailers	25,922	-5.2	12,291	13,631	15,749	12,654	14,692	13,125	13,076	12,491	13,300	13,632
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses	(*)	(*)	(*)	9,087	11,663	7,792	8,787	(*)	9,436	8,856	8,967	9,144
722	Food services & drinking places ...	50,915	5.6	25,584	25,331	28,111	24,016	24,194	27,961	27,654	28,366	26,247	26,616

(*) 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					
		Feb. 2002 Advance from --		Jan. 2002 Preliminary from --		Dec. 2001 through Feb. 2002 from --	
		Jan. 2002 (p)	Feb. 2001 (r)	Dec. 2001 (r)	Jan. 2001 (r)	Sept. 2001 through Nov. 2001	Dec. 2000 through Feb. 2001
	Retail & food services, total	0.3	2.9	-0.3	2.7	0.2	3.3
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts)	0.2	2.8	1.2	2.4	1.8	2.5
	Retail	0.2	2.5	-0.1	2.6	-0.3	3.0
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	0.4	3.1	-4.6	3.6	-4.5	5.9
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	0.5	3.4	-5.1	3.8	-5.1	6.5
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	1.5	5.8	0.3	2.0	5.6	5.6
443	Electronics & appliance stores	1.1	8.4	-3.2	6.6	3.8	8.4
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers.....	-0.4	3.6	2.8	5.4	1.2	4.1
445	Food & beverage stores.....	-0.2	2.4	0.1	3.2	0.6	2.9
4451	Grocery stores	-0.3	2.2	0.5	3.3	0.5	2.6
446	Health & personal care stores	-0.1	8.1	3.3	9.3	1.8	8.1
447	Gasoline stations	0.0	-13.0	4.2	-13.5	-7.3	-14.1
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	-0.1	0.5	1.4	1.7	5.4	1.2
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores.....	-1.6	8.9	2.9	11.5	1.8	11.2
452	General merchandise stores.....	0.4	6.7	1.7	5.3	3.3	5.6
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	-0.3	4.8	1.2	3.9	4.2	4.1
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	1.0	3.4	-0.4	3.6	0.5	4.1
454	Nonstore retailers	0.4	-1.3	4.7	-4.1	4.4	-6.7
722	Food services & drinking places	1.1	6.5	-2.5	3.9	4.8	6.7

(p) Preliminary. (r) Revised.

(1) Percent change rounded to nearest tenth.

Official Business

Penalty for Private Use, \$300

Reliability of Estimates

The Advance estimates are based on a small subsample of the Bureau's full retail sales sample. Estimates from the Advance and the subsequent full survey can differ because of the earlier reporting in the Advance and because of sampling variability present in each survey. The margin of sampling error, as used 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.

insufficient coverage of the universe of retail businesses, and response errors. Additionally, estimates of sales prior to March 2001 have been restated from SIC-based estimates. The restatement methodology may have introduced additional nonsampling error. Precautionary steps are taken to minimize nonsampling errors, but their magnitude is not directly measured.

Preliminary estimates for the current month and final estimates for the previous month based on the full sample will be published next month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report. This report will provide sales estimates in greater detail and additional measures of sampling variability. It will also present a description of revisions, the techniques used in developing the estimates, and an explanation of confidence intervals and sampling variability (Appendix B, Reliability of Estimates).

Estimates from the Advance and the full survey are subject to nonsampling errors. Such errors can occur because of nonresponse,

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	1.0	0.1	0.3
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ..	0.7	0.6	0.2	1.0	0.1	0.2
	Retail	0.7	0.7	0.2	1.0	0.0	0.3
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	1.9	1.8	0.6	2.1	0.0	0.8
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers	2.1	1.9	0.6	2.3	0.0	0.8
442	Furniture & home furn. stores.....	3.7	2.0	0.7	5.0	0.1	0.9
443	Electronics & appliance stores	1.2	0.7	0.8	1.6	0.5	0.6
444	Building material & garden eq. &...						
	supplies dealers.....	1.7	1.1	0.4	3.6	0.1	0.4
445	Food & beverage stores.....	0.7	0.4	0.2	0.8	0.1	0.2
4451	Grocery stores	0.8	0.3	0.2	0.9	0.1	0.2
446	Health & personal care stores	2.1	0.6	0.6	2.2	-0.1	0.4
447	Gasoline stations	1.8	0.9	0.3	2.9	-0.3	0.8
448	Clothing & clothing accessories						
	stores	1.5	1.1	0.6	2.1	-0.1	0.5
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book &						
	music stores.....	2.4	2.4	1.3	3.1	0.5	1.3
452	General merchandise stores.....	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.3	-0.2	0.4
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-0.3	0.6
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	3.5	3.5	1.6	11.9	0.8	1.0
454	Nonstore retailers	6.0	3.0	1.4	5.7	0.3	0.8
722	Food services & drinking places ..	2.4	1.4	0.6	2.8	0.4	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. These revisions combine data from the SIC-based and NAICS-based samples.

(2) Medians are based on the period February 2001 to present.