

U.S. Census Bureau News

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MONDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2012, AT 8:30 A.M. EDT

Ian Thomas / Paul Bucchioni
Service Sector Statistics Division
(301) 763-2713

CB12-189

ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES SEPTEMBER 2012

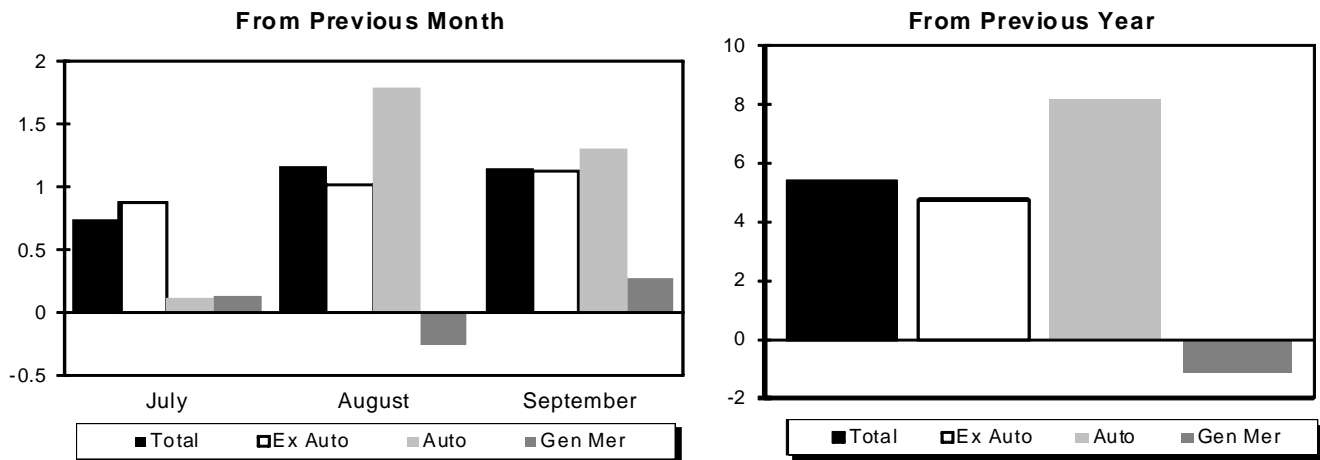
The U.S. Census Bureau announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for September, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$412.9 billion, an increase of 1.1 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) from the previous month and 5.4 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$) above September 2011. Total sales for the July through September 2012 period were up 4.8 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) from the same period a year ago. The July to August 2012 percent change was revised from 0.9 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) to 1.2 percent ($\pm 0.3\%$).

Retail trade sales were up 1.2 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) from August 2012 and 5.3 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$) above last year. Nonstore retailers sales were up 15.0 percent ($\pm 3.1\%$) from September 2011 and auto and other motor vehicle dealers were up 9.3 percent ($\pm 2.5\%$) 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 October is scheduled to be released November 14, 2012 at 8:30 a.m. EST.

For customized retail time series estimates by industry, visit the Census Bureau's web site at <www.census.gov/timeseries>.

To receive the latest updates on the nation's key economic indicators, download the America's Economy app for Apple and Android smartphones and tablets.

For additional survey information, visit <www.census.gov/retail>.

* 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				
		9 Month Total		2012			2011		2012			2011	
		2012	% Chg. 2011	Sep. ³ (a)	Aug. (p)	Jul. (r)	Sep.	Aug.	Sep. ³ (a)	Aug. (p)	Jul. (r)	Sep. (r)	Aug. (r)
	Retail & food services,												
	total	3,599,536	5.6	390,766	422,637	400,813	379,330	398,950	412,939	408,250	403,587	391,913	388,718
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	2,926,180	5.0	319,997	341,846	325,335	311,306	326,393	337,398	333,676	330,321	322,062	321,705
	Retail	3,202,841	5.3	347,453	377,092	355,767	338,059	356,718	368,787	364,288	359,725	350,098	347,395
	GAFO⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	101,524	93,633	91,623	98,373	(*)	99,384	99,546	98,399	97,703
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	673,356	8.1	70,769	80,791	75,478	68,024	72,557	75,541	74,574	73,266	69,851	67,013
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	610,580	8.7	64,059	73,327	68,326	60,866	64,919	68,659	67,770	66,336	62,813	59,999
44111	New car dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	60,993	56,958	51,006	53,711	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,464	7,152	7,158	7,638	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	70,015	8.8	7,942	8,558	7,934	7,556	7,772	8,112	8,081	8,030	7,503	7,409
4421	Furniture stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,571	4,270	4,085	4,157	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,987	3,664	3,471	3,615	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	Electronics & appliance stores	69,526	0.1	7,765	8,098	7,820	7,578	8,293	8,536	8,170	8,259	8,238	8,357
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,188	5,962	5,763	6,384	(*)	6,219	6,276	6,291	6,429
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,910	1,858	1,815	1,909	(*)	1,951	1,983	1,947	1,928
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	221,733	5.8	23,146	25,244	24,986	23,299	24,540	24,632	24,353	23,897	23,579	23,666
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	22,158	21,712	20,396	21,499	(*)	20,612	20,235	19,937	19,962
445	Food & beverage stores	470,601	3.6	51,933	54,068	53,361	50,360	52,054	53,411	52,783	52,886	51,367	51,663
4451	Grocery stores	423,313	3.3	46,595	48,536	47,852	45,229	46,841	47,839	47,352	47,425	46,105	46,423
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,813	3,778	3,597	3,658	(*)	3,673	3,700	3,652	3,629
446	Health & personal care stores	204,750	1.5	21,819	23,089	22,263	22,265	23,032	23,040	22,951	22,975	22,859	22,917
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	19,050	18,420	18,736	19,349	(*)	18,993	19,029	19,256	19,330
447	Gasoline stations	412,852	3.9	46,563	49,482	45,921	44,738	47,602	47,176	46,030	43,404	44,604	44,655
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	166,619	6.1	18,456	20,643	18,234	17,818	19,056	20,147	20,017	19,957	19,201	18,870
44811	Men's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	644	642	698	596	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
44812	Women's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,277	3,090	3,177	2,909	(*)	3,457	3,476	3,272	3,115
44814	Family clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	8,357	7,477	6,854	7,685	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,050	2,242	2,163	2,824	(*)	2,413	2,406	2,328	2,281
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores	63,585	6.6	7,168	8,699	6,847	6,899	8,239	7,553	7,493	7,516	7,186	7,146
452	General merchandise stores	452,301	1.5	48,036	52,057	49,847	48,615	51,642	52,612	52,469	52,606	53,199	52,874
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	125,240	-0.4	13,521	15,192	13,576	13,730	14,811	15,270	15,308	15,308	15,469	15,301
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) ⁵	(*)	(*)	(*)	15,433	13,796	13,956	15,051	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	36,865	36,271	34,885	36,831	(*)	37,161	37,298	37,730	37,573
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	32,056	31,583	30,686	32,611	(*)	32,152	32,327	33,210	33,074
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,809	4,688	4,199	4,220	(*)	5,009	4,971	4,520	4,499
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	89,288	7.3	10,014	10,685	10,185	9,768	10,087	10,267	10,274	10,174	9,668	9,681
454	Nonstore retailers	308,215	11.5	33,842	35,678	32,891	31,139	31,844	37,760	37,093	36,755	32,843	33,144
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses	(*)	(*)	(*)	28,525	26,074	24,087	24,965	(*)	29,226	28,716	25,196	25,397
722	Food services & drinking places ...	396,695	7.7	43,313	45,545	45,046	41,271	42,232	44,152	43,962	43,862	41,815	41,323

(*) 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/eos/www/naics>

(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-13ARIMA-SEATS 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/retail>

(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/retail>

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					
		Sep. 2012 Advance from --		Aug. 2012 Preliminary from --		Jul. 2012 through Sep. 2012 from --	
		Aug. 2012 (p)	Sep. 2011 (r)	Jul. 2012 (r)	Aug. 2011 (r)	Apr. 2012 through Jun. 2012	Jul. 2011 through Sep. 2011
	Retail & food services,						
	total	1.1	5.4	1.2	5.0	1.4	4.8
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts)	1.1	4.8	1.0	3.7	1.3	3.9
	Retail	1.2	5.3	1.3	4.9	1.5	4.6
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	1.3	8.1	1.8	11.3	1.7	8.9
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	1.3	9.3	2.2	13.0	2.0	10.0
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	0.4	8.1	0.6	9.1	1.9	8.9
443	Electronics & appliance stores	4.5	3.6	-1.1	-2.2	1.7	0.4
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	1.1	4.5	1.9	2.9	1.2	3.0
445	Food & beverage stores	1.2	4.0	-0.2	2.2	0.9	3.0
4451	Grocery stores	1.0	3.8	-0.2	2.0	0.9	2.8
446	Health & personal care stores	0.4	0.8	-0.1	0.1	0.6	0.7
447	Gasoline stations	2.5	5.8	6.1	3.1	2.2	2.1
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	0.6	4.9	0.3	6.1	1.9	5.5
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores	0.8	5.1	-0.3	4.9	0.1	6.2
452	General merchandise stores	0.3	-1.1	-0.3	-0.8	-0.2	-0.7
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	-0.2	-1.3	0.0	0.0	0.5	-0.6
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	-0.1	6.2	1.0	6.1	2.5	6.2
454	Nonstore retailers	1.8	15.0	0.9	11.9	3.8	13.1
722	Food services & drinking places	0.4	5.6	0.2	6.4	0.4	6.2

(p) Preliminary estimate (r) Revised estimate

(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/retail>.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Official Business

Penalty for Private Use, \$300

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 Sep. 2012

(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	0.8	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.2
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ..	0.7	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.1
	Retail	0.9	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.1
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	2.5	1.0	0.5	1.3	0.0	0.4
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	2.6	1.0	0.6	1.5	0.0	0.4
442	Furniture & home furn. stores.....	3.1	1.3	0.8	1.8	0.4	0.4
443	Electronics & appliance stores	1.5	0.6	0.5	1.0	-0.6	0.5
444	Building material & garden eq. &....						
	supplies dealers.....	3.3	1.6	1.0	2.2	0.0	0.5
445	Food & beverage stores.....	1.2	0.2	0.3	0.5	-0.1	0.1
4451	Grocery stores	1.3	0.2	0.3	0.5	-0.1	0.2
446	Health & personal care stores	1.7	0.3	0.3	0.8	-0.1	0.3
447	Gasoline stations	2.5	0.5	0.4	1.0	-0.2	0.5
448	Clothing & clothing accessories						
	stores	2.8	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.1	0.3
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book &						
	music stores.....	4.9	1.6	1.4	2.8	0.0	0.7
452	General merchandise stores.....	0.5	0.1	0.1	0.3	-0.2	0.1
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-0.2	0.1
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	3.6	2.4	1.5	3.0	0.3	0.7
454	Nonstore retailers	2.2	1.0	0.6	1.9	0.3	0.3
722	Food services & drinking places ..	2.1	0.7	0.5	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 most recent 12 months.

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