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## ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES SEPTEMBER 2011

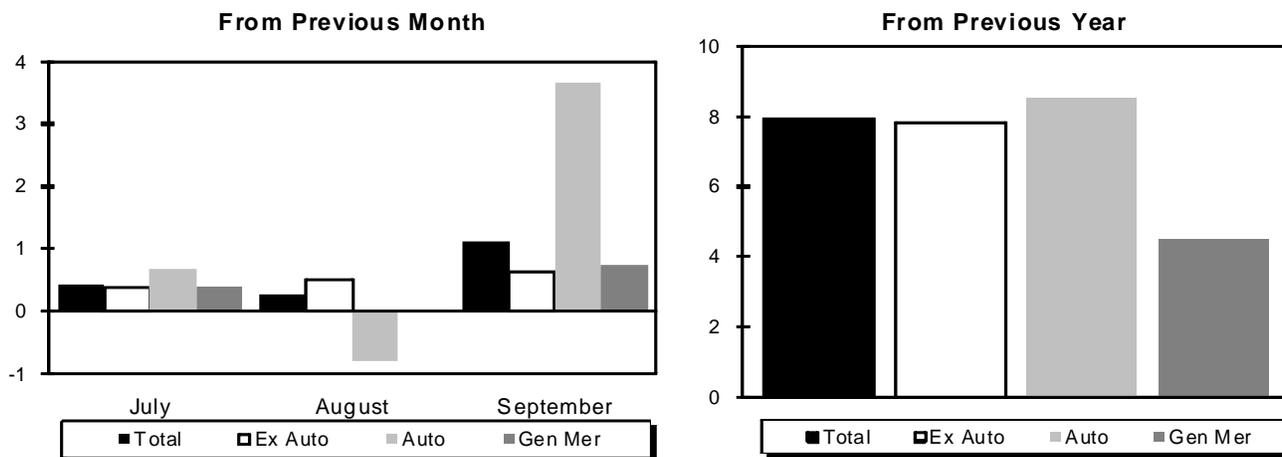
The U.S. Census Bureau announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for September, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$395.5 billion, an increase of 1.1 percent ( $\pm 0.5\%$ ) from the previous month and 7.9 percent ( $\pm 0.7\%$ ) above September 2010. Total sales for the July through September 2011 period were up 8.0 percent ( $\pm 0.7\%$ ) from the same period a year ago. The July to August 2011 percent change was revised from virtually unchanged ( $\pm 0.5\%$ )\* to +0.3 percent ( $\pm 0.2\%$ ).

Retail trade sales were up 1.1 percent ( $\pm 0.5\%$ ) from August 2011, and 8.1 percent ( $\pm 0.7\%$ ) above last year. Gasoline stations sales were up 20.3 percent ( $\pm 1.7\%$ ) from September 2010 and nonstore retailers sales were up 10.1 percent ( $\pm 2.3\%$ ) 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 15, 2011 at 8:30 a.m. EST.

For information, visit the Census Bureau's Web site at <http://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 <sup>1</sup> code	Kind of Business	Not Adjusted							Adjusted <sup>2</sup>				
		9 Month Total		2011			2010		2011			2010	
		2011	% Chg. 2010	Sep. <sup>3</sup> (a)	Aug. (p)	Jul. (r)	Sep.	Aug.	Sep. <sup>3</sup> (a)	Aug. (p)	Jul. (r)	Sep. (r)	Aug. (r)
	<b>Retail &amp; food services,</b>												
	<b>total</b> .....	3,443,873	8.1	382,009	401,951	391,878	351,696	369,199	395,472	391,038	389,934	366,371	363,666
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	2,826,679	7.6	314,954	330,226	322,077	290,020	303,114	326,679	324,667	323,028	302,974	300,875
	Retail .....	3,075,501	8.4	340,821	359,707	348,781	313,704	328,971	353,826	349,905	348,967	327,405	324,572
	<b>GAFO<sup>4</sup></b>	(*)	(*)	(*)	98,890	93,731	87,029	94,605	(*)	98,053	97,884	94,451	94,343
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers</b> .....	617,194	10.4	67,055	71,725	69,801	61,676	66,085	68,793	66,371	66,906	63,397	62,791
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	556,383	10.9	59,998	64,177	62,895	55,032	59,120	61,854	59,478	60,129	56,851	56,251
44111	New car dealers .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	52,969	51,318	45,336	48,538	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,548	6,906	6,644	6,965	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores</b> .....	65,237	1.0	7,671	7,892	7,422	7,357	7,611	7,573	7,488	7,437	7,335	7,375
4421	Furniture stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,199	4,061	4,016	4,085	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,693	3,361	3,341	3,526	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores</b> .....	70,324	0.0	7,737	8,240	7,888	7,685	8,082	8,433	8,420	8,395	8,430	8,337
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,572	6,243	5,885	6,240	(*)	6,679	6,613	6,539	6,420
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,668	1,645	1,800	1,842	(*)	1,741	1,782	1,891	1,917
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp; supplies dealers</b> .....	226,261	5.8	24,764	26,196	25,973	23,288	23,722	25,215	25,231	24,943	23,669	23,384
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	22,057	21,595	19,694	20,132	(*)	20,367	20,315	19,232	19,064
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores</b> .....	455,276	5.6	50,418	52,164	53,062	47,710	48,597	51,630	51,750	51,552	48,934	48,720
4451	Grocery stores .....	409,779	5.8	45,190	46,878	47,552	42,718	43,520	46,301	46,460	46,257	43,768	43,564
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,712	3,887	3,446	3,523	(*)	3,661	3,664	3,542	3,541
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores</b> .....	203,772	5.2	22,581	23,255	22,119	21,546	21,835	23,184	23,116	22,969	22,212	22,123
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	19,296	18,355	18,107	18,329	(*)	19,296	19,120	18,648	18,665
447	<b>Gasoline stations</b> .....	403,045	19.5	45,681	48,238	48,120	37,596	39,528	45,681	45,124	44,763	37,976	37,115
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories stores</b> .....	156,606	5.9	17,578	19,057	17,755	16,229	17,960	19,124	18,879	18,948	17,767	17,832
44811	Men's clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	594	634	601	551	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
44812	Women's clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,829	2,867	2,957	2,875	(*)	3,022	3,168	3,061	3,065
44814	Family clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,667	7,273	6,479	7,390	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,856	2,202	2,019	2,727	(*)	2,298	2,294	2,197	2,219
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp; music stores</b> .....	62,293	5.8	7,068	8,573	6,745	6,594	7,907	7,464	7,487	7,324	7,060	7,041
452	<b>General merchandise stores</b> .....	446,918	3.5	48,368	51,797	51,160	46,166	49,848	53,196	52,812	52,795	50,897	50,858
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	125,312	-0.9	13,676	14,829	13,950	13,604	14,844	15,491	15,317	15,401	15,335	15,436
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) <sup>5</sup> .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	15,102	14,217	13,813	15,048	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	36,968	37,210	32,562	35,004	(*)	37,495	37,394	35,562	35,422
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	32,602	32,807	28,399	30,814	(*)	32,865	32,774	31,105	30,969
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,366	4,403	4,163	4,190	(*)	4,630	4,620	4,457	4,453
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers</b> .....	88,590	8.7	10,510	10,681	10,258	9,591	9,514	10,378	10,288	10,261	9,616	9,342
454	<b>Nonstore retailers</b> .....	279,985	13.2	31,390	31,889	28,478	28,266	28,282	33,155	32,939	32,674	30,112	29,654
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses ....	(*)	(*)	(*)	24,835	22,178	21,989	22,397	(*)	25,061	24,975	23,343	22,995
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places</b> ...	368,372	5.5	41,188	42,244	43,097	37,992	40,228	41,646	41,133	40,967	38,966	39,094

(\*) 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-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/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 <sup>1</sup>					
		Sep. 2011 Advance from --		Aug. 2011 Preliminary from --		Jul. 2011 through Sep. 2011 from --	
		Aug. 2011 (p)	Sep. 2010 (r)	Jul. 2011 (r)	Aug. 2010 (r)	Apr. 2011 through Jun. 2011	Jul. 2010 through Sep. 2010
	<b>Retail &amp; food services,</b>						
	<b>total .....</b>	1.1	7.9	0.3	7.5	1.1	8.0
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ..	0.6	7.8	0.5	7.9	1.1	8.1
	Retail .....	1.1	8.1	0.3	7.8	1.1	8.2
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers .....</b>	3.6	8.5	-0.8	5.7	1.1	7.5
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers	4.0	8.8	-1.1	5.7	0.9	7.6
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores .....</b>	1.1	3.2	0.7	1.5	1.3	2.1
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores .....</b>	0.2	0.0	0.3	1.0	0.7	0.3
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp; supplies dealers.....</b>	-0.1	6.5	1.2	7.9	1.2	7.2
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores.....</b>	-0.2	5.5	0.4	6.2	0.8	6.4
4451	Grocery stores .....	-0.3	5.8	0.4	6.6	0.8	6.8
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores .....</b>	0.3	4.4	0.6	4.5	1.5	4.5
447	<b>Gasoline stations .....</b>	1.2	20.3	0.8	21.6	0.9	21.5
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories stores .....</b>	1.3	7.6	-0.4	5.9	0.9	6.9
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp; music stores.....</b>	-0.3	5.7	2.2	6.3	0.6	5.3
452	<b>General merchandise stores.....</b>	0.7	4.5	0.0	3.8	1.0	4.3
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	1.1	1.0	-0.5	-0.8	-0.4	0.1
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers .....</b>	0.9	7.9	0.3	10.1	3.6	9.5
454	<b>Nonstore retailers .....</b>	0.7	10.1	0.8	11.1	0.9	11.3
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places .</b>	1.2	6.9	0.4	5.2	1.3	6.0

(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

### 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/retail>.

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  $\pm 1.5$  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. 2011**

(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 <sup>(1)</sup> for Current Mo. (%)	Median standard error <sup>(1)</sup> for Percent change			Revision for month-to-month change <sup>(2)</sup>	
			Previous Mo. to Current Mo.	Previous Qtr. to Current Qtr.	Current Mo. to same Mo. Last Yr.	Average revision	Median absolute revision
	<b>Retail &amp; food services,</b>						
	<b>total</b> .....	0.7	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.2
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ..	0.6	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.2
	<b>Retail</b> .....	0.8	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.2
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers</b> .....	2.3	1.0	0.5	1.3	0.2	0.6
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	2.5	1.1	0.6	1.5	0.2	0.7
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores</b> .....	3.2	1.5	0.9	1.7	0.0	0.5
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores</b> ....	1.6	0.6	0.3	0.9	0.0	0.3
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp;...   supplies dealers</b> .....	3.2	1.7	1.1	1.9	0.1	0.7
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores</b> .....	1.2	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.2
4451	Grocery stores .....	1.3	0.2	0.2	0.6	0.0	0.2
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores</b> .....	1.8	0.4	0.4	0.9	0.0	0.3
447	<b>Gasoline stations</b> .....	2.5	0.5	0.4	1.0	0.2	0.5
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories   stores</b> .....	2.6	0.6	0.6	0.9	0.0	0.5
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp;   music stores</b> .....	3.9	1.9	1.2	2.2	0.4	0.5
452	<b>General merchandise stores</b> .....	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers</b> .....	4.1	2.4	1.3	3.0	0.6	0.8
454	<b>Nonstore retailers</b> .....	2.3	1.1	0.7	1.4	0.1	0.3
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places</b> ..	2.0	0.8	0.7	1.2	0.2	0.4

(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.