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## ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES December 2009

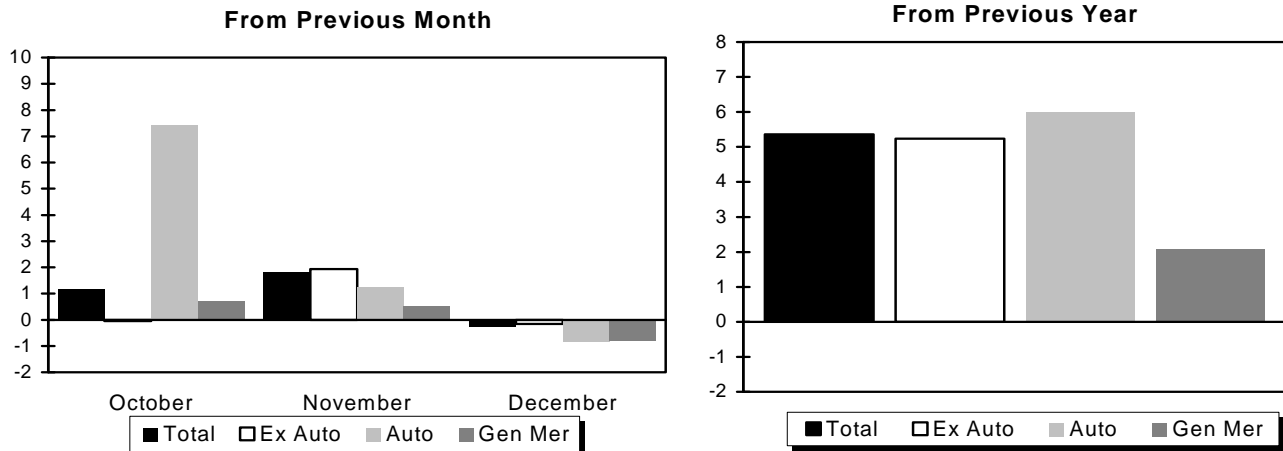
The U.S. Census Bureau announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for December, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$353.0 billion, a decrease of 0.3 percent ( $\pm 0.5\%$ )\* from the previous month, but 5.4 percent ( $\pm 0.5\%$ ) above December 2008. Total sales for the 12 months of 2009 were down 6.2 percent ( $\pm 0.2\%$ ) from 2008. Total sales for the October through December 2009 period were up 1.9 percent ( $\pm 0.3\%$ ) from the same period a year ago. The October to November 2009 percent change was revised from +1.3 percent ( $\pm 0.5\%$ ) to +1.8 percent ( $\pm 0.2\%$ ).

Retail trade sales were down 0.2 percent ( $\pm 0.5\%$ )\* from November 2009, but 5.9 percent ( $\pm 0.5\%$ ) above last year. Gasoline stations sales were up 33.6 percent ( $\pm 1.5\%$ ) from December 2008 and nonstore retailers sales were up 10.3 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 January is scheduled to be released February 11, 2010 at 8:30 a.m. EST.

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 <sup>1</sup> code	Kind of Business	Not Adjusted							Adjusted <sup>2</sup>				
		12 Month Total		2009			2008		2009			2008	
		2009	% Chg. 2008	Dec. <sup>3</sup> (a)	Nov. (p)	Oct. (r)	Dec.	Nov.	Dec. <sup>3</sup> (a)	Nov. (p)	Oct. (r)	Dec. (r)	Nov. (r)
	<b>Retail &amp; food services,</b>												
	<b>total</b> .....	4,139,381	-6.2	409,231	347,175	344,726	387,964	338,788	352,985	353,951	347,641	335,016	345,175
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	3,443,815	-4.9	352,419	295,513	287,895	334,459	289,976	293,545	294,025	288,445	278,928	288,233
	Retail .....	3,683,124	-7.0	370,945	311,226	306,112	350,138	302,569	315,041	315,789	309,821	297,453	307,210
	<b>GAFO<sup>4</sup></b> .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	102,736	91,199	136,308	103,191	(*)	94,795	94,335	92,358	94,499
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers</b> .....	695,566	-12.3	56,812	51,662	56,831	53,505	48,812	59,440	59,926	59,196	56,088	56,942
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	618,290	-13.4	50,727	45,771	50,147	47,105	42,565	53,173	53,659	52,842	49,428	50,254
44111	New car dealers .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	36,805	40,184	38,596	34,435	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,891	6,684	6,400	6,247	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores</b> .....	93,824	-11.1	9,185	8,223	7,672	9,521	8,754	7,764	7,743	7,687	8,069	8,212
4421	Furniture stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,324	4,179	4,542	4,469	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,899	3,493	4,979	4,285	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores</b> .....	102,451	-7.8	13,804	9,944	7,506	13,913	10,325	8,449	8,674	8,435	8,506	9,064
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,790	5,825	10,989	8,204	(*)	6,809	6,612	6,644	7,190
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,154	1,681	2,924	2,121	(*)	1,865	1,823	1,862	1,874
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp; supplies dealers</b> .....	285,751	-11.6	20,897	21,802	23,268	22,113	23,230	23,343	23,427	22,908	24,784	25,482
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	18,481	20,081	18,877	19,830	(*)	19,515	19,198	20,698	21,346
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores</b> .....	589,673	0.3	54,161	49,210	49,734	52,275	49,296	49,559	49,946	49,397	48,240	49,343
4451	Grocery stores .....	526,308	0.0	46,892	43,865	44,420	45,372	44,062	44,280	44,578	44,111	43,170	44,150
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,459	3,536	4,660	3,548	(*)	3,473	3,477	3,442	3,502
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores</b> .....	253,945	3.3	24,235	20,767	21,430	23,123	19,808	21,697	21,520	21,409	20,646	20,720
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	17,279	17,955	19,054	16,403	(*)	17,887	17,777	17,212	17,140
447	<b>Gasoline stations</b> .....	361,542	-24.5	32,680	31,728	32,264	24,506	28,049	34,545	34,190	31,203	25,850	30,521
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories stores</b> .....	209,358	-3.1	28,751	18,787	17,394	26,863	18,858	17,461	17,574	17,600	16,628	17,312
44811	Men's clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	762	743	1,165	817	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
44812	Women's clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,132	2,976	4,107	3,210	(*)	2,933	2,944	2,905	2,992
44814	Family clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,777	7,124	10,633	7,869	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,125	2,081	2,771	2,181	(*)	2,155	2,141	2,102	2,162
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp; music stores</b> .....	87,197	-0.6	12,429	7,422	6,366	11,957	7,441	7,411	7,291	7,267	7,084	7,189
452	<b>General merchandise stores</b> .....	594,618	-0.2	70,980	55,296	48,816	69,679	54,778	49,965	50,358	50,099	48,951	49,601
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	188,330	-5.8	26,996	18,605	15,011	27,417	19,569	15,737	15,737	15,667	15,923	16,517
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) <sup>5</sup> .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	19,092	15,453	28,238	20,196	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	36,691	33,805	42,262	35,209	(*)	34,621	34,432	33,028	33,084
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	32,360	29,801	37,058	31,197	(*)	30,644	30,440	29,505	29,403
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,331	4,004	5,204	4,012	(*)	3,977	3,992	3,523	3,681
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers</b> .....	114,252	-2.8	11,572	9,334	9,935	10,974	9,065	9,625	9,722	9,612	9,242	9,427
454	<b>Nonstore retailers</b> .....	294,947	-0.9	35,439	27,051	24,896	31,709	24,153	25,782	25,418	25,008	23,365	23,397
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses ....	(*)	(*)	(*)	19,936	17,766	23,654	16,993	(*)	18,494	18,092	16,658	16,261
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places</b> ...	456,257	0.7	38,286	35,949	38,614	37,826	36,219	37,944	38,162	37,820	37,563	37,965

(\*) 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>					
		Dec. 2009 Advance from --		Nov. 2009 Preliminary from --		Oct. 2009 through Dec. 2009 from --	
		Nov. 2009 (p)	Dec. 2008 (r)	Oct. 2009 (r)	Nov. 2008 (r)	Jul. 2009 through Sep. 2009	Oct. 2008 through Dec. 2008
	<b>Retail &amp; food services, total .....</b>	-0.3	5.4	1.8	2.5	1.7	1.9
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	-0.2	5.2	1.9	2.0	1.9	1.4
	Retail .....	-0.2	5.9	1.9	2.8	1.9	2.1
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers .....</b>	-0.8	6.0	1.2	5.2	0.6	4.5
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	-0.9	7.6	1.5	6.8	0.9	5.8
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores .....</b>	0.3	-3.8	0.7	-5.7	-0.2	-5.8
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores .....</b>	-2.6	-0.7	2.8	-4.3	2.0	-3.9
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp; supplies dealers.....</b>	-0.4	-5.8	2.3	-8.1	-0.7	-9.4
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores.....</b>	-0.8	2.7	1.1	1.2	0.8	1.3
4451	Grocery stores .....	-0.7	2.6	1.1	1.0	0.9	1.1
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores .....</b>	0.8	5.1	0.5	3.9	1.7	4.3
447	<b>Gasoline stations .....</b>	1.0	33.6	9.6	12.0	8.2	6.8
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories stores .....</b>	-0.6	5.0	-0.1	1.5	0.6	2.7
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp; music stores.....</b>	1.6	4.6	0.3	1.4	1.0	3.2
452	<b>General merchandise stores.....</b>	-0.8	2.1	0.5	1.5	1.6	1.7
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.0	-1.2	0.4	-4.7	1.1	-2.9
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers .....</b>	-1.0	4.1	1.1	3.1	1.7	2.0
454	<b>Nonstore retailers .....</b>	1.4	10.3	1.6	8.6	4.4	7.2
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places ....</b>	-0.6	1.0	0.9	0.5	0.1	0.4

(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

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  $\pm 1.5$  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 Dec 2009**

(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>						
	total .....	0.7	0.3	0.2	0.3	-0.1	0.2
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ..	0.7	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.2
	<b>Retail .....</b>	0.7	0.3	0.2	0.3	-0.1	0.1
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers .....</b>	2.2	1.6	0.7	1.5	-0.6	0.8
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	2.5	1.8	0.8	1.6	-0.6	0.9
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores.....</b>	2.8	1.8	0.8	1.9	-0.1	0.6
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores .....</b>	1.5	0.7	0.5	1.0	0.4	0.9
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp;... supplies dealers.....</b>	2.6	1.2	0.9	1.1	0.2	0.5
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores.....</b>	1.0	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.0	0.2
4451	Grocery stores .....	1.0	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.2
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores .....</b>	1.9	0.4	0.3	0.8	-0.1	0.3
447	<b>Gasoline stations .....</b>	2.4	0.6	0.5	0.9	0.4	0.6
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories stores .....</b>	2.4	0.7	0.6	1.0	-0.2	0.6
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp; music stores.....</b>	3.0	1.5	1.1	1.9	0.2	0.4
452	<b>General merchandise stores.....</b>	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.1	-0.1	0.2
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-0.2	0.3
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers .....</b>	3.3	2.7	1.6	3.2	1.1	0.8
454	<b>Nonstore retailers .....</b>	2.0	0.9	0.5	1.0	0.1	0.5
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places ..</b>	1.9	0.8	0.6	1.2	0.3	0.5



- (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.

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