

# U.S. Census Bureau News

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
TUESDAY, JUNE 13, 2006, AT 8:30 A.M. EDT

Scott Scheleur / Judy Ross Davis  
Service Sector Statistics Division  
(301) 763-2713

CB06-88

## ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES May 2006

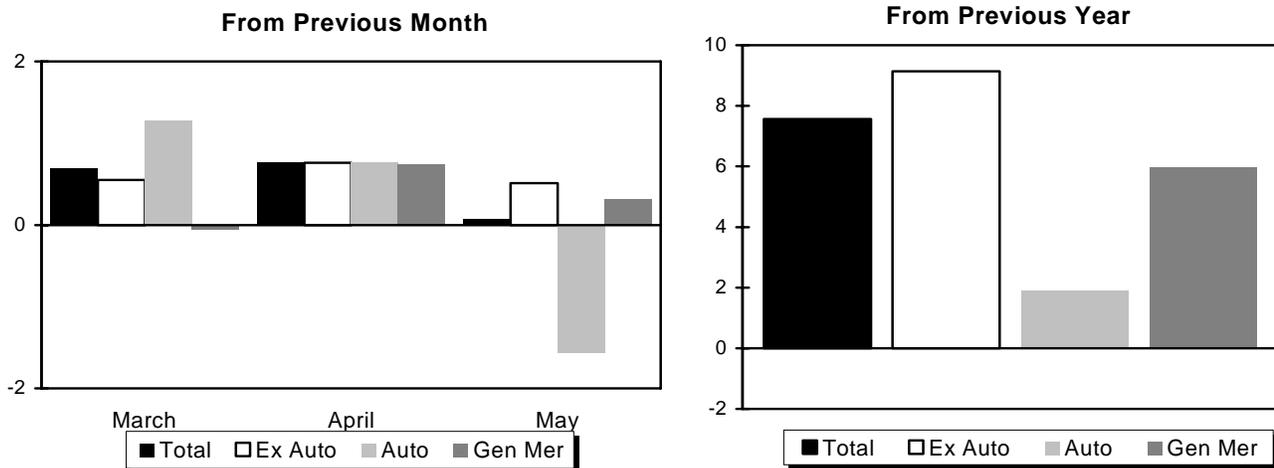
The U.S. Census Bureau announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for May, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$364.2 billion, an increase of 0.1 percent ( $\pm 0.7\%$ )\* from the previous month and up 7.6 percent ( $\pm 0.8\%$ ) from May 2005. Total sales for the March through May 2006 period were up 7.6 percent ( $\pm 0.3\%$ ) from the same period a year ago. The March to April 2006 percent change was revised from +0.5 percent ( $\pm 0.7\%$ )\* to +0.8 percent ( $\pm 0.3\%$ ).

Retail trade sales were up 0.1 percent ( $\pm 0.7\%$ )\* from April and were 7.5 percent ( $\pm 0.8\%$ ) above last year. Gasoline stations were up 21.9 percent ( $\pm 2.1\%$ ) from May 2005 and sales of nonstore retailers were up 14.1 percent ( $\pm 4.5\%$ ) 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 June is scheduled to be released July 14, 2006 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 from 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>				
		5 Month Total		2006			2005		2006			2005	
		2006	% Chg. 2005	May <sup>3</sup> (a)	Apr. (p)	Mar. (r)	May	Apr.	May <sup>3</sup> (a)	Apr. (p)	Mar. (r)	May (r)	Apr. (r)
	<b>Retail &amp; food services,</b>												
	<b>total</b> .....	1,744,907	8.0	380,072	357,440	366,989	347,570	337,663	364,198	363,943	361,190	338,604	339,841
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	1,366,513	9.5	296,704	280,218	283,385	268,459	259,145	288,760	287,304	285,130	264,568	264,403
	Retail .....	1,571,734	7.9	343,401	321,698	330,759	313,573	304,176	328,767	328,520	325,981	305,820	307,011
	<b>GAFO<sup>4</sup></b> .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	86,826	87,741	84,275	81,163	(*)	92,809	92,337	87,677	87,715
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers</b> .....	378,394	2.8	83,368	77,222	83,604	79,111	78,518	75,438	76,639	76,060	74,036	75,438
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	347,509	2.5	76,866	71,018	76,929	73,007	72,350	69,186	70,385	69,745	68,040	69,367
44111	New car dealers .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	55,889	61,857	58,425	57,550	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,204	6,675	6,104	6,168	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores</b> .....	46,298	9.3	9,592	9,058	9,881	8,792	8,544	9,818	9,867	9,851	9,139	9,080
4421	Furniture stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,748	5,251	4,644	4,609	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,310	4,630	4,148	3,935	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores</b> .....	40,065	6.7	8,084	7,409	8,290	7,540	7,145	8,780	8,746	8,714	8,284	8,306
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,034	6,654	6,067	5,649	(*)	7,192	7,139	6,623	6,638
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,375	1,636	1,473	1,496	(*)	1,554	1,575	1,661	1,668
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp; supplies dealers</b> .....	148,674	15.5	36,491	32,827	31,027	31,891	29,950	30,242	30,363	31,007	27,195	26,915
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	27,096	27,391	26,317	24,918	(*)	26,801	27,473	24,012	23,891
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores</b> .....	217,540	4.6	46,481	43,966	44,268	43,796	41,668	45,089	44,841	44,592	42,962	42,899
4451	Grocery stores .....	194,436	3.8	41,309	39,155	39,629	39,226	37,357	40,028	39,832	39,629	38,419	38,354
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,961	2,918	2,811	2,732	(*)	3,157	3,124	2,863	2,849
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores</b> .....	90,727	6.4	18,782	17,786	19,062	17,448	16,932	18,253	18,186	18,189	17,310	17,155
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	14,930	15,855	14,661	14,168	(*)	15,219	15,201	14,501	14,355
447	<b>Gasoline stations</b> .....	171,381	18.7	39,501	36,474	34,327	31,954	31,247	37,300	36,620	34,709	30,607	30,694
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories stores</b> .....	78,003	6.1	17,102	16,922	16,465	16,032	15,741	17,581	17,553	17,474	16,592	16,775
44811	Men's clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	754	718	753	724	(*)	792	779	788	783
44812	Women's clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,421	3,229	3,124	3,136	(*)	3,227	3,188	3,030	3,033
44814	Family clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,509	6,267	5,951	5,963	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,285	2,084	2,028	2,069	(*)	2,130	2,116	2,028	2,028
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp; music stores</b> .....	32,122	7.6	6,570	6,285	6,637	6,010	6,001	7,292	7,241	7,230	6,783	6,788
452	<b>General merchandise stores</b> .....	210,638	6.6	45,345	44,166	43,162	42,706	40,805	46,035	45,889	45,550	43,441	43,429
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	79,000	-0.2	16,984	16,784	16,455	16,905	16,624	17,815	17,799	17,820	17,819	18,050
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) <sup>5</sup> .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	17,207	16,860	17,370	17,071	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	27,382	26,707	25,801	24,181	(*)	28,090	27,730	25,622	25,379
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	24,046	23,402	22,431	21,024	(*)	24,637	24,276	22,275	22,038
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,336	3,305	3,370	3,157	(*)	3,453	3,454	3,347	3,341
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers</b> .....	47,197	8.9	10,498	9,175	9,530	9,673	8,595	9,885	9,929	9,882	9,273	9,107
454	<b>Nonstore retailers</b> .....	110,695	12.6	21,587	20,408	24,506	18,620	19,030	23,054	22,646	22,723	20,198	20,425
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses ....	(*)	(*)	(*)	13,452	15,447	12,578	12,350	(*)	14,848	14,939	13,212	13,152
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places</b> ...	173,173	8.6	36,671	35,742	36,230	33,997	33,487	35,431	35,423	35,209	32,784	32,830

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

(NA) Not available. (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 <sup>1</sup>					
		May 2006 Advance from --		Apr. 2006 Preliminary from --		Mar. 2006 through May 2006 from --	
		Apr. 2006 (p)	May 2005 (r)	Mar. 2006 (r)	Apr. 2005 (r)	Dec. 2005 through Feb. 2006	Mar. 2005 through May 2005
	<b>Retail &amp; food services,</b>						
	<b>total</b> .....	0.1	7.6	0.8	7.1	1.7	7.6
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	0.5	9.1	0.8	8.7	2.0	9.1
	Retail .....	0.1	7.5	0.8	7.0	1.7	7.4
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers</b> .....	-1.6	1.9	0.8	1.6	0.5	2.1
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	-1.7	1.7	0.9	1.5	0.7	1.8
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores</b> .....	-0.5	7.4	0.2	8.7	0.8	8.6
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores</b> .....	0.4	6.0	0.4	5.3	0.1	5.5
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp; supplies dealers</b> .....	-0.4	11.2	-2.1	12.8	2.0	13.9
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores</b> .....	0.6	5.0	0.6	4.5	1.0	4.8
4451	Grocery stores .....	0.5	4.2	0.5	3.9	1.0	4.1
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores</b> .....	0.4	5.4	0.0	6.0	1.2	6.3
447	<b>Gasoline stations</b> .....	1.9	21.9	5.5	19.3	5.3	18.4
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories stores</b> .....	0.2	6.0	0.5	4.6	1.0	6.0
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp; music stores</b> .....	0.7	7.5	0.2	6.7	2.5	7.0
452	<b>General merchandise stores</b> .....	0.3	6.0	0.7	5.7	1.0	5.9
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.1	0.0	-0.1	-1.4	-0.6	-0.6
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers</b> .....	-0.4	6.6	0.5	9.0	2.3	8.3
454	<b>Nonstore retailers</b> .....	1.8	14.1	-0.3	10.9	3.5	13.3
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places</b> ....	0.0	8.1	0.6	7.9	1.6	8.6

(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

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 statistical 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 <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 .....	0.8	0.4	0.2	0.5	0.2	0.3
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ..	0.7	0.4	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.1
	<b>Retail .....</b>	0.8	0.4	0.2	0.5	0.2	0.3
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers .....</b>	2.1	1.5	0.6	1.4	0.6	1.0
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	2.2	1.6	0.7	1.6	0.7	1.1
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores.....</b>	4.1	1.5	1.0	1.9	0.4	0.8
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores ....</b>	1.9	0.5	0.4	1.0	0.4	0.3
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp;....</b>						
	<b>supplies dealers.....</b>	2.5	0.8	0.6	1.3	0.3	0.4
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores.....</b>	0.9	0.2	0.2	0.5	-0.1	0.1
4451	Grocery stores .....	0.9	0.2	0.2	0.5	-0.1	0.1
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores .....</b>	3.2	0.5	0.4	0.9	-0.2	0.1
447	<b>Gasoline stations .....</b>	1.9	0.7	0.5	1.3	0.2	0.6
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories</b>						
	<b>stores .....</b>	1.5	0.7	0.5	0.8	0.0	0.3
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp;</b>						
	<b>music stores.....</b>	3.0	1.8	1.2	2.1	0.0	0.2
452	<b>General merchandise stores.....</b>	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0	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>	3.4	3.3	1.5	3.8	0.4	0.9
454	<b>Nonstore retailers .....</b>	4.9	2.0	1.0	2.7	0.2	0.4
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places ..</b>	3.0	0.7	0.6	1.5	0.2	0.1

(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 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>

