




MONTHLY ADVANCE ECONOMIC INDICATORS REPORT, MAY 2026

Release Number: CB26-110

June 26, 2026 — The U.S. Census Bureau announced the following international trade, wholesale inventories, and retail inventories advance statistics for May 2026:

	 ADVANCE INTERNATIONAL TRADE: GOODS DEFICIT	 ADVANCE WHOLESALE INVENTORIES	 ADVANCE RETAIL INVENTORIES
MAY 2026	\$105.8 Billion +27.4%°	\$944.0 Billion +0.3%	\$832.2 Billion +0.6%
APRIL 2026	\$83.0 Billion	\$940.7 Billion (R)	\$827.4 Billion (R)
Next release: July 28, 2026.			
<small>* The 90 percent confidence interval includes zero. There is insufficient evidence to conclude that the actual change is different from zero. ° Statistical significance is not applicable or not measurable. Data adjusted for seasonality but not price changes. Source: U.S. Census Bureau; Advance Economic Indicators Report, June 26, 2026.</small>			

Advance International Trade in Goods

The international trade deficit was \$105.8 billion in May, up \$22.7 billion from \$83.0 billion in April. Exports of goods for May were \$207.7 billion, \$11.8 billion less than April exports. Imports of goods for May were \$313.4 billion, \$10.9 billion more than April imports.

Advance Wholesale Inventories

Wholesale inventories for May, adjusted for seasonal variations and trading day differences, but not for price changes, were estimated at an end-of-month level of \$944.0 billion, up 0.3 percent (± 0.2 percent) from April 2026, and were up 4.3 percent (± 1.2 percent) from May 2025. The March 2026 to April 2026 percentage change was revised from the preliminary estimate of up 0.6 percent (± 0.4 percent) to up 0.7 percent (± 0.4 percent).

Advance Retail Inventories

Retail inventories for May, adjusted for seasonal variations and trading day differences, but not for price changes, were estimated at an end-of-month level of \$832.2 billion, up 0.6 percent (± 0.2 percent) from April 2026, and were up 3.4 percent (± 0.5 percent) from May 2025. The March 2026 to April 2026 percentage change was unrevised from the preliminary estimate of up 0.7 percent (± 0.2 percent).

The June 2026 Advance report is scheduled for release on July 28, 2026. View the full schedule in the Economic Briefing Room: < <https://www.census.gov/economic-indicators> >. The full text and tables of this release can be found at < <https://www.census.gov/econ/indicators/index.html> >.

Data InquiriesInternational Trade Indicator Branch: 301-763-2311 eid.international.trade.data@census.govRetail Indicator Branch: 301-763-2713 eid.retail.indicator.branch@census.govWholesale Indicator Branch: 301-763-6856 eid.wholesale.indicator.branch@census.gov**Media Inquiries**

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Intention to Revise - Monthly retail estimates are anticipated to be revised based on historical corrections and the results of the 2023 and 2024 Annual Integrated Economic Survey. Revised not adjusted estimates and corresponding adjusted estimates are tentatively scheduled for release on September 28, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. EDT. Revisions to the retail estimates are anticipated to be reflected in the August 2026 Advance Economic Indicators release scheduled for September 30, 2026 at 8:30 a.m. EDT.

Special Notice - The Annual Wholesale Trade Survey (AWTS) has transitioned to the Annual Integrated Economic Survey (AIES). As a result of this transition and the associated changes to data processing and integration, the Monthly Wholesale Trade Survey (MWTS) annual revisions will be delayed. An updated release schedule will be provided once it becomes available.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

International Trade in Goods

Goods (Census Basis)

Data for goods on a Census basis are compiled from the documents collected by the U.S. Customs and Border Protection and reflect the movement of goods between foreign countries and the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and U.S. Foreign Trade Zones. They include government and non-government shipments of goods and exclude shipments between the United States and its territories and possessions; transactions with U.S. military, diplomatic, and consular installations abroad; U.S. goods returned to the United States by its Armed Forces; personal and household effects of travelers; and in-transit shipments. Data for U.S. exports to Canada are derived from import data compiled by Canada. For more information on the data exchange and substitution please refer to the FT-900. The General Imports value reflects the total arrival of merchandise from foreign countries that immediately enters consumption channels, warehouses, or Foreign Trade Zones.

For imports, the value reported is the U.S. Customs and Border Protection appraised value of merchandise—generally, the price paid for merchandise for export to the United States. Import duties, freight, insurance, and other charges incurred in bringing merchandise to the United States are excluded.

Exports are valued at the free alongside ship value of merchandise at the U.S. port of export, based on the transaction price including inland freight, insurance, and other charges incurred in placing the merchandise alongside the carrier at the U.S. port of exportation.

Additional information on coverage and valuation are available in the Guide to Foreign Trade Statistics, <www.census.gov/foreign-trade/guide/sec2.html#coverage> and <www.census.gov/foreign-trade/guide/sec2.html#valuation>, respectively.

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Nonsampling Errors

Goods data are a complete enumeration of documents collected by the U.S. Customs and Border Protection and are not subject to sampling errors. This report presents current month statistics which reflect nearly complete coverage. Current month statistics reflecting complete coverage will be published in the upcoming U.S. International Trade in Goods and Services report (FT-900). Statistics for other months shown reflect complete coverage and appear in the most recently published FT-900. Quality assurance procedures are performed at every stage of collection, processing, and tabulation. However, the data are still subject to several types of nonsampling errors. Information on nonsampling errors and other quality issues are available in the Guide to Foreign Trade Statistics, <www.census.gov/foreign-trade/guide/sec2.html>.

The U.S. Census Bureau recommends that data users incorporate this information into their analyses, as nonsampling errors could impact the conclusion drawn from the results. For a detailed discussion of errors affecting the goods data, see U.S. Merchandise Trade Statistics: A Quality Profile (October 2014), available at <www.census.gov/foreign-trade/aip/quality_profile10032014.pdf> or from the Economic Indicators Division, U.S. Census Bureau.

Adjustments for Seasonal and Trading-Day Variations

Goods data are presented on a seasonally adjusted and not seasonally adjusted basis. Seasonally adjusted (and/or trading day adjusted data) are produced using X-13ARIMA-SEATS software to develop monthly adjustment factors. Goods data are initially classified under the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System (Harmonized System), which is an internationally accepted standard for the commodity classification of traded goods. Combining trade into approximately 140 export and 140 import end-use categories makes it possible to examine goods according to their principal uses. These categories are used as the basis for computing the seasonal and trading-day adjusted data. These adjusted data are then summed to the six end-use aggregates for publication. For more information, visit the seasonal adjustment section of the Guide to Foreign Trade here: <www.census.gov/foreign-trade/guide/sec2.html#seasonal>.

Retail and Wholesale Inventories

National estimates of end-of-month inventories are based on data from the Monthly Retail Trade Survey and the Monthly Wholesale Trade Survey. Additional information for each survey can be found at <www.census.gov/retail> and <www.census.gov/wholesale>. The advance estimates contained in this report are not incorporated into the full MRTS and MWTS time series.

The MRTS and MWTS samples selected to measure inventories consist of a stratified simple random sampling method of approximately 11,000 retail firms and 4,200 wholesale firms located in the United States. The retail and wholesale samples include firms of all sizes and are updated on a quarterly basis to account for new retail and wholesale firms, deaths, and other changes to the universe.

Data for nonresponding firms are imputed based on data for similar-sized firms classified in the same kind of business. For surveyed Retail companies, approximately 35.7 percent provided data for this reporting period

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resulting in a total quantity response rate of 43.5 percent. For surveyed Wholesale companies, approximately 49.3 percent provided data for this reporting period resulting in a total quantity response rate of 54.3 percent.

MRTS estimates cover companies with one or more establishments that sell merchandise and related services to final consumers. The Census Bureau has reviewed this data product to ensure appropriate access, use, and disclosure avoidance protection of the confidential source data (Project No. P-7504206, Disclosure Review Board (DRB) approval number: CBDRB-FY26-003).

MWTS estimates cover wholesale merchants who sell goods on their own account and include such businesses as wholesale merchants or jobbers, industrial distributors, exporters, and importers. Sales offices and branches maintained by manufacturing, refining, or mining firms for the purpose of marketing their products are not covered in this report. Also excluded is NAICS Industry Group 4251: Wholesale Electronic Markets and Agents and Brokers. The Census Bureau has reviewed this data product to ensure appropriate access, use, and disclosure avoidance protection of the confidential source data (Project No. 7503922, Disclosure Review Board (DRB) approval number: CBDRB-FY26-005).

Reliability of Estimates

Because the retail and wholesale estimates 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 are estimated measures of sampling variation.

The margin of sampling error gives a range about the estimate which is a 90 percent confidence interval. If, for example, the percentage change estimate is +1.2 percent and its estimated standard error is 0.9 percent, then the margin of sampling error is $\pm 1.753 \times 0.9$ percent or ± 1.6 percent, and the 90 percent confidence interval is -0.4 percent to $+2.8$ 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 are statistically significant unless otherwise noted. For a monthly total, the estimated coefficient of variation is given. The resulting confidence interval is the estimated value $\pm 1.753 \times CV \times$ (the estimated monthly total).

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 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.

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The U.S. Census Bureau recommends that individuals using retail and wholesale estimates incorporate this information into their analyses, as sampling error and nonsampling error could affect the conclusions drawn from the estimates.

Adjustments for Seasonal Variations

Concurrent seasonal adjustment is used to adjust the retail and wholesale inventories estimates for seasonal variations. Concurrent seasonal adjustment uses all available unadjusted estimates as input to the X-13ARIMA-SEATS program. The factors derived from the program are applied to the retail and wholesale estimates of current and previous month inventories and for inventories estimates a year ago as well.

Statement Regarding Natural Disasters: For information on the impact of natural disasters, including hurricanes, on the compilation of this report, please see <[Wholesale Natural Disaster FAQs](#)> and <[Retail Natural Disaster FAQs](#)>.

Data Availability

The Advance Economic Indicators Report is available at <www.census.gov/econ/indicators/index.html>. For archived versions of the Advance Economic Indicators Report please visit the Historical Data tab at the following: <www.census.gov/econ/indicators/historical_data.html>.

RESOURCES

API

The Census Bureau's application programming interface lets developers create custom apps to reach new users and makes key demographic, socio-economic and housing statistics more accessible than ever before.

<www.census.gov/developers>

FRED Mobile App



Receive the latest updates on the nation's key economic indicators by downloading the FRED App <fred.stlouisfed.org/fred-mobile> for both Apple and Android devices. FRED, the signature database of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, now incorporates the Census Bureau's 13 economic indicators.

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* The 90 percent confidence interval includes zero. There is insufficient statistical evidence to conclude that the actual change is different from zero.

° Statistical significance is not applicable or not measurable for this survey.

(R) Revised from the last published Monthly Retail Trade Report and Monthly Wholesale Trade: Sales and Inventories Report

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Table 1. U.S. International Trade in Goods by Principal End-Use Category (1)

In millions of dollars. Details may not equal totals due to seasonal adjustment and rounding. (X) – Not applicable

	Goods - Census Basis (2)						
	Monthly				Percent change		
	May 2026 (a)	April 2026	March 2026	May 2025	May 2026/ April 2026	April 2026/ March 2026	May 2026/ May 2025
Seasonally Adjusted							
Balance	-105,755	-83,007	-85,118	-91,545	(X)	(X)	(X)
Exports	207,673	219,520	211,472	181,110	-5.4	3.8	14.7
Foods, Feeds, & Beverages	15,571	14,984	15,035	13,078	3.9	-0.3	19.1
Industrial Supplies (3)	82,730	88,990	86,458	67,152	-7.0	2.9	23.2
Capital Goods	66,834	70,315	66,268	58,234	-5.0	6.1	14.8
Automotive Vehicles, etc.	12,919	12,855	13,201	13,400	0.5	-2.6	-3.6
Consumer Goods	20,692	22,793	21,129	21,778	-9.2	7.9	-5.0
Other Goods	8,927	9,583	9,382	7,468	-6.8	2.1	19.5
Imports	313,427	302,527	296,591	272,656	3.6	2.0	15.0
Foods, Feeds, & Beverages	18,215	17,467	17,407	18,246	4.3	0.3	-0.2
Industrial Supplies (3)	55,924	53,344	54,286	50,045	4.8	-1.7	11.7
Capital Goods	127,465	126,903	119,926	89,851	0.4	5.8	41.9
Automotive Vehicles, etc.	36,879	34,688	35,196	36,360	6.3	-1.4	1.4
Consumer Goods	59,528	56,293	56,552	65,513	5.7	-0.5	-9.1
Other Goods	15,417	13,832	13,223	12,641	11.5	4.6	22.0
Not Seasonally Adjusted							
Balance	-103,505	-82,460	-80,744	-91,581	(X)	(X)	(X)
Exports	207,365	217,996	221,658	184,210	-4.9	-1.7	12.6
Foods, Feeds, & Beverages	13,826	13,942	15,593	12,621	-0.8	-10.6	9.5
Industrial Supplies (3)	83,903	89,314	88,501	68,799	-6.1	0.9	22.0
Capital Goods	65,452	70,046	70,101	58,058	-6.6	-0.1	12.7
Automotive Vehicles, etc.	13,824	13,161	14,667	14,528	5.0	-10.3	-4.9
Consumer Goods	21,410	21,967	23,218	22,683	-2.5	-5.4	-5.6
Other Goods	8,951	9,566	9,578	7,520	-6.4	-0.1	19.0
Imports	310,870	300,455	302,401	275,791	3.5	-0.6	12.7
Foods, Feeds, & Beverages	18,609	17,985	19,040	19,069	3.5	-5.5	-2.4
Industrial Supplies (3)	57,014	54,998	55,137	52,573	3.7	-0.3	8.4
Capital Goods	127,034	123,443	121,360	90,846	2.9	1.7	39.8
Automotive Vehicles, etc.	36,980	35,724	37,677	36,806	3.5	-5.2	0.5
Consumer Goods	56,133	54,176	54,924	63,865	3.6	-1.4	-12.1
Other Goods	15,101	14,129	14,264	12,633	6.9	-0.9	19.5

(a) Advance statistics

(1) For a listing of the detail included in each end-use category, see <www.census.gov/foreign-trade/reference/codes/enduse/exeumstr.txt>.

(2) Data are presented on a Census basis. The information needed to convert to a balance of payment basis is not available.

(3) Includes petroleum and petroleum products.

NOTES:

* Current month statistics reflect nearly complete coverage; current month statistics reflecting complete coverage will be published in the upcoming U.S. International Trade in Goods and Services report (FT-900). Statistics for other months shown reflect complete coverage and appear in the most recently published FT-900.

* For information on data sources, nonsampling errors, and definitions, see the explanatory notes in this release or at <www.census.gov/econ/indicators/advance_report.pdf>.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; Advance Economic Indicators Report, June 26, 2026.

Table 2. Levels and Percent Changes for Inventories

Inventories estimates are shown in millions of dollars. Estimates are based on data from the Monthly Wholesale Trade Survey and the Monthly Retail Trade Survey.

	Inventories					
	Monthly			Percent change		
	May 2026 (a)	April 2026 (r)	May 2025 (r)	May 2026/ April 2026	April 2026/ March 2026	May 2026/ May 2025
Adjusted¹						
Merchant wholesale ² trade, total	943,951	940,712	904,999	0.3	0.7	4.3
Durable goods	586,657	585,157	567,250	0.3	0.9	3.4
Nondurable goods	357,294	355,555	337,749	0.5	0.3	5.8
Retail ³ trade, total	832,172	827,439	805,154	0.6	0.7	3.4
Total (excl. motor veh. & parts)	564,835	562,618	551,264	0.4	0.7	2.5
Motor vehicle & parts dealers	267,337	264,821	253,890	1.0	0.8	5.3
Not Adjusted						
Merchant wholesale ² trade, total	942,267	946,382	902,979	-0.4	0.4	4.4
Durable goods	590,941	588,686	570,991	0.4	1.6	3.5
Nondurable goods	351,326	357,696	331,988	-1.8	-1.4	5.8
Retail ³ trade, total	821,431	826,265	796,569	-0.6	1.0	3.1
Total (excl. motor veh. & parts)	556,664	560,009	543,524	-0.6	0.7	2.4
Motor vehicle & parts dealers	264,767	266,256	253,045	-0.6	1.8	4.6

(a) Advance estimate

(r) Revised estimate

See footnotes and notes at the end of Table 3.

Table 3. Estimated Measures of Sampling Variability

Estimates are shown as percents and are based on data from the Monthly Wholesale Trade Survey and the Monthly Retail Trade Survey.

	Inventories					
	Coefficient of Variation			Standard Error of Percent Change		
	May 2026 (a)	April 2026 (r)	May 2025 (r)	May 2026/ April 2026	April 2026/ March 2026	May 2026/ May 2025
Merchant wholesale ² trade, total	2.0	2.1	1.9	0.1	0.2	0.7
Durable goods	2.8	2.9	2.7	0.1	0.3	1.0
Nondurable goods	1.9	1.9	1.5	0.2	0.2	0.7
Retail trade, total	1.2	1.2	1.2	0.1	0.1	0.3
Total (excl. motor veh. & parts)	1.6	1.6	1.6	0.1	0.1	0.2
Motor vehicle & parts dealers	1.7	1.7	1.7	0.2	0.3	0.8

(a) Advance estimate

(r) Revised estimate

Z Estimate rounds to zero

(1) Estimates are concurrently adjusted for seasonal variation and trading day differences, but not for price changes. Concurrent seasonal adjustment uses all available not adjusted 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.

(2) The 2017 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) defines merchant wholesalers as including manufacturers' sales branches and offices. However, the estimates included in this release exclude manufacturers' sales branches and offices. Note that this is not a change in coverage from prior releases and is consistent with the description used in the Monthly Wholesale Trade Survey data products.

(3) Retail Trade estimates include data only for businesses with paid employees. Prior to the benchmark report released in April 2025, the monthly retail estimates that were released in the Advance Economic Indicators Report estimates included nonemployers.

NOTES:

Estimated measures of sampling variability are based on estimates not adjusted for seasonal variation. Additional information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, sample design, and definitions may be found at www.census.gov/wholesale/www/how_surveys_are_collected/monthly_methodology.html for wholesale and at www.census.gov/retail/mrts/how_surveys_are_collected.html for retail.