

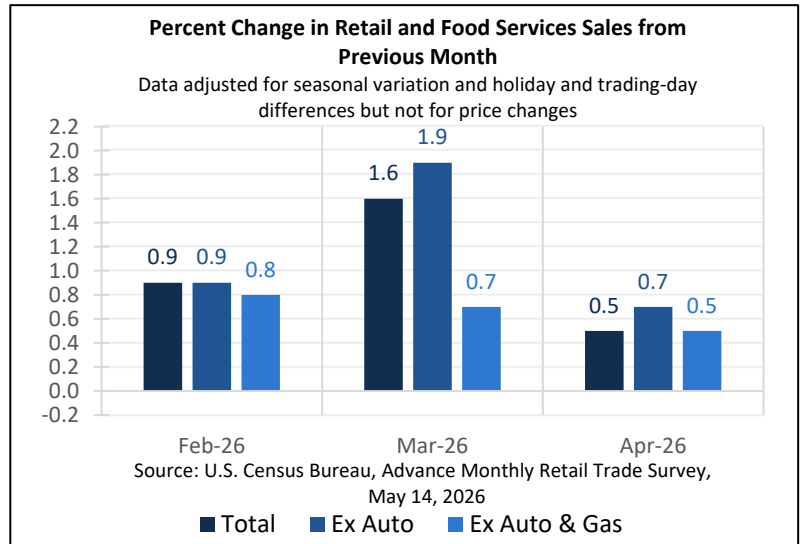
FOR RELEASE AT 8:30 AM EDT, THURSDAY, MAY 14, 2026

ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES, APRIL 2026

Release Number: CB26-78

May 14, 2026 — The U.S. Census Bureau announced the following advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for April 2026:

ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES		
April 2026	\$757.1 billion	0.5%
March 2026 (revised)	\$753.4 billion	1.6%
Next release: June 17, 2026		
<small>* The 90 percent confidence interval includes zero. There is insufficient statistical evidence to conclude that the actual change is different from zero. Data adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences but not for price changes. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey, May 14, 2026</small>		



Advance Estimates of U.S. Retail and Food Services

Advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for April 2026, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$757.1 billion, up 0.5 percent (± 0.4 percent) from the previous month, and up 4.9 percent (± 0.5 percent) from April 2025. Total sales for the February 2026 through April 2026 period were up 4.4 percent (± 0.4 percent) from the same period a year ago. The February 2026 to March 2026 percent change was revised from up 1.7 percent (± 0.4 percent) to up 1.6 percent (± 0.2 percent).

GENERAL INFORMATION

Release Schedule

The May 2026 Advance Monthly Retail report is scheduled for release on June 17, 2026 at 8:30 a.m. EDT. 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/retail/index.html>.

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Special Notice

The Annual Retail Trade Survey (ARTS) 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 Annual Revision Report for the Monthly Retail Trade Survey (MRTS) will be delayed. An updated release schedule will be provided once it becomes available.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

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 4,800 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. For more information on how data is collected for the Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey (MARTS), see our methodology page at https://www.census.gov/retail/marts/how_surveys_are_collected.html.

Survey Description

The U.S. Census Bureau conducts the Advance Monthly Retail Trade and Food Services Survey 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, letters are mailed to a probability sample of approximately 4,800 employer firms selected from the larger Monthly Retail Trade Survey (MRTS). Advance sales estimates are computed using a link relative estimator. For each detailed industry, we compute a ratio of current-to-previous month weighted sales using data from units for which we have obtained usable responses for both the current and previous month. For each detailed industry, the advance total sales estimates for the current month is computed by multiplying this ratio by the preliminary sales estimate for the previous month (derived from the larger MRTS) at the appropriate industry level. Total estimates for broader industries are computed as the sum of the detailed industry estimates. The link relative estimate is used because imputation is not performed for most nonrespondents in MARTS. For a limited number of nonresponding companies that have influential effects on the estimates, sales may be estimated based on historical performance of that company. The monthly estimates are benchmarked to the annual survey estimates from the Annual Retail Trade Survey once available. The estimates are adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading day differences. Additional information on MARTS and MRTS can be found on the Census Bureau website at www.census.gov/retail.

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).

Reliability of Estimates

Because the estimates presented in this report are based on a sample survey, they contain sampling error and nonsampling error.

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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 $\pm 1.753 \times 0.9$ 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 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 $\pm 1.753 \times CV \times$ (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.

Statement Regarding Natural Disasters

For information on the impact of natural disasters on the compilation of this report, please see the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on our website at www.census.gov/retail/marts_weather_fags.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



ECONOMIC DATA | ST. LOUIS FED

Receive the latest updates on the nation's key economic indicators by downloading the FRED App <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/fred-mobile/> for both

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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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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				
		4 Month Total		2026			2025		2026			2025	
		2026	% Chg. 2025	Apr. ³ (a)	Mar. (p)	Feb. (r)	Apr.	Mar.	Apr. ³ (a)	Mar. (p)	Feb. (r)	Apr. (r)	Mar. (r)
	Retail & food services,												
	total	2,846,941	4.1	755,713	760,772	656,082	722,319	726,888	757,085	753,370	741,278	721,903	723,339
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	2,301,792	5.1	609,628	611,382	529,523	574,654	574,454	617,856	613,556	602,258	581,040	581,017
	Total (excl. gasoline stations)	2,633,737	3.7	693,217	701,758	610,900	670,770	676,367	695,573	693,518	688,618	671,016	671,997
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts & gasoline stations)	2,088,588	4.7	547,132	552,368	484,341	523,105	523,933	556,344	553,704	549,598	530,153	529,675
	Retail	2,458,520	4.2	654,238	657,332	564,663	623,756	624,954	656,115	653,040	641,038	623,635	625,420
	GAFO⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	133,661	115,513	125,740	128,550	(*)	137,056	135,616	131,599	132,264
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	545,149	0.0	146,085	149,390	126,559	147,665	152,434	139,229	139,814	139,020	140,863	142,322
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	499,879	-0.2	134,073	137,244	116,146	135,856	140,668	127,567	128,146	127,214	129,387	130,854
44111	New car dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	113,415	96,779	113,706	118,056	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	12,146	10,413	11,809	11,766	(*)	11,668	11,806	11,476	11,468
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	42,326	-3.0	10,838	11,505	9,976	11,219	11,549	11,082	11,313	11,023	11,495	11,412
4421	Furniture stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,272	5,556	6,076	6,352	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	Electronics & appliance stores	29,446	6.3	7,438	7,671	6,975	6,820	7,199	8,174	8,058	7,953	7,595	7,610
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	154,882	3.7	46,390	42,093	32,663	45,042	39,789	41,761	41,725	41,290	40,864	40,470
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	35,739	28,196	38,113	33,963	(*)	35,847	35,511	35,421	35,050
445	Food & beverage stores	327,255	0.6	83,285	83,469	75,965	82,609	83,083	85,609	84,935	84,066	84,439	84,583
4451	Grocery stores	297,319	0.7	75,322	75,700	68,964	74,601	75,242	77,174	76,619	75,785	76,046	76,156
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,564	5,045	5,626	5,613	(*)	5,983	5,963	5,985	5,984
446	Health & personal care stores	153,458	2.2	39,177	40,347	36,149	38,492	38,832	40,099	40,106	39,681	39,198	39,145
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	34,591	31,105	33,216	33,126	(*)	34,591	34,144	33,619	33,665
447	Gasoline stations	213,204	9.3	62,496	59,014	45,182	51,549	50,521	61,512	59,852	52,660	50,887	51,342
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	95,412	6.3	25,739	26,733	22,418	24,739	24,941	27,534	27,943	27,797	26,103	26,029
44811	Men's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
44812	Women's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,833	2,258	2,862	3,081	(*)	2,673	2,682	2,773	2,948
44814	Family clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	12,897	9,835	11,280	11,191	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,312	2,732	2,967	3,222	(*)	3,305	3,344	3,170	3,212
451	Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, & book stores	30,313	9.2	8,045	8,270	6,838	7,154	7,721	8,773	8,651	8,634	7,734	8,179
452	General merchandise stores	292,375	2.5	75,526	77,392	67,546	73,888	75,038	78,842	78,737	77,868	76,470	76,619
4522	Department stores	10,331	-3.3	2,980	2,968	2,374	3,003	2,933	3,187	3,294	3,140	3,226	3,270
4523	Gen. merchandise stores incl. warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	74,424	65,172	70,885	72,105	(*)	75,443	74,728	73,244	73,349
452311	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	65,084	57,192	61,973	63,421	(*)	65,941	65,362	64,287	64,322
452319	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	9,340	7,980	8,912	8,684	(*)	9,502	9,366	8,957	9,027
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	59,720	11.6	15,708	15,845	14,075	14,112	14,440	15,942	15,895	16,120	14,133	14,695
454	Nonstore retailers	514,980	10.3	133,511	135,603	120,317	120,467	119,407	137,558	136,011	134,926	123,854	123,014
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses	(*)	(*)	(*)	127,082	111,255	113,538	111,839	(*)	128,366	127,149	116,569	116,016
722	Food services & drinking places	388,421	3.5	101,475	103,440	91,419	98,563	101,934	100,970	100,330	100,240	98,268	97,919

(*) Advance estimates are not available for this kind of business. (NA) Not available (a) Advance estimate (p) Preliminary estimate (r) Revised estimate

(S) Estimate does not meet publication standards because of high sampling variability (coefficient of variation is greater than 30%), poor response quality (total quantity response rate is less than 50%), or other concerns about the estimate's quality.

(1) Estimates include data only for businesses with paid employees. Prior to the benchmark report released in April 2025, the Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey estimates included nonemployers.

For a full description of the NAICS codes used in this table, see <<https://www.census.gov/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, musical instrument, and book (451), general merchandise (452), office supply, stationery, and gift stores (4532).

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey, May 14, 2026. (Project No. P-7504206 / Approval CBDRB-FY26-003), 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 <www.census.gov/retail/how_surveys_are_collected.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 ¹					
		Apr. 2026 Advance from --		Mar. 2026 Preliminary from --		Feb. 2026 through Apr. 2026 from --	
		Mar. 2026 (p)	Apr. 2025 (r)	Feb. 2026 (r)	Mar. 2025 (r)	Nov. 2025 through Jan. 2026	Feb. 2025 through Apr. 2025
	Retail & food services,						
	total	0.5	4.9	1.6	4.2	2.2	4.4
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts)	0.7	6.3	1.9	5.6	2.5	5.4
	Total (excl. gasoline stations)	0.3	3.7	0.7	3.2	1.5	3.8
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts & gasoline stations)	0.5	4.9	0.7	4.5	1.7	4.7
	Retail	0.5	5.2	1.9	4.4	2.4	4.5
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	-0.4	-1.2	0.6	-1.8	0.7	0.3
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ...	-0.5	-1.4	0.7	-2.1	0.7	0.0
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	-2.0	-3.6	2.6	-0.9	0.7	-3.1
443	Electronics & appliance stores	1.4	7.6	1.3	5.9	3.6	6.4
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	0.1	2.2	1.1	3.1	2.2	3.1
445	Food & beverage stores	0.8	1.4	1.0	0.4	-0.1	0.4
4451	Grocery stores	0.7	1.5	1.1	0.6	-0.1	0.6
446	Health & personal care stores	0.0	2.3	1.1	2.5	0.5	2.3
447	Gasoline stations	2.8	20.9	13.7	16.6	10.5	12.3
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	-1.5	5.5	0.5	7.4	2.0	7.1
451	Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, & book stores	1.4	13.4	0.2	5.8	3.7	10.4
452	General merchandise stores	0.1	3.1	1.1	2.8	1.2	2.4
4522	Department stores	-3.2	-1.2	4.9	0.7	-0.2	-2.0
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	0.3	12.8	-1.4	8.2	2.5	11.1
454	Nonstore retailers	1.1	11.1	0.8	10.6	4.0	10.3
722	Food services & drinking places	0.6	2.7	0.1	2.5	0.6	3.6

(p) Preliminary estimate (r) Revised estimate

(1) Estimates shown in this table are derived from adjusted estimates provided in Table 1 of this report.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey, May 14, 2026. (Project No. P-7504206 / Approval CBDRB-FY26-003),

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 <www.census.gov/retail/how_surveys_are_collected.html>.

Table 3. Estimated Measures of Sampling Variability and Revision to Advance Estimates Apr. 2026

(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	1.0	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.1
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts)	1.3	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.1
	Total (excl. gasoline stations)	1.0	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.1
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts & gasoline stations)	1.3	0.3	0.1	0.4	0.0	0.1
	Retail, total	1.0	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.1
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	1.8	0.7	0.4	0.9	0.0	0.1
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers	2.0	0.7	0.4	1.0	0.1	0.2
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	2.6	1.8	0.8	1.9	-0.6	0.5
443	Electronics & appliance stores	2.3	1.1	0.7	1.3	0.3	0.5
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	3.7	0.8	0.5	1.0	0.0	0.1
445	Food & beverage stores	0.6	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.2
4451	Grocery stores	0.6	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.2
446	Health & personal care stores	3.9	0.5	0.2	0.6	0.1	0.1
447	Gasoline stations	1.6	0.4	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.4
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	3.2	1.1	0.6	1.1	0.2	0.4
451	Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, & book stores	3.4	1.3	0.8	1.5	-0.1	0.8
452	General merchandise stores	1.0	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.0
4522	Department stores	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-0.1	0.2
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	4.7	2.5	1.5	2.9	0.1	0.7
454	Nonstore retailers	2.7	0.3	0.4	1.0	-0.1	0.4
722	Food services & drinking places	3.2	0.9	0.6	1.0	0.1	0.1

(1) Estimated measures of sampling variability are based on estimates not adjusted for seasonal variation or holiday or trading day variation. 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.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey, May 14, 2026. (Project No. P-7504206 / Approval CBDRB-FY26-003), Additional information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, sample design, and definitions may be found at <www.census.gov/retail/how_surveys_are_collected.html>.