

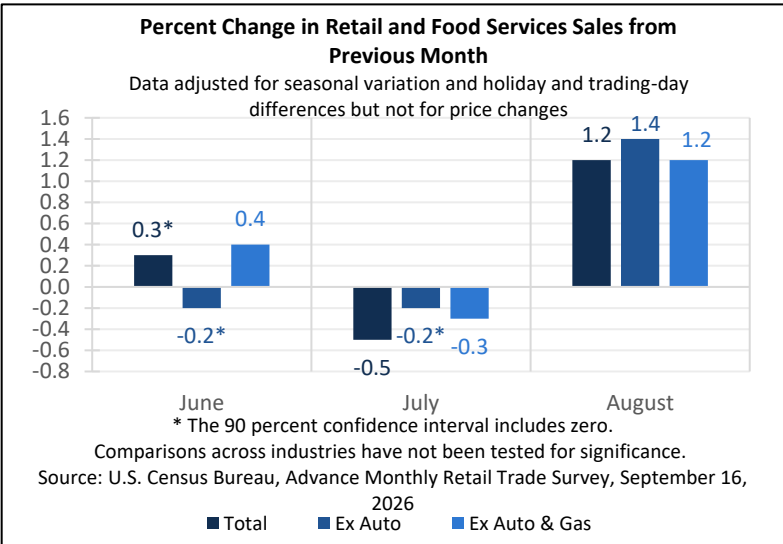
ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES, AUGUST 2026

Release Number: CB26-153

Notice of Revision: Monthly retail estimates were revised based on historical corrections and the results of the 2023 and 2024 Annual Integrated Economic Survey. This report no longer contains the most up to date estimates. Revised not adjusted estimates and corresponding adjusted estimates were released on September 28, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. EDT.

September 16, 2026 — The U.S. Census Bureau announced the following advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for August 2026:

ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES		
August 2026	\$773.9 billion	1.2%
July 2026 (revised)	\$764.5 billion	-0.5%
Next release: October 15, 2026		
* 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, September 16, 2026		



Advance Estimates of U.S. Retail and Food Services

Advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for August 2026, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$773.9 billion, up 1.2 percent (± 0.4 percent) from the previous month, and up 6.0 percent (± 0.5 percent) from August 2025. Total sales for the June 2026 through August 2026 period were up 6.0 percent (± 0.5 percent) from the same period a year ago. The June 2026 to July 2026 percent change was revised from down 0.6 percent (± 0.4 percent) to down 0.5 percent (± 0.2 percent).

Data Inquiries
Economic Indicators Division, Retail Indicator Branch
301-763-2713
eid.retail.indicator.branch@census.gov

Media Inquiries
Public Information Office
301-763-3030
pio@census.gov

GENERAL INFORMATION

Release Schedule

The September 2026 Advance Monthly Retail report is scheduled for release on October 15, 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>>.

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).

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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 $\pm 1.753 \times 0.9$ 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_faqs.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/

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FRED Mobile App



Receive the latest updates on the nation's key economic indicators by downloading the FRED App <<https://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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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				
		8 Month Total		2026			2025		2026			2025	
		2026	% Chg. 2025	Aug. ³ (a)	Jul. (p)	Jun. (r)	Aug.	Jul.	Aug. ³ (a)	Jul. (p)	Jun. (r)	Aug. (r)	Jul. (r)
	Retail & food services,												
	total	5,989,438	5.2	784,846	784,603	776,516	745,232	745,651	773,947	764,462	768,587	730,037	727,837
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	4,853,994	6.0	637,032	636,420	629,289	599,943	601,050	631,568	622,897	624,447	590,616	588,964
	Total (excl. gasoline stations)	5,508,624	4.3	717,434	718,707	712,174	689,297	689,311	711,644	704,007	708,001	678,531	676,196
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts & gasoline stations)	4,373,180	5.0	569,620	570,524	564,947	544,008	544,710	569,265	562,442	563,861	539,110	537,323
	Retail	5,168,718	5.3	676,204	677,249	671,109	640,803	644,493	668,877	660,638	665,247	630,770	629,146
	GAFO⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	138,933	134,781	138,659	133,091	(*)	138,814	138,241	133,388	133,774
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	1,135,444	1.9	147,814	148,183	147,227	145,289	144,601	142,379	141,565	144,140	139,421	138,873
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	1,039,938	1.6	135,051	135,546	134,656	133,364	132,754	130,107	129,461	132,145	127,988	127,525
44111	New car dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	112,511	110,628	112,991	111,378	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	12,637	12,571	11,925	11,847	(*)	12,104	11,995	11,433	11,348
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	88,364	-1.6	11,683	11,590	11,274	11,585	11,808	11,398	11,296	11,319	11,182	11,611
4421	Furniture stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,053	5,943	6,207	6,363	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	Electronics & appliance stores	61,429	6.7	8,232	8,082	7,771	7,626	7,647	8,307	8,180	8,189	7,703	7,756
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers.....	338,218	4.6	42,432	45,392	47,810	40,324	43,162	42,227	42,318	42,380	40,167	39,924
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	39,817	41,106	35,511	37,667	(*)	36,529	36,571	34,577	34,305
445	Food & beverage stores.....	674,596	0.7	86,388	87,838	84,344	86,838	86,847	85,580	85,214	85,408	85,168	84,755
4451	Grocery stores	610,476	0.9	78,079	79,027	75,813	78,291	78,193	77,153	76,800	76,968	76,756	76,360
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,412	6,132	6,143	6,228	(*)	6,043	6,041	5,993	5,971
446	Health & personal care stores	314,150	1.9	40,395	40,234	40,198	39,797	39,981	40,721	40,355	40,238	39,957	40,182
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	34,722	34,503	34,223	34,661	(*)	34,515	34,538	34,569	34,557
447	Gasoline stations	480,814	15.7	67,412	65,896	64,342	55,935	56,340	62,303	60,455	60,586	51,506	51,641
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	208,219	5.4	29,192	27,951	26,295	28,215	26,670	28,353	28,163	27,792	27,195	26,962
44811	Men's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
44812	Women's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,624	2,452	2,769	2,649	(*)	2,656	2,609	2,775	2,698
44814	Family clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	13,772	12,874	13,051	12,756	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,600	3,050	4,343	3,569	(*)	3,312	3,297	3,320	3,311
451	Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, & book stores	66,439	10.1	9,768	8,879	8,809	8,927	8,024	9,061	8,951	8,934	8,182	8,138
452	General merchandise stores.....	615,677	3.1	81,963	79,862	77,806	79,847	76,422	80,388	79,854	79,442	76,896	76,970
4522	Department stores	22,915	0.2	3,060	3,024	2,981	3,046	2,898	3,297	3,323	3,323	3,237	3,245
4523	Gen. merchandise stores incl. warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	76,838	74,825	76,801	73,524	(*)	76,531	76,119	73,659	73,725
452311	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	67,589	65,403	67,833	64,628	(*)	66,986	66,602	64,480	64,563
452319	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	9,249	9,422	8,968	8,896	(*)	9,545	9,517	9,179	9,162
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	128,720	11.0	16,527	17,148	17,949	14,672	15,673	16,821	16,515	16,612	14,757	15,142
454	Nonstore retailers	1,056,648	10.3	134,398	136,194	137,284	121,748	127,318	141,339	137,772	140,207	128,636	127,192
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses	(*)	(*)	(*)	129,377	130,611	115,476	121,095	(*)	129,897	132,466	121,298	120,015
722	Food services & drinking places	820,720	4.2	108,642	107,354	105,407	104,429	101,158	105,070	103,824	103,340	99,267	98,691

(*) 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, September 16, 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					
		Aug. 2026 Advance from --		Jul. 2026 Preliminary from --		Jun. 2026 through Aug. 2026 from --	
		Jul. 2026 (p)	Aug. 2025 (r)	Jun. 2026 (r)	Jul. 2025 (r)	Mar. 2026 through May 2026	Jun. 2025 through Aug. 2025
	Retail & food services,						
	total	1.2	6.0	-0.5	5.0	1.2	6.0
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts)	1.4	6.9	-0.2	5.8	1.0	6.5
	Total (excl. gasoline stations)	1.1	4.9	-0.6	4.1	1.5	5.0
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts & gasoline stations)	1.2	5.6	-0.3	4.7	1.4	5.3
	Retail	1.2	6.0	-0.7	5.0	1.0	6.1
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	0.6	2.1	-1.8	1.9	2.0	3.5
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ...	0.5	1.7	-2.0	1.5	1.9	3.2
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	0.9	1.9	-0.2	-2.7	0.7	-0.3
443	Electronics & appliance stores	1.6	7.8	-0.1	5.5	1.1	6.9
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers.....	-0.2	5.1	-0.1	6.0	1.0	5.5
445	Food & beverage stores.....	0.4	0.5	-0.2	0.5	0.1	0.7
4451	Grocery stores	0.5	0.5	-0.2	0.6	0.0	0.7
446	Health & personal care stores	0.9	1.9	0.3	0.4	0.6	1.1
447	Gasoline stations	3.1	21.0	-0.2	17.1	-1.8	19.1
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	0.7	4.3	1.3	4.5	0.9	4.3
451	Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, & book stores	1.2	10.7	0.2	10.0	1.9	11.1
452	General merchandise stores.....	0.7	4.5	0.5	3.7	0.9	3.9
4522	Department stores	-0.8	1.9	0.0	2.4	0.3	2.6
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	1.9	14.0	-0.6	9.1	4.4	11.1
454	Nonstore retailers	2.6	9.9	-1.7	8.3	1.6	10.2
722	Food services & drinking places	1.2	5.8	0.5	5.2	2.7	5.3

(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, September 16, 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 Aug. 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	1.1	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.1
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts)	1.3	0.2	0.1	0.4	0.0	0.1
	Total (excl. gasoline stations)	1.1	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.1
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts & gasoline stations)	1.4	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.1
	Retail, total	1.0	0.2	0.2	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	2.1	0.7	0.4	1.0	0.0	0.2
442	Furniture & home furn. stores.....	2.8	1.8	0.9	2.0	-0.2	0.5
443	Electronics & appliance stores	2.3	1.2	0.7	1.3	0.2	0.4
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers.....	3.7	0.8	0.6	1.1	0.0	0.3
445	Food & beverage stores.....	0.6	0.2	0.2	0.3	-0.1	0.2
4451	Grocery stores	0.7	0.1	0.1	0.3	-0.1	0.2
446	Health & personal care stores	3.9	0.4	0.3	0.6	0.1	0.2
447	Gasoline stations	1.5	0.4	0.2	0.5	-0.2	0.4
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	3.3	1.0	0.6	1.1	0.2	0.5
451	Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, & book stores	3.6	1.4	0.9	1.6	0.0	0.6
452	General merchandise stores.....	1.0	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1
4522	Department stores	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.4
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	4.9	2.2	1.5	3.2	0.1	0.9
454	Nonstore retailers	2.8	0.3	0.4	1.1	-0.1	0.4
722	Food services & drinking places	3.2	0.9	0.6	1.0	0.2	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, September 16, 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
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