

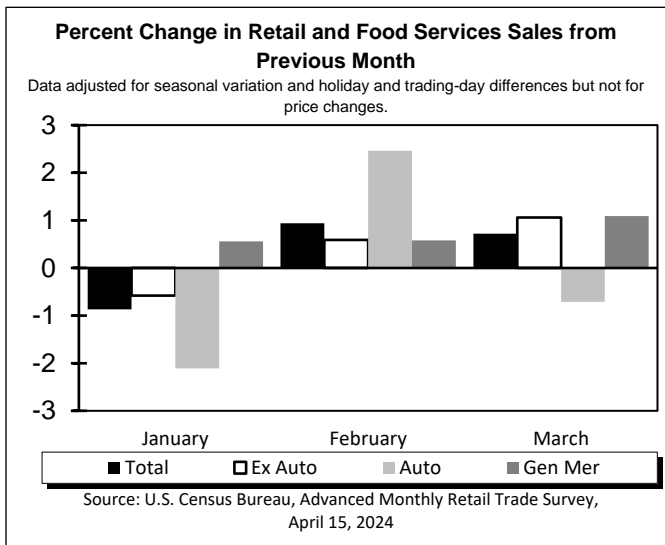
ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES, MARCH 2024

Release Number: CB24-58

Intention to Revise: Monthly retail sales estimates will be revised based on the results of the 2022 Annual Retail Trade Survey and the Service Annual Survey. Revised not adjusted estimates and corresponding adjusted estimates are scheduled for release on April 23, 2024 at 10:00 a.m. EDT.

April 15, 2024 — The U.S. Census Bureau announced the following advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for March 2024:

ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES		
March 2024	\$709.6 billion	+0.7%
February 2024 (revised)	\$704.5 billion	+0.9%
Next release: May 15, 2024		
<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, Advanced Monthly Retail Trade Survey, April 15, 2024</small>		



Advance Estimates of U.S. Retail and Food Services

Advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for March 2024, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$709.6 billion, up 0.7 percent (± 0.5 percent) from the previous month, and up 4.0 percent (± 0.5 percent) above March 2023. Total sales for the January 2024 through March 2024 period were up 2.1 percent (± 0.5 percent) from the same period a year ago. The January 2024 to February 2024 percent change was revised from up 0.6 percent (± 0.5 percent) to up 0.9 percent (± 0.2 percent).

Retail trade sales were up 0.8 percent (± 0.5 percent) from February 2024, and up 3.6 percent (± 0.5 percent) above last year. Nonstore retailers were up 11.3 percent (± 1.6 percent) from last year, while food services and drinking places were up 6.5 percent (± 2.1 percent) from March 2023.

General Information

The April 2024 Advance Monthly Retail report is scheduled for release on May 15, 2024 at 8:30 a.m. EDT.

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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 <www.census.gov/retail/>.

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, 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, questionnaires are mailed to a probability sample of approximately 4,800 employer firms selected from the larger Monthly Retail Trade Survey. 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-FY24-0003).

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.

Weather Information

For information on the impact of weather events 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

The Rest of the Consumer Spending Story

Retail and services together represent what's commonly referred to as consumer spending. Quarterly Services Survey (QSS) revenue comprises roughly 2/3 of the personal consumption expenditures component of the U.S. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) measured by the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA). The fourth quarter 2023 Quarterly Services Report was released on March 13, 2024 at 10:00 AM. Learn

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about historical revenue trends for certain industries going back 15 years and other data, such as inpatient days and discharges for hospitals, by visiting <<https://www.census.gov/services/index.html>>

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

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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				
		3 Month Total		2024			2023		2024			2023	
		2024	% Chg. 2023	Mar. ³ (a)	Feb. (p)	Jan. (r)	Mar.	Feb.	Mar. ³ (a)	Feb. (p)	Jan. (r)	Mar. (r)	Feb. (r)
	Retail & food services,												
	total	1,998,247	3.3	712,659	647,464	638,124	695,933	609,578	709,590	704,528	697,954	682,184	689,962
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	1,611,456	3.6	572,235	519,869	519,352	554,088	490,443	575,532	569,515	566,186	551,757	558,478
	Total (excl. gasoline stations)	1,850,293	3.8	658,910	599,941	591,442	641,380	561,973	654,967	651,011	645,266	627,191	634,414
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts & gasoline stations)	1,463,502	4.3	518,486	472,346	472,670	499,535	442,838	520,909	515,998	513,498	496,764	502,930
	Retail	1,727,617	2.8	614,526	559,056	554,035	604,084	529,374	615,862	611,172	605,038	594,206	602,307
	GAFO⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	114,848	110,704	123,653	110,441	(*)	130,218	129,600	127,187	130,149
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	386,791	2.1	140,424	127,595	118,772	141,845	119,135	134,058	135,013	131,768	130,427	131,484
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	353,698	1.6	128,554	117,053	108,091	130,540	109,406	122,432	123,604	120,369	119,871	120,491
44111	New car dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	96,409	90,640	103,412	87,828	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	10,542	10,681	11,305	9,729	(*)	11,409	11,399	10,556	10,993
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	30,763	-8.4	11,073	10,048	9,642	12,035	10,567	10,678	10,712	10,749	11,375	11,754
4421	Furniture stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,797	5,586	6,778	5,987	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	Electronics & appliance stores	21,751	1.3	7,383	7,157	7,211	7,494	6,756	7,635	7,729	7,631	7,678	7,634
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	106,219	-5.1	39,072	34,095	33,052	42,170	34,324	40,881	40,611	39,706	41,141	42,972
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	29,652	28,719	36,115	29,628	(*)	35,133	34,108	35,407	36,897
445	Food & beverage stores	242,270	3.0	84,217	77,603	80,450	81,360	74,421	83,047	82,654	82,461	81,909	82,203
4451	Grocery stores	219,266	2.8	75,855	70,042	73,369	73,584	67,365	74,514	74,119	74,110	73,731	73,946
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,355	5,001	5,645	5,071	(*)	6,051	5,918	5,892	5,938
446	Health & personal care stores	106,797	3.6	36,248	34,391	36,158	36,344	32,496	36,248	36,087	36,086	35,423	35,437
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	28,584	30,713	30,044	26,870	(*)	30,025	30,200	29,455	29,302
447	Gasoline stations	147,954	-3.0	53,749	47,523	46,682	54,553	47,605	54,623	53,517	52,688	54,993	55,548
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	67,544	3.4	25,738	22,309	19,497	24,963	20,937	26,037	26,462	26,397	25,677	25,917
44811	Men's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
44812	Women's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,864	2,441	3,408	2,735	(*)	3,365	3,339	3,322	3,356
44814	Family clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	8,942	8,043	10,226	7,999	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,679	2,183	3,273	2,618	(*)	3,197	3,164	3,215	3,248
451	Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, & book stores	21,982	-1.5	7,924	6,927	7,131	8,258	6,796	8,350	8,499	8,439	8,693	8,635
452	General merchandise stores	206,926	4.9	75,138	66,482	65,306	68,530	63,367	75,195	74,387	73,958	71,156	73,567
4521	Department stores	28,975	-1.4	10,609	9,493	8,873	10,618	9,466	10,923	11,044	11,086	11,206	11,554
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	56,989	56,433	57,912	53,901	(*)	63,343	62,872	59,950	62,013
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	48,761	48,467	49,472	46,467	(*)	54,119	53,673	51,373	53,288
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	8,228	7,966	8,440	7,434	(*)	9,224	9,199	8,577	8,725
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	43,381	4.6	15,604	14,072	13,705	14,861	13,103	16,137	15,804	15,655	15,212	15,304
454	Nonstore retailers	345,239	8.7	117,956	110,854	116,429	111,671	99,867	122,973	119,697	119,500	110,522	111,852
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses	(*)	(*)	(*)	100,331	105,296	100,415	89,207	(*)	110,012	109,798	100,616	101,487
722	Food services & drinking places	270,630	6.6	98,133	88,408	84,089	91,849	80,204	93,728	93,356	92,916	87,978	87,655

(*) 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) 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, April 15, 2024. (Project No. P-7504206 / Approval CBDRB-FY24-0003), 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					
		Mar. 2024 Advance from --		Feb. 2024 Preliminary from --		Jan. 2024 through Mar. 2024 from --	
		Feb. 2024 (p)	Mar. 2023 (r)	Jan. 2024 (r)	Feb. 2023 (r)	Oct. 2023 through Dec. 2023	Jan. 2023 through Mar. 2023
	Retail & food services,						
	total	0.7	4.0	0.9	2.1	0.1	2.1
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts)	1.1	4.3	0.6	2.0	0.2	2.3
	Total (excl. gasoline stations)	0.6	4.4	0.9	2.6	0.2	2.6
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts & gasoline stations)	1.0	4.9	0.5	2.6	0.3	3.0
	Retail	0.8	3.6	1.0	1.5	0.1	1.6
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	-0.7	2.8	2.5	2.7	-0.5	1.1
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ...	-0.9	2.1	2.7	2.6	-0.6	0.6
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	-0.3	-6.1	-0.3	-8.9	-0.4	-9.6
443	Electronics & appliance stores	-1.2	-0.6	1.3	1.2	1.1	-0.2
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	0.7	-0.6	2.3	-5.5	-2.1	-4.9
445	Food & beverage stores	0.5	1.4	0.2	0.5	-0.1	0.9
4451	Grocery stores	0.5	1.1	0.0	0.2	-0.1	0.8
446	Health & personal care stores	0.4	2.3	0.0	1.8	-2.7	2.7
447	Gasoline stations	2.1	-0.7	1.6	-3.7	-1.2	-3.9
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	-1.6	1.4	0.2	2.1	0.1	1.0
451	Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, & book stores	-1.8	-3.9	0.7	-1.6	-1.2	-3.1
452	General merchandise stores	1.1	5.7	0.6	1.1	1.7	2.5
4521	Department stores	-1.1	-2.5	-0.4	-4.4	1.8	-4.3
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	2.1	6.1	1.0	3.3	1.1	3.1
454	Nonstore retailers	2.7	11.3	0.2	7.0	2.2	8.7
722	Food services & drinking places	0.4	6.5	0.5	6.5	-0.4	5.4

(p) Preliminary estimate (r) Revised estimate

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

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey, April 15, 2024. (Project No. P-7504206 / Approval CBDRB-FY24-0003),

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 Mar. 2024

(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 Current Mo. (%)	Median standard error Percent change			Revision for month-to-month change	
			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	0.9	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.0	0.2
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts)	1.1	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.2
	Total (excl. gasoline stations)	0.9	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.1
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts & gasoline stations)	1.1	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.1
	Retail, total	0.8	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.0	0.1
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	1.5	0.8	0.4	1.0	0.0	0.1
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers	1.6	0.8	0.5	1.1	0.0	0.1
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	3.0	1.8	0.8	1.7	-0.1	0.8
443	Electronics & appliance stores	2.2	0.9	0.5	1.1	0.4	0.6
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	2.7	0.8	0.5	1.1	-0.1	0.3
445	Food & beverage stores	0.7	0.2	0.2	0.4	-0.1	0.1
4451	Grocery stores	0.7	0.2	0.2	0.5	-0.1	0.3
446	Health & personal care stores	3.1	0.5	0.3	0.7	-0.1	0.3
447	Gasoline stations	1.4	0.4	0.3	0.5	0.2	0.5
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	3.1	1.0	0.6	1.3	0.0	0.3
451	Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument, & book stores	2.5	1.2	0.9	1.4	0.3	0.4
452	General merchandise stores	1.6	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.1
4521	Department stores	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	5.1	2.3	1.3	2.6	0.4	1.1
454	Nonstore retailers	2.0	0.6	0.4	0.9	0.0	0.4
722	Food services & drinking places	3.4	0.9	0.7	1.2	0.0	0.3

(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, April 15, 2024. (Project No. P-7504206 / Approval CBDRB-FY24-0003), 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>.