

Monthly Retail Trade

Measuring the U.S. Economy

The U.S. Census Bureau measures the nation's people, places, and economy.

Visit the Retail website for access to the latest data, full-release reports, historical data, information on methodology, and to create your own customizable time series at www.census.gov/retail.

For more information on how the MARTS data are collected, visit www.census.gov/retail/how_surveys_are_collected.html.

For more information on the monthly retail data, call 301-763-1605 or e-mail eid.ceb.customer.service@census.gov.

For more information on the Economic Indicators, visit www.census.gov/economic-indicators/.



ECONOMIC DATA | ST. LOUIS FED

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

A Vital Resource for Retail Trade Statistics

What is the Advance Monthly Sales for Retail and Food Services (MARTS)?

The Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey (MARTS) is a monthly survey of retail and food services businesses that provides an early indication of consumer spending in the United States. It is a sample of approximately 5,500 firms, and is a subsample of the Monthly Retail Trade Survey. The release contains advance current-month national estimates of sales for retail and food services companies, and is released about 9 working days after the reference month.

What is the Monthly Retail Trade Survey (MRTS)?

MRTS is a monthly survey of retail and food services businesses that provides current estimates of sales at retail and food services stores and inventories held by retail stores in the United States. It is a sample of approximately 13,000 firms. The data are released approximately 6 weeks after the reference month and the release contains preliminary current-month estimates and revised estimates for the previous month. Statistics include:

- Sales.
- Inventories.
- Inventories/sales ratios.

What is covered in the MARTS and the MRTS?

The MARTS and MRTS cover Retail Trade (North American Industry Classification System [NAICS] Sectors 44-45) and Food Services and Drinking Places (NAICS Sector 72, subsector 722).

What is the Quarterly Retail E-Commerce Report?

Retail e-commerce sales are estimated from the same sample used for the MRTS to estimate preliminary and final U.S. retail sales. Estimates are obtained by summing e-commerce sales of retailers for the 3 months in the calendar quarter. The Quarterly E-Commerce Report covers Retail Trade (NAICS Sector 44-45).

What value does the MARTS, MRTS, and the Quarterly Retail E-Commerce Report provide?

These economic indicators are widely used and closely watched throughout government, academic, and business communities.

- Current statistics on the retail trade sector of the economy.
- Major component of Gross Domestic Product (GDP).
- Provides data to industry groups, media, and private businesses for news and analysis.

What geographic levels are provided?

Data are provided at the national level.

Is respondent information kept confidential?

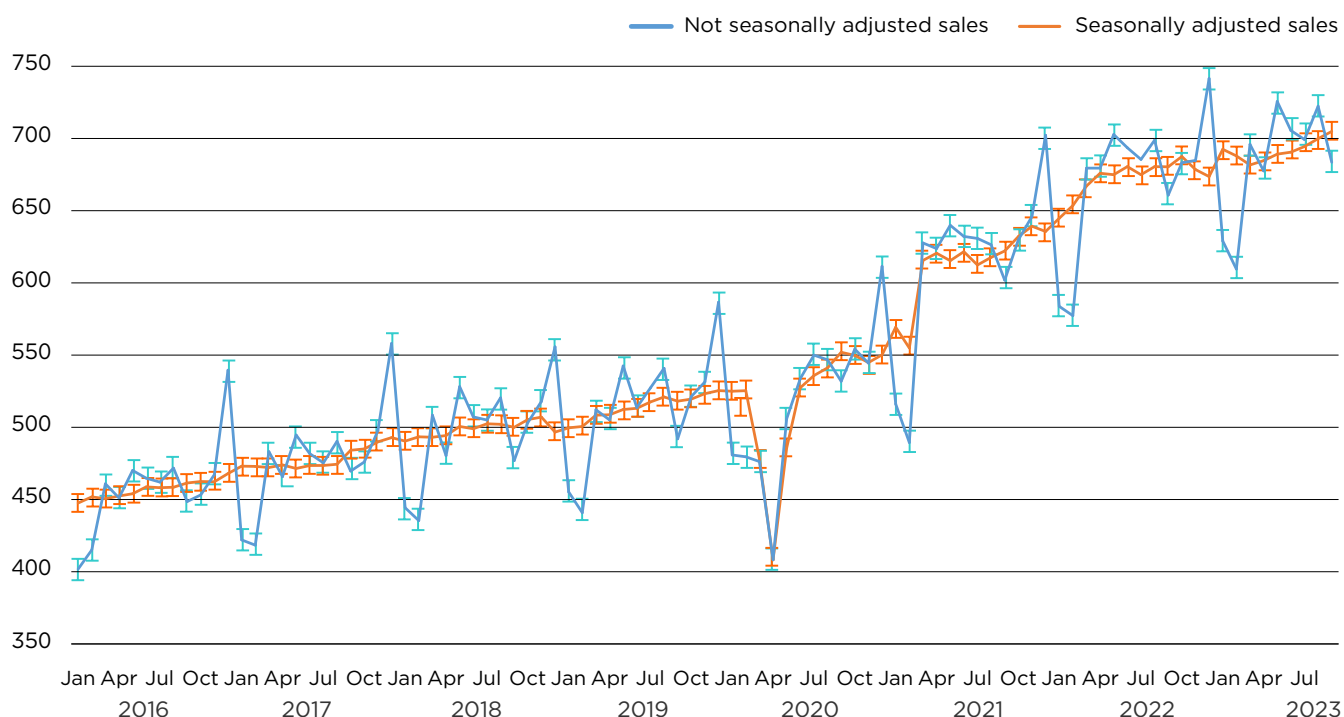
Title 13, United States Code, Section 9 requires the Census Bureau to keep respondent information confidential and to use responses only to produce statistics.

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Advance Monthly Sales for Retail and Food Services NAICS 44X72: Retail Trade and Food Services, U.S. Total January 2016 to September 2023¹

(Estimates with 90 percent confidence limits, in billions of dollars)



¹ For the Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey, estimates for the most recent month are advance estimates that are based on data from a subsample of firms from the larger Monthly Retail Trade Survey. The advance estimates will be superseded in following months by revised estimates derived from the larger Monthly Retail Trade Survey.

Note: For information on the reliability and use of the data, including important notes on estimation and sampling variance, seasonal adjustment, measures of sampling variability, and other information pertinent to this economic indicator, go to the Monthly and Annual Retail Trade website. Estimated measures of sampling variability for totals are expressed as coefficients of variation (CV). Standard errors (SE) are provided for month-to-month change and ratio estimates. Estimated measures of sampling variability are based on data not adjusted for seasonal variation, and should be used when drawing inferences about both adjusted and not adjusted estimates. The 90 percent confidence intervals (error bars) displayed on the charts are obtained under standard normality assumptions and may be rounded to the nearest unit. Consequently, they may differ somewhat from the program's published margins of error, which make use of their survey's design and estimation procedures and may employ finer degrees of precision. The y-axis for the line charts may be truncated to prevent flattening of the lines or to present the complete range of data.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Advanced Monthly Retail Trade Report, October 17, 2023.

Are there other programs that provide similar data?

Selected annual data are available, including data from the Annual Retail Trade Survey <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/arts.html> and County Business Patterns <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/cbp.html>. Detailed statistics from the 5-year Economic Census <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/economic-census.html> are also available.