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adjusted from February and up 4% unadjusted year over year. That compared with increases of 0.9% month over month and 2.1% year over year in February.

Isaac M. O'Bannon • Apr. 16, 2024

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Retail sales continued to increase in March along with job growth and tax refunds, which put more money in shoppers' pockets, according to data from the U.S. Census Bureau.

"March's Census Bureau numbers confirm that consumer spending remains steady, underscoring a resilient consumer despite inflationary pressure," said National Retail Federation Chief Economist Jack Kleinhenz. "While sales were mixed, several factors supported retail sales including an early Easter holiday, slightly larger 2023 tax refunds and stronger payroll growth over the last three months. Nonetheless, the increasing share of consumer spending going to services as prices for services rise remains a stubborn problem because it leaves less household income available to spend on retail goods."

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On Friday, the CNBC/NRF Retail Monitor, powered by Affinity Solutions, reported that March sales grew at a steady pace. The Retail Monitor found core March retail sales were up 0.23% seasonally adjusted from February and up 2.92% unadjusted year over year. That compared with increases of 0.27% month over month and 2.99% year over year in February.

As the leading authority and voice for the retail industry, NRF provides data on retail sales each month and also forecasts annual retail sales and spending for key periods such as the holiday season each year.

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