

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF
COMMERCE**

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ADVANCE REPORT ON RETAIL TRADE, FEBRUARY 1955

Total sales of retail stores in February were \$12.8 billion, the U. S. Department of Commerce announced today. This advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal factors and trading day differences, showed no change from January 1955 but an increase of about 6 percent over February a year ago.

The February sales figures are based on the Advance Report on Retail Trade, a monthly survey of the Bureau of the Census conducted in cooperation with a representative cross-section of about 1,800 retail firms which, in total, operate some 37,000 stores in the United States. The firms which are cooperating in the early reporting of sales are part of a larger group which furnishes figures at a later date. Therefore, the advance estimates are preliminary and subject to revision.

The preliminary Census figures are shown in table 1 on the reverse side. The Office of Business Economics noted that, after allowance for seasonal variations, an increase in automotive sales offset declines in general merchandise and apparel stores.

(more)

ADVANCE RETAIL SALES REPORT--PRELIMINARY ESTIMATES FOR FEBRUARY 1955

Table 1.--SALES OF RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES, BY KIND-OF-BUSINESS GROUP
(NOT ADJUSTED for seasonal factors and trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	Sales (millions of dollars)		
	1955		February 1954
	February	January	
Retail stores, total ¹	12,845	13,279	12,067
Food group.....	3,263	3,398	3,112
Grocery stores.....	2,765	2,868	2,607
Eating and drinking places.....	957	1,013	962
General merchandise group.....	1,185	1,244	1,142
Department stores ²	630	677	599
Apparel group.....	582	693	604
Furniture and appliance group.....	653	698	652
Lumber, building, hardware group ³	835	820	868
Automotive group.....	2,679	2,645	2,254
Gasoline service stations.....	899	949	801
Drug and proprietary stores.....	402	420	394

See footnotes below table 2.

Source: Bureau of the Census

Table 2.--SALES OF RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES, BY KIND-OF-BUSINESS GROUP
(ADJUSTED for seasonal factors and trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	Sales (millions of dollars)			Percent change, January 1955 from--	
	January 1955	1954		December 1954	January 1954
		December	January		
Retail stores, total ¹	14,871	15,123	13,622	-2	+9
Durable goods stores, total ¹	5,143	5,320	4,436	-3	+16
Nondurable goods stores, total ¹ ..	9,728	9,803	9,186	-1	+6
Food group.....	3,560	3,657	3,378	-3	+5
Eating and drinking places.....	1,092	1,070	1,066	+2	+2
General merchandise group.....	1,654	1,669	1,505	-1	+10
Apparel group.....	896	912	845	-2	+6
Furniture and appliance group.....	805	766	784	+5	+3
Lumber, building, hardware group ³ ..	1,102	1,124	1,024	-2	+8
Automotive group.....	2,844	3,054	2,285	-7	+24
Gasoline service stations.....	1,023	974	936	+5	+9
Drug and proprietary stores.....	425	413	430	+3	-1

Source: Office of Business Economics

¹ Totals include data for kinds of business not shown separately.

² Based on preliminary estimates supplied by Federal Reserve Board.

³ Includes farm equipment dealers.