

# ADVANCE RETAIL SALES REPORT

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
Frederick H. Mueller, Secretary

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS  
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For release  
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## ADVANCE REPORT ON RETAIL SALES, SEPTEMBER 1959

Total sales of retail stores in September were \$17.5 billion, the U. S. Department of Commerce announced today. This advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal factors and trading day differences, was about 2 percent below August of this year and about 7 percent above September 1958.

The September 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 1,700 retail firms which, in total, operate some 35,000 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. The advance estimates are preliminary and subject to revision, but the revision of the total seldom exceeds  $1\frac{1}{2}$  percent.

The preliminary Census figures for September are shown in table 1 of this release. The Office of Business Economics noted that after adjustment for seasonal factors and trading day differences, moderate declines occurred in the major durable goods groups while changes in the nondurable lines of trade were mixed and less pronounced. Final estimates for August indicate that seasonally adjusted retail sales were 1 percent below July.

(more)

ADVANCE RETAIL SALES REPORT--PRELIMINARY ESTIMATES FOR SEPTEMBER 1959  
 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)		
	1959		1958
	September	August	September
Retail stores, total <sup>1</sup> .....	17,541	18,054	16,326
Durable-goods stores, total <sup>1</sup> .....	5,748	6,240	5,080
Nondurable-goods stores, total <sup>1</sup> .....	11,793	11,814	11,246
Food group.....	4,197	4,295	4,068
Grocery stores.....	3,708	3,823	3,594
Eating and drinking places.....	1,395	1,458	1,276
General merchandise group.....	1,916	1,843	1,781
Department stores.....	<sup>2</sup> 1,126	1,057	1,049
Apparel group.....	1,102	958	1,042
Furniture and appliance group.....	919	942	850
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equip. group.	1,444	1,421	1,326
Automotive group.....	2,950	3,410	2,447
Gasoline service stations.....	1,396	1,504	1,346
Drug and proprietary stores.....	578	587	538

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	Percentage change, Sept. 1959 from--		Sales (millions of dollars)				Percentage change, Aug. 1959 from--	
	Aug. 1959	Sept. 1958	1959		1958	July 1959	Aug. 1958	
			Sept.	Aug.	July			Aug.
Retail stores, total <sup>1</sup> .....	-1.9	+7.2	17,761	18,110	18,296	16,859	-1	+7
Durable-goods stores, total <sup>1</sup> ..	-4.5	+14.2	5,821	6,095	6,160	5,214	-1	+17
Nondurable-goods stores, total <sup>1</sup>	-0.6	+4.1	11,940	12,015	12,136	11,645	-1	+3
Food group.....				4,305	4,289	4,152	0	+4
Eating and drinking places.....				1,296	1,325	1,255	-2	+3
General merchandise group.....				1,989	2,030	1,918	-2	+4
Apparel group.....				1,096	1,133	1,094	-3	0
Furniture and appliance group.....				952	929	891	+2	+7
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group..				1,297	1,287	1,179	+1	+10
Automotive group.....				3,350	3,454	2,703	-3	+24
Gasoline service stations.....				1,392	1,404	1,340	-1	+4
Drug and proprietary stores.....				600	592	551	+1	+9

Source: Office of Business Economics

<sup>1</sup> Totals include data for kinds of business not shown separately.

<sup>2</sup> Based on preliminary estimates supplied by Federal Reserve Board.