



The U.S. Department of Commerce announced today that total sales of retail stores in December were estimated at \$30.2 billion, bringing sales for the full year 1965 to \$282.7 billion, a record annual total and about 8 percent above the 1964 level. Statistics prepared by the Department's Bureau of the Census show that the December figure, after adjustment for seasonal and holiday variations and trading day differences, but not for price changes, was about 1 percent above the November level and 7 percent above December 1964.

The Office of Business Economics noted that, after adjustment, sales of durable goods stores rose 2 percent in December, as automobile sales continued to advance. Sales by nondurable goods stores rose 1 percent, with declines in sales at general merchandise stores more than offset by increases in sales of food stores.

The December sales figures are based on a monthly survey of the Bureau of the Census conducted in cooperation with a representative cross-section of about 2,500 retail firms, which, in total, operate some 48,000 stores in the United States. The firms which are cooperating in the early reporting of sales are part of a larger sample group which furnishes figures at a later date. The advance estimates are subject to revision by estimates subsequently derived from the full sample.

The revision of the total seldom exceeds 1.5 percent and for the past year has averaged 0.9 percent. For individual kind-of-business groups, revisions have been greater, ranging on the average from 0.9 percent for drug and proprietary stores to 2.9 percent for the lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.

(more)

ADVANCE RETAIL SALES FOR DECEMBER 1965

Table 1. SALES OF RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES, BY KIND-OF-BUSINESS GROUP

(NOT ADJUSTED for seasonal variations or trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	Sales (millions of dollars)					
	12 months			Dec. <sup>1</sup> 1965	Nov. <sup>1</sup> 1965	Dec. 1964
	1965	1964	Percent increase			
Retail stores, total <sup>2</sup> .....	282,710	261,630	+8	30,173	24,512	27,719
Durable-goods stores, total <sup>2</sup> .....	94,147	85,116	+11	8,911	8,223	8,201
Nondurable-goods stores, total <sup>2</sup> .....	188,563	176,514	+7	21,262	16,289	19,518
Food group.....	66,061	62,191	+6	6,408	5,402	5,762
Grocery stores.....	60,013	56,273	+7	5,864	4,924	5,208
Eating and drinking places.....	21,401	19,401	+10	1,850	1,786	1,658
General merchandise group.....	34,885	31,721	+10	5,446	3,455	5,048
Department stores.....	20,995	18,631	+13	3,351	2,106	2,977
Apparel group.....	16,041	15,567	+3	2,491	1,455	2,324
Furniture and appliance group.....	13,561	13,093	+4	1,584	1,290	1,488
Lumber, bldg., hdwe., farm equip. group..	16,889	15,634	+8	1,467	1,428	1,242
Automotive group.....	55,458	48,491	+14	4,638	4,737	4,370
Gasoline service stations.....	21,697	20,295	+7	1,846	1,813	1,790
Drug and proprietary stores.....	9,350	8,585	+9	1,100	783	966

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 variations and trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	Percentage change, Dec. 1965 from --		Sales (millions of dollars)				Percentage change, Nov. 1965 from --	
	Nov. 1965	Dec. 1964	1965			1964 Dec.	Oct. 1965	Nov. 1964
			Dec. <sup>1</sup>	Nov. <sup>1</sup>	Oct. <sup>1</sup>			
Retail stores, total.....	+1	+7	24,303	24,013	23,959	21,661	0	+11
Durable-goods stores, total ...	+2	+6	8,112	7,927	7,838	6,695	+1	+18
Nondurable-goods stores, total	+1	+7	16,191	16,086	16,121	14,966	0	+7
Food group.....				5,590	5,670	5,258	-1	+6
Eating and drinking places.....				1,855	1,897	1,609	-2	+15
General merchandise group.....				3,055	2,967	2,738	+3	+12
Apparel group.....				1,377	1,354	1,310	+2	+5
Furniture and appliance group.....				1,191	1,167	1,098	+2	+8
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.....				1,442	1,524	1,256	-5	+15
Automotive group. <sup>3</sup> .....				4,572	4,457	3,685	+3	+24
Gasoline service stations.....				1,826	1,825	1,738	0	+5
Drug and proprietary stores.....				818	828	724	-1	+13

<sup>1</sup> Advance sample estimates.

<sup>2</sup> Totals include data for kinds of business not shown separately.

<sup>3</sup> Extreme care should be taken in interpreting data in this category for October due to seasonal variations and trading day differences.