



For release
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OCTOBER 1967

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The U.S. Department of Commerce announced today that total sales of retail stores in October, after adjustment for seasonal and holiday variations and trading day differences but not for price changes, were estimated at \$26.2 billion. This advance estimate was about 2 percent below September sales but 2 percent above October sales last year. It should be noted that most of the decline in sales from September was due to a sharp decrease in new car sales which were affected by the strike in the automotive industry. Adjusted August-through-October sales averaged about 3 percent above the prior 3 months and 1 percent above the comparable period in 1966.

The Office of Business Economics noted that after adjustment, sales of stores in the nondurable stores goods category were for the most part unchanged from September. Durable goods stores except for the automotive group, showed small declines from previous month sales. Average monthly sales for durable goods stores during the August-October period were virtually unchanged from the average for the prior 3 months, while the average for nondurable goods stores for the comparable period increased 1 percent. The year-to-year gain in the 3 month average for nondurable goods stores was about 4 percent and about 1 percent for durable goods stores.

Based on the full sample the total U.S. unadjusted sales estimate for September was \$26.3 billion, about \$0.1 billion more than the \$26.2 billion published earlier in the September Advance Monthly Retail Sales report released on October 11, 1967. The seasonally adjusted sales for September as revised were about 1 percent above August.

The October sales figures are based on advance reporting of a small subsample of the Census Bureau's panel of retail firms. 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 1.1 percent. For individual kind-of-business groups revisions have been greater, ranging on the average from 0.8 percent for food stores to 3.5 percent for the furniture group.

It should be noted that even for figures derived from the full sample, sales movements between individual pairs of months tend to be relatively irregular. Data for several months are generally required to indicate the underlying trend.

(more)

ADVANCE RETAIL SALES FOR OCTOBER 1967

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)		
	1967		1966
	October ¹	September ²	October
Retail stores, total ³	26,231	26,260	25,923
Durable-goods stores, total ³	8,499	8,187	8,625
Nondurable-goods stores, total ³	17,732	18,073	17,298
Food group.....	5,861	6,252	5,922
Grocery stores.....	5,344	5,739	5,430
Eating and drinking places.....	2,173	2,205	2,006
General merchandise group.....	3,530	3,515	3,375
Department stores.....	2,292	2,316	2,221
Apparel group.....	1,483	1,570	1,478
Furniture and appliance group.....	1,378	1,353	1,332
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equip. group	1,537	1,543	1,492
Automotive group.....	4,889	4,517	5,096
Gasoline service stations.....	2,043	2,019	1,959
Drug and proprietary stores.....	883	889	841

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, Oct. 1967 from--		Sales (millions of dollars)				Percentage change, Sept. 1967 from--	
	Sept. 1967	Oct. 1966	1967			1966	Aug. 1967	Sept. 1966
			Oct. ¹	Sept. ²	Aug.	Sept.		
Retail stores, total ³	-2	+2	26,152	26,753	26,422	25,703	+1	+4
Durable-goods stores, total ³ ..	-7	-1	8,155	8,731	8,508	8,394	+3	+4
Nondurable-goods stores, total ³	0	+4	17,997	18,022	17,914	17,309	+1	+4
Food group.....				6,058	6,019	5,947	+1	+2
Eating and drinking places.....				2,137	2,094	1,975	+2	+8
General merchandise group.....				3,586	3,565	3,341	+1	+7
Apparel group.....				1,554	1,562	1,472	-1	+6
Furniture and appliance group.....				1,333	1,299	1,293	+3	+3
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group....				1,421	1,389	1,328	+2	+7
Automotive group ⁴				5,227	5,053	5,034	+3	+4
Gasoline service stations.....				2,017	2,003	1,931	+1	+4
Drug and proprietary stores.....				908	913	860	-1	+6

¹Advance sample estimates.

²Preliminary estimates of full sample.

³Totals include data for kinds of business not shown separately.

⁴During months of model change over, seasonal adjustment factors are less reliable than in other months.