

advance monthly RETAIL SALES



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JULY 1968

The U.S. Department of Commerce announced today that total sales of retail stores in July were estimated at \$28.8 billion; this advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal and holiday variations and trading day differences but not for price changes, was \$29.1 billion. The advance estimate, after adjustment, was about 3 percent above June sales and about 10 percent above July sales last year. Adjusted May-through-July sales averaged about 3 percent above the prior 3 months and 8 percent above the comparable period a year ago.

The Office of Business Economics noted that after adjustments, sales of durable goods stores were up 5 percent and sales of nondurable goods stores were up 2 percent from June to July. Widespread increases for all major kinds of business

were led by gains of more than 5 percent in automotive and general merchandise group sales. Average monthly sales for durable goods stores during the May-July period were about 4 percent above the average for the prior 3 months, and the average for nondurable goods stores for the comparable period increased 2 percent. The year-to-year gain in the 3 month average for nondurable goods stores was about 7 percent and about 10 percent for durable goods stores.

Based on the full sample, the total U.S. unadjusted sales estimate for June was \$0.1 billion above the \$28.5 billion published earlier in the June Advance Monthly Retail Sales report released on July 10, 1968. The seasonally adjusted sales for June as revised were about 1 percent above May.

The July sales figures are based on advance reporting of a small subsample of the Census Bureau's panel of retail firms. Beginning with the October 1967 report, the advance figures have been modified on the basis of the relationship between the advance estimates and full sample estimates. 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 1.0 percent for food stores to 4.0 percent for the lumber 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)

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. Annual subscription to Current Retail Trade Reports (Weekly Retail Sales Report, Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report, Monthly Retail Trade Report, and Annual Retail Trade Report sold as a single subscription) \$6.00. Single copies, available only from the Bureau of the Census, 10¢.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE C. R. Smith, Secretary
William H. Chartener, Assistant Secretary for Economic Affairs
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS A. Ross Eckler, Director

ADVANCE RETAIL SALES FOR JULY 1968

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)		
	1968		1967
	July ¹	June ²	July
Retail stores, total ³	28,845	28,640	26,005
Durable-goods stores, total ³	9,865	9,650	8,547
Nondurable-goods stores, total ³	18,980	18,990	17,458
Food group.....	6,534	6,486	6,145
Grocery stores.....	5,998	5,957	5,632
Eating and drinking places.....	2,445	2,342	2,293
General merchandise group.....	3,614	3,719	3,085
Department stores.....	2,363	2,473	2,008
Apparel group.....	1,375	1,495	1,301
Furniture and appliance group.....	1,436	1,386	1,239
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equip. group	1,674	1,610	1,575
Automotive group.....	5,964	5,838	5,014
Gasoline service stations.....	2,310	2,252	2,159
Drug and proprietary stores.....	986	956	879

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, July 1968 from--		Sales (millions of dollars)				Percentage change, June 1968 from--	
	June 1968	July 1967	1968		1967	May 1968	June 1967	
			July ¹	June ²	June			
Retail stores, total ³	+3	+10	29,055	28,218	27,993	26,544	+1	+6
Durable-goods stores, total ³ ...	+5	+11	9,580	9,143	9,031	8,546	+1	+7
Nondurable-goods stores, total ³ ...	+2	+9	19,475	19,075	18,962	17,998	+1	+6
Food group.....				6,426	6,425	6,050	0	+6
Eating and drinking places.....				2,205	2,227	2,059	-1	+7
General merchandise group.....				3,902	3,778	3,604	+3	+8
Apparel group.....				1,572	1,566	1,524	0	+3
Furniture and appliance group.....				1,414	1,413	1,295	0	+9
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group....				1,430	1,433	1,422	0	+1
Automotive group.....				5,479	5,338	5,069	+3	+8
Gasoline service stations.....				2,153	2,145	2,040	0	+6
Drug and proprietary stores.....				975	983	923	-1	+6

¹Advance sample estimates.

²Preliminary estimates of full sample.

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