

Advance Monthly Retail Sales

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The Bureau of the Census, U. S. Department of Commerce, announced today that total sales of retail stores in February, after adjusting for seasonal variations and trading day differences, but not for price changes, were estimated at \$57.6 billion. This adjusted figure was about 2 percent above January 1977, and 9 percent greater than February a year ago. The adjusted February estimate, excluding the automotive group, was 1 percent above January and 8 percent above February of last year.

Adjusted sales of durable goods stores increased 3 percent from January, while sales of nondurable goods stores increased 1 percent. Compared with sales for February 1976, durable goods stores increased 12 percent, while nondurable goods stores increased 8 percent.

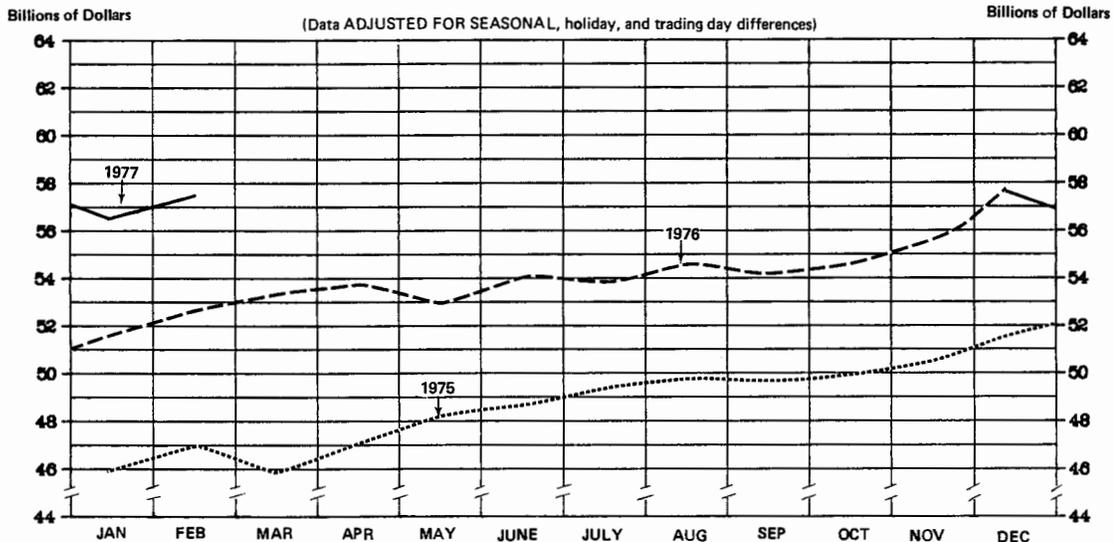
The revised estimate of retail sales for January, based on preliminary results from the full sample of retail stores, was about \$56.6 billion, virtually the same as the advance estimate published earlier. Seasonally adjusted sales for January, as revised, were about 2 percent below December but were 10 percent above January 1976. Excluding the automotive group, these estimates were about 2 percent below December but were 7 percent over January of last year. For nondurable goods stores, adjusted January sales were about 1 percent below the previous month but were 8 percent above the same month a year earlier. For durable goods stores, adjusted sales for January were 4 percent below December but were 13 percent higher than January 1976.

The advance sales estimates are based on early reporting of sales for the weeks and part-weeks of the month by a small subsample of the Bureau's retail survey panel. Because retailers' weekly records often differ from their monthly records (in reflecting such items as carrying charges, sales taxes, merchandise returns), the advance estimate can differ from the subsequent estimates which are based on monthly reports obtained from the full sample of retail stores. In addition, sampling variability between the sub-sample used for the advance estimates and the full sample can cause a difference. For most months, such differences have been reduced by modifying the advance estimates prior to publication on the basis of the relationship between the advance and full-sample data for previous months.

The differences between advance and full-sample estimates of month-to-month percentage change in seasonally adjusted total retail store sales have ranged from 0 to 2 percent during the last 12 months, with a median of 1 percent. For individual kind-of-business groups, these differences tend to be higher.

Preliminary estimates for January 1977 and final estimates for December 1976 based on the full sample will also be published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade report for January (BR-77-1). The complete report will provide sales estimates in greater detail and will present a description of the sample design and the techniques used in developing the estimates. In addition, the complete report will include approximate measures of sampling variability.

MONTHLY SALES OF ALL RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES



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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

Data on retail trade, published in the Weekly Retail Sales Report, Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report, the Monthly Retail Trade Report, and the Annual Retail Trade Report are available on a single subscription from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 20402, at \$30.10 per year. Add \$7.55 for each subscription to a foreign address. Single copies of the Advance Monthly Retail Trade Report are available from Subscriber Services Section (Publications), Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C., 20233 at 25 cents each.

Table 1. ESTIMATED SALES OF RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES BY KIND OF BUSINESS

(Sales in millions of dollars)

Kind of business	Not adjusted					Adjusted ¹				
	1977		1976			1977		1976		
	Feb. ² advance	Jan. prelim.	Dec. final	Feb.	Jan.	Feb. ² advance	Jan. prelim.	Dec. final	Feb.	Jan.
Retail stores, total.....	48,871	49,129	68,171	45,243	46,767	57,569	56,570	57,898	52,601	51,592
Total (excl. automotive group).....	38,445	39,519	57,906	36,289	38,468	45,488	44,971	45,884	42,255	41,987
Durable goods stores, total.....	16,436	15,587	19,639	14,764	14,213	19,547	18,950	19,730	17,397	16,730
Nondurable goods stores, total.....	32,435	33,542	48,532	30,479	32,554	38,022	37,620	38,168	35,204	34,862
Food stores, total.....	10,918	11,458	13,210	10,507	11,723	11,979	11,807	12,188	11,424	11,433
Grocery stores.....	10,154	10,712	12,289	9,775	10,983	11,122	10,987	11,358	10,625	10,642
Eating and drinking places.....	3,914	4,062	4,495	3,723	3,889	4,541	4,444	4,518	4,174	4,213
General merchandise group with nonstores.....	6,014	6,511	15,342	6,213	6,247	9,009	8,919	9,153	8,401	8,022
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....	6,005	5,948	14,603	5,718	5,748	8,317	8,241	8,491	7,849	7,443
Department stores.....	4,205	4,196	10,707	3,840	3,918	5,948	5,852	6,063	5,408	5,075
Variety stores.....	*	447	1,334	563	555	*	637	688	764	753
Mail-order houses (department store merchandise).....	*	420	709	432	366	*	640	530	533	524
Apparel and accessory stores, total.....	1,788	1,976	4,147	1,768	1,976	2,400	2,402	2,473	2,369	2,311
Men's, boys' wear stores.....	*	482	1,050	378	461	*	559	549	507	505
Women's apparel, accessory stores.....	*	712	1,482	715	767	*	873	915	935	906
Shoe stores.....	*	308	525	272	303	*	370	392	374	354
Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores, total.....	2,084	2,143	3,187	2,064	2,138	2,423	2,370	2,516	2,332	2,273
Furniture, home furnishings stores.....	*	1,302	1,721	1,226	1,228	*	1,471	1,500	1,385	1,326
Household appliance, TV, radio stores.....	*	664	1,091	654	693	*	706	787	736	713
Household appliance dealers.....	*	375	633	381	404	*	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
Building materials, hardware, farm equipment dealers, total.....	2,484	2,356	3,211	2,398	2,315	3,249	3,209	3,384	3,083	3,117
Lumber and other building materials dealers.....	*	1,393	1,754	1,367	1,323	*	1,835	1,991	1,746	1,748
Hardware stores.....	*	381	632	406	387	*	522	537	545	507
Automotive dealers, total.....	10,426	9,610	10,265	8,954	8,299	12,081	11,599	12,014	10,346	9,605
Passenger car, other automotive dealers.....	*	8,821	9,319	8,311	7,619	*	10,602	11,134	9,509	8,778
Passenger car dealers (franchised).....	*	7,873	8,222	7,252	6,682	*	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
Tire, battery, accessory dealers.....	*	789	946	643	680	*	997	880	837	827
Gasoline service stations.....	3,711	3,977	4,248	3,475	3,654	4,270	4,272	4,274	3,861	3,867
Drug and proprietary stores.....	1,551	1,587	2,357	1,462	1,481	1,703	1,699	1,733	1,572	1,522
Liquor stores.....	*	819	1,344	786	841	*	919	950	918	899

NOTE: Totals include data for kinds of businesses not shown separately.

^{*}Advance estimates are not available from the subsample panel for these kinds of businesses.¹Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. (See explanatory material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-77-1). ²Advance estimates are based on early reporting by a small subsample of the full survey panel. All other estimates are based on the full sample. NA Not available.

Table 2. PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN SALES OF RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

(Adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading day differences)

Kind of business	Percent change					
	February 1977 advance from--		January 1977 preliminary from--		December 1976 through February 1977 from--	
	Jan. 1977 preliminary	Feb. 1976 final	Dec. 1976 final	Jan. 1976 final	Sept. 1976 through Nov. 1976	Dec. 1975 through Feb. 1976
Total, retail stores.....	+2	+9	-2	+10	+5	+10
Total (excluding automotive group).....	+1	+8	-2	+7	+2	+8
Durable goods stores, total.....	+3	+12	-4	+13	+9	+15
Nondurable goods stores, total.....	+1	+8	-1	+8	+2	+8
Food stores, total.....	+1	+5	-3	+3	+1	+5
Grocery stores.....	+1	+5	-3	+3	+1	+5
Eating and drinking places.....	+2	+9	-2	+5	+2	+7
General merchandise group with nonstores.....	+1	+7	-3	+11	+2	+9
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....	0	+6	-3	+11	+2	+8
Department stores.....	+2	+10	-3	+15	+2	+12
Apparel and accessory stores, total.....	0	+1	-3	+4	0	+4
Furniture, home furnishings and equipment stores, total.....	+2	+4	-6	+4	0	+5
Building materials, hardware, farm equipment dealers, total..	+1	+5	-5	+3	-1	+7
Automotive dealers, total.....	+4	+17	-3	+21	+16	+21
Gasoline service stations.....	0	+11	0	+10	+5	+11
Drug and proprietary stores.....	0	+8	-2	+12	+2	+10

Table 3. ESTIMATED SALES OF STORES OF FIRMS OPERATING 11 OR MORE RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS: JANUARY 1977

(Sales in millions of dollars)

Kind of business	Not adjusted			Adjusted ¹		
	1977	1976		1977	1976	
	Jan. prelim.	Dec. final	Jan.	Jan. prelim.	Dec. final	Jan.
Retail stores, total.....	14,565	24,522	14,124	17,186	17,602	15,663
Food stores, total.....	6,173	7,139	6,282	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
Grocery stores	6,086	7,023	6,212	6,172	6,414	5,871
General merchandise group with nonstores...	5,132	12,421	4,868	7,158	7,295	6,359
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....	4,874	12,074	4,650	6,819	6,963	6,084
Department stores.....	3,752	9,480	3,489	5,226	5,414	4,525
Variety stores.....	341	1,087	437	501	554	608
Apparel and accessory stores, total.....	442	1,071	444	584	624	576
Shoe stores.....	118	243	117	148	167	145
Drug and proprietary stores.....	663	1,113	575	760	736	622

¹Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday and trading day differences. (See Explanatory Material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-77-1). NA Not available.

Table 4. ESTIMATED SALES OF RETAIL STORES BY SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS FOR SPECIFIED STANDARD METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREAS AND CITIES

(Sales in millions of dollars)

Area	Not adjusted		
	1977	1976	
	Jan. preliminary	Dec. final	Jan.
Standard Consolidated Areas ¹			
Chicago, Ill.--Northwestern Ind., total.....	1,918	2,721	1,868
Nondurable goods stores.....	1,300	1,983	1,304
GAF ²	523	1,087	508
New York-Northeastern N.J., total.....	3,226	4,415	3,175
Nondurable goods stores.....	2,473	3,431	2,442
GAF ²	894	1,728	853
Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas ¹			
Baltimore, Md., GAF ²	96	219	102
Boston, Mass., GAF ²	174	387	164
Chicago, Ill., total.....	1,765	2,493	1,667
Nondurable goods stores.....	1,197	1,822	1,202
GAF ²	488	1,018	475
Cleveland, Ohio, GAF ²	102	224	99
Dallas, Texas, GAF ²	135	258	127
Detroit, Mich., total.....	947	1,370	866
Nondurable goods stores.....	636	975	617
GAF ²	227	510	212
Houston, Texas, GAF ²	161	316	145



Table 4. ESTIMATED SALES OF RETAIL STORES BY SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS FOR SPECIFIED
STANDARD METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREAS AND CITIES--Continued

(Sales in millions of dollars)

Area	Not adjusted		
	1977	1976	
	Jan. preliminary	Dec. final	Jan.
Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas ¹ --Con.			
Kansas City, Mo.-Kansas, GAP ²	113	235	110
Los Angeles-Long Beach, Calif., total.....	1,778	2,405	1,665
Nondurable goods stores.....	1,236	1,774	1,200
GAP ²	482	951	442
Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minn., GAP ²	143	269	120
New York, N.Y.--Nassau-Suffolk, N.Y., total ³	2,228	2,967	2,180
Nondurable goods stores.....	1,727	2,324	1,698
GAP ²	623	1,161	589
Nassau-Suffolk, N.Y., total ⁴	644	784	609
Nondurable goods stores.....	473	593	445
GAP ²	191	287	157
New York, N.Y., total ⁵	1,584	2,183	1,571
Nondurable goods stores.....	1,254	1,731	1,253
GAP ²	432	874	432
Philadelphia, Pa., total.....	1,036	1,470	990
Nondurable goods stores.....	776	1,126	742
GAP ²	241	542	247
Pittsburgh, Pa., total.....	489	750	494
Nondurable goods stores.....	394	615	388
GAP ²	123	307	137
St. Louis, Mo.-Ill., total.....	462	687	467
Nondurable goods stores.....	298	473	323
GAP ²	112	261	113
San Francisco-Oakland, Calif., total.....	783	1,050	740
Nondurable goods stores.....	565	801	554
GAP ²	207	376	187
Washington, D.C.-Md.-Va., total.....	742	1,017	711
Nondurable goods stores.....	513	740	498
GAP ²	161	343	166
Cities			
Chicago, Ill., total.....	671	986	670
Nondurable goods stores.....	491	765	510
GAP ²	255	497	243
Detroit, Mich., total.....	232	311	195
Nondurable goods stores.....	160	219	146
GAP ²	43	99	42
Los Angeles, Calif., total.....	606	825	575
Nondurable goods stores.....	441	631	437
GAP ²	204	363	177
New York, N.Y., total.....	1,331	1,821	1,325
Nondurable goods stores.....	1,065	1,447	1,065
GAP ²	372	733	373
Philadelphia, Pa., total.....	367	504	358
Nondurable goods stores.....	297	414	288
GAP ²	208	204	102

¹Definitions of standard consolidated areas and standard metropolitan statistical areas are shown in the Monthly Retail Trade Report BR-77-1. ²Stores in the general merchandise, apparel, and furniture and appliance groups; these stores specialize in department store types of merchandise. ³Formerly New York, N.Y. SMSA. ⁴Includes Nassau and Suffolk Counties formerly included in the New York, N.Y., SMSA. ⁵Includes New York City, Rockland and Westchester Counties, N.Y.

