

# Advance Monthly Retail Sales

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CB-79-92

## APRIL 1979

The Bureau of the Census, U. S. Department of Commerce, announced today that total sales of retail stores in April, after adjusting for seasonal variations and trading day differences, but not for price changes were estimated at \$72.2 billion. This adjusted figure was little changed from March but 11 percent higher than April a year ago. The adjusted April estimate, excluding the automotive group was about 1 percent above March and 12 percent above April last year.

Adjusted sales of durable goods stores were little changed from March while sales of nondurable goods stores increased about 1 percent. Compared with sales for April 1978, durable goods stores increased 12 percent, and nondurable goods stores increased 10 percent.

The revised estimate of retail sales for March, based on preliminary results from the full sample of retail stores, was about \$71.9 billion, virtually the same as the March Advance estimate published earlier. Seasonally adjusted preliminary sales for March were about 1 percent above February 1979 estimates and 12 percent above the March 1978 sales. Excluding the automotive group, retail sales were about 1 percent above February and 12 percent over March 1978. For nondurable goods stores, adjusted March sales increased about 1 percent from the previous month and 10 percent above the same month a year earlier. For durable goods stores, adjusted sales for March were 1 percent above February and 16 percent higher than March 1978.

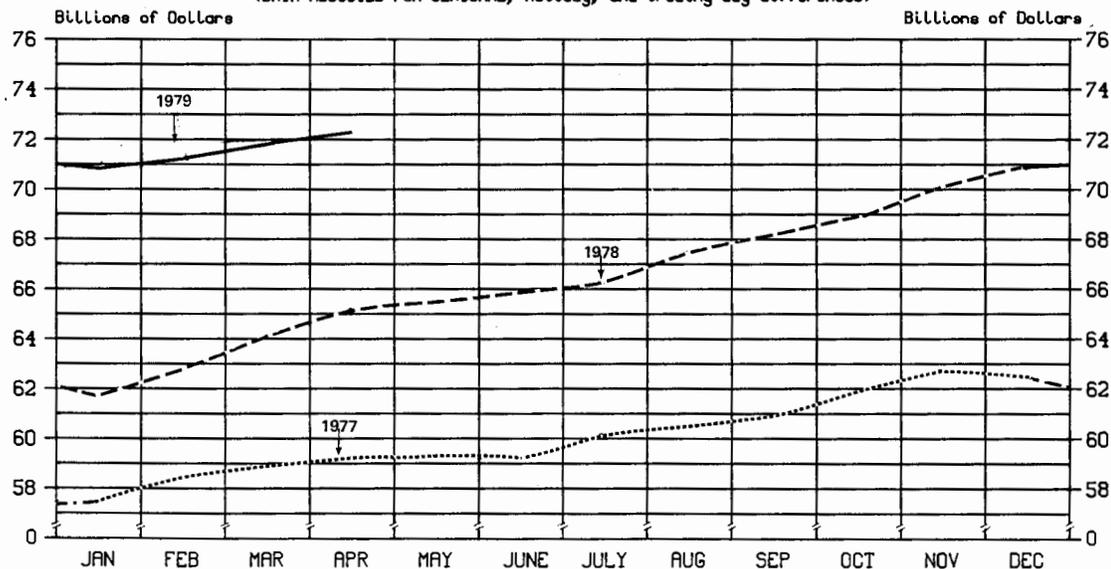
The advance sales estimates are based on early reporting of sales by a small subsample of the Bureau's retail survey panel. Because of the early reporting, the advance estimates can differ from the subsequent estimates which are based on monthly reports obtained from the full sample of retail stores. 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.

In the past, differences between advance and full-sample estimates of month-to-month percentage change in seasonally adjusted total retail stores sales have averaged less than 1 percent. However, most modifications being applied to the current advance monthly estimates are based on the relationship between the advance and the redesigned full-sample data for only the months since June 1977. The differences now, therefore, may vary from the past experience.

Preliminary estimates for March 1979 and final estimates for February 1979 based on the full sample will also be published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade report for March (BR-79-3). The complete report will provide sales estimates in greater detail and will present a description of the sample design, the basis and methodology used in developing revisions, and the techniques used in developing the estimates. In addition, the complete report will include approximate measures of sampling variability.

### ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES FOR THE UNITED STATES JANUARY 1977 - APRIL 1979

(DATA ADJUSTED FOR SEASONAL, holiday, and trading day differences)



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U.S. Department of Commerce  
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

The 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, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402, at \$25 per year. Add \$6.25 for each subscription to a foreign address. Postage stamps not acceptable; currency submitted at sender's risk. Remittances from foreign countries must be by international money order or by a draft on a U.S. bank. Single copies of the Advance Monthly Retail Sales report are for sale by Subscriber Services (Publications), Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233, at 70 cents each.

Table 1. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales by Kind of Business for the United States

(Sales in millions of dollars)

1972 SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted					Adjusted <sup>1</sup>				
		1979			1978		1979			1978	
		Apr. <sup>2</sup> advance	Mar. prelim.	Feb. final	Apr.	Mar.	Apr. <sup>2</sup> advance	Mar. prelim.	Feb. final	Apr.	Mar.
	Retail trade, total.....	71,495	71,998	60,653	63,838	64,764	72,197	71,852	71,122	65,146	64,075
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	55,499	55,875	47,553	49,456	50,204	57,549	56,959	56,190	51,609	50,943
	Durable goods stores, total.....	26,409	25,972	21,131	23,165	22,777	25,253	25,356	25,035	22,617	21,813
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	4,248 (*)	3,730 2,439	2,708 1,790	3,665 2,382	3,170 2,114	4,069 (*)	4,043 2,611	3,676 2,380	3,609 2,451	3,397 2,251
521,3	Building materials and supply stores.....	(*)	2,439	1,790	2,382	2,114	(*)	2,611	2,380	2,451	2,251
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	624	452	571	504	(*)	678	608	547	545
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	15,996	16,123	13,100	14,382	14,560	14,648	14,893	14,932	13,537	13,132
551,2,5, 6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous auto- motive dealers.....	(*)	14,877	12,084	13,234	13,462	(*)	13,649	13,654	12,426	12,030
551	Motor vehicle dealers (franchised).....	(*)	12,980	10,635	11,300	11,622	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	1,246	1,016	1,148	1,098	(*)	1,244	1,278	1,111	1,102
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	3,274 (*)	3,317 2,122	2,882 1,796	2,901 1,825	2,902 1,758	3,414 (*)	3,358 2,124	3,333 2,062	3,061 1,885	2,924 1,734
571	Furniture and home furnishings stores.....	(*)	2,122	1,796	1,825	1,758	(*)	2,124	2,062	1,885	1,734
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores	(*)	923	842	804	852	(*)	947	996	877	883
5722	Household appliance stores.....	(*)	453	401	399	390	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	45,086	46,026	39,522	40,673	41,987	46,944	46,496	46,087	42,529	42,262
53	General merchandise group stores.....	8,128	7,932	5,925	7,472	7,366	8,599	8,680	8,378	8,048	7,952
531	Department stores.....	6,473	6,303	4,700	6,010	5,894	6,864	6,942	6,734	6,462	6,420
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	617	483	582	611	(*)	663	660	654	622
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.	(*)	1,012	742	880	861	(*)	1,075	984	932	910
54	Food stores.....	15,084	16,212	14,215	13,865	14,529	15,832	15,609	15,639	14,298	14,177
541	Grocery stores.....	13,789	14,923	13,079	12,862	13,482	14,530	14,335	14,357	13,273	13,153
554	Gasoline service stations.....	5,499	5,435	4,898	4,889	4,906	5,606	5,512	5,566	4,994	4,996
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	3,366	3,143	2,416	2,816	2,940	3,390	3,428	3,214	3,064	2,983
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	553	462	536	532	(*)	633	626	585	581
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	(*)	1,242	948	1,088	1,143	(*)	1,323	1,234	1,201	1,169
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	565	444	511	521	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	575	402	528	570	(*)	620	533	548	528
58	Eating and drinking places.....	6,361	6,311	5,339	5,719	5,579	6,504	6,499	6,274	5,794	5,787
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	2,204	2,214	2,058	1,940	2,070	2,270	2,225	2,257	2,042	2,050
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,160	1,034	1,010	1,038	(*)	1,212	1,235	1,098	1,110
5961 (pt.)	Mail-order houses (department store merchandise) <sup>3</sup> .....	(*)	459	374	538	594	(*)	443	482	584	571

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

\*Advance estimates are not available from the subsample panel for these kinds of business.

NA Not available.

<sup>1</sup>Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. (See Explanatory Material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-79-3).<sup>2</sup>Advance estimates are based on early reporting by a small subsample of the full survey panel. All other estimates are based on the full sample.<sup>3</sup>Includes sales made by mail-order catalog desks located within department stores of some mail-order firms.

Table 2. Percent Change in Estimated Monthly Retail Sales by Kind of Business for the United States

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

1972 SIC code	Kind of business	Percent change					
		Apr. 1979 advance from--		Mar. 1979 preliminary from--		Feb. 1979 through Apr. 1979 from--	
		Mar. 1979 preliminary	Apr. 1978 final	Feb. 1979 final	Mar. 1978 final	Nov. 1978 through Jan. 1979	Feb. 1978 through Apr. 1978
	Retail trade, total.....	0	+11	+1	+12	+2	+12
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	+1	+12	+1	+12	+2	+12
	Durable goods stores, total.....	0	+12	+1	+16	0	+15
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	+1	+13	+10	+19	-1	+14
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	-2	+8	0	+13	+1	+13
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	+2	+12	+1	+15	+2	+13
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	+1	+10	+1	+10	+2	+10
53	General merchandise group stores.....	-1	+7	+4	+9	0	+8
531	Department stores.....	-1	+6	+3	+8	0	+7
54	Food stores.....	+1	+11	0	+10	+2	+11
541	Grocery stores.....	+1	+9	0	+9	+2	+9
554	Gasoline service stations.....	+2	+12	-1	+10	+5	+11
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	-1	+11	+7	+15	0	+13
58	Eating and drinking places.....	0	+12	+4	+12	+6	+12
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	+2	+11	-1	+9	0	+10

Table 3. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales of Group II Companies by Kind of Business for the United States: MARCH 1979

(Sales in millions of dollars)

1972 SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted			Adjusted <sup>1</sup>		
		Mar. 1979 preliminary	Feb. 1979 final	Mar. 1978	Mar. 1979 preliminary	Feb. 1979 final	Mar. 1978
	Retail trade, total.....	23,364	19,144	21,496	23,604	23,283	21,626
53	General merchandise group stores.....	7,002	5,230	6,511	7,664	7,445	7,035
531	Department stores.....	5,969	4,454	5,565	6,574	6,381	6,049
533	Variety stores.....	512	396	493	542	548	499
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.	521	380	453	(S)	(S)	(S)
54	Food stores.....	8,653	7,579	7,876	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
541	Grocery stores.....	8,556	7,485	7,776	8,095	8,162	7,463
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	1,088	751	1,032	1,199	1,098	1,025
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	459	323	432	511	474	442
566	Shoe stores.....	287	185	279	306	261	248
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	1,061	967	974	1,075	1,104	961

Note: The Group II component of the sample consists of companies which had 11 or more retail establishments according to the most recent update of multi-establishment files and which were selected with certainty (i.e., their sales size exceeded specified dollar volume cutoffs which vary by kind of business).

<sup>1</sup>Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. (See Explanatory Material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-79-3).

NA Not available

(S) Suppressed - Estimates do not meet Bureau of the Census standard for publication.

Official Business

Table 4. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales by Selected Kinds of Business for Specified Areas and Cities

(Sales in millions of dollars)

Area	Not adjusted			Area	Not adjusted		
	Mar. 1979 preliminary	Feb. 1979 final	Mar. 1978		Mar. 1979 preliminary	Feb. 1979 final	Mar. 1978
<b>Standard Consolidated Areas<sup>1</sup></b>				<b>Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas<sup>2</sup>--Con.</b>			
Chicago, Ill.--Northwestern				Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minn.-Wis., total.....	859	712	762
Indiana, total.....	2,697	2,327	2,526	Nondurable goods stores.....	550	471	484
Nondurable goods stores.....	1,798	1,536	1,730	GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	216	180	212
GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	627	493	602	Nassau-Suffolk, N.Y., total.....	973	844	885
New York, N.Y.--Northeastern N.J., total.....	4,735	4,155	4,077	Nondurable goods stores.....	655	586	607
Nondurable goods stores.....	3,340	2,939	2,977	GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	231	193	200
<b>Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas<sup>2</sup></b>				New York, N.Y.-N.J., total.....	2,502	2,205	2,222
Anaheim-Santa Ana-Garden Grove, Calif., total.....	882	731	772	Nondurable goods stores.....	1,848	1,635	1,657
Nondurable goods stores.....	536	461	482	GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	731	592	665
GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	213	182	191	Newark, N.J., total.....	673	563	521
Atlanta, Ga., GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	190	134	188	Nondurable goods stores.....	405	359	381
Baltimore, Md., total.....	734	575	655	GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	150	116	125
Nondurable goods stores.....	486	406	444	Philadelphia, Pa.-N.J., total.....	1,445	1,188	1,380
GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	158	113	141	Nondurable goods stores.....	992	854	962
Boston, Mass., total.....	1,146	1,013	1,089	GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	352	242	303
Nondurable goods stores.....	765	694	779	Pittsburgh, Pa., total.....	722	562	681
GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	292	235	257	Nondurable goods stores.....	496	411	476
Buffalo, N.Y., total.....	371	304	322	GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	193	143	177
Nondurable goods stores.....	287	241	240	St. Louis, Mo.-Ill., total.....	683	575	623
Chicago, Ill., total.....	2,489	2,153	2,352	Nondurable goods stores.....	511	446	492
Nondurable goods stores.....	1,675	1,434	1,621	GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	190	147	166
GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	591	466	567	San Diego, Calif., total.....	630	544	499
Cincinnati, Ohio-Ky.-Ind., total.....	436	368	391	Nondurable goods stores.....	363	316	315
Nondurable goods stores.....	325	276	290	GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	164	139	144
GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	676	578	642	San Francisco-Oakland, Calif., total.....	1,144	1,011	1,046
Cleveland, Ohio, total.....	470	409	437	Nondurable goods stores.....	757	674	684
Nondurable goods stores.....	161	127	154	GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	294	254	279
GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	1,154	983	1,037	Seattle-Everett, Wash., total.....	610	522	551
Dallas-Fort Worth, Tex., total.....	652	559	635	Nondurable goods stores.....	388	340	365
Nondurable goods stores.....	264	206	237	GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	1,088	876	1,001
GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	1,808	1,525	1,576	Washington, D.C.-Md.-Va., total.....	718	604	642
Detroit, Mich., total.....	1,041	885	925	Nondurable goods stores.....	281	213	262
Nondurable goods stores.....	406	331	383	GAP <sup>2</sup> .....			
GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	1,196	1,018	1,044	<b>Cities</b>			
Houston, Tex., total.....	740	632	601	Chicago, Ill., total.....	814	734	831
Nondurable goods stores.....	282	230	261	Nondurable goods stores.....	563	489	606
GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	599	505	557	GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	202	163	193
Kansas City, Mo.-Kans., total.....	381	326	340	Detroit, Mich., total.....	306	262	293
Nondurable goods stores.....	131	102	122	Nondurable goods stores.....	206	180	202
GAP <sup>2</sup> .....				GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	43	38	47
Los Angeles-Long Beach, Calif., total.....	2,482	2,173	2,155	Los Angeles, Calif., total.....	875	782	726
Nondurable goods stores.....	1,606	1,405	1,468	Nondurable goods stores.....	648	575	571
GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	651	563	582	GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	231	199	193
Miami, Fla., total.....	591	557	558	New York, N.Y., total.....	1,675	1,487	1,507
Nondurable goods stores.....	373	342	337	Nondurable goods stores.....	1,273	1,128	1,140
GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	150	134	137	GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	512	413	494
Milwaukee, Wis., total.....	515	447	509	Philadelphia, Pa., total.....	416	357	392
Nondurable goods stores.....	312	268	304	Nondurable goods stores.....	332	291	327
GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	119	103	124	GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	103	73	89

<sup>1</sup>Definitions of standard consolidated areas and standard metropolitan statistical areas are shown in the Monthly Retail Trade Report BR-79-3  
<sup>2</sup>Includes the following: General merchandise group stores (SIC 53); apparel and accessory stores (SIC 56); furniture, home furnishings and equipment stores (SIC 57); and miscellaneous shopping goods stores (SIC 594). GAP represents stores which specialize in department store types of merchandise.  
<sup>3</sup>Statistics for the Boston SMSA include retail establishments in all Essex, Middlesex, Norfolk, Plymouth and Suffolk Counties.