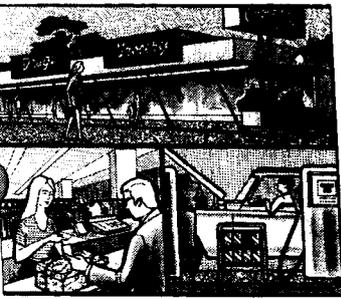


Advance Monthly Retail Sales



MAY 1981

FOR WIRE TRANSMISSION 2:30 P.M. EDT, THURSDAY, June 11, 1981

CB-81-101

The Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce, announced today that total sales of retail stores in May, after adjusting for seasonal variations and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were estimated at \$85.9 billion. This adjusted figure was little changed from April but 13 percent higher than May a year ago. The adjusted May estimate excluding the automotive group was also little changed from April but 12 percent above May of last year.

Adjusted sales of durable goods stores were about 1 percent above April while sales of nondurable goods were little changed. Compared with sales for May 1980, durable goods stores increased 17 percent while nondurable goods stores increased 11 percent.

The revised estimate of retail sales for April based on preliminary results from a full sample of retail stores was about \$85.7 billion, \$0.6 billion below the April advance estimate published earlier. Seasonally adjusted preliminary sales for April were 2 percent below March but 12 percent above April 1980. Excluding the automotive group, retail sales were little changed from March but were 11 percent over April 1980. For nondurable goods stores, adjusted April sales were also little changed from March and 11 percent above the same month a year ago. For durable goods stores, adjusted sales for April were down 8 percent from March but were 14 percent above April 1980.

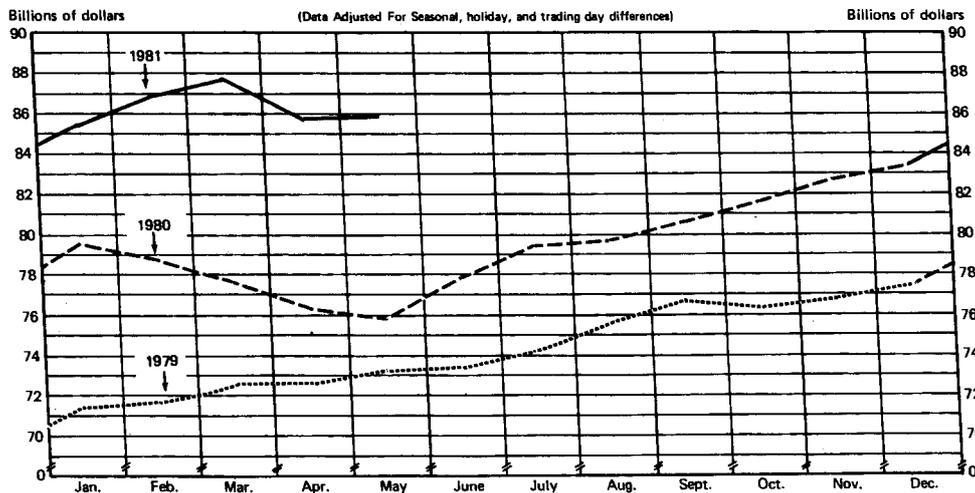
The advance sales estimates are based on early reporting of sales by a small subsample of the Bureau's retail survey panel. Because of the early reporting, the advance estimates can differ from the subsequent estimates which are based on monthly reports obtained from the full sample of retail stores.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

Percentage differences between advance and full-sample preliminary estimates of month-to-month percentage change in seasonally adjusted total retail store sales have ranged from approximately -1.1 percent to +1.6 percent with the absolute average about 0.7 percent for the past 12 months. For individual kind-of-business groups, these differences tend to be higher.

Preliminary estimates for April 1981 and final estimates for March 1981 based on the full sample will be published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for March (BR-81-4). 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 completed report will include approximate measures of sampling variability.

The Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report for June is scheduled to be released July 13, 1981, at 2:30 p.m.

ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES FOR THE UNITED STATES JANUARY 1979-MAY 1981



Inquiries concerning this report should be addressed to Mr. Faran Stoetzel, Business Division, Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233. Telephone (301) 763-7288



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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 ¹				
		1981			1980		1981			1980	
		May advance	Apr. prelim.	Mar. final	May	Apr.	May advance	Apr. prelim.	Mar. final	May	Apr.
	Retail trade, total.....	87,781	85,662	84,652	79,202	75,154	85,890	85,745	87,608	75,975	76,404
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	72,166	69,457	67,316	65,715	61,559	71,269	71,242	71,278	63,833	63,896
	Durable goods stores, total.....	27,542	27,604	28,295	24,247	23,652	26,421	26,273	28,429	22,544	23,011
52	Building materials, hardware, garden										
521,3	supply, and mobile home dealers.....	4,834	4,533	4,043	4,287	3,899	4,439	4,434	4,481	3,828	3,846
525	Building materials and supply stores.....	(*)	3,034	2,785	2,865	2,647	(*)	3,083	3,126	2,698	2,715
	Hardware stores.....	(*)	775	655	720	647	(*)	736	731	626	614
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	15,615	16,205	17,336	13,487	13,595	14,621	14,503	16,330	12,142	12,508
551,2,5, 6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous auto-	(*)	14,523	15,745	11,924	12,037	(*)	12,909	14,688	10,646	11,013
551	motor dealers.....	(*)	12,434	13,982	10,108	10,345	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Motor vehicle dealers (franchised).....	(*)	1,682	1,591	1,563	1,558	(*)	1,594	1,642	1,496	1,495
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)					(*)				
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment										
571	stores.....	3,696	3,619	3,716	3,444	3,326	3,826	3,833	3,897	3,524	3,524
571	Furniture and home furnishings stores....	(*)	2,249	2,260	2,123	2,048	(*)	2,307	2,313	2,115	2,109
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores	(*)	1,038	1,088	1,006	956	(*)	1,156	1,185	1,055	1,051
5722	Household appliance stores.....	(*)	458	484	540	497	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	60,239	58,058	56,357	54,955	51,502	59,469	59,472	59,179	53,431	53,393
53	General merchandise group stores.....	10,398	9,934	8,972	9,476	8,614	10,510	10,534	10,306	9,410	9,266
531	Department stores.....	8,512	8,087	7,337	7,682	6,927	8,607	8,603	8,443	7,629	7,489
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	778	663	737	712	(*)	783	762	736	726
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.	(*)	1,069	972	1,057	975	(*)	1,148	1,101	1,045	1,051
54	Food stores.....	20,684	19,425	18,837	18,756	17,223	19,794	19,711	19,522	17,591	17,725
541	Grocery stores.....	19,057	17,817	17,410	17,478	15,951	18,202	18,162	18,098	16,365	16,478
554	Gasoline service stations.....	8,784	8,428	8,380	8,008	7,619	8,561	8,530	8,613	7,737	7,727
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	3,779	3,982	3,448	3,523	3,475	3,957	3,943	3,947	3,633	3,574
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings	(*)	628	552	615	574	(*)	653	660	654	613
561	stores.....	(*)					(*)				
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores,	(*)	1,539	1,355	1,358	1,337	(*)	1,555	1,502	1,387	1,393
565	furriers.....	(*)	791	668	714	681	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	820	665	656	697	(*)	724	745	664	648
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)					(*)				
58	Eating and drinking places.....	8,279	7,905	7,710	7,488	7,052	7,840	7,850	8,006	7,044	7,102
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	2,814	2,762	2,701	2,598	2,483	2,834	2,824	2,770	2,580	2,549
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,287	1,247	1,394	1,269	(*)	1,403	1,386	1,379	1,390
53,56,57, 594,5961 (pt.)	GAF ³ plus mail-order houses (department	(*)	20,399	18,864	19,050	17,879	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
53,56,57, 594	stores mdse.).....	(*)					(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	GAF.....	(*)	19,910	18,346	18,650	17,465	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)

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.

¹Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. (See Explanatory Material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-81-04.²Advance estimates are based on early reporting by a small subsample of the full survey panel. All other estimates are based on the full sample.³GAF represents stores which specialize in department store types of merchandise. Data for mail-order catalog desks located within department stores of some mail-order firms are included in the department store estimates.

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					
		May 1981 advance from--		Apr. 1981 preliminary from--		Mar. 1981 through May 1981	
		Apr. 1981 preliminary	May 1980 final	Mar. 1981 final	Apr. 1980 final	Dec. 1980 through Feb. 1981	Mar. 1980 through May 1980
	Retail trade, total.....	0	+13	-2	+12	+1	+13
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	0	+12	0	+11	+2	+11
	Durable goods stores, total.....	+1	+17	-8	+14	0	+16
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	0	+16	-1	+15	-1	+15
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	+1	+20	-11	+16	-1	+19
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	0	+9	-2	+9	-1	+9
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	0	+11	0	+11	+2	+11
53	General merchandise group stores.....	0	+12	+2	+14	+3	+12
531	Department stores.....	0	+13	+2	+15	+4	+13
54	Food stores.....	0	+13	+1	+11	+3	+11
541	Grocery stores.....	0	+11	0	+10	+3	+10
554	Gasoline service stations.....	0	+11	-1	+10	+1	+11
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	0	+9	0	+10	+1	+10
58	Eating and drinking places.....	0	+11	-2	+11	+2	+12
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	0	+10	+2	+11	+1	+10

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

(Sales in millions of dollars)

1972 SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted			Adjusted ¹		
		Apr. 1981 preliminary	Mar. 1981 final	Apr. 1980	Apr. 1981 preliminary	Mar. 1981 final	Apr. 1980
	Retail trade, total.....	28,725	27,291	24,983	29,585	29,252	26,073
53	General merchandise group stores.....	8,767	7,955	7,514	9,326	9,123	8,111
531	Department stores.....	7,670	6,977	6,559	8,142	8,010	7,083
533	Variety stores.....	592	511	523	613	575	543
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.	505	467	432	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	10,120	9,883	8,890	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
541	Grocery stores.....	9,930	9,743	8,775	10,102	10,128	9,093
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	1,455	1,206	1,196	1,404	1,402	1,210
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	590	501	491	589	574	508
566	Shoe stores.....	404	311	332	343	342	302
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	1,392	1,344	1,211	1,444	1,393	1,250

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).

¹Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. (See Explanatory Material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-

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