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BUREAU OF
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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 \$88.3 billion. This adjusted figure was 1.4 percent above March and 2.4 percent higher than April a year ago. The adjusted April estimate excluding the automotive group was 0.5 percent above March and 1.2 percent above April of last year.

Adjusted sales of durable goods stores were about 3.4 percent above March while sales of nondurable goods stores increased 0.4 percent. Compared with sales for April 1981, durable goods stores sales increased 2.7 percent and nondurable goods stores increased 2.2 percent.

The revised estimate of retail sales for March 1982 based on preliminary results from a full sample of retail stores was about \$87.1 billion, virtually the same as the March advance estimate published earlier. Seasonally adjusted preliminary sales for March were about 0.6 percent below February but 1.2 percent above March 1981. Excluding the automotive group, retail sales were 1.1 percent below February but 1.5 percent above March 1981. For nondurable goods stores, adjusted March sales were 1.1 percent lower than February but 2.3 percent above March 1981. For durable goods stores, March adjusted sales were 0.6 percent above February but 2.1 percent below March 1981.

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 -1.5 percent to +0.9 percent with the average of the absolute differences about 0.7 percent for the past 12 months. For individual kind-of-business groups, these differences tend to be higher. Sampling variability of and revisions to advance-to-preliminary estimates are shown in table 4 on the last page of this report.

Preliminary estimates for March 1982 and final estimates for February 1982 based on the full sample will be published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for March (82-82-03). The complete report will provide sales estimates in greater detail and will present a description of revisions, and the techniques used in developing the estimates. In addition, the complete report will include approximate measures of sampling variability.

The Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report for May is scheduled to be released June 10, 1982 at 2:30 p.m.

ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES FOR THE UNITED STATES January 1980—April 1982

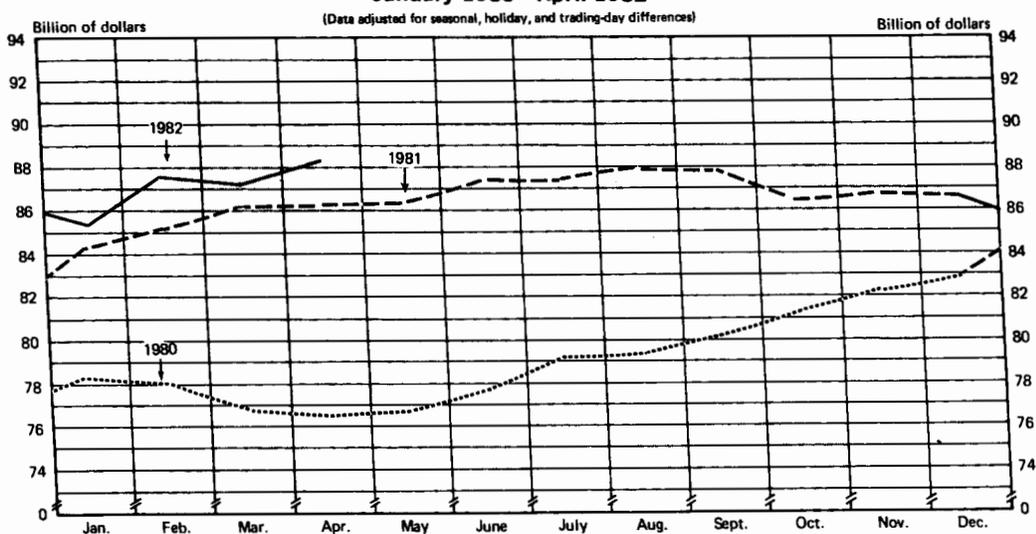


Table 1. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales by Kind of Business for the United States

(Sales in millions of dollars)

SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted					Adjusted ¹				
		1982			1981		1982			1981	
		Apr. ² advance	Mar. prelim.	Feb. final	Apr.	Mar.	Apr. ² advance	Mar. prelim.	Feb. final	Apr.	Mar.
	Retail trade, total.....	87,549	86,019	75,698	85,210	83,971	88,310	87,128	87,654	86,263	86,128
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	71,074	68,920	61,786	69,516	67,225	72,263	71,928	72,760	71,386	70,895
	Durable goods stores, total.....	27,786	28,014	23,365	27,501	28,063	27,893	26,972	26,810	27,166	27,601
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	4,344	3,889	3,055	4,695	4,192	4,331	4,202	4,130	4,620	4,604
521,3	Building materials and supply stores.....	(*)	2,511	1,977	3,002	2,750	(*)	2,756	2,690	3,082	3,073
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	711	581	830	705	(*)	774	781	792	784
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	16,475	17,099	13,912	15,694	16,746	16,047	15,200	14,894	14,877	15,233
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	14,813	15,501	12,590	13,998	15,173	14,466	13,574	13,239	13,256	13,608
551	Motor vehicle dealers (franchised).....	(*)	13,878	11,410	12,252	13,699	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	1,598	1,322	1,696	1,573	(*)	1,626	1,655	1,621	1,625
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	3,527	3,581	3,143	3,571	3,670	3,788	3,682	3,655	3,833	3,838
571	Furniture and home furnishings stores....	(*)	2,171	1,893	2,257	2,283	(*)	2,186	2,176	2,353	2,334
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores	(*)	1,126	995	1,048	1,091	(*)	1,194	1,187	1,176	1,185
5722	Household appliance stores.....	(*)	469	419	467	468	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	59,763	58,005	52,333	57,709	55,908	60,417	60,156	60,844	59,097	58,527
53	General merchandise group stores.....	10,168	9,500	7,468	10,033	9,054	10,647	10,863	10,770	10,628	10,406
531	Department stores.....	8,425	7,889	6,143	8,127	7,383	8,859	9,006	8,916	8,646	8,486
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	655	519	770	649	(*)	757	714	763	752
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.	(*)	956	806	1,136	1,022	(*)	1,100	1,140	1,219	1,168
54	Food stores.....	20,604	20,023	18,594	19,346	18,788	20,541	20,296	20,419	19,628	19,366
541	Grocery stores.....	18,952	18,436	17,088	17,717	17,289	18,990	18,717	18,778	18,097	17,861
554	Gasoline service stations.....	7,840	7,871	7,460	8,397	8,285	7,848	7,999	8,382	8,482	8,463
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	4,131	3,752	3,168	3,957	3,445	4,123	4,223	4,340	3,964	3,945
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	515	444	603	536	(*)	618	615	655	650
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	(*)	1,447	1,224	1,470	1,300	(*)	1,599	1,663	1,476	1,459
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	783	658	834	709	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	699	570	807	645	(*)	765	792	720	712
58	Eating and drinking places.....	8,448	8,061	7,259	7,806	7,620	8,348	8,259	8,460	7,759	7,823
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	2,827	2,769	2,575	2,653	2,589	2,850	2,846	2,823	2,713	2,677
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,381	1,257	1,336	1,297	(*)	1,516	1,468	1,447	1,441
53,56,57,594,5961 (pt.)	GAF ³ plus mail-order houses (department stores mdse.).....	(*)	19,975	16,595	20,543	18,963	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
53,56,57,594	GAF.....	(*)	19,521	16,255	20,157	18,555	(*)	(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-82-02.²Advance 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)

SIC code	Kind of business	Percent change					
		Apr. 1982 advance from--		Mar. 1982 preliminary from--		Feb. 1982 through Apr. 1982	
		Mar. 1982 preliminary	Apr. 1981 final	Feb. 1982 final	Mar. 1981 final	Nov. 1981 through Jan. 1982	Feb. 1981 through Apr. 1981
	Retail trade, total.....	+1.4	+2.4	-0.6	+1.2	+1.7	+2.1
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	+0.5	+1.2	-1.1	+1.5	+0.5	+2.0
	Durable goods stores, total.....	+3.4	+2.7	+0.6	-2.3	+4.8	-0.4
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	+3.1	-6.3	+1.7	-8.7	+2.8	-8.9
55 ex. 534	Automotive dealers.....	+5.6	+7.9	+2.1	-0.2	+7.9	+2.6
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	+6.6	+9.1	+2.5	-0.2	+9.3	+3.1
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	+2.9	-1.2	+0.7	-4.1	+0.6	-3.2
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	+0.4	+2.2	-1.1	+2.8	+0.4	+3.3
53	General merchandise group stores.....	-2.0	+0.2	+0.9	+4.4	+1.0	+2.8
531	Department stores.....	-1.6	+2.5	+1.0	+6.1	+2.5	+4.9
54	Food stores.....	+1.2	+4.7	-0.6	+4.8	+0.3	+5.4
541	Grocery stores.....	+1.5	+4.9	-0.3	+4.8	0.0	+5.5
554	Gasoline service stations.....	-1.9	-7.5	-4.6	-5.5	-5.7	-4.6
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	-2.4	+4.0	-2.7	+7.0	+6.5	+6.7
58	Eating and drinking places.....	+1.1	+7.6	-2.4	+5.6	+5.4	+7.4
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	+0.1	+5.0	+0.8	+6.3	+2.7	+5.9

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

(Sales in millions of dollars)

SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted			Adjusted ¹		
		Mar. 1982 preliminary	Feb. 1982 final	Mar. 1981	Mar. 1982 preliminary	Feb. 1982 final	Mar. 1981
	Retail trade, total.....	30,265	26,138	28,490	32,038	32,051	30,468
53	General merchandise group stores.....	8,743	6,814	8,279	10,016	9,874	9,469
531	Department stores.....	7,608	5,909	7,125	8,675	8,564	8,134
533	Variety stores.....	521	405	511	598	566	580
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	614	500	643	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	10,894	10,086	10,039	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
541	Grocery stores.....	10,747	9,929	9,897	10,878	10,887	10,267
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	1,478	1,137	1,250	1,666	1,705	1,562
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	625	483	588	697	718	668
566	Shoe stores.....	333	252	310	352	366	340
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	1,498	1,374	1,385	1,584	1,561	1,449

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-82-02)

Table 4. Sampling Variability of and Revision to Advance-to-Preliminary Estimate

SIC code	Kind of business	Estimated coefficient of variation in percent of the advance-to-preliminary ratio			Preliminary-to-final percent change minus the advance-to-preliminary percent change			
		Range ¹		Median	Range ²		Mean	Average of absolute difference
		From	To		From	To		
	Retail trade, total.....	0.6	0.8	0.7	-1.54	+0.94	-0.18	0.69
	Total (excl. automotive group)....	0.7	0.8	0.7	-3.12	+2.82	-0.38	0.57
	Durable goods stores, total.....	1.2	2.0	1.6	-3.59	+4.63	-0.14	1.55
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	1.5	3.6	1.8	-4.10	+3.70	-0.39	2.07
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	1.8	2.3	2.05	-4.62	+7.79	+0.67	2.63
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	1.0	1.8	1.45	-5.47	+4.04	+0.55	2.71
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	1.7	4.2	2.25	-4.37	+2.97	-0.61	1.99
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	0.5	0.7	0.6	-1.24	+0.54	-0.31	0.46
53	General merchandise group stores.....	0.3	0.7	0.45	-3.03	+2.04	+0.05	1.24
531	Department stores.....	0.1	0.4	0.35	-2.36	+3.23	+0.18	1.29
54	Food stores.....	1.2	1.5	1.5	-1.65	+1.54	-0.23	0.77
541	Grocery stores.....	0.4	0.5	0.45	-2.61	+2.50	-0.38	0.86
554	Gasoline service stations.....	0.6	1.5	0.95	-2.32	+0.50	-0.83	1.04
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	1.2	2.9	1.75	-1.92	+1.19	-0.33	1.06
58	Eating and drinking places.....	0.6	1.2	1.05	-2.35	+2.33	-0.13	1.39
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	0.4	1.9	0.55	-1.09	+0.99	-0.15	0.68

Note: See Appendix B, Reliability of Data, in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for a discussion on the measures of sampling variability.

¹The ranges of sampling variability shown are based on sales estimates unadjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences for the data months of July-December 1981.

²The ranges shown are based on sales estimates adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences for the 12-month period, January-December 1981.

