

Advance Monthly Retail Sales



U.S. Department of Commerce
ECONOMICS AND STATISTICS ADMINISTRATION
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

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The Census Bureau of the Department of Commerce announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for May adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$158.8 billion, an increase of 0.2 percent ($\pm 1.7\%$) from the previous month and were 2.7 percent ($\pm 1.9\%$) above the same period a year ago. Total sales in the March through May period were 3.0 percent ($\pm 1.9\%$) above the same period a year ago. The April from March 1992 percent change was revised from +0.9 percent ($\pm 1.7\%$) published in the April advance, to +0.4 percent ($\pm 0.4\%$).

Durable goods increased 0.4 percent ($\pm 3.4\%$) from the previous month and were 5.2 percent above the previous year. Building materials dealers were up 8.0 percent from May 1991.

Nondurable goods were unchanged from April. General merchandise stores were up 4.6 percent above May a year ago.

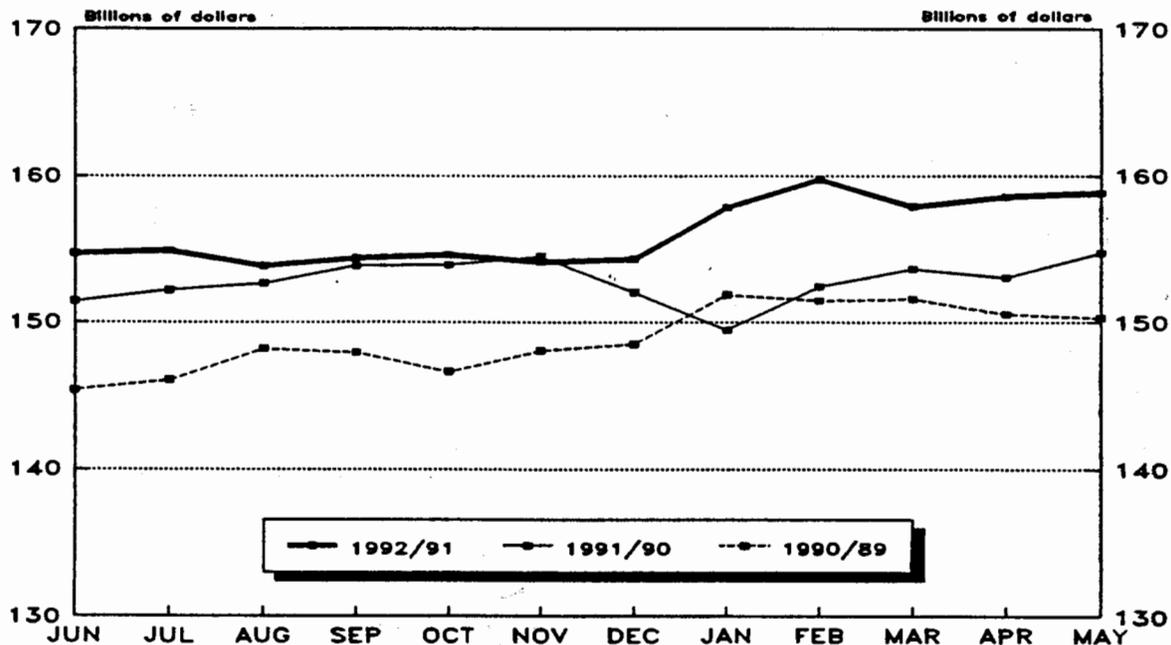
The advance estimates are based on a small subsample of the Bureau's full retail sales sample. Estimates from the advance and the subsequent full survey can differ because of the earlier reporting in the advance and because of sampling variability present in both surveys.

The Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report for June is scheduled to be released July 14, 1992 at 8:30 a.m.

ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES

June 1989 - May 1992

(Data adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences)



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This report is available the day of issue through the Department of Commerce's online Economic Bulletin Board. For information call (202) 377-1986. The data are also available through the Census Bureau's online information service - CENDATA. CENDATA is available from Dialog Information Services, INC. (1-800-334-2564) and CompuServe (1-800-848-8199). The CENDATA staff at the Bureau of the Census (301-763-2074) can provide content information and general guidance.

Table 1. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales, By Kind of Business

(Sales in millions of dollars)

SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted					Adjusted ¹				
		1992			1991		1992			1991	
		May ² adv.	Apr. prel.	Mar. final	May	Apr.	May ² adv.	Apr. prel.	Mar. final	May ¹	Apr. ¹
	Retail trade, total.....	163,368	157,395	153,026	161,887	150,294	158,818	158,541	157,873	154,708	153,009
	Total (excl. auto group)...	127,713	121,987	118,499	126,489	116,832	125,407	125,357	124,815	123,071	121,843
	Durable goods, total.....	60,563	58,829	56,646	59,740	55,943	57,599	57,363	57,122	54,759	54,265
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	10,048	9,278	8,069	9,599	8,850	8,707	8,813	8,692	8,062	8,199
521.3	Building mat. and supply stores.....	(*)	6,714	6,038	6,806	6,331	(*)	6,531	6,479	5,970	6,076
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	1,083	981	1,176	1,083	(*)	1,036	1,062	1,022	1,020
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	35,655	35,408	34,527	35,398	33,462	33,411	33,184	33,058	31,637	31,166
551,2.5, 6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	32,897	32,701	31,952	32,425	30,626	30,774	30,533	30,373	28,848	28,410
551	Motor vehicle (franchised).....	(*)	27,718	27,902	28,481	26,769	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	2,707	2,575	2,973	2,836	(*)	2,651	2,685	2,789	2,756
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	7,466	7,207	7,325	7,402	7,040	7,657	7,625	7,677	7,508	7,461
571	Furniture and home furnishings.....	(*)	3,993	3,968	4,100	3,899	(*)	4,070	4,074	4,008	3,983
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores.....	(*)	2,467	2,567	2,575	2,448	(*)	2,717	2,754	2,685	2,687
5722	Household appliance stores.....	(*)	674	667	735	675	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total.....	102,805	98,566	96,380	102,147	94,351	101,219	101,178	100,751	99,949	98,744
53	General merchandise group stores.....	18,943	17,717	16,901	18,111	16,362	19,154	19,012	19,030	18,308	18,123
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts).....	14,952	14,079	13,500	14,126	12,977	15,195	15,010	15,050	14,385	14,260
531	Dept. stores (in. leased depts).....	(*)	14,568	13,963	14,622	13,474	(*)	15,498	15,532	14,905	14,774
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	584	509	606	547	(*)	601	574	617	616
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	3,054	2,892	3,379	2,838	(*)	3,401	3,406	3,306	3,247
54	Food stores.....	33,404	31,684	31,174	33,575	30,375	32,114	32,169	31,823	32,049	31,515
541	Grocery stores.....	31,265	29,607	29,233	31,462	28,485	30,063	30,119	29,830	30,050	29,579
554	Gasoline service stations.....	10,402	9,907	9,758	11,055	10,232	10,188	10,203	10,229	10,712	10,441
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	8,076	8,199	7,397	7,990	7,527	8,133	8,195	8,137	8,133	8,083
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	683	619	717	686	(*)	711	729	730	742
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	(*)	2,889	2,631	2,894	2,691	(*)	2,858	2,817	2,888	2,797
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	2,446	2,181	2,317	2,115	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	1,591	1,383	1,497	1,466	(*)	1,450	1,436	1,481	1,497
58	Eating and drinking places.....	17,362	16,348	16,581	17,019	15,909	16,472	16,463	16,716	16,162	16,053
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	6,502	6,548	6,384	6,366	6,116	6,561	6,561	6,528	6,297	6,279
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,818	1,741	1,876	1,721	(*)	1,938	1,909	1,861	1,857
5961 (pt)	Mail-order houses (department store merchandise).....	(*)	385	383	364	355	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
53,56,57 594	GAF ⁴	(*)	38,099	36,444	38,601	35,387	(*)	40,721	40,611	39,413	39,071

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

NA Not available.

¹Revised.

¹Data are concurrently adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. Concurrent seasonal adjustment uses all available unadjusted estimates as input to the X-11 program and the factors derived from the program are used in calculating all seasonally adjusted data shown in this publication. Factors and explanatory material are contained in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-92-04.

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.

³Includes data for leased departments operated within department stores. Data for this line not included in broader kind-of-business totals.

⁴GAF represents stores which specialize in department store types of merchandise.

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

Table 2. Percent Change in Estimated Monthly Retail Sales, by Kind of Business

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

SIC code	Kind of business	Percent change					
		May 1992 advance from--		Apr. 1992 preliminary from--		Mar. 1992 through May 1992 from--	
		Apr. 1992 prelim.	May 1991 final	Mar. 1992 final	Apr. 1991 final	Dec. 1991 through Feb. 1992	Mar. 1991 through May 1991
	Retail trade, total.....	+0.2	+2.7	+0.4	+3.6	+0.7	+3.0
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	0.0	+1.9	+0.4	+2.9	+0.9	+2.3
	Durable goods, total.....	+0.4	+5.2	+0.4	+5.7	+1.1	+5.2
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	-1.2	+8.0	+1.4	+7.5	+3.1	+8.9
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	+0.7	+5.6	+0.4	+6.5	+0.1	+5.6
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	+0.8	+6.7	+0.5	+7.5	+0.2	+6.4
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	+0.4	+2.0	-0.7	+2.2	+1.0	+2.4
	Nondurable goods, total.....	0.0	+1.3	+0.4	+2.5	+0.5	+1.8
53	General merchandise group stores.....	+0.7	+4.6	-0.1	+4.9	+0.6	+4.9
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	+1.2	+5.6	-0.3	+5.3	+0.4	+5.6
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.) ²	(NA)	(NA)	-0.2	+4.9	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	-0.2	+0.2	+1.1	+2.1	+0.2	+0.8
541	Grocery stores.....	-0.2	0.0	+1.0	+1.8	0.0	+0.7
554	Gasoline service stations.....	-0.1	-4.9	-0.3	-2.3	+0.1	-3.7
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	-0.8	0.0	+0.7	+1.4	+1.3	+1.4
58	Eating and drinking places.....	+0.1	+1.9	-1.5	+2.6	-1.5	+3.1
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	0.0	+4.2	+0.5	+4.5	+1.2	+3.8

Table 3. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales of Large (Group II) Companies, by Kind of Business

(Sales in millions of dollars)

SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted			Adjusted ¹		
		Apr. 1992 prelim.	Mar. 1992 final	Apr. 1991	Apr. 1992 prelim.	Mar. 1992 final	Apr. ¹ 1991
	Retail trade, total.....	62,947	60,895	58,352	65,159	64,615	61,912
53	General merchandise group stores.....	16,840	16,125	15,396	18,193	18,155	17,151
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	13,861	13,290	12,748	14,809	14,783	13,993
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.) ²	14,337	13,742	13,238	15,285	15,269	14,499
533	Variety stores.....	380	322	348	390	366	397
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	2,599	2,513	2,300	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	18,950	18,700	17,845	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
541	Grocery stores.....	18,576	18,367	17,546	18,878	18,628	18,296
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	5,197	4,656	4,582	5,144	5,145	4,941
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	1,801	1,619	1,618	1,780	1,783	1,727
566	Shoe stores.....	1,070	923	970	946	958	997
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	4,040	3,878	3,584	4,052	4,014	3,749

NA Not available.

¹Revised.

¹Data are concurrently adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. Concurrent seasonal adjustment uses all available unadjusted estimates as input to the X-11 program and the factors derived from the program are used in calculating all seasonally adjusted data shown in this publication. Factors and explanatory material are contained in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-92-04.

²Includes data for leased departments operated within department stores. Data for this line not included in broader kind-of-business totals.

Note: The large (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).

Official Business

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Sample Design and Reliability of Data

The advance estimates are based on a small subsample of the Bureau's full retail sales sample. Estimates from the advance and the subsequent full survey can differ because of the earlier reporting in the advance and because of sampling variability present in both surveys.

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 -0.8 percent to +1.5 percent with the average of the absolute differences about 0.4 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 below.

Preliminary estimates for April 1992 and final estimates for March 1992 based on the full sample are published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for April (BR-92-04). 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.

The margin of sampling error, as used on page 1, indicates a range about the estimate which corresponds to a 90 percent confidence interval. If, for example, the estimate is up 0.8 percent and the margin of sampling error is 1.2 percentage points above or below the estimate, then the indicated range is -0.4 percent to +2.0 percent. If the range contains 0, it is uncertain whether there was an increase or decrease. The Monthly Retail Trade Report includes explanations of confidence intervals and sampling variability along with additional measures of sampling variability.

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						Preliminary-to-final percent change minus the Advance-to-preliminary percent change			
		Advance-to-preliminary ratio		Ratio to same month a year ago	Dollar volume sales est.	Ratio of current quarter to prev. quarter	Range ²		Mean	Avg. of absolute diff.	
		Range ¹		Median	Median	Median	Median	From			To
		From	To								
	Retail trade, total.....	0.8	1.1	0.9	1.0	0.9	1.0	-0.8	+1.5	0.0	0.4
	Total (excl. auto).....	0.8	0.9	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.9	-0.7	+1.3	+0.1	0.4
	Durable goods, total.....	1.8	2.8	2.2	2.5	2.2	2.3	-2.5	+2.2	+0.2	0.7
52	Building materials, group stores.....	1.2	2.0	1.7	3.3	2.5	2.5	-3.4	+4.0	+0.4	2.0
55 ex. 554 551, 2.5, 6, 7, 9	Automotive dealers.....	2.2	4.1	3.1	3.4	3.6	3.3	-3.0	+2.6	+0.5	1.0
	Motor vehicle and misc. automotive dealers.....	1.6	4.1	2.9	4.8	3.9	3.5	-3.2	+2.6	+0.5	1.1
57	Furniture, home furn., and equipment stores.....	1.8	4.3	2.4	4.5	4.2	3.1	-2.5	+2.3	-0.2	1.2
	Nondurable goods, total.....	0.7	0.9	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.9	-0.6	+0.9	+0.2	0.4
53	General merch. group, total.....	0.2	0.8	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.5	-1.4	+1.7	+0.1	0.7
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts.).....	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	-1.7	+1.6	+0.1	0.8
54	Food stores.....	0.9	1.5	1.0	1.7	1.4	1.5	-0.5	+0.6	0.0	0.4
541	Grocery stores.....	0.2	0.9	0.3	1.8	1.3	1.5	-0.5	+0.7	0.0	0.3
554	Gasoline service stations.....	1.1	4.7	1.3	3.3	2.6	2.8	-1.4	+1.9	+0.3	0.8
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	1.1	2.9	2.0	3.0	2.6	2.0	-2.7	+4.8	+0.5	1.5
58	Eating and drinking places.....	0.6	1.3	0.9	3.1	2.7	2.7	-0.9	+2.3	+0.3	0.8
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	0.5	3.2	0.8	2.4	1.7	2.0	-3.7	+1.1	+0.1	1.0

¹The ranges of sampling variability shown are based on sales estimates not adjusted for seasonal variation, holiday, and trading-day differences for the data months of November 1990 - March 1991.

²The ranges shown for the retail trade total are based on sales estimates adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences for the 12-month period, May 1991 - April 1992. The ranges for all other totals and kinds of business are based on the 12-month period April 1990 - March 1991.

Note: Coefficients of variation for the ratio of current quarter to current quarter a-year-ago estimates are approximately the same as those for the ratio of current quarter to previous quarter. See appendix B, Reliability of Data in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for a discussion of the measures of sampling variability.

