

# Advance Monthly Retail Sales



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ECONOMICS AND STATISTICS ADMINISTRATION  
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The Census Bureau of the Department of Commerce announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for October adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$163.3 billion, an increase of 0.9 percent ( $\pm 1.0\%$ ) from the previous month and were 5.7 percent ( $\pm 1.4\%$ ) above the same month a year ago. Total sales in the August through October period were 5.1 percent ( $\pm 1.6\%$ ) above the same period a year ago. The August to September 1992 percent change was revised from +0.3 percent ( $\pm 1.3\%$ ) as published in the September advance to +0.5 percent ( $\pm 0.4\%$ ).

Durable goods increased 1.7 percent ( $\pm 2.0\%$ ) from the previous month and were 8.1 percent above the previous year. Automotive sales were up 8.1 percent above the previous year while building material dealers were up 8.7 percent in the same period.

Nondurable goods increased 0.4 percent ( $\pm 0.8\%$ ) from September and were 4.3 percent above last year. General merchandise stores increased 0.9 percent from the previous month and were 8.7 percent above October 1991.

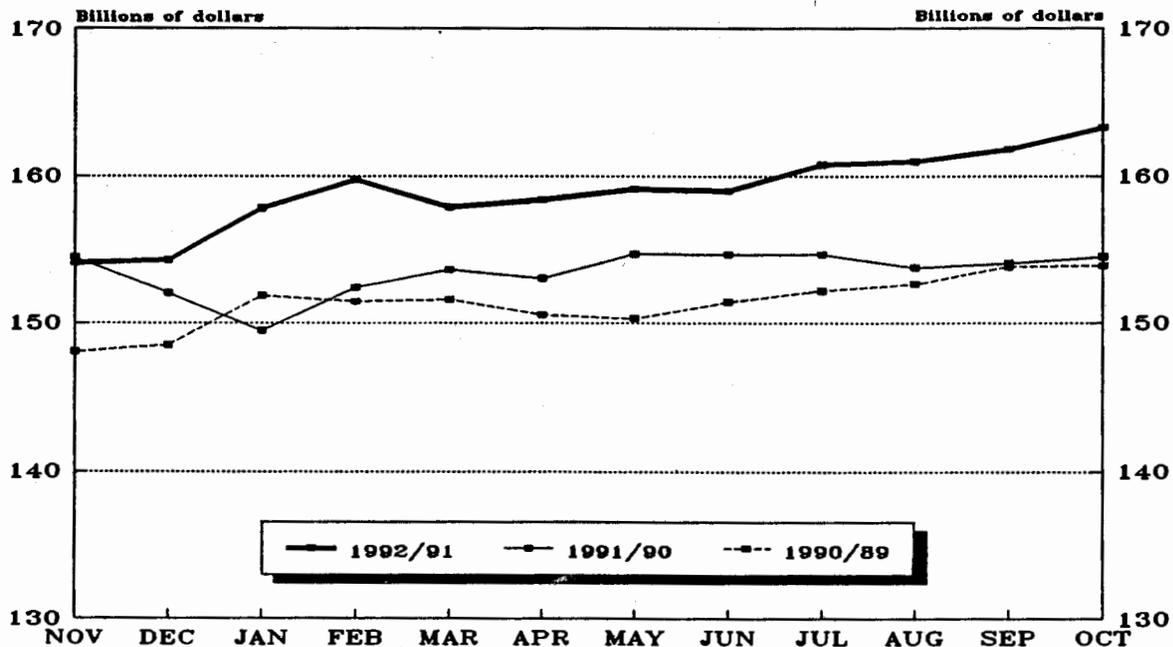
*The advance estimates are based on a small subsample of the Bureau's full retail sales sample. Estimates from the advance and the subsequent full survey can differ because of the earlier reporting in the advance and because of sampling variability present in both surveys.*

The Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report for November is scheduled to be released December 11, 1992 at 8:30 a.m.

## ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES

November 1989 - October 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)

Code	Kind of business	Not adjusted					Adjusted <sup>1</sup>				
		1992			1991		1992			1991	
		Oct. <sup>2</sup> adv.	Sept. prel.	Aug. final	Oct.	Sept.	Oct. <sup>2</sup> adv.	Sept. prel.	Aug. final	Oct. <sup>1</sup>	Sept. <sup>1</sup>
	Retail trade, total.....	163,967	158,880	164,312	153,920	148,509	163,308	161,835	160,999	154,508	154,071
	Total (excl. auto group)...	129,434	123,793	129,655	121,929	116,423	128,286	127,796	127,344	122,107	122,095
	Durable goods, total.....	59,212	59,477	59,687	54,900	54,281	59,917	58,894	58,254	55,404	55,034
	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	9,149	9,177	9,138	8,592	8,301	8,747	8,685	8,477	8,049	8,097
	Building mat. and supply stores.....	(*)	7,034	7,006	6,684	6,384	(*)	6,555	6,358	6,138	6,109
	Hardware stores.....	(*)	1,087	1,111	1,007	957	(*)	1,107	1,103	981	991
	Automotive dealers.....	34,533	35,087	34,657	31,991	32,086	35,022	34,039	33,655	32,401	31,976
	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	31,660	32,306	31,826	29,172	29,360	32,306	31,365	30,989	29,737	29,272
	Motor vehicle (franchised).....	(*)	28,531	27,808	25,648	26,011	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	2,781	2,831	2,819	2,726	(*)	2,674	2,666	2,664	2,704
	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	8,001	7,842	7,800	7,328	7,062	8,009	7,850	7,823	7,357	7,428
	Furniture and home furnishings.....	(*)	4,168	4,347	4,018	3,800	(*)	4,253	4,270	3,920	3,954
	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores.....	(*)	2,663	2,666	2,541	2,472	(*)	2,765	2,740	2,641	2,658
	Household appliance stores.....	(*)	722	762	679	614	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total.....	104,755	99,403	104,625	99,020	94,228	103,391	102,941	102,745	99,104	99,037
	General merchandise group stores.....	19,718	17,642	19,370	17,780	16,187	19,895	19,708	19,653	18,296	18,328
	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts).....	15,688	13,945	15,477	14,129	12,809	15,719	15,581	15,570	14,476	14,457
	Dept. stores (in. leased depts) <sup>3</sup> .....	(*)	14,401	15,944	14,622	13,250	(*)	16,073	16,066	14,951	14,955
	Variety stores.....	(*)	481	518	578	521	(*)	550	538	589	602
	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	3,216	3,375	3,073	2,857	(*)	3,577	3,545	3,231	3,269
	Food stores.....	33,032	31,767	33,060	31,478	30,600	32,599	32,280	32,620	31,784	31,834
	Grocery stores.....	30,920	29,702	30,921	29,548	26,705	30,433	30,124	30,494	29,786	29,839
	Gasoline service stations.....	11,090	10,694	11,178	10,685	10,406	10,492	10,464	10,437	10,138	10,262
	Apparel and accessory stores.....	8,896	8,385	9,175	7,789	7,496	8,825	8,700	8,562	7,865	7,954
	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	632	644	695	646	(*)	704	719	702	732
	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	(*)	2,878	3,001	2,794	2,637	(*)	2,995	2,971	2,775	2,782
	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	2,693	3,019	2,396	2,228	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Shoe stores.....	(*)	1,509	1,744	1,362	1,410	(*)	1,509	1,501	1,429	1,449
	Eating and drinking places.....	16,619	16,487	17,624	16,362	15,861	16,471	16,537	16,303	16,378	15,941
	Drug and proprietary stores.....	6,291	6,090	6,294	6,309	5,947	6,367	6,417	6,469	6,399	6,354
	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,934	2,057	1,797	1,733	(*)	2,025	2,009	1,872	1,859
	Mail-order houses (department store merchandise).....	(*)	376	369	391	321	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	GAF <sup>4</sup> .....	(*)	39,108	42,183	37,976	35,715	(*)	42,281	42,183	39,099	39,294

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

NA Not available.

<sup>†</sup>Revised.

<sup>1</sup>Data 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-92-09.

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

<sup>4</sup>GAF 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					
		Oct. 1992 advance from--		Sept. 1992 preliminary from--		Aug. 1992 through Oct. 1992 from--	
		Sept. 1992 prelim.	Oct. 1991 final	Aug. 1992 final	Sept. 1991 final	May 1992 through July 1992	Aug. 1991 through Oct. 1991
	Retail trade, total.....	+0.9	+5.7	+0.5	+5.0	+1.5	+5.1
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	+0.4	+5.1	+0.4	+4.7	+1.4	+4.5
	Durable goods, total.....	+1.7	+8.1	+1.1	+7.0	+1.8	+7.5
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	+0.7	+8.7	+2.5	+7.3	+0.1	+7.2
56 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	+2.9	+8.1	+1.1	+6.5	+2.0	+7.5
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	+3.0	+8.6	+1.2	+7.2	+2.1	+8.1
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	+2.0	+8.9	+0.3	+5.7	+2.4	+6.5
	Nondurable goods, total.....	+0.4	+4.3	+0.2	+3.9	+1.3	+3.8
53	General merchandise group stores.....	+0.9	+8.7	+0.3	+7.5	+2.8	+7.9
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	+0.9	+8.6	+0.1	+7.8	+2.7	+8.1
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.) <sup>2</sup> .....	(NA)	(NA)	+0.1	+7.5	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	+1.0	+2.6	-1.0	+1.4	+1.1	+2.4
541	Grocery stores.....	+1.0	+2.2	-1.2	+1.0	+1.0	+2.1
554	Gasoline service stations.....	+0.3	+3.5	+0.3	+2.0	-0.6	+1.3
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	+1.4	+12.2	+1.6	+9.4	+2.6	+9.4
58	Eating and drinking places.....	-0.4	+0.6	+1.4	+3.7	+2.3	+1.4
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	-0.8	-0.5	-0.8	+1.0	-0.8	+0.9

**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 <sup>1</sup>		
		Sept. 1992 prelim.	Aug. 1992 final	Sept. 1991	Sept. 1992 prelim.	Aug. 1992 final	Sept. 1991
	Retail trade, total.....	62,729	66,391	58,493	66,339	66,419	62,913
53	General merchandise group stores.....	16,807	18,515	15,273	18,896	18,869	17,415
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	13,737	15,266	12,595	15,349	15,343	14,216
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.) <sup>2</sup> .....	14,182	15,722	13,027	15,828	15,817	14,703
533	Variety stores.....	351	373	324	404	386	376
538	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	2,719	2,876	2,354	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	18,574	19,292	17,951	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
541	Grocery stores.....	18,277	18,985	17,672	18,707	19,100	18,641
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	5,199	5,747	4,625	5,420	5,342	4,960
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	1,729	1,816	1,595	1,820	1,832	1,730
566	Shoe stores.....	1,023	1,210	931	1,012	1,013	950
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	3,714	3,834	3,612	3,964	3,981	3,896

NA Not available.

<sup>2</sup>Revised.

<sup>1</sup>Data 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-92-09.

<sup>2</sup>Includes 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 0.6 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 September 1992 and final estimates for August 1992 based on the full sample are published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for September (BR-92-09). 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 <sup>2</sup>		Mean	Avg. of absolute diff.	
		Range <sup>1</sup>		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	+0.1	0.6
	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

<sup>1</sup>The 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.

<sup>2</sup>The 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, October 1991 - September 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.

