

# Advance Monthly Retail Sales



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The Census Bureau of the Department of Commerce announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for August adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$186.6 billion, an increase of 0.8 percent ( $\pm 1.3\%$ ) from the previous month and were 7.0 percent ( $\pm 1.9\%$ ) above the same month a year ago. Total sales in the June through August period were 7.1 percent ( $\pm 1.8\%$ ) above the same period a year ago. The June to July 1994 percent change was revised from -0.1 percent ( $\pm 1.3\%$ ) as published in the July advance, to 0.0 percent ( $\pm 0.4\%$ ).

Durable goods were up 10.4 percent from the previous year. Building materials were up 13.1 percent from August 1993 while automotive dealers and furniture were up 10.0 percent and 12.7 percent, respectively, in the same period.

Nondurable goods were up 5.0 percent from August 1993. General merchandise stores were up 6.9 percent from the previous year while food stores and gasoline stations were up 3.0 percent and 6.4 percent, respectively, in the same period.

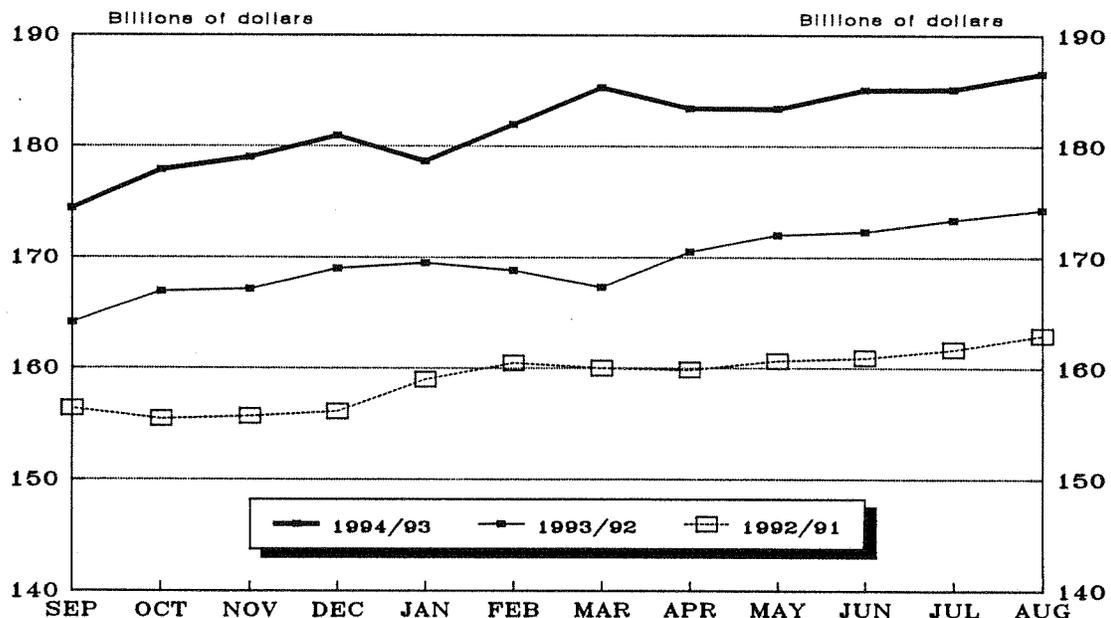
*The advance estimates are based on a small subsample of the Bureau's full retail sales sample. Estimates from the advance and the subsequent full survey can differ because of the earlier reporting in the advance and because of sampling variability present in both surveys.*

The Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report for September is scheduled to be released October 14, 1994 at 8:30 a.m.

## ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES

September 1991 - August 1994

(Data adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes)



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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) 482-1986. 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 <sup>1</sup>				
		1994			1993		1994			1993	
		Aug. <sup>2</sup> adv.	July prel.	June final	Aug.	July	Aug. <sup>2</sup> adv.	July prel.	June final	Aug. <sup>2</sup> adv.	July <sup>3</sup>
	Retail trade, total.....	193,018	186,038	190,294	177,104	177,720	186,561	185,138	185,089	174,279	173,382
	Total (excl. auto group)...	147,453	142,085	142,690	137,035	136,471	144,131	143,193	142,474	135,717	135,341
	Durable goods, total.....	77,793	74,189	78,915	68,478	69,254	73,283	72,332	72,805	66,372	65,500
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	12,027	11,487	12,343	10,422	10,528	10,924	10,689	10,706	9,661	9,506
521,3	Building mat. and supply stores.....	(*)	8,521	8,991	7,743	7,765	(*)	7,875	7,873	6,976	6,945
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	1,210	1,269	1,087	1,167	(*)	1,135	1,147	1,085	1,062
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	45,565	43,953	47,604	40,069	41,249	42,430	41,945	42,615	38,562	38,041
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	41,875	40,459	44,005	36,681	37,825	39,063	38,643	39,325	35,372	34,894
551	Motor vehicle (franchised).....	(*)	36,193	39,254	33,119	33,746	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	3,494	3,599	3,388	3,424	(*)	3,302	3,290	3,190	3,147
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	10,837	10,321	10,367	9,380	9,386	10,740	10,557	10,553	9,533	9,400
571	Furniture and home furnishings.....	(*)	5,227	5,170	4,903	4,916	(*)	5,227	5,160	4,850	4,829
5722,31,4	Household appliance, radio, TV and computer stores.....	(*)	4,103	4,226	3,675	3,734	(*)	4,213	4,317	3,820	3,741
5722	Household appliance stores.....	(*)	940	992	909	1,017	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total.....	115,225	111,849	111,379	108,626	108,466	113,278	112,806	112,284	107,907	107,882
53	General merchandise group stores.....	23,583	21,767	22,590	21,838	20,684	23,978	23,878	23,791	22,438	22,377
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts).....	18,183	16,575	17,167	16,571	15,398	18,422	18,335	18,224	16,909	16,828
531	Dept. stores (in. leased depts) <sup>3</sup> .....	(*)	16,984	17,601	17,045	15,836	(*)	18,808	18,685	17,393	17,326
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	458	502	581	579	(*)	501	525	612	615
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	4,734	4,921	4,686	4,707	(*)	5,042	5,042	4,917	4,934
54	Food stores.....	34,270	35,115	34,301	32,806	34,562	33,695	33,636	33,535	32,726	32,587
541	Grocery stores.....	32,309	33,171	32,368	30,989	32,700	31,769	31,743	31,640	30,927	30,791
554	Gasoline service stations.....	12,449	12,193	11,850	11,637	11,875	11,591	11,481	11,383	10,896	11,119
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	9,631	8,232	8,399	9,186	8,379	9,052	8,877	8,921	8,759	8,817
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	723	804	616	605	(*)	837	821	696	690
562,3	Women's clothing, specialty stores.....	(*)	2,725	2,945	3,206	3,149	(*)	2,985	3,113	3,281	3,350
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	2,701	2,620	2,825	2,567	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	1,456	1,445	1,753	1,432	(*)	1,537	1,488	1,487	1,475
58	Eating and drinking places.....	20,015	20,095	19,399	18,924	18,686	18,829	18,993	18,707	17,769	17,579
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	6,833	6,640	6,754	6,510	6,636	6,965	6,946	6,864	6,725	6,806
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,899	1,774	1,743	1,922	(*)	1,783	1,778	1,731	1,768
5961	Total mail order.....	(*)	2,167	2,294	2,004	1,834	(*)	2,672	2,677	2,232	2,183
53,56,57	GAF <sup>4</sup> .....	(*)	46,282	47,434	46,636	44,267	(*)	49,988	49,900	47,208	47,030
594											

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

NA Not available.

<sup>1</sup>Revised.

<sup>1</sup>Data are concurrently adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes. 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-94-07.

<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 (general merchandise, apparel, furniture, and miscellaneous shopping goods stores).

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, but not for price changes)

SIC code	Kind of business	Percent change					
		Aug. 1994 advance from—		July 1994 preliminary from—		June 1994 through Aug. 1994 from—	
		July 1994 prelim.	Aug. 1993 final	June 1994 final	July 1993 final	Mar. 1994 through May 1994	June 1993 through Aug. 1993
	Retail trade, total.....	+0.8	+7.0	0.0	+6.8	+0.8	+7.1
	Total (excl. automotive group)....	+0.7	+6.2	+0.5	+5.8	+1.6	+5.8
	Durable goods, total.....	+1.3	+10.4	-0.6	+10.4	+0.4	+11.1
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	+2.2	+13.1	-0.2	+12.4	+1.5	+12.8
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	+1.2	+10.0	-1.6	+10.3	-1.5	+11.7
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	+1.1	+10.4	-1.7	+10.7	-1.6	+12.2
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	+1.7	+12.7	0.0	+12.3	+3.4	+12.9
	Nondurable goods, total.....	+0.4	+5.0	+0.5	+4.6	+1.2	+4.6
53	General merchandise group stores.....	+0.4	+6.9	+0.4	+6.7	+2.3	+7.0
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	+0.5	+8.9	+0.6	+9.0	+3.0	+9.1
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.) <sup>1</sup> .....	(NA)	(NA)	+0.7	+8.6	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	+0.2	+3.0	+0.3	+3.2	+0.4	+3.1
541	Grocery stores.....	+0.1	+2.7	+0.3	+3.1	+0.4	+2.9
554	Gasoline service stations.....	+1.0	+6.4	+0.9	+3.3	+1.6	+4.0
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	+2.0	+3.3	-0.5	+0.7	+1.1	+1.8
58	Eating and drinking places.....	-0.9	+6.0	+1.5	+8.0	+1.5	+6.9
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	+0.3	+3.6	+1.2	+2.1	+1.1	+2.3

NA Not available.

<sup>1</sup>Includes data for leased departments operated within department stores. Data for this line not included in broader kind-of-business totals.

Official Business

Penalty for Private Use, \$300

## 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 -1.0 percent to +1.3 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 July 1994 and final estimates for June 1994 based on the full sample are published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for July (BR-94-07). 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 3. 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	Median	Median	Median	Median	From	To		
	Retail trade, total.....	0.5	1.3	0.7	1.0	0.8	1.0	-1.0	+1.3	+0.1	0.4
	Total (excl. auto).....	0.5	0.9	0.7	1.1	0.8	1.0	-1.6	+0.7	-0.1	0.4
	Durable goods, total.....	1.2	3.4	1.4	2.2	1.7	2.2	-0.9	+1.1	+0.2	0.5
52	Building materials, group stores.....	0.9	2.6	1.6	4.1	2.9	3.4	-4.2	+2.5	-0.4	1.4
55 ex. 554 551,2,5, 6,7,9	Automotive dealers.....	1.6	3.2	2.1	3.4	2.6	3.1	-1.3	+2.2	+0.6	1.1
	Motor vehicle and misc. automotive dealers.....	1.2	3.0	1.5	4.0	2.8	3.2	-1.5	+2.3	+0.5	1.1
57	Furniture, home furn., and equipment stores.....	1.3	3.6	2.1	4.6	3.4	4.1	-3.4	+2.3	-0.1	1.5
	Nondurable goods, total.....	0.4	0.8	0.6	1.1	0.8	1.1	-1.1	+0.5	0.0	0.3
53	General merch. group, total.....	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.5	-0.3	+0.7	+0.1	0.2
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts.).....	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	-0.4	+0.6	-0.1	0.2
54	Food stores.....	0.6	1.0	0.7	1.7	0.9	1.7	-0.5	+0.8	+0.1	0.3
541	Grocery stores.....	0.1	0.8	0.3	1.8	0.9	1.7	-0.6	+0.5	0.0	0.2
554	Gasoline service stations.....	0.5	1.9	0.9	2.7	1.8	3.0	-1.4	+1.2	-0.4	0.8
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	0.8	3.4	1.4	3.3	2.8	2.6	-2.4	+1.3	-0.4	1.1
58	Eating and drinking places.....	0.8	2.0	1.2	4.6	4.0	3.9	-3.6	+2.4	0.0	1.0
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	0.4	1.8	1.0	2.5	1.5	2.5	-1.0	+1.3	+0.2	0.6

<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 April 1993 - March 1994.

<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, August 1993 - July 1994. The ranges for all other totals and kinds of business are based on the period April 1993 - February 1994.

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.

