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Questions concerning this report may be directed
to: Mr. Carl Bostrom (301) 763-7041

REVISIONS TO RETAIL SALES AND INVENTORY SERIES

The U. S. Department of Commerce announced today that the monthly series of retail sales and inventories statistics have been revised based on estimates derived from the 1977 Annual Retail Trade Survey.

Revised levels of retail sales in the United States during 1978 amounted to \$798.8 billion, based on the aggregates of final monthly statistics published in Current Business Reports, Retail Trade and Accounts Receivable, using levels derived from the 1977 Annual Retail Trade Survey. Tables 1A and 1B show the revised and originally published monthly estimates for 1978.

Retail sales in the United States during 1977 amounted to \$724.0 billion, about 2.2 percent above estimates derived previously from aggregates of monthly statistics. Sales of durable goods stores amounted to \$247.8 billion, about 3.8 percent greater than previously published, while sales of nondurable goods stores are estimated to have been \$476.2 billion in 1977, 1.4 percent greater than earlier estimates.

Among the more significant differences noted between these and aggregates of earlier published monthly estimates during 1977 were motor vehicle dealers at \$127.9 billion, up 3.1 percent; miscellaneous general merchandise stores at \$10.2 billion, up 5.2 percent; and gasoline service station sales of \$58.2 billion, 3.0 percent greater than previously estimated. Few downward revision were observed, but variety store sales were estimated to have been \$7.6 billion, down 4.5 percent. Tables 2A and 2B show revised and originally published monthly estimates for 1977.

With the modification, total 1978 annual sales of all retail stores in the United States were estimated to be 10 percent above the value estimated from the 1977 Annual Retail Trade Survey. Excluding the automotive group, annual sales were also 10 percent above 1977. Annual sales of durable goods stores increased 12 percent from the previous year, while those of nondurable goods stores increased 9 percent for the same period. All major kind-of-business groups showed increases in comparison with 1977. In the durable goods stores category, the advance was led by the building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers, up 14 percent; followed by the automotive dealers, up 10 percent; and furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores, up 8 percent. In the nondurable goods stores category, general merchandise group

stores, food stores, eating and drinking places, and apparel and accessory stores, each showed an increase of 10 percent over the year 1977.

The complete results of the 1977 Annual Retail Trade Survey will be made available later this month. The first presentation of retail inventory estimates, based on the results of the 1977 Annual Retail Trade Survey, will be shown in the report on manufacturing and trade sales and inventories for January 1979, scheduled for release on March 13. Revisions to retail sales by kind of business for the years 1976, 1977, and 1978, along with revisions to sales estimates for geographic areas during 1978, will be shown in the full monthly retail report for January 1979, scheduled for release later this month. This report, together with a supplementary publication covering the retail sales series for the period 1967-1978, will also contain a full description of the methodology used in the revision process.

The annual retail trade survey is an end-of-year report on sales and inventories from about 32,000 firms representing all categories of retail trade. The annual survey estimates are derived from a larger sample of respondents than those participating in each monthly survey. Differences between estimates from the annual and the monthly surveys are attributed to sampling error, response bias in monthly reports, and the changeover to a new monthly retail trade survey completed in mid-1977.

Sample estimates derived from the 1977 Annual Retail Trade Survey will be superseded by the complete-censuses results of the 1977 Census of Retail Trade, scheduled for release later this year. Subsequent revisions will make use of later annual surveys of retail trade and the 1977 Census of Retail Trade.

Table 1A. Revised 1978 Estimated Monthly Retail Sales by Kind of Business for the United States

	(millions of dollars.)													
	1978													
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Total	
	Data NOT ADJUSTED for seasonal variations, holiday, or trading-day differences													
Retail trade, total.....	53,209	53,612	64,764	63,838	67,952	69,056	66,557	69,102	66,219	68,615	71,297	84,597	798,818	
Total (excl. automotive group).....	42,867	42,493	50,204	49,456	52,537	53,338	52,263	54,460	53,486	54,214	57,687	72,145	635,150	
Durable goods stores, total.....	16,944	17,936	22,777	23,163	25,085	25,685	23,932	24,898	22,563	24,596	24,463	25,872	277,916	
Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	2,341	2,461	3,170	3,665	4,115	4,260	4,074	4,308	4,034	4,219	3,918	3,560	44,125	
Automotive dealers.....	10,342	11,119	14,560	14,382	15,415	15,718	14,294	14,642	12,733	14,401	13,610	12,452	163,668	
Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	2,511	2,539	2,902	2,901	3,074	3,107	3,021	3,224	3,138	3,231	3,566	4,216	37,430	
Nondurable goods stores, total.....	36,265	35,676	41,987	40,673	42,867	43,371	42,625	44,204	43,656	44,019	46,834	58,725	520,902	
General merchandise group stores.....	5,405	5,524	7,366	7,472	8,017	8,106	7,497	8,165	8,024	8,262	9,883	15,784	99,505	
Department stores.....	4,345	4,424	5,894	6,010	6,431	6,522	5,965	6,520	6,468	6,610	7,908	12,635	79,732	
Food stores.....	13,061	12,792	14,529	13,865	14,528	14,936	15,006	14,858	14,942	14,417	14,834	16,690	174,458	
Grocery stores.....	12,141	11,892	13,482	12,862	13,455	13,848	13,941	13,781	13,892	13,295	13,695	15,243	161,527	
Gasoline service stations.....	4,633	4,404	4,906	4,889	5,156	5,256	5,283	5,387	5,191	5,264	5,197	5,318	60,884	
Apparel and accessory stores.....	2,293	2,151	2,940	2,816	2,906	2,892	2,754	3,194	3,236	3,273	3,675	5,698	37,828	
Eating and drinking places.....	4,829	4,734	5,579	5,719	6,024	6,220	6,395	6,527	6,134	6,006	5,775	6,141	70,083	
Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	1,875	1,847	2,070	1,940	2,060	2,069	2,016	2,109	2,041	2,106	2,164	3,040	25,337	
	Data ADJUSTED for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences													
Retail trade, total.....	61,892	62,898	64,075	65,146	65,522	65,964	66,224	67,303	68,085	68,971	70,158	70,918		
Total (excl. automotive group).....	49,333	50,209	50,943	51,609	52,002	52,326	52,734	53,408	54,052	54,619	55,727	56,360		
Durable goods stores, total.....	20,817	21,244	21,813	22,617	22,730	22,947	23,049	23,617	23,872	24,422	24,954	25,163		
Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	3,275	3,324	3,397	3,609	3,590	3,651	3,707	3,809	3,798	3,911	3,971	4,009		
Automotive dealers.....	12,559	12,689	13,132	13,537	13,520	13,638	13,490	13,895	14,033	14,352	14,431	14,558		
Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	2,867	2,934	2,924	3,061	3,116	3,071	3,091	3,170	3,228	3,248	3,303	3,307		
Nondurable goods stores, total.....	41,075	41,654	42,262	42,529	42,792	43,017	43,175	43,686	44,213	44,549	45,204	45,755		
General merchandise group stores.....	7,698	7,815	7,952	8,048	8,236	8,294	8,287	8,361	8,379	8,394	8,549	8,716		
Department stores.....	6,270	6,338	6,420	6,462	6,609	6,662	6,650	6,701	6,696	6,684	6,806	6,897		
Food stores.....	13,923	14,070	14,177	14,298	14,375	14,420	14,609	14,629	14,775	14,947	15,125	15,284		
Grocery stores.....	12,902	13,054	13,133	13,273	13,335	13,393	13,574	13,577	13,687	13,835	13,960	13,984		
Gasoline service stations.....	4,929	5,005	4,996	4,994	5,020	5,030	4,887	5,082	5,191	5,222	5,276	5,292		
Apparel and accessory stores.....	2,844	2,862	2,983	3,064	3,062	3,074	3,126	3,221	3,261	3,271	3,388	3,376		
Eating and drinking places.....	5,450	5,563	5,787	5,794	5,672	5,770	5,867	5,923	5,996	6,018	6,003	6,184		
Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	2,020	2,023	2,030	2,042	2,058	2,075	2,102	2,135	2,158	2,180	2,240	2,232		

Table 1B. Original 1978 Estimated Monthly Retail Sales by Kind of Business for the United States

(millions of dollars)

	1978													Total
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.		
	Data NOT ADJUSTED for seasonal variations, holiday, or trading-day differences													
Retail trade, total.....	52,127	52,479	63,334	67,391	66,368	67,475	65,076	67,539	64,754	67,063	69,642	82,315	780,563	
Total (excl. automotive group).....	42,151	41,769	49,326	49,559	51,537	52,342	51,312	53,447	52,492	53,181	56,524	70,332	622,972	
Durable goods stores, total.....	16,295	17,230	21,863	22,227	24,059	24,656	22,975	23,899	21,658	23,621	23,426	24,526	266,435	
Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	2,304	2,419	3,116	3,592	4,027	4,186	4,012	4,247	3,982	4,163	3,863	3,487	43,398	
Automotive dealers.....	9,976	10,710	14,008	13,832	14,831	15,133	13,764	14,092	12,262	13,882	13,118	11,983	157,591	
Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	2,494	2,523	2,882	2,887	3,059	3,091	3,009	3,210	3,120	3,212	3,542	4,171	37,200	
Nondurable goods stores, total.....	35,832	35,249	41,471	40,164	42,309	42,819	42,101	43,640	43,096	43,442	46,216	57,789	514,128	
General merchandise group stores.....	5,368	5,488	7,317	7,420	7,960	8,049	7,443	8,107	7,967	8,200	9,805	15,635	98,759	
Department stores.....	4,325	4,404	5,867	5,982	6,401	6,492	5,937	6,490	6,438	6,579	7,871	12,541	79,327	
Food stores.....	12,880	12,617	14,333	13,675	14,328	14,732	14,806	14,653	14,737	14,211	14,624	16,477	172,073	
Grocery stores.....	12,043	11,796	13,374	12,759	13,347	13,737	13,829	13,670	13,780	13,188	13,585	15,166	160,274	
Gasoline service stations.....	4,537	4,313	4,804	4,787	5,049	5,147	5,173	5,275	5,083	5,155	5,089	5,151	59,563	
Apparel and accessory stores.....	2,217	2,080	2,847	2,729	2,817	2,804	2,674	3,098	3,136	3,168	3,554	5,509	36,633	
Eating and drinking places.....	4,857	4,761	5,610	5,750	6,055	6,251	6,426	6,558	6,609	6,039	5,808	6,130	70,411	
Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	1,820	1,793	2,010	1,883	2,000	2,009	1,957	2,048	1,982	2,045	2,101	2,947	24,595	
	Data ADJUSTED for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences													
Retail trade, total.....	59,987	61,548	62,649	63,917	64,292	64,565	64,343	65,862	66,347	67,389	68,572	69,443		
Total (excl. automotive group).....	47,892	49,388	50,007	50,782	51,223	51,333	51,569	52,262	52,952	53,435	54,678	55,454		
Durable goods stores, total.....	19,914	20,445	20,897	21,807	21,821	22,092	21,844	22,908	22,812	23,599	23,883	24,006		
Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	3,224	3,382	3,341	3,559	3,518	3,619	3,641	3,801	3,772	3,923	3,891	3,803		
Automotive dealers.....	12,095	12,160	12,442	13,135	13,069	13,232	12,774	13,600	13,395	13,954	13,894	13,989		
Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	2,773	2,921	2,887	3,055	3,101	3,039	3,059	3,171	3,220	3,215	3,293	3,322		
Nondurable goods stores, total.....	40,073	41,103	41,752	42,110	42,471	42,473	42,499	42,954	43,535	43,790	44,689	45,377		
General merchandise group stores.....	7,432	7,763	7,866	8,026	8,160	8,215	8,141	8,204	8,277	8,251	8,507	8,827		
Department stores.....	6,066	6,309	6,336	6,425	6,538	6,618	6,531	6,596	6,644	6,592	6,768	7,018		
Food stores.....	13,638	13,906	13,900	14,218	14,342	14,263	14,381	14,383	14,511	14,743	14,863	15,180		
Grocery stores.....	12,704	12,977	12,947	13,291	13,374	13,324	13,452	13,441	13,523	13,737	13,792	13,991		
Gasoline service stations.....	4,796	4,952	4,983	4,900	4,916	4,930	4,803	4,907	5,028	5,064	5,193	5,100		
Apparel and accessory stores.....	2,723	2,755	2,885	3,009	2,753	2,924	2,986	3,147	3,164	3,139	3,336	3,291		
Eating and drinking places.....	5,415	5,510	5,772	5,808	5,783	5,853	5,917	6,000	6,081	6,051	6,000	6,167		
Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	1,944	1,957	1,992	1,999	1,996	1,999	2,018	2,094	2,084	2,110	2,162	2,201		

P - preliminary estimate

Table 2A. Revised 1977 Estimated Monthly Retail Sales by Kind of Business for the United States

	(millions of dollars)											
	1977											
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
	Data NOT ADJUSTED for seasonal variations, holiday, or trading-day differences											
Retail trade, total.....	49.839	49.830	58.346	60.114	60.480	61.519	61.032	61.930	59.370	62.102	63.321	75.937
Total (excl. automotive group).....	40.048	39.260	44.943	46.801	47.166	47.541	48.125	48.732	47.804	49.221	51.332	64.603
Durable goods stores, total.....	15.928	16.851	20.974	21.353	21.795	22.634	21.264	21.977	20.328	21.597	20.853	22.278
Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	2.068	2.248	2.924	3.311	3.623	3.719	3.550	3.704	3.589	3.635	3.264	3.006
Automotive dealers.....	9.791	10.570	13.403	13.313	13.314	13.978	12.907	13.198	11.766	12.881	11.989	11.334
Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	2.411	2.430	2.802	2.754	2.788	2.876	2.901	2.961	2.860	2.929	3.197	3.852
Nondurable goods stores, total.....	33.911	32.979	37.372	38.761	38.685	38.885	39.768	39.953	39.242	40.505	42.468	53.659
General merchandise group stores.....	4.932	4.999	6.466	7.025	6.942	6.950	6.953	7.305	7.191	7.666	9.050	14.654
Department stores.....	3.929	3.956	5.144	5.570	5.544	5.565	5.535	5.864	5.824	6.208	7.323	11.871
Food stores.....	12.080	11.666	12.831	13.215	13.054	13.336	13.943	13.256	13.771	13.341	13.319	15.107
Grocery stores.....	11.272	10.863	11.910	12.251	12.111	12.366	12.991	12.317	12.448	12.349	12.364	13.900
Gasoline service stations.....	4.464	4.172	4.688	4.888	4.969	5.003	5.249	5.152	4.867	4.936	4.821	5.022
Apparel and accessory stores.....	2.242	2.125	2.549	2.834	2.607	2.581	2.525	2.813	2.773	2.978	3.266	5.048
Eating and drinking places.....	4.450	4.449	4.963	5.203	5.391	5.666	5.806	5.835	5.441	5.460	5.231	5.461
Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	1.693	1.691	1.830	1.853	1.861	1.847	1.836	1.887	1.847	1.902	1.904	2.767
	Data ADJUSTED for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences											
Retail trade, total.....	57.405	58.474	58.917	59.254	59.367	59.203	60.176	60.566	60.973	61.979	62.862	62.480
Total (excl. automotive group).....	45.465	46.385	46.658	47.082	47.250	47.167	47.962	48.051	48.315	49.082	49.914	49.602
Durable goods stores, total.....	19.562	19.954	20.309	20.294	20.292	20.137	20.476	20.870	21.102	21.474	21.637	21.433
Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	2.899	3.036	3.160	3.177	3.197	3.188	3.249	3.276	3.329	3.372	3.327	3.257
Automotive dealers.....	11.940	12.089	12.259	12.172	12.117	12.036	12.214	12.515	12.658	12.897	12.948	12.878
Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	2.744	2.808	2.842	2.855	2.870	2.848	2.937	2.933	2.912	2.947	2.985	2.980
Nondurable goods stores, total.....	37.843	38.520	38.608	38.960	39.075	39.066	39.700	39.696	39.871	40.505	41.225	41.047
General merchandise group stores.....	6.966	7.058	7.151	7.199	7.188	7.245	7.558	7.507	7.530	7.758	7.821	7.971
Department stores.....	5.613	5.660	5.716	5.719	5.751	5.791	6.076	6.039	6.048	6.245	6.297	6.389
Food stores.....	12.533	12.822	12.933	13.051	13.150	13.162	13.244	13.218	13.314	13.472	13.760	13.532
Grocery stores.....	11.645	11.924	12.018	12.082	12.233	12.244	12.314	12.292	12.374	12.499	12.760	12.466
Gasoline service stations.....	4.749	4.746	4.784	4.942	4.862	4.811	4.842	4.860	4.857	4.882	4.909	4.943
Apparel and accessory stores.....	2.730	2.831	2.815	2.770	2.793	2.763	2.839	2.846	2.822	2.935	3.030	2.927
Eating and drinking places.....	4.939	5.228	5.213	5.224	5.305	5.256	5.307	5.324	5.361	5.349	5.489	5.456
Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	1.824	1.850	1.862	1.874	1.882	1.871	1.905	1.898	1.948	1.967	1.977	2.007

Table 2B. Original 1977 Estimated Monthly Retail Sales by Kind of Business for the United States

	(millions of dollars)											
	1977											
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
	Data NOT ADJUSTED for seasonal variations, holiday, or trading-day differences											
Retail trade, total.....	48.826	48.853	57.293	58.634	58.893	60.027	59.835	60.702	58.341	60.836	61.975	74.219
Total (excl. automotive group).....	39.270	38.524	44.146	45.783	46.015	46.472	47.315	47.989	47.014	48.418	50.424	63.292
Durable goods stores, total.....	15.438	16.349	20.328	20.559	20.961	21.829	20.553	21.182	19.551	20.788	20.049	21.128
Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	2.027	2.198	2.865	3.251	3.515	3.622	3.493	3.657	3.547	3.591	3.229	2.963
Automotive dealers.....	9.556	10.329	13.057	12.851	12.878	13.555	12.520	12.713	11.327	12.418	11.551	10.927
Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	2.384	2.406	2.787	2.730	2.763	2.852	2.884	2.946	2.842	2.911	3.179	3.815
Nondurable goods stores, total.....	33.388	32.504	36.875	38.075	37.932	38.198	39.282	39.520	38.790	40.048	41.926	52.991
General merchandise group stores.....	4.828	4.903	6.347	6.911	6.860	6.887	6.920	7.258	7.143	7.616	8.986	14.572
Department stores.....	3.840	3.873	5.044	5.470	5.457	5.487	5.492	5.837	5.797	6.179	7.290	11.817
Food stores.....	11.905	11.461	12.695	13.047	12.846	13.102	13.783	13.082	13.194	13.169	13.135	14.894
Grocery stores.....	11.178	10.729	11.858	12.172	11.984	12.208	12.900	12.230	12.349	12.250	12.265	13.787
Gasoline service stations.....	4.326	4.014	4.477	4.631	4.826	4.864	5.123	5.047	4.767	4.834	4.721	4.918
Apparel and accessory stores.....	2.224	2.110	2.524	2.754	2.543	2.524	2.465	2.733	2.694	2.891	3.166	4.899
Eating and drinking places.....	4.466	4.542	5.073	5.250	5.466	5.607	5.844	5.864	5.470	5.491	5.261	5.491
Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	1.647	1.652	1.792	1.797	1.825	1.828	1.831	1.833	1.794	1.847	1.849	2.685
	Data ADJUSTED for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences											
Retail trade, total.....	55.671	57.169	57.850	57.929	58.052	57.851	58.669	59.177	59.412	60.720	61.650	61.813
Total (excl. automotive group).....	44.077	45.456	45.855	46.087	46.269	46.125	46.900	47.040	47.320	48.238	49.190	49.420
Durable goods stores, total.....	18.828	19.260	19.723	19.620	19.565	19.462	19.622	20.141	20.161	20.837	20.795	20.674
Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	2.807	2.591	3.123	3.135	3.129	3.143	3.175	3.229	3.297	3.428	3.260	3.149
Automotive dealers.....	11.594	11.713	11.995	11.842	11.783	11.726	11.769	12.137	12.092	12.482	12.460	12.393
Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	2.667	2.780	2.819	2.836	2.843	2.815	2.891	2.920	2.859	2.942	3.030	3.008
Nondurable goods stores, total.....	36.843	37.909	38.127	38.309	38.487	38.389	39.047	39.056	39.251	39.883	40.855	41.139
General merchandise group stores.....	6.682	6.930	6.995	7.059	7.066	7.094	7.452	7.363	7.403	7.716	7.822	8.276
Department stores.....	5.388	5.550	5.577	5.588	5.629	5.635	5.966	5.944	5.952	6.248	6.306	6.646
Food stores.....	12.217	12.612	12.784	12.933	13.065	13.014	13.080	13.005	13.099	13.203	13.599	13.400
Grocery stores.....	11.416	11.785	11.938	12.060	12.235	12.168	12.237	12.171	12.251	12.299	12.644	12.416
Gasoline service stations.....	4.589	4.605	4.642	4.723	4.710	4.696	4.728	4.691	4.674	4.739	4.798	4.898
Apparel and accessory stores.....	2.700	2.798	2.780	2.726	2.700	2.663	2.714	2.782	2.698	2.855	3.027	2.875
Eating and drinking places.....	4.891	5.255	5.290	5.232	5.283	5.262	5.346	5.341	5.514	5.368	5.488	5.469
Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	1.757	1.804	1.825	1.834	1.845	1.844	1.874	1.853	1.892	1.889	1.894	2.008