



Advance Monthly Retail Sales

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

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CB-92-213

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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 \$159.7 billion, a decrease of 0.5 percent ($\pm 1.0\%$) from the previous month and were 3.8 percent ($\pm 1.4\%$) above the same period a year ago. Total sales in the June through August period were 3.5 percent ($\pm 1.5\%$) above the same period a year ago. The July from June 1992 percent change was revised from +0.5 percent ($\pm 1.0\%$) as published in the July advance, to +1.0 percent ($\pm 0.4\%$).

Durable goods decreased 1.6 percent ($\pm 2.3\%$) from the previous month but were 5.6 percent above the previous year. Automotive dealers were up 6.4 percent from last year.

Nondurable goods increased 0.1 percent ($\pm 0.8\%$) from July and were up 2.9 percent from August 1991. General merchandise stores were up 7.4 percent from last year.

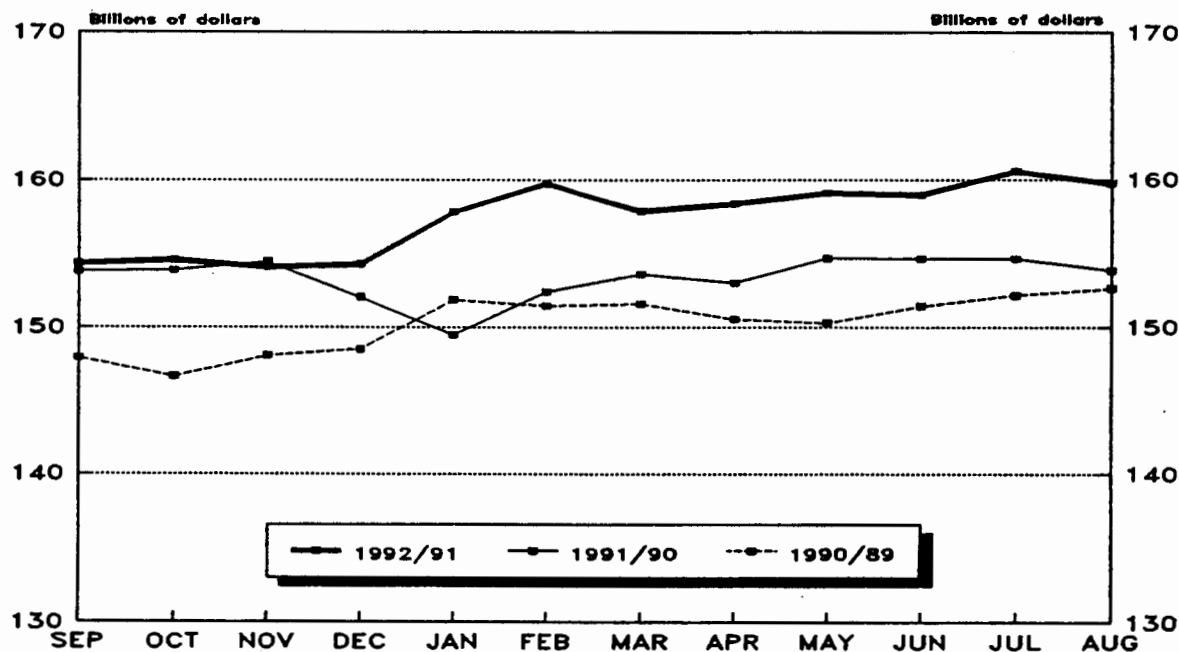
The advance estimates are based on a small subsample of the Bureau's full retail sales sample. Estimates from the advance and the subsequent full survey can differ because of the earlier reporting in the advance and because of sampling variability present in both surveys.

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

ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES

September 1989 - August 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	
		Aug. ² adv.	July prel.	June final	Aug.	July	Aug. ² adv.	July prel.	June final	Aug. ¹	July ¹
	Retail trade, total.....	163,027	164,020	162,722	161,895	156,635	159,728	160,582	158,982	153,853	154,860
	Total (excl. auto group)...	128,595	127,189	124,993	128,379	122,009	126,511	126,981	125,566	122,640	123,086
	Durable goods, total.....	58,819	61,837	62,933	57,510	58,068	57,279	58,190	57,686	54,244	54,718
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	9,009	9,635	9,979	8,884	9,126	8,373	8,608	8,574	7,992	8,139
521,3	Building mat. and supply stores.....	(*)	7,295	7,389	6,864	6,946	(*)	6,416	6,337	6,064	6,082
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	1,157	1,185	1,043	1,051	(*)	1,078	1,065	1,001	989
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	34,432	36,831	37,729	33,516	34,626	33,217	33,601	33,416	31,213	31,574
551,2,5, 6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	31,586	33,927	34,832	30,585	31,639	30,547	30,927	30,770	28,531	28,841
551	Motor vehicle (franchised).....	(*)	29,567	30,447	27,245	28,199	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	2,904	2,897	2,931	2,987	(*)	2,674	2,646	2,682	2,733
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	7,632	7,844	7,597	7,586	7,454	7,670	7,879	7,683	7,470	7,506
571	Furniture and home furnishings.....	(*)	4,284	4,218	4,111	3,975	(*)	4,263	4,205	3,968	3,971
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores.....	(*)	2,817	2,652	2,673	2,739	(*)	2,795	2,668	2,686	2,707
5722	Household appliance stores.....	(*)	809	775	716	773	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total.....	104,208	102,183	99,789	104,385	98,567	102,449	102,392	101,296	99,609	99,942
53	General merchandise group stores.....	19,405	17,489	17,681	18,583	16,153	19,649	19,602	19,025	18,300	18,424
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts).....	15,524	13,750	13,975	14,767	12,710	15,602	15,415	15,076	14,407	14,493
531	Dept. stores (in. leased depts) ³	(*)	14,175	14,415	15,286	13,132	(*)	15,856	15,550	14,972	14,957
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	517	504	609	553	(*)	555	568	607	613
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	3,222	3,202	3,207	2,890	(*)	3,632	3,381	3,286	3,318
54	Food stores.....	33,364	34,132	32,477	33,432	32,890	32,903	32,389	32,200	31,613	31,851
541	Grocery stores.....	31,146	31,912	30,316	31,366	30,820	30,716	30,248	30,075	29,619	29,835
554	Gasoline service stations.....	11,062	11,276	10,961	11,403	11,133	10,358	10,568	10,539	10,578	10,444
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	9,036	7,885	7,940	8,904	7,332	8,492	8,577	8,445	8,068	8,065
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	598	714	660	577	(*)	727	729	714	702
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	(*)	2,709	2,730	2,882	2,611	(*)	2,922	2,945	2,801	2,835
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	2,573	2,515	2,874	2,278	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	1,386	1,443	1,802	1,342	(*)	1,507	1,492	1,505	1,476
58	Eating and drinking places.....	16,978	17,115	16,603	17,881	17,220	15,720	15,906	15,843	16,330	16,215
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	6,380	6,361	6,291	6,300	6,133	6,564	6,531	6,459	6,332	6,336
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	2,101	1,989	2,014	1,975	(*)	1,982	1,985	1,896	1,886
5961 (pt)	Mail-order houses (department store merchandise).....	(*)	327	356	348	335	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
53,56,57 594	GAF ⁴	(*)	38,605	38,640	40,452	35,773	(*)	42,131	41,157	39,389	39,494

* 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-92-07.

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					
		Aug. 1992 advance from--		July 1992 preliminary from--		June 1992 through Aug. 1992 from--	
		July 1992 prelim.	Aug. 1991 final	June 1992 final	July 1991 final	Mar. 1992 through May 1992	June 1991 through Aug. 1991
	Retail trade, total.....	-0.5	+3.8	+1.0	+3.8	+0.8	+3.5
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	-0.4	+3.2	+1.1	+3.2	+0.9	+2.9
	Durable goods, total.....	-1.6	+5.6	+0.9	+6.3	+0.6	+5.6
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	-2.7	+4.8	+0.4	+5.8	-2.2	+5.7
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	-1.1	+6.4	+0.6	+6.4	+0.5	+5.8
551,2,5, 6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	-1.2	+7.1	+0.5	+7.2	+0.5	+6.6
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	-2.7	+2.7	+2.6	+5.0	+1.7	+3.9
	Nondurable goods, total.....	+0.1	+2.9	+1.1	+2.5	+1.0	+2.3
53	General merchandise group stores.....	+0.2	+7.4	+3.0	+6.4	+2.2	+6.3
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	+1.2	+8.3	+2.2	+6.4	+2.0	+7.0
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.) ²	(NA)	(NA)	+2.0	+6.0	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	+1.6	+4.1	+0.6	+1.7	+1.6	+2.1
541	Grocery stores.....	+1.5	+3.7	+0.6	+1.4	+1.4	+1.8
554	Gasoline service stations.....	-2.0	-2.1	+0.3	+1.2	+1.6	-0.6
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	-1.0	+5.3	+1.6	+6.3	+3.5	+5.8
58	Eating and drinking places.....	-1.2	-3.7	+0.4	-1.9	-4.2	-2.9
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	+0.5	+3.7	+1.1	+3.1	0.0	+3.0

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		
		July 1992 prelim.	June 1992 final	July 1991	July 1992 prelim.	June 1992 final	July 1991
	Retail trade, total.....	64,341	63,390	60,338	66,322	65,432	62,997
53	General merchandise group stores.....	16,636	16,849	15,137	18,856	18,197	17,462
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	13,543	13,762	12,510	15,132	14,830	14,232
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.) ²	13,957	14,191	12,923	15,612	15,309	14,719
533	Variety stores.....	357	347	344	387	392	387
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores...	2,736	2,740	2,283	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	19,862	18,829	19,171	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
541	Grocery stores.....	19,542	18,510	18,872	18,718	18,697	18,538
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	4,839	4,967	4,442	5,437	5,311	5,025
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	1,619	1,698	1,586	1,769	1,812	1,743
566	Shoe stores.....	912	963	872	1,007	984	968
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	3,869	3,890	3,673	4,039	4,019	3,858

NA Not available.

²Revised.

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-92-07.

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 0.5 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 1992 and final estimates for June 1992 based on the full sample are published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for July (BR-92-07). 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 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 ¹		Median	Median	Median	Median	Range ²		Mean	Avg. of absolute diff.
		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	0.5
	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	Automotive dealers.....	2.2	4.1	3.1	3.4	3.6	3.3	-3.0	+2.6	+0.5	1.0
551,2,5, 6,7,9	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, August 1991 - July 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.

