

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
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BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
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August 1954

ANNUAL RETAIL TRADE REPORT-1953

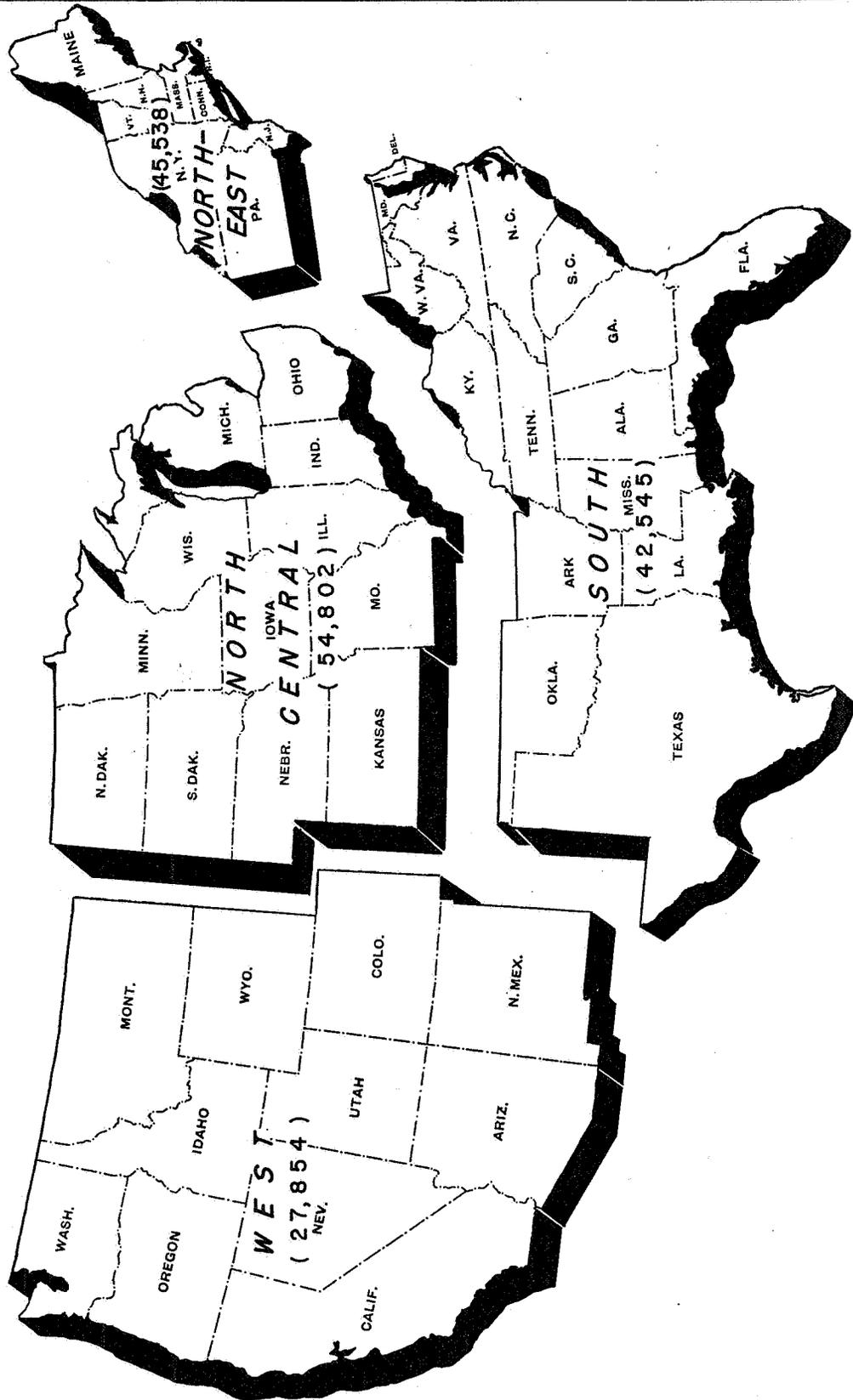
Statistics on-

- **SALES BY REGION**
- **MERCHANDISE INVENTORIES**
- **ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE**

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RETAIL SALES BY CENSUS REGION — 1953

[FIGURES IN PARENTHESES ARE RETAIL SALES IN MILLIONS OF DOLLARS]



ANNUAL RETAIL TRADE REPORT: 1953

The data in this report are based on the sample survey carried out by means of a special appropriation for making "spot checks" of business in lieu of the complete Census of Business originally scheduled for 1953. The subjects covered by this report are end-of-year inventories, sales-inventory ratios, dollar volume of sales by Census region, end-of-year accounts receivable, and estimates of the number of retail establishments. The various data are shown by kind of business.

Census region	Percentage distribution of—			
	Population 1950	Total income payments 1952 ¹	Retail store sales, 1953	
			All retail stores	Stores of organizations operating 11 or more units
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	
United States..	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Northeast.....	26.2	29.7	26.7	29.2
North Central.....	29.5	31.4	32.1	30.9
South.....	31.3	23.7	24.9	24.6
West.....	13.0	15.2	16.3	15.3

¹ Source: Office of Business Economics, Department of Commerce.

Merchandise inventories

Retail store inventories totaled almost \$19.3 billion at cost value on December 31, 1953, an increase of 2 percent compared with December 31, 1952. Of this total, a little more than \$3.0 billion worth of goods were held for sale by retailers in each of the automotive; general merchandise; and lumber, building, hardware groups. Apparel stores had almost \$2.3 billion worth of inventories on December 31, 1953; food stores, almost \$2.0 billion; and stores in the furniture and appliance group, almost \$1.8 billion worth of goods.

Among individual kinds of business, motor vehicle dealers showed the largest increase in inventories for December 31, 1953, compared with December 31, 1952, 9 percent. Other moderate increases shown were for women's ready-to-wear stores and liquor stores, 8 percent; shoe stores, 6 percent; drug, jewelry, and dry goods and general merchandise stores, 5 percent; and grocery stores, 4 percent. The largest decreases in inventories for year-end 1953 compared with year-end 1952 were for mail-order houses (11%); household appliance dealers (5%); lumber yards, building materials dealers (4%); and department stores (3%).

Sales inventory ratios

The ratio of 1953 annual sales to December 31, 1953, inventories for all types of retail stores which were in operation throughout the full year 1953 was 9.0 as compared with 9.4 for 1952. Comparable ratios for firms operating 11 or more stores were 12.5 and 11.8. These ratios are based on store inventories only and do not include warehouse inventories.

Sales by Census regions

The distribution of retail store sales, 1953, by Census regions, together with the distribution of total 1950 population and total income payments for 1952, are shown in the table below.

Except for the Northeast region, the distribution of sales of all retail stores (col. 3) follows more closely the distribution of total income payments (col. 2) than the distribution of total population (col. 1). The distribution of retail store sales by 11-or-more unit firms (col. 4) appears very highly correlated with the income payment distribution in each region.

Accounts receivable

Balances due retail stores from customers, as a result of credit sales, totaled about \$10.5 billion on December 31, 1953, an increase of 5 percent compared with December 31, 1952. Of the 1953 year-end total, about \$2.3 billion were receivables due stores in the general merchandise group and about \$2.0 billion were due stores in the furniture and appliance group. Establishments in the lumber, building, hardware group had amounts due from customers of almost \$1.6 billion and those in the automotive group about \$1.4 billion.

In a comparison of year-end receivables for 1953 with 1952, gasoline service stations showed an increase of 19 percent; household appliance dealers, 18 percent; eating and drinking places, 17 percent; grocery stores, 14 percent; and motor-vehicle dealers, 12 percent.

Number of stores

The number of retail stores at the end of 1953, as estimated from the annual survey, showed very little change from the number reported in the 1948 Census of Business. The store counts for December 31, 1953, and December 31, 1948, were 1,748,000 and 1,770,000, respectively. Organizations which operated 11 or more stores in 1948 and a total of 79,000 stores that year, operated 81,000 stores at the end of 1953. For purposes of this survey, 11 or more store organizations are defined as those which in 1948 operated 11 or more establishments.

These and other related data are contained in the tables of this annual report. A statement on the sampling design and reliability of the data and an explanation of terms will be found on pages 9-11 of this report.

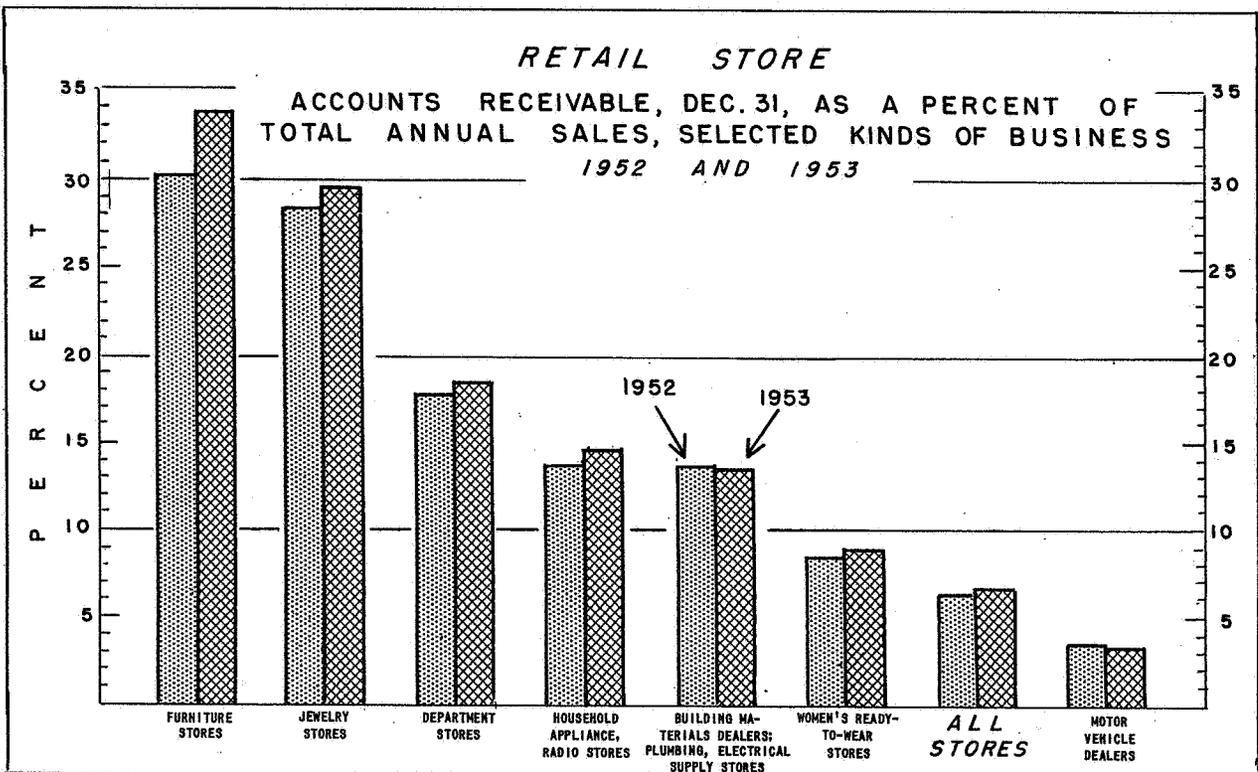
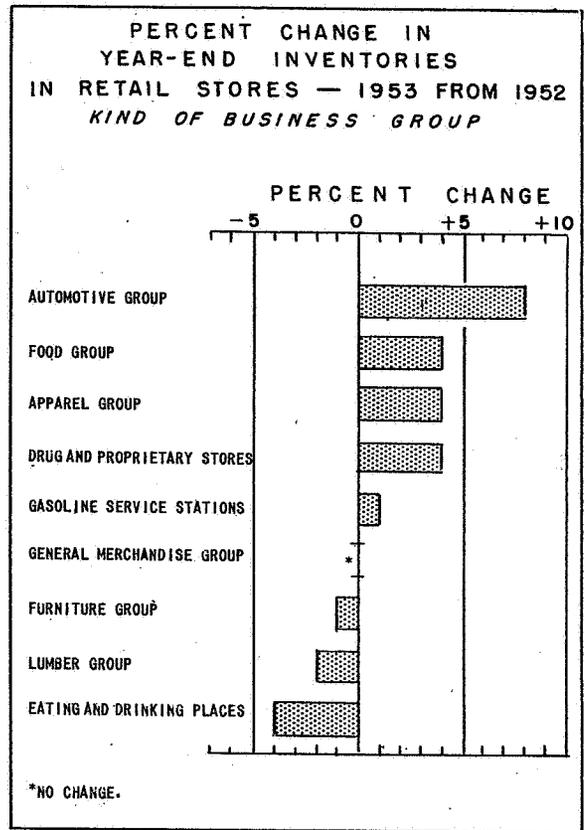
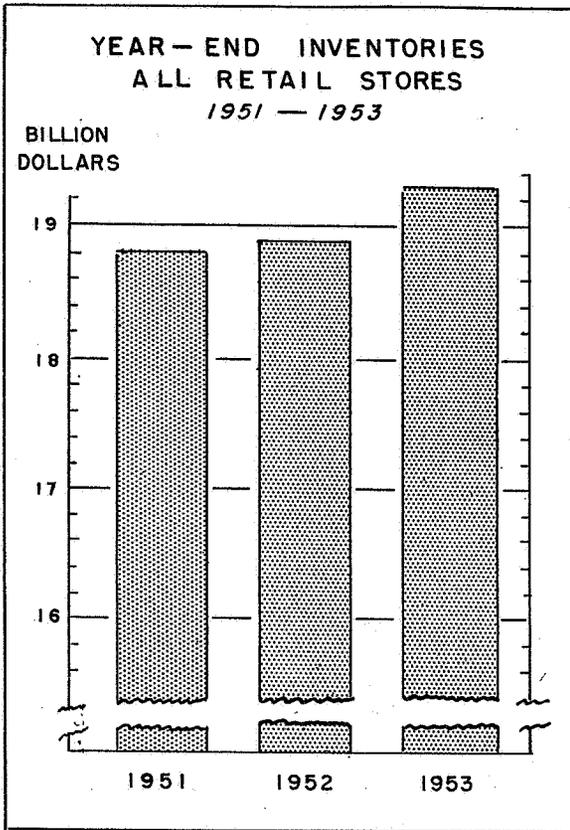


Table 1.--SALES OF RETAIL STORES BY KIND OF BUSINESS--UNITED STATES AND FOUR CENSUS REGIONS: 1953
 Estimated dollar volume for all retail stores and stores of organizations operating 11 or more stores
 (Millions of dollars)

Kind of business	United States	Census regions ¹			
		Northeast	North Central	South	West
ALL RETAIL STORES					
United States, total.....	170,739	45,538	54,802	42,545	27,854
Food group.....	40,777	12,365	12,293	10,086	6,033
Grocery stores ²	33,623	9,342	9,915	9,258	5,108
Eating and drinking places.....	13,003	4,137	4,237	2,449	2,180
Eating places.....	8,340	(³)	2,301	1,838	1,488
Drinking places.....	4,664	1,425	1,936	(³)	(³)
General merchandise group.....	19,005	4,518	6,341	5,126	3,020
Department stores, including mail order.....	11,695	2,899	4,369	2,637	1,790
Mail order (catalog sales).....	1,329	(⁴)	(⁴)	(⁴)	(⁴)
Variety stores.....	3,054	960	865	847	422
Other general merchandise stores ⁵	4,215	(³)	1,107	1,642	(³)
Apparel group.....	10,256	3,630	2,827	2,585	1,214
Women's ready-to-wear stores ⁶	3,604	1,261	(³)	(³)	(³)
Shoe stores.....	1,735	617	(³)	360	(³)
Furniture and appliance group.....	9,125	(³)	2,834	2,278	(³)
Lumber, building, hardware group.....	13,550	(³)	5,192	3,254	(³)
Automotive group.....	33,319	(³)	10,425	8,869	(³)
Motor vehicle dealers (new and used cars).....	27,974	(³)	8,984	7,400	(³)
Gasoline service stations.....	10,537	1,919	3,835	2,942	1,841
Drug and proprietary stores.....	4,789	1,174	1,585	1,227	803
Liquor stores.....	3,326	(³)	921	(³)	(³)
STORES OF ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING 11 OR MORE STORES					
United States, total.....	30,928	9,042	9,561	7,605	4,720
Food group.....	13,392	4,639	3,814	3,224	1,715
Grocery stores ²	12,404	4,183	3,469	3,106	1,646
Eating and drinking places.....	672	325	159	122	66
General merchandise group.....	8,962	1,892	3,115	2,320	1,635
Department stores, including mail order.....	5,290	1,039	1,946	1,258	1,047
Variety stores.....	2,350	742	692	635	281
Apparel group.....	2,078	718	626	459	275
Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	200	80	64	30	26
Women's apparel and accessory stores ⁶	820	231	253	223	113
Women's ready-to-wear stores.....	739	203	217	215	104
Shoe stores.....	650	215	198	144	93
Furniture and appliance group.....	708	196	177	223	112
Tire, battery, accessory dealers.....	636	97	202	254	83
Other retail stores.....	2,809	943	753	659	454
Drug and proprietary stores.....	760	132	306	196	126
Liquor stores.....	836	273	239	181	143

¹ States comprising Census regions (see map of Census regions on page 2):

Northeast (Maine, N. H., Vt., Mass., R. I., Conn., N. Y., N. J., Pa.)

North Central (Ohio, Ind., Ill., Mich., Wis., Minn., Iowa, Mo., N. Dak., S. Dak., Nebr., Kans.)

South (Del., Md., D. C., Va., W. Va., N. C., S. C., Ga., Fla., Ky., Ala., Miss., Ark., La., Okla., Tex., Tenn.)

West (Mont., Idaho, Wyo., Colo., N. Mex., Ariz., Utah, Nev., Wash., Oreg., Calif.)

² Includes data for grocery stores with and without fresh meat.

³ Not shown because of high sampling variability.

⁴ Withheld to avoid disclosure.

⁵ Includes data for general stores and dry goods and general merchandise stores.

⁶ Includes data for women's ready-to-wear; other apparel, accessory, specialty shops; and furriers.

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

Table 1A.--SAMPLING VARIABILITIES OF DOLLAR VOLUME ESTIMATES* OF RETAIL STORE SALES

Kind of business	Sampling variability (percent)					Kind of business	Sampling variability (percent)				
	United States	North-east	North Central	South	West		United States	North-east	North Central	South	West
ALL RETAIL STORES						ALL RETAIL STORES--Con.					
United States, total.....	1	4	2	3	3	Apparel group.....	2	4	9	7	6
Food group.....	2	5	2	5	7	Women's ready-to-wear stores.....	3	8	-	-	-
Grocery stores.....	3	5	3	6	9	Shoe stores.....	5	7	-	8	-
Eating and drinking places.....	3	8	3	6	5	Furniture and appliance group.....	4	-	7	8	-
Eating places.....	4	-	4	6	8	Lumber, building, hardware group...	4	-	6	7	-
Drinking places.....	6	8	5	-	-	Automotive group.....	2	-	6	7	-
General merchandise group.....	2	5	2	3	4	Motor vehicle dealers (new and used cars).....	5	-	7	7	-
Department stores, including mail order.....	1	2	1	2	2	Gasoline service stations.....	5	6	6	5	5
Mail order (catalog sales).....	0	0	0	0	0	Drug and proprietary stores.....	4	7	8	6	8
Variety stores.....	2	4	4	7	5	Liquor stores.....	6	-	8	-	-
Other general merchandise stores.....	6	-	7	8	7						

* Sampling variabilities apply to estimates for All Retail Stores Total in table 1 above.

Table 2.--MERCHANDISE INVENTORIES OF RETAIL STORES BY KIND OF BUSINESS--UNITED STATES: DECEMBER 31, 1953 AND 1952

Estimated volume for all retail stores and retail stores and warehouses of multiunit organizations

(Millions of dollars)

Kind of business	Merchandise inventories, at cost, December 31								
	All retail stores			Retail stores of organizations operating--				Warehouses of organizations operating 11 or more retail stores	
	1953	1952 ^r	Percentage change, Dec. 31, 1953 from Dec. 31, 1952	11 or more retail stores			1953	1952 ^r	
				4 or more retail stores, 1953	1953	1952 ^r			Percentage change, Dec. 31, 1953 from Dec. 31, 1952
United States, total.....	19,295.2	18,845.8	+2	3,531.0	2,515.1	2,543.9	-1	851.7	848.9
Food group.....	1,994.3	1,924.4	+4	493.1	411.3	395.5	+4	381.7	370.6
Grocery stores.....	1,811.8	1,740.7	+4	460.7	390.4	375.3	+4	360.9	343.7
Eating and drinking places.....	414.1	433.1	-4	15.4	8.7	8.2	+5	8.6	8.6
General merchandise group.....	3,023.4	3,037.7	0	1,415.1	1,118.6	1,185.7	-6	173.2	180.2
Department stores, including mail order.....	1,546.6	1,616.9	-4	834.6	660.6	716.1	-8	109.9	108.2
Mail order (catalog sales).....	195.7	220.4	-11	195.7	195.7	220.4	-11	-	-
Variety stores.....	536.8	521.3	+3	363.0	311.4	311.4	0	31.9	35.5
Other general merchandise stores.....	940.0	899.5	+5	217.6	146.6	158.1	-7	31.4	36.5
Dry goods and general merchandise stores.....	672.8	641.5	+5	189.0	132.7	144.2	-8	27.6	32.5
Apparel group.....	2,288.0	2,195.1	+4	445.1	292.6	282.0	+4	49.4	45.1
Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	642.6	630.7	+2	58.5	37.1	35.3	+5	10.6	9.0
Women's ready-to-wear stores.....	583.7	541.6	+8	119.3	65.5	68.2	-4	8.8	7.2
Family clothing stores.....	384.2	382.7	0	105.4	76.2	(¹)	(¹)	7.3	(¹)
Shoe stores.....	433.0	408.8	+6	147.6	106.5	100.7	+6	20.0	19.9
Furniture and appliance group.....	1,778.2	1,787.0	-1	222.8	103.9	102.0	+2	39.3	37.8
Furniture, home furnishings stores.....	1,175.2	1,168.2	+1	122.6	29.8	(¹)	(¹)	24.0	(¹)
Furniture stores.....	918.9	929.4	-1	105.0	27.8	(¹)	(¹)	7.8	(¹)
Household appliance, radio stores.....	603.0	618.8	-3	100.2	74.1	73.2	+1	15.3	13.8
Household appliance dealers.....	444.4	468.0	-5	94.0	70.0	(¹)	(¹)	14.1	(¹)
Lumber, building, hardware group.....	3,013.9	3,062.4	-2	346.6	221.8	223.4	-1	21.2	20.6
Building materials dealers, plumbing, electrical stores.....	1,337.7	1,375.3	-3	242.1	161.4	166.6	-3	16.9	16.6
Lumber yards, building materials dealers.....	1,078.6	1,126.7	-4	211.1	138.6	(¹)	(¹)	2.0	(¹)
Hardware stores.....	749.1	750.1	0	(¹)	49.7	51.3	-3	4.3	4.1
Farm equipment dealers.....	927.0	n.a.	n.a.	(¹)	10.6	n.a.	n.a.	-	-
Automotive group.....	3,036.8	2,805.1	+8	161.7	(²)	(²)	(²)	10.1	9.6
Motor vehicle and other automotive dealers.....	2,770.2	2,537.6	+9	30.8	(²)	(²)	(²)	-	-
Motor vehicle dealers.....	2,683.9	2,462.0	+9	28.5	(²)	(²)	(²)	-	-
Tire, battery, accessory dealers.....	266.7	267.6	0	130.9	109.0	97.4	+12	10.1	9.6
Gasoline service stations.....	521.8	514.8	+1	(¹)	12.3	(¹)	(¹)	6.1	(¹)
Other retail stores.....	3,224.7	3,086.2	+4	394.6	(²)	(²)	(²)	162.0	170.6
Drug and proprietary stores.....	816.5	782.9	+4	119.4	84.2	79.4	+6	44.3	43.8
Drug stores.....	771.5	738.1	+5	114.4	(²)	(²)	(²)	(²)	(²)
Liquor stores.....	458.1	425.2	+8	103.9	73.8	73.1	+1	69.9	72.1
Jewelry stores.....	502.3	479.5	+5	41.0	17.5	(¹)	(¹)	2.6	(¹)
Feed, farm, and garden supply stores.....	429.0	n.a.	n.a.	66.6	33.8	n.a.	n.a.	23.0	n.a.
Cigar stores.....	34.3	n.a.	n.a.	6.7	4.7	n.a.	n.a.	1.3	n.a.

r Revised.

n.a. Not available.

¹ Not shown because of high sampling variability.² Withheld to avoid possible disclosure.

Note: Group totals may include data for kinds of business not shown separately and may not agree with addition of detail, due to rounding.

Table 2A.--SAMPLING VARIABILITIES FOR DOLLAR VOLUME ESTIMATES* OF RETAIL STORE INVENTORIES

Kind of business	Sampling variability (percent)	Kind of business	Sampling variability (percent)	Kind of business	Sampling variability (percent)
United States, total.....	1	Apparel group--Continued		Lumber, building, hardware group--Con.	
Food group.....	3	Women's ready-to-wear stores.....	5	Farm equipment dealers.....	8
Grocery stores.....	3	Family clothing stores.....	9	Automotive group.....	4
Eating and drinking places.....	6	Shoe stores.....	6	Motor vehicle, other automotive dealers.....	4
General merchandise group.....	2	Furniture and appliance group.....	5	Motor vehicle dealers.....	4
Department stores, including mail order.....	2	Furniture, home furnishings stores	4	Tire, battery, accessory dealers...	5
Mail order (catalog sales).....	0	Furniture stores.....	6	Gasoline service stations.....	5
Variety stores.....	5	Household appliance, radio stores.	6	Other retail stores.....	3
Other general merchandise stores.....	6	Household appliance dealers.....	6	Drug and proprietary stores.....	3
Dry goods and general merchandise stores.....	7	Lumber, building, hardware group....	4	Drug stores.....	5
Apparel group.....	3	Building materials dealers, plumbing, electrical stores.....	4	Liquor stores.....	9
Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	8	Lumber yards, building materials dealers.....	6	Jewelry stores.....	9
		Hardware stores.....	5	Feed, farm, and garden supply stores	10

* Sampling variabilities apply to estimates for all retail stores, table 2, col. 1 above.

Table 3.—SALES-INVENTORY RATIOS BY KIND OF BUSINESS, UNITED STATES: 1953 AND 1952

All retail stores and stores of organizations operating 11 or more stores

Ratio¹ of annual sales to year-end inventories of retail stores

Kind of business	Total		Stores of organizations ² operating 11 or more stores		Kind of business	Total		Stores of organizations ² operating 11 or more stores	
	1953	1952 ¹	1953	1952 ¹		1953	1952 ¹	1953	1952 ¹
United States, total.....	9.0	9.4	12.5	11.8	Lumber, building, hardware group.....	4.5	4.7	5.2	5.0
Food group.....	21.1	21.4	33.3	31.9	Bldg. materials dealers, plumbing, elect. stores..	5.6	5.6	4.3	4.3
Grocery stores.....	19.7	19.0	32.5	31.2	Lumber yards, building materials dealers..	5.4	5.6	3.7	3.7
Meat markets, fish markets.....	46.9	51.7	53.8	53.3	Hardware stores.....	3.6	3.7	7.7	7.3
Eating and drinking places.....	30.4	29.4	80.9	83.5	Farm equipment dealers.....	3.5	4.1	3.2	3.2
General merchandise group.....	6.6	6.5	7.9	7.4	Automotive group.....	10.2	9.8	7.6	7.6
Department stores, including mail order....	7.6	7.1	8.0	7.3	Motor vehicle, other automotive dealers.....	10.6	10.3	(3)	(3)
Mail order (catalog sales).....	6.4	6.3	6.4	6.3	Motor vehicle dealers.....	10.8	10.4	(3)	(3)
Variety stores.....	6.1	6.3	7.6	7.5	Tire, battery, accessory dealers.....	6.1	6.1	6.2	6.6
Other general merchandise stores.....	5.2	5.2	8.6	7.7	Gasoline service stations.....	20.4	19.1	44.4	41.9
Dry goods, general merchandise stores.....	5.1	5.1	8.7	7.8	Other retail stores.....	7.2	7.4	12.2	12.2
Apparel group.....	4.6	4.7	7.0	6.9	Drug and proprietary stores.....	6.4	6.4	9.1	9.4
Men's, boys' clothing, furnishings stores..	3.3	3.6	4.9	5.2	Drug stores.....	6.5	n.a.	9.1	9.4
Women's ready-to-wear stores.....	6.8	7.0	11.5	11.1	Liquor stores.....	8.1	8.2	12.1	11.8
Family clothing stores.....	4.2	4.5	5.0	5.2	Jewelry stores.....	2.6	3.0	4.3	4.5
Shoe stores.....	3.8	4.1	6.2	6.1	Feed, farm, garden supply stores.....	12.6	12.1	17.3	16.7
Furniture and appliance group.....	5.5	5.5	7.1	7.0	Cigar stores.....	13.4	11.8	14.1	13.3
Furniture, home furnishings stores.....	4.9	4.9	11.2	10.9	Florists.....	22.8	27.9	-	-
Furniture stores.....	4.7	4.7	6.7	6.5	Fuel and ice dealers.....	16.1	13.1	11.8	12.0
Household appliance, radio stores.....	6.5	6.6	5.4	5.3	Book and stationery stores.....	6.0	6.1	n.a.	n.a.
Household appliance dealers.....	6.2	6.2	5.1	5.0					

¹ Revised. n.a. Not available. ² Based on only those firms in business the full calendar year. ³ Withheld to avoid possible disclosure.
² Based on store inventories only (warehouse inventories are excluded).
 Note: Group ratios include data for kinds of business not shown separately.

Table 4.—NUMBER OF RETAIL STORES IN OPERATION ON DECEMBER 31, 1953, AND DECEMBER 31, 1948, BY KIND OF BUSINESS—UNITED STATES

Estimates of total number and number in organizations operating 11 or more stores

Kind of business	Number of retail stores			
	December 31, 1953		December 31, 1948	
	Total	Stores of organizations ¹ operating 11 or more stores	Total	Stores of organizations operating 11 or more stores ²
United States, total.....	1,747,850	78,771	1,769,540	80,959
Food group.....	456,409	23,083	504,439	28,011
Grocery stores.....	358,336	17,432	377,939	22,550
Eating and drinking places.....	340,853	4,225	346,556	4,127
Eating places.....	186,275	4,096	194,123	3,988
Drinking places.....	154,578	129	152,433	139
General merchandise group.....	70,658	11,368	74,101	11,077
Department stores, including mail order....	2,658	1,483	2,540	1,407
Variety stores.....	(²)	6,573	20,210	6,413
Apparel group.....	115,157	11,202	115,246	9,757
Women's apparel, accessory stores.....	47,655	4,135	46,508	3,554
Women's ready-to-wear stores.....	34,059	2,761	30,677	2,265
Shoe stores.....	21,765	5,179	19,551	4,391
Furniture and appliance group.....	93,797	5,281	85,585	4,279
Furniture, home furnishings stores.....	52,711	892	48,654	683
Furniture stores.....	28,745	454	29,031	265
Household appliance, radio stores.....	41,086	4,389	36,931	3,596
Household appliance dealers.....	28,455	4,295	29,700	3,545
Lumber, building, hardware group.....	107,370	5,860	98,938	5,445
Building materials dealers, plumbing, electrical stores.....	49,952	4,906	46,649	4,588
Lumber yards, building materials dealers.....	27,694	3,353	26,110	3,483
Hardware stores.....	36,664	888	34,674	810
Automotive group.....	81,321	3,065	86,162	3,061
Motor vehicle, other automotive dealers.....	65,983	n.a.	65,534	34
Motor vehicle dealers.....	61,820	n.a.	60,873	18
Tire, battery, accessory dealers.....	(²)	3,018	20,627	3,027
Gasoline service stations.....	201,444	n.a.	188,253	4,208
Other retail stores.....	280,841	10,882	270,260	10,994
Drug and proprietary stores.....	58,980	2,554	55,796	2,749
Drug stores.....	51,549	2,093	46,955	2,569

n.a. Not available. ¹ Includes only those organizations which operated 11 or more retail stores in 1948.
² Not shown because of high sampling variability.

Table 4A.—SAMPLING VARIABILITIES FOR ESTIMATES* OF THE NUMBER OF RETAIL STORES

Kind of business	Sampling variability (percent)	Kind of business	Sampling variability (percent)	Kind of business	Sampling variability (percent)
United States, total.....	1	Apparel group—Continued		Lumber, building, hardware group—Con.	
Food group.....	3	Shoe stores.....	5	Hardware stores.....	4
Grocery stores.....	1	Furniture and appliance group.....	3	Automotive group.....	3
Eating and drinking places.....	3	Furniture, home furnishings stores.....	4	Motor vehicle, other automotive dealers.....	4
Eating places.....	2	Household appliance, radio stores.....	4	Motor vehicle dealers.....	4
Drinking places.....	4	Household appliance dealers.....	4	Motor vehicle dealers (new and used cars).....	5
General merchandise group.....	5	Lumber, building, hardware group.....	3	Gasoline service stations.....	3
Department stores, including mail order.....	3	Building materials dealers, plumbing, electrical stores.....	4	Other retail stores.....	2
Apparel group.....	3	Lumber yards, building materials dealers.....	5	Drug and proprietary stores.....	3
Women's apparel, accessory stores.....	4			Drug stores.....	3
Women's ready-to-wear stores.....	5				

* Sampling variabilities apply to estimates of the total number of retail establishments shown in table 4, column 1, above.

Table 5.—ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE OF RETAIL STORES BY KIND OF BUSINESS—UNITED STATES: DECEMBER 31, 1953, AND DECEMBER 31, 1952
 Estimated volume of charge account and installment account receivables of all retail stores and organizations operating 11 or more stores
 (Thousands of dollars)

Kind of business	Accounts receivable as of December 31						
	Total			Charge account		Installment	
	1953	1952 ^r	Percentage change Dec. 31, 1953 from Dec. 31, 1952	1953	1952 ^r	1953	1952 ^r
ALL RETAIL STORES							
United States, total.....	10,528,945	10,021,765	+5	6,263,742	6,045,314	4,265,203	3,976,451
Food group.....	532,717	481,173	+11	514,511	465,710	18,206	15,463
Grocery stores.....	372,216	326,941	+14	363,014	317,056	9,202	9,885
Eating and drinking places.....	30,362	29,362	+17	30,362	25,916	-	-
General merchandise group.....	2,313,921	2,270,799	+2	1,114,381	999,166	1,199,540	1,271,633
Department stores, including mail order.....	2,042,552	2,025,145	+1	936,341	839,933	1,106,211	1,185,212
Mail order (catalog sales).....	210,616	209,735	0	3,314	5,628	207,302	204,107
Other general merchandise stores.....	252,568	229,065	+10	173,564	153,751	79,004	75,314
Dry goods and general merchandise stores.....	152,823	139,289	+10	95,056	90,755	57,767	48,534
Apparel group.....	756,073	742,381	+2	612,265	583,037	143,808	159,344
Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	148,999	149,967	-1	137,086	131,002	17,913	18,965
Women's ready-to-wear stores.....	316,820	302,681	+5	277,425	255,293	39,395	47,388
Family clothing stores.....	203,157	204,866	-1	130,118	126,988	73,039	77,878
Shoe stores.....	23,164	23,576	-2	22,186	22,549	978	1,027
Furniture and appliance group.....	2,046,403	1,931,608	+6	666,139	660,067	1,380,264	1,271,541
Furniture, home furnishings stores.....	1,457,613	1,423,139	+2	449,180	449,921	1,009,433	973,218
Furniture stores.....	1,343,950	1,314,260	+2	381,443	386,333	962,507	927,927
Household appliance, radio stores.....	588,790	508,469	+16	217,959	210,146	370,831	298,323
Household appliance dealers.....	519,542	439,904	+18	168,138	162,124	351,404	277,780
Lumber, building, hardware group.....	1,569,086	1,581,440	-1	1,353,539	1,358,463	215,547	222,977
Building materials dealers, electrical, plumbing stores.....	1,021,483	1,021,802	0	977,647	985,244	43,836	36,558
Lumber yards, building materials dealers.....	851,225	852,910	0	817,085	823,233	34,140	29,677
Hardware stores.....	249,857	259,036	-4	164,141	162,679	85,716	96,357
Farm equipment dealers.....	297,746	300,602	-1	211,751	210,540	85,995	90,062
Automotive group.....	1,378,654	1,229,005	+12	604,024	643,469	774,630	585,536
Motor vehicles, other automotive dealers.....	1,094,488	969,639	+13	511,539	552,899	582,949	416,740
Motor vehicle dealers.....	1,060,126	948,486	+12	491,931	540,152	568,195	408,334
Tire, battery, accessory dealers.....	284,166	259,366	+10	92,485	90,570	191,681	168,796
Gasoline service stations.....	304,833	256,014	+19	292,663	242,813	12,170	13,201
Other retail stores.....	1,596,896	1,503,429	+6	1,075,858	1,066,673	521,038	436,756
Drug and proprietary stores.....	71,432	65,079	+10	69,678	64,296	1,754	783
Drug stores.....	69,498	62,388	+11	67,744	61,573	1,754	815
Jewelry stores.....	376,604	353,236	+7	90,342	97,571	286,262	255,665
Feed, farm, and garden supply stores.....	343,078	335,730	+2	333,540	331,887	9,538	3,843
STORES OF ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING 11 OR MORE STORES							
United States, total.....	1,726,023	1,775,356	-3	405,004	404,156	1,321,019	1,371,200
Food group.....	49,161	46,820	+5	41,076	39,610	8,085	7,210
Grocery stores.....	11,216	11,105	+1	10,471	10,484	745	621
Eating and drinking places.....	5,667	5,247	+8	5,667	5,247	-	-
General merchandise group.....	760,695	853,815	-11	92,816	97,832	667,879	755,983
Department stores, including mail order.....	718,494	815,033	-12	85,821	91,072	632,673	723,961
Mail order (catalog sales).....	210,616	209,735	0	3,314	5,628	207,302	204,107
Other general merchandise stores.....	26,977	27,249	-1	5,967	6,022	21,010	21,227
Dry goods and general merchandise stores.....	15,616	15,771	-1	1,691	1,577	13,925	14,197
Apparel group.....	91,307	94,606	-3	55,666	54,727	35,641	39,879
Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	10,593	9,211	+15	6,038	5,250	4,555	3,961
Women's ready-to-wear stores.....	27,525	32,086	-14	12,202	12,417	15,323	19,669
Family clothing stores.....	50,382	50,891	-1	34,865	34,911	15,517	15,980
Furniture and appliance group.....	274,979	253,779	+8	15,179	15,924	259,800	237,855
Furniture, home furnishings stores.....	129,070	129,070	0	8,894	9,938	119,176	119,132
Furniture stores.....	104,743	105,801	-1	6,701	6,877	98,042	98,924
Household appliance, radio stores.....	145,909	124,709	+17	6,285	5,986	139,624	118,723
Household appliance dealers.....	142,394	121,704	+17	(¹)	(¹)	(¹)	(¹)
Lumber, building, hardware group.....	152,649	170,625	-11	101,130	101,378	51,519	69,247
Building materials dealers, electrical, plumbing stores.....	100,903	100,903	0	95,954	95,656	4,949	5,247
Lumber yards, building materials dealers.....	86,281	87,153	-1	83,157	84,277	3,124	2,876
Hardware stores.....	49,720	67,189	-26	(¹)	(¹)	(¹)	(¹)
Automotive group.....	(¹)	(¹)	(¹)	(¹)	(¹)	148,126	122,695
Tire, battery, accessory dealers.....	174,015	147,470	+18	25,889	24,775	148,126	122,695
Other retail stores.....	207,194	195,466	+6	58,003	57,858	149,191	137,608
Jewelry stores.....	39,998	39,602	+1	263	277	39,735	39,325

^r Revised. ¹ Withheld to avoid possible disclosure.
 Note: Group totals may include data for kinds of business not shown separately and may not agree with addition of detail, due to rounding.

Table 5A.—SAMPLING VARIABILITIES FOR DOLLAR VOLUME ESTIMATES* OF RETAIL STORE RECEIVABLES

Kind of business	Sampling variability (percent)	Kind of business	Sampling variability (percent)	Kind of business	Sampling variability (percent)
United States, total.....	2	Apparel group—Continued		Lumber, building, hardware group—Con.	
Food group.....	5	Women's ready-to-wear stores.....	9	Hardware stores.....	6
Grocery stores.....	5	Family clothing stores.....	12	Farm equipment dealers.....	10
Eating and drinking places.....	12	Shoe stores.....	13	Automotive group.....	9
General merchandise group.....	2	Furniture and appliance group.....	6	Motor vehicle, other automotive dealers.....	11
Department stores, (including mail order).....	2	Furniture, home furnishings stores	7	Motor vehicle dealers.....	11
Mail order (catalog sales).....	0	Furniture stores.....	8	Tire, battery, accessory dealers.....	5
Other general merchandise stores..	10	Household appliance, radio stores.	8	Gasoline service stations.....	5
Dry goods and general merchandise stores.....	14	Household appliance dealers.....	10	Other retail stores.....	5
Apparel group.....	4	Lumber, building, hardware group....	5	Drug and proprietary stores.....	10
Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	11	Building materials dealers,		Drug stores.....	9
plumbing, electrical stores.....	6	Lumber yards, building materials		Jewelry stores.....	15
dealers.....	7	dealers.....	7	Feed, farm, and garden supply stores	13

* Sampling variabilities apply to estimates for all retail stores, total, in table 5 above. Variabilities for percentage changes in receivables have not been evaluated but in general should be significantly smaller than those shown in this table for dollar volume estimates.

SAMPLE DESIGN AND RELIABILITY OF DATA

Sample design

The data in this Annual Retail Trade Report are based on a sample representing all sizes of retail stores, forms of retail organizations, and kinds of retail business throughout the United States. The sample is the same probability sample used by the Bureau of the Census to produce monthly estimates of sales of retail stores which are published in the Monthly Retail Trade Report. The sample of retail establishments consists of the following:

I. All large organizations, i.e., those which in the 1948 Census of Business were reported as operating 11 or more retail stores in the United States, regardless of location. These organizations report the combined sales of their retail stores. Also all department stores with 1948 sales volume in excess of 5 million dollars are included, regardless of location in the United States.

II. All remaining retail stores are represented by stores located in 230 Census Sample Areas. These Census Sample Areas, generally consisting of combinations of two or three counties, were chosen randomly (with known probability of selection), one from each of 230 primary strata. Within these 230 Census Sample Areas the sample consists of--

A. All "large" stores, i.e., stores of organizations which operated 1 to 10 retail stores whose annual sales in 1948 exceeded a designated amount, the amount varying by kind of business and by Census Sample Area. (At the time of their selection, these "large" stores were the largest in their kind of business in their immediate locality. Since the Census Sample Areas vary in size from the largest metropolitan areas to the smallest rural areas, the size criterion for selection of "large" stores also varies widely.) "Large" stores also include those stores which, according to records of the Bureau of Old Age and Survivors Insurance, were established between 1948 and March 1951 and whose payroll for the first quarter 1951 as reported to that Bureau, when converted to annual sales, exceeded the size criterion established for "large" stores.

B. "Small" stores, i.e., all stores other than those described above which on personal enumeration were found to be located in a sample of land segments selected at random within the Census Sample Areas. (The enumeration of these land segments accounts not only for small retail stores, but for new stores, regardless of size, which have come into existence subsequent to the establishment of the sample.) This sample of land segments, after selection, was randomly divided into 12 groups, each group having the same number of segments. For purposes of the Census Bureau's Monthly Retail Trade Report, group 1 is regularly enumerated each January; group 2, each February; and group 12, each December. For this Annual Retail Trade Report, the "small" store or "area sample" portion of the sample contained three such groups of segments; those regularly enumerated in the monthly sales survey for the report months of December, January, and February.

Comparison of sample designs for 1953 and 1952 surveys

The 1952 Annual Retail Trade Report was based on a somewhat smaller sample of retail establishments, although similar in type, than that described above for the 1953 Annual Retail Trade Report. The 1952 Annual Survey sample design differed from that for 1953 in that (1) there were only 68 Census Sample Areas and (2) firms operating 11-25 stores in 1948 were sampled, i.e., only those 11-25 store firms whose central office or headquarters was located in one of the 68 Census Sample Areas were included in the sample. A comparison of the size of the 68 Sample Area design with the 230 Sample Area design in terms of number of retail stores is shown below:

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF RETAIL STORES IN ANNUAL RETAIL TRADE REPORT

Sample design	Total	Organization reporters (11-or-more store firms)	"Large" store reporters	"Small" store reporters
68 areas (1952 survey)....	103,000	73,000	20,000	10,000
230 areas (1953 survey)...	122,500	80,000	18,000	24,000

Revisions of 1952 inventories and receivables estimates

Inventories and receivables estimates for year-end 1952 published in the Annual Retail Trade Report for that year have been revised because they were based on a different sample from that for the 1953 Annual Retail Trade Report. The 1952 data have been revised to enable direct comparisons between those data and the estimates for 1953. The revision was made by computing composite estimates for 1952, using an optimum combination of the 1953/1952 changes reported in the 1953 survey and the level of the 1952 estimates from the survey for that year.

Revisions have been made in the inventories figures for stores and warehouses of organizations operating 11 or more stores because 1953 reports from these firms contained corrected data for year-end 1952. In a number of cases on the 1952 report, total inventories (stores and warehouses combined) had been reported inadvertently in place of store inventories.

Reliability of the data

Because the estimates obtained are based on a sample, exact agreement is not expected with the results that would be obtained from a complete census of retail stores in which the same enumeration procedures were used. However, because every retail store in the United States has had a chance of being selected for the sample, and because the probability of selection for each store in the sample is known, it is possible to determine the sampling variabilities of the estimates made from the sample.

Approximate measures of the differences which arise from sampling for the 1953 estimates of regional sales, merchandise inventories, number of retail stores, and receivables are shown in tables 1A, 2A, 4A, and 5A of this report. The sampling variabilities in those tables refer only to the 1953 estimates for all retail stores in tables 1, 2, 4, and 5. The measures of sampling variability have been computed at the one sigma level. At this level, the chances are two out of three that the 1953 quantities estimated in this survey would differ from the results of a complete census by less than the percentages shown. Sampling variabilities for the revised 1952 data in this report are unknown but probably are not larger than those shown in the Annual Report for that year. Sampling variabilities for the dollar volume of merchandise inventories in retail stores of organizations with four or more stores have not been computed but in general are believed to be smaller than those for all retail stores.

Since the 1953 data in this report for stores of organizations operating 11 or more stores are not based on a sample, they are not subject to sampling variability.

Measures of sampling variability shown in tables 1A, 2A, 4A, and 5A of this report do not include biases which might arise from differences of response or nonreporting. However, the nonreporting bias is probably small since less than 5 percent of any total estimate (merchandise inventories, sales by Census region, or receivables) was imputed because of nonresponse.

EXPLANATION OF TERMS

Retail trade

Retail Trade includes those establishments primarily engaged in selling merchandise for personal, household, or farm consumption. Some of the important characteristics of retail trade establishments are: The establishment is a recognizable place of business and is engaged in activities to attract the general public to buy; the establishment buys or receives merchandise as well as sells; the establishment renders services or processes only incidental or subordinate to selling; the establishment is considered retail by the trade. Not all of these characteristics need be present, and some are modified by trade practice. Excluded from Retail Trade are peddlers and itinerant vendors without an established place of business. Also excluded are places of business operated by institutions and open only to their own members or personnel, such as restaurants and bars operated by country clubs, school cafeterias, cafeterias operated by industrial plants for their employees, and establishments operated by agencies of the Federal Government on military posts, at hospitals, etc.

Retail stores

These are separate places of business primarily engaged in selling merchandise at retail. In addition to those kinds of business readily recognizable as retail stores, such as grocery stores and drug stores, the term retail stores also includes eating and drinking places, milk dealers, gasoline service stations, lumber yards, coal yards, mail-order houses, establishments from which direct selling (house-to-house) is conducted, and establishments which sell merchandise through coin-operated vending machines. Stores with annual sales of less than \$500 during the year 1953 were excluded from the tabulations for this Annual Retail Trade Report.

Warehouses of firms operating 11 or more stores

These are locations of 11 or more stores firms which maintain a supply of merchandise and are primarily engaged in distributing that merchandise to retail stores within their own organization.

Merchandise inventories

Merchandise inventories in retail stores are the cost value of stocks of goods held for sale in the stores. Merchandise inventories in warehouses represent the cost value of goods which are held primarily for distribution to retail stores within a firm's own organization

Merchandise inventories do not include the value of fixtures, furnishings, equipment, and supplies used in store and warehouse operations and not held for resale. Inventories were reported as of the close of the calendar years, except for some businesses which used a fiscal year rather than the calendar year for accounting purposes. Data so reported have been accepted and included in the tabulations without adjustment.

Sales

Sales include total receipts from customers during the year, after deduction of refunds and allowances for merchandise returned by customers. Sales include receipts from repairs and from other services to customers; sales for resale; sales taxes and excise taxes; and financing charges. The sales figures represent total sales and receipts of all establishments primarily engaged in retail trade. They do not include sales at retail by manufacturers, wholesalers, service establishments, and other businesses whose primary activity is other than retail trade.

Sales-inventory ratio

This is the relationship of annual sales to December 31 inventories. The ratio is derived by dividing the cost value of year-end inventories by annual sales. This sales-inventory ratio is based on data for only those stores in operation throughout the full year except for the ratios for organizations with 11 or more stores which are derived from annual sales figures containing sales of some stores not in operation the full year. Ratios for organizations with 11 or more stores are based on store inventories only and do not include warehouse inventories.

Accounts receivable

These are balances due from customers resulting from credit sales. They are shown as receivables outstanding as of the end of the year. Receivables against which the firm may have borrowed are included. However, credit paper discounted or sold to others and accounts actually charged off as bad debts are excluded.

Charge account receivables--

These are receivables outstanding for which full payment was scheduled to be made at the end of the customary billing period.

Installment account receivables--

These are receivables outstanding for which payment was scheduled to be paid in two or more parts.

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