

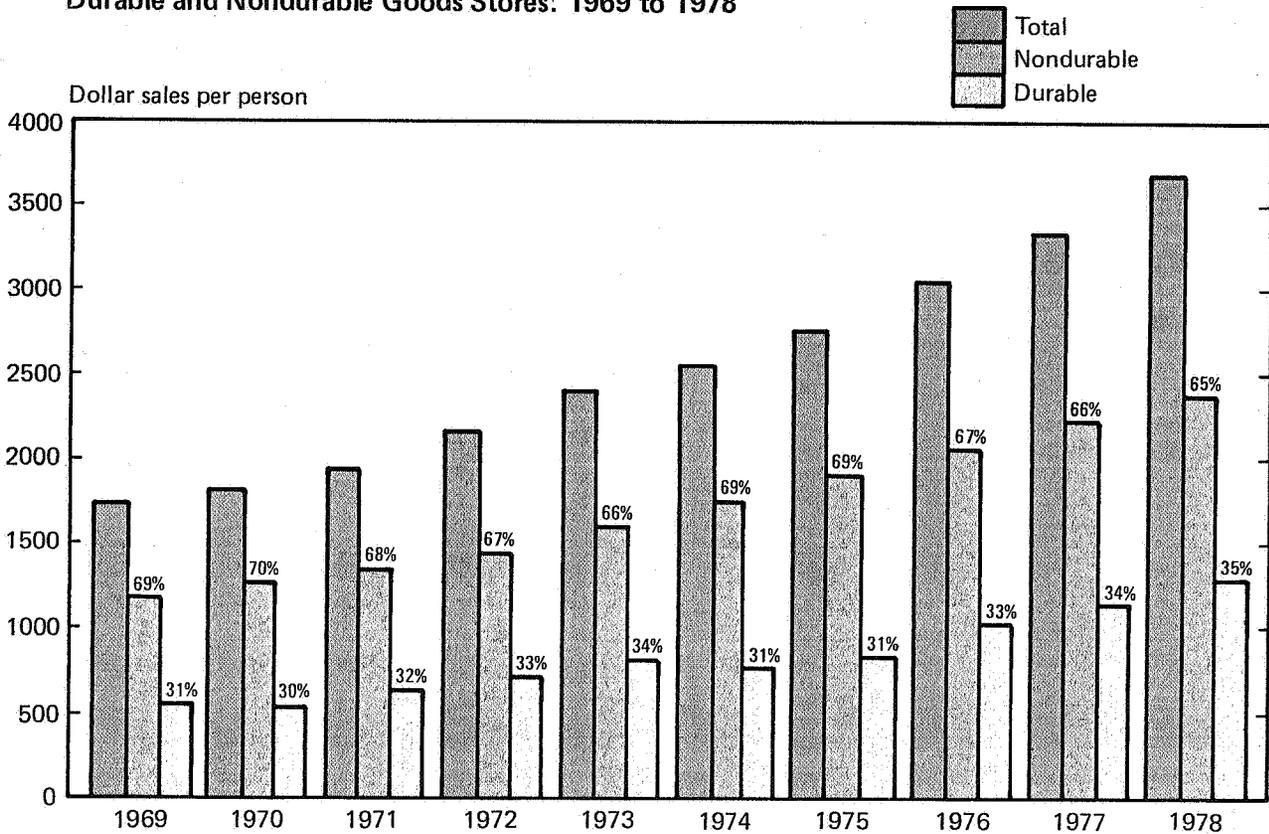
CURRENT
BUSINESS
REPORTS

**1978
Retail
Trade**

**Annual Sales, Year-
End Inventories
and Accounts
Receivable by Kind
of Retail Store**

BR-78-13

**Estimated Per Capita Sales of All Retail Stores and of
Durable and Nondurable Goods Stores: 1969 to 1978**



Note: Sales estimates are not adjusted for price changes.

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Annual Retail Trade Survey and Current Population Report, Series P-25, No. 802, May 1978 and No. 865, Oct. 1979

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Issued April 1980



U.S. Department of Commerce
Philip M. Klutznick, Secretary
Courtenay M. Slater, Chief Economist

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
Vincent P. Barabba, Director



BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

Vincent P. Barabba, Director

Daniel B. Levine, Deputy Director

Shirley Kallek, Associate Director for Economic Fields

Business Division

Tyler R. Sturdevant, Chief

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Inquiries concerning this report should be addressed to Mr. Irving True, Business Division, Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233. Telephone (301) 763-7660/7661.

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ANNUAL SALES

Year-to-Year Comparison

Sales of all retail stores in the United States were estimated at \$801 billion in 1978, an increase of 10 percent over 1977 sales. Sales of nondurable goods stores increased 9 percent over the previous year, while durable goods stores showed a 13 percent increase.

All major kinds of business showed percentage increases in comparison with 1977 levels. General merchandise groups stores showed a 12 percent increase and apparel and accessory stores had an 11 percent increase. Food stores and eating and drinking places each showed a 9 percent increase. Following the general upward trend were drug stores and proprietary stores, 7 percent; liquor stores, 6 percent; and gasoline service stations, 5 percent. In the durable goods category, building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home

dealers showed an 18 percent increase while automotive dealers were up 12 percent. Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores showed an 11 percent increase.

Annual sales of organizations operating 11 or more retail stores increased 12 percent over 1977 for all kinds of business. A sales gain for 11 percent was shown by nondurable goods stores, while sales of durable goods stores showed a gain of 17 percent. In the durable goods category, auto and home supply stores increased 18 percent compared with 1977. In the nondurable goods category, the largest increase (18 percent) was reported by eating places. General merchandise group stores, apparel and accessory stores, and drug stores and proprietary stores each showed a 12 percent increase. Food stores showed a 10 percent increase over the previous year.

Table 1. Estimated Sales of All Retail Stores in the United States, by Kind of Business: 1978 and 1977

(Millions of dollars)

1972 SIC code	Kind of business	1978	1977 ¹	Percent change	1972 SIC code	Kind of business	1978	1977 ¹	Percent change
	Retail trade, total.....	800,890	725,220	+10		Nondurable goods stores, total	519,399	476,528	+9
	Total (excluding automotive group).....	632,855	575,268	+10	53	General merchandise group stores....	101,240	90,686	+12
	Durable goods stores, total...	281,491	248,692	+13	531	Department stores, miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	93,881	83,591	+12
					539	Department stores.....	81,850	73,647	+11
					533	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	12,031	9,944	+21
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	45,892	38,860	+18	54	Variety stores.....	7,359	7,095	+4
521,3,5	Building materials, supply, hardware stores.....	38,822	33,214	+17	541	Food stores.....	171,997	157,941	+9
521,3	Building materials and supply stores.....	31,645	27,127	+17	546	Grocery stores.....	160,506	147,759	+9
525	Hardware stores.....	7,177	6,087	+18	554	Retail bakeries.....	2,520	2,300	+10
					56	Gasoline service stations.....	59,270	56,468	+5
					561	Apparel and accessory stores.....	39,413	35,565	+11
					5623,8	Men's, boys' clothing, furnishings stores.....	8,127	6,943	+17
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	168,035	149,952	+12	562	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	14,751	13,458	+10
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	153,917	137,091	+12	565	Women's ready-to-wear stores....	13,657	12,444	+10
551,2	Motor vehicle dealers.....	144,138	128,828	+12	566	Family clothing stores.....	8,516	8,055	+6
551	Motor vehicle dealers (franchised).....	137,166	121,883	+13	58	Shoe stores.....	6,387	5,650	+13
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	14,118	12,861	+10	5812	Eating and drinking places.....	69,145	63,276	+9
					5812(pt.)	Eating places.....	61,185	55,581	+10
					5813	Restaurants, lunchrooms, cafeterias.....	38,380	33,963	+13
57	Furniture, home furnishings, equipment stores.....	36,719	33,176	+11	5813	Refreshment places.....	22,214	20,886	+6
571	Furniture and home furnishings stores.....	23,175	20,315	+14	591	Drinking places (alcoholic beverages).....	7,960	7,695	+3
5712	Furniture stores.....	16,215	14,060	+15	592	Drug stores and proprietary stores..	24,787	23,196	+7
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores.....	10,476	10,001	+5	596	Liquor stores.....	13,764	12,967	+6
5722	Household appliance stores.....	5,268	4,734	+11	5961(pt.)	Nonstore retailers ²	21,911	19,788	+11
5944	Jewelry stores.....	6,187	5,429	+14	594	Mail order houses (department store merchandise) ³	7,050	6,765	+4
						GAF ⁴ , total.....	201,890	180,309	+12

Note: Measures of sampling variability are shown in table 13. U.S. and group totals include kinds of business not shown separately.

¹The 1977 sales were taken from the 1977 Census of Retail Trade after adjusting the census levels to include the estimated sales of nonemployer direct sellers, and the different allocation of catalog desk sales made in department stores. ²Includes establishments primarily selling merchandise through coin-operated vending machines, by house-to-house canvass, and from mail order. ³Includes sales made by mail-order catalog desks located within department stores of some mail-order firms. ⁴GAF represents stores which specialize in department store types of merchandise (see explanatory material on page 13.)

Table 2. Estimated Retail Sales of Group II Companies by Kind of Business for the United States: 1978 and 1977

(Millions of dollars)

1972 SIC code	Kind of business	1978	1977	Percent change	1972 SIC code	Kind of business	1978	1977	Percent change
	Retail trade, total.....	272,187	243,996	+12		Nondurable goods stores,--- Continued			
	Durable goods stores, total..	20,189	17,283	+17	54	Food stores.....	92,861	84,303	+10
553	Automotive and home supply stores..	3,119	2,636	+18	541	Grocery stores.....	91,811	83,209	+10
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	251,998	226,713	+11	56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	13,231	11,785	+12
53	General merchandise group stores...	89,213	79,897	+12	562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	5,568	4,921	+13
531	Department stores.....	76,152	68,403	+13	562	Women's ready-to-wear stores...	5,381	4,760	+13
533	Variety stores.....	6,164	5,837	+6	565	Family clothing stores.....	3,055	2,752	+11
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	6,897	5,657	+22	566	Shoe stores.....	3,178	2,802	+13
					5812	Eating places.....	14,266	12,078	+18
					591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.	12,065	10,745	+12

Note: The Group II component of the sample consists of companies which had 11 or more retail establishments according to the most recent update of multiestablishment files and which were selected with certainty (i.e., their sales size exceeded specified dollar volume cut offs which varied by kind of business). Group totals include kinds of business not shown separately.

FIGURE 1. Estimated Sales of All Retail Stores in the United States, by selected Kinds of Business: 1978 and 1977

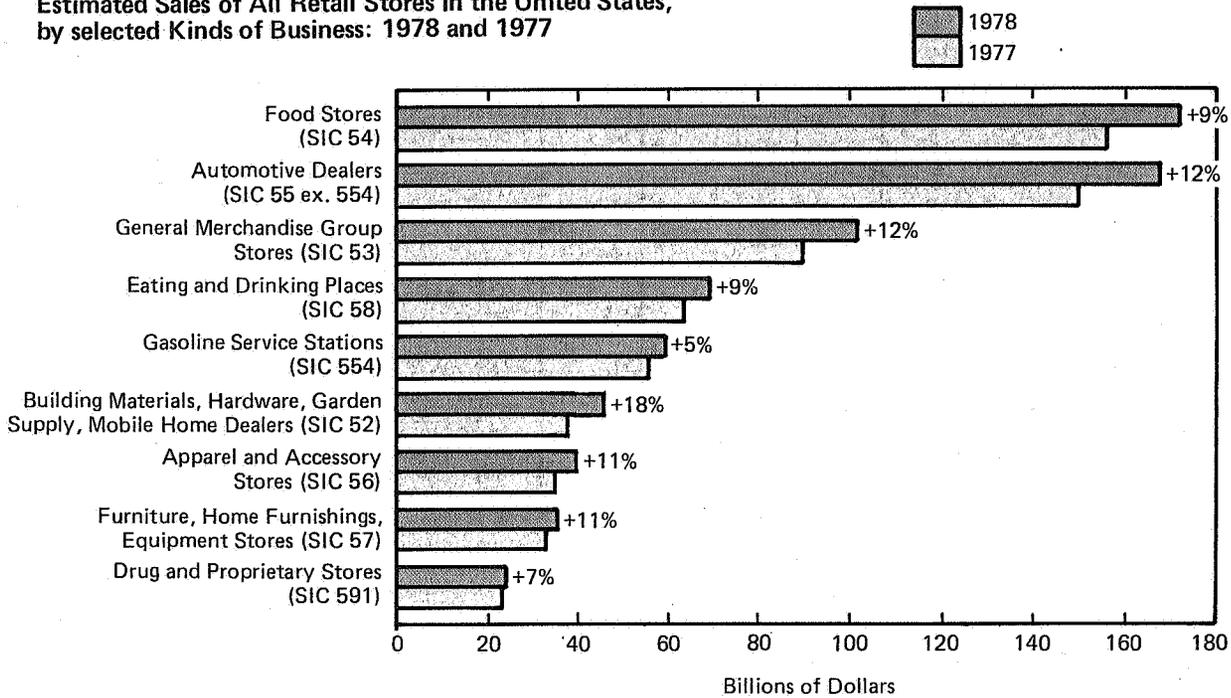


Table 3. Estimated Sales Taxes as a Percent of Sales of All Retail Stores in the United States, by Kind of Business: 1978

1972 SIC code	Kind of business	1978 sales tax (percent)	1972 SIC code	Kind of business	1978 sales tax (percent)
	Retail trade, total.....	3.1		Nondurable goods stores, total.....	3.1
	Total (excluding automotive group).....	3.3	53 531,9	General merchandise group stores.....	4.3
	Durable goods stores, total.....	3.1	531 539 533	Department stores, miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	4.2
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	3.7	54 541	Department stores.....	4.3
521,3,5, 521,3 525	Building materials, supply, hardware stores... Building material and supply stores..... Hardware stores.....	3.8 3.7 4.3	546 554 56	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.... Variety stores.....	3.7 4.4
55 ex. 554 551,2,5, 6,7,9 551,2 551 553	Automotive dealers..... Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers..... Motor vehicle dealers..... Motor vehicle dealers (franchised)..... Auto and home supply stores.....	2.6 2.5 2.5 2.5 3.4	561 562,3,8 562 565 566	Food stores..... Grocery stores..... Retail bakeries..... Gasoline service stations..... Apparel and accessory stores..... Men's, boys' clothing, furnishings stores.... Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.. Women's ready-to-wear stores..... Family clothing stores..... Shoe stores.....	2.1 2.1 1.8 2.2 3.9 4.4 3.9 3.9 4.1 3.7
57 571 5712 5722,32 5722	Furniture, home furnishings, equipment stores... Furniture and home furnishing stores..... Furniture stores..... Household appliance, radio and TV stores..... Household appliance stores.....	4.1 4.1 4.3 4.2 4.1	58 5812 5812(pt.) 5813 591 592	Eating and drinking places..... Eating places..... Restaurants, lunchrooms, cafeterias..... Refreshment places..... Drinking places (alcoholic beverages)..... Drug stores and proprietary stores..... Liquor stores.....	4.3 4.3 4.4 4.4 3.6 2.9 4.1
5944	Jewelry stores.....	4.3	596 5961(pt.) 53,56, 57,594	Nonstore retailers..... Mail order houses (department store merchandise)..... GAF, total.....	3.1 3.7 4.2

Table 4. Estimated Receipts for Carrying Charges or Other Charges for Credit as a Percent of Sales of All Retail Stores in the United States, by Kind of Business: 1978

1972 SIC code	Kind of business	1978 carrying charge (percent)	1972 SIC code	Kind of business	1978 carrying charge (percent)
	Retail trade, total.....	0.5		Nondurable goods stores, total.....	0.6
	Total (excluding automotive group).....	0.6	53 531,9	General merchandise group stores.....	2.2
	Durable goods stores, total.....	0.4	531 539	Department stores, miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	2.4
525	Hardware stores.....	0.6	539	Department stores.....	2.6
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	1.3	56 562,3,8	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	1.0
57 571 5712 5722,32 5722	Furniture, home furnishings, equipment stores..... Furniture and home furnishings stores..... Furniture stores..... Household appliance, radio and TV stores..... Household appliance stores.....	1.0 1.2 1.7 0.6 0.8	56 562 565 5961(pt.) 53,56, 57,594	Apparel and accessory stores..... Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.... Women's ready-to-wear stores..... Family clothing stores..... Mail order houses (department store merchandise)....	0.5 0.6 0.6 1.0 6.2
5944	Jewelry stores.....	1.0		GAF, total.....	1.4

Note: Kinds of business not shown separately were less than 0.5%.

Table 5. Estimates of Civilian Population, Retail Sales, and Per Capita Sales in the United States: 1969-1978

Year	Civilian population estimates ¹ as of July 1 (thousands)	Retail sales		Durable goods stores		Nondurable goods stores	
		Total (millions of dollars)	Per capita sales (dollars)	Total (millions of dollars)	Per capita sales (dollars)	Total (millions of dollars)	Per capita sales (dollars)
1969.....	199,145	346,717	1,741	108,621	545	238,096	1,196
1970.....	201,722	368,403	1,826	109,195	541	259,208	1,285
1971.....	204,258	406,234	1,989	128,810	631	277,424	1,358
1972.....	206,461	449,069	2,175	148,427	719	300,642	1,456
1973.....	208,102	503,332	2,419	169,589	815	333,743	1,604
1974.....	209,683	536,309	2,558	167,054	797	369,255	1,761
1975.....	211,373	584,776	2,767	181,268	858	403,508	1,909
1976.....	213,011	655,163	3,076	216,881	1,018	438,282	2,058
1977.....	214,729	725,220	3,377	248,692	1,158	476,528	2,219
1978.....	216,439	800,890	3,700	281,491	1,300	519,399	2,400

¹U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Series, P-25, No. 802 May 1978 and No. 865 October 1979.

Table 6. Estimated Sales of All Retail Stores in the United States, by Legal Form of Ownership and Kind of Business: 1978

1972 SIC code	Kind of business	Total (millions of dollars)	Individual proprietorship (percent of total)	Partnerships (percent of total)	Corporations (percent of total)
	Retail trade, total.....	800,890	13	4	82
	Total (excluding automotive group).....	632,855	15	4	80
	Durable goods stores, total.....	281,491	10	4	86
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers...	45,892	10	5	84
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	168,035	6	3	91
57	Furniture, home furnishings, equipment stores.....	36,719	16	5	79
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	519,399	15	4	80
55	General merchandise group stores.....	101,240	1	(Z)	98
531	Department stores.....	81,850	(Z)	(Z)	99
54	Food stores.....	171,997	12	3	84
541	Grocery stores.....	160,506	11	3	85
554	Gasoline service stations.....	59,270	45	6	47
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	39,413	10	4	86
58	Eating and drinking places.....	69,145	22	7	71
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	24,787	9	3	88

Note: Total includes data for kinds of business and forms of ownership not shown separately.

(Z) The amount is less than 1 percent of all forms of ownership combined.

MERCHANDISE INVENTORIES

Merchandise on Hand

The cost of merchandise inventories in stores and warehouses of retail stores in the United States on December 31, 1978, was estimated at \$99.3 billion, or 14 percent higher than the estimate of stocks held a year ago. Of this total, \$49.5 billion represented the value of stocks of nondurable goods stores, an increase of 11 percent over 1977, and \$49.8 billion represented the value of durable goods stores, up 17 percent from a year ago.

In the durable goods category, automotive dealers showed a 15 percent increase in the value of inventory holdings from the previous year, while furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores increased 17 percent. Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers increased the value of holdings 15 percent year-to-year. In the nondurable goods category, increases from a year ago were reported by eating and drinking places, up 22 percent; general merchandise group stores and apparel and accessory stores both showing a 13 percent increase; and drug stores and proprietary stores, up 11

percent. Food stores and liquor stores each showed an 8 percent increase. Gasoline service stations increased 2 percent from 1977.

Sales-Inventory Ratio

Annual sales of all retail stores in 1978 were 8.1 times the cost of year-end inventories held in retail stores and warehouses of retail stores compared to 8.3 in 1977. The ratio of sales to year-end inventories for nondurable goods stores was 10.5 in 1978, compared to 10.7 in 1977. The ratio for durable goods stores was 5.7 in 1978 and 5.8 in 1977.

Motor vehicle dealers showed a sales-inventory ratio of 7.1 in 1978, compared with 7.3 for the preceding year. The ratio reported by grocery stores for 1978 was 16.4, up from 16.2 for 1977, and department stores at 6.2 in 1978 was unchanged from 1977. Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores decreased to 4.8 for 1978 from 5.1 for 1977, while building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers increased to 5.5 in 1978 from 5.4 in 1977.

FIGURE 2.
Total Merchandise Inventories of All Retail Stores and Warehouses
by Major Kinds of Business: End of Year 1978 and 1977

(Merchandise inventories, at cost)

All Kinds of Business

1978 Total \$99.3 Billion
1977 Total \$87.4 Billion

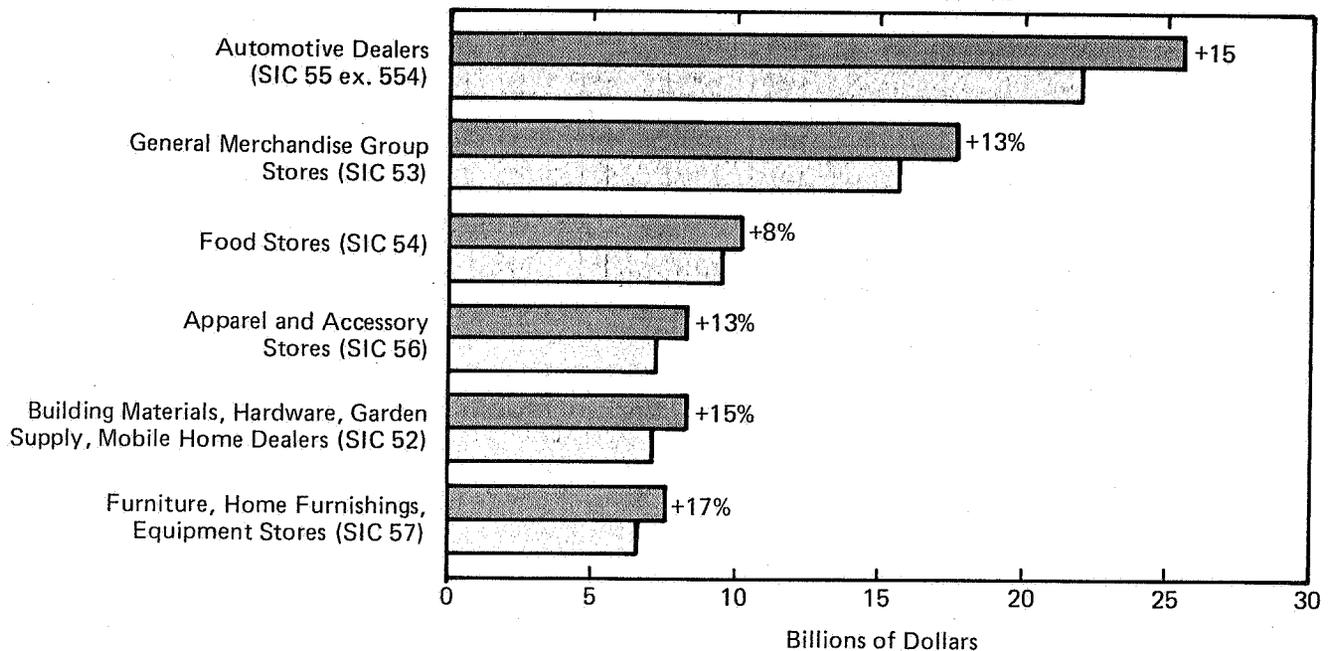


Table 7. Estimated Merchandise Inventories and Sales-Inventory Ratios of Retail Stores and Warehouses in the United States, by Kind of Business: End of Year 1978 and 1977

1972 SIC code	Kind of business	Merchandise inventories at cost ¹ (millions of dollars)						Sales-inventory ratio ²			
		Warehouses ³ and stores			Stores			Warehouses and stores		Stores	
		1978	1977 ^r	Percent change	1978	1977 ^r	Percent change	1978	1977 ^r	1978	1977 ^r
	Retail trade, total.....	99,342	87,361	+14	89,689	78,117	+15	8.1	8.3	8.9	9.3
	Total (excluding automotive group).....	73,812	65,219	+13	63,948	56,361	+13	8.6	8.8	9.9	10.2
	Durable goods stores, total.....	49,815	42,755	+17	48,289	40,630	+19	5.7	5.8	5.8	6.1
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	8,288	7,179	+15	7,717	6,703	+15	5.5	5.4	5.9	5.8
521,3,5	Building materials, supply, hardware stores..	6,726	5,992	+12	6,309	5,582	+13	5.8	5.5	6.2	6.0
521,3	Building materials and supply stores.....	4,909	4,390	+12	4,555	4,038	+13	6.4	6.2	6.9	6.7
525	Hardware stores.....	1,817	1,602	+13	1,754	1,544	+14	3.9	3.8	4.1	3.9
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	25,530	22,142	+15	25,741	21,756	+18	6.6	6.8	6.5	6.9
551,2,5, 6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	22,697	19,541	+16	23,081	19,310	+20	6.8	7.0	6.7	7.1
551,2	Motor vehicle dealers.....	20,259	17,594	+15	20,786	17,506	+19	7.1	7.3	6.9	7.4
551	Motor vehicle dealers (franchised).....	19,333	16,817	+15	19,858	16,731	+19	7.1	7.2	6.9	7.3
553	Automotive and home supply stores.....	2,833	2,601	+9	2,660	2,446	+9	5.0	4.9	5.3	5.3
57	Furniture, home furnishings, equipment stores..	7,614	6,513	+17	6,808	5,827	+17	4.8	5.1	5.4	5.7
571	Furniture and home furnishings stores.....	4,561	3,847	+19	4,110	3,488	+18	5.1	5.3	5.6	5.8
5712	Furniture stores.....	3,464	2,948	+18	3,113	2,665	+17	4.7	4.8	5.2	5.3
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores....	2,212	1,944	+14	1,892	1,644	+15	4.7	5.1	5.5	6.1
5722	Household appliance stores.....	1,022	910	+12	889	790	+13	5.2	5.2	5.9	6.0
5944	Jewelry stores.....	2,510	2,101	+19	2,418	2,035	+19	2.5	2.6	2.6	2.7
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	49,527	44,606	+11	41,400	37,487	+10	10.5	10.7	12.5	12.7
53	General merchandise group stores.....	17,766	15,673	+13	14,136	12,761	+11	5.7	5.8	7.2	7.1
531,9	Department stores, miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	15,912	14,054	+13	12,534	11,326	+11	5.9	5.9	7.5	7.4
531	Department stores.....	13,160	11,919	+10	10,158	9,452	+7	6.2	6.2	8.1	7.8
533	Variety stores.....	1,854	1,619	+15	1,602	1,435	+12	4.0	4.4	4.6	4.9
54	Food stores.....	10,209	9,474	+8	8,063	7,383	+9	16.8	16.7	21.3	21.4
541	Grocery stores.....	9,815	9,116	+8	7,693	7,058	+9	16.4	16.2	20.9	20.9
554	Gasoline service stations.....	1,870	1,839	+2	1,658	1,580	+5	31.7	30.7	35.7	35.7
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	8,328	7,340	+13	7,856	6,958	+13	4.7	4.8	5.0	5.1
561	Men's, boys' clothing, furnishings stores....	2,066	1,717	+20	1,984	1,646	+21	3.9	4.0	4.1	4.2
562	Women's ready-to-wear stores.....	2,097	1,938	+8	1,988	1,847	+8	6.5	6.4	6.9	6.7
565	Family clothing stores.....	1,839	1,702	+8	1,718	1,604	+7	4.6	4.7	5.0	5.0
566	Shoe stores.....	1,723	1,400	+23	1,568	1,290	+22	3.7	4.0	4.1	4.4
58	Eating and drinking places.....	1,846	1,508	+22	1,669	1,388	+20	37.5	42.0	41.4	45.6
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	4,195	3,789	+11	3,710	3,346	+11	5.9	6.1	6.7	6.9
592	Liquor stores.....	1,502	1,387	+8	1,333	1,236	+8	9.2	9.3	10.3	10.5
5961(pt.)	Mail order houses (department store merchandise).....	1,055	1,038	+2	773	783	-1	6.7	6.5	9.1	8.6

Note: Measures of sampling variability are shown in table 13. U.S. and group totals include kinds of business not shown separately.

^rRevised.

¹Data not adjusted for seasonal variations.

²See explanatory material on page 12 for an explanation of the method used to calculate sales-inventory ratio.

³Includes merchandise on hand in all off site locations such as warehouses, offices or in transit for distribution to retail locations.

Table 8. Estimated Merchandise Inventories and Sales-Inventory Ratios of Retail Stores and Warehouses of Group II Companies in the United States, by Kind of Business: End of Year 1978 and 1977

1972 SIC code	Kind of business	Merchandise inventories at cost ¹ (millions of dollars)						Sales-inventory ratio			
		Warehouses and stores			Stores			Warehouses and stores		Stores	
		1978	1977	Percent change	1978	1977	Percent change	1978	1977	1978	1977
	Retail trade, total.....	33,761	29,778	+13	25,462	22,634	+12	8.1	8.2	10.7	10.8
	Durable goods stores, total.....	4,768	4,014	+19	3,981	3,350	+19	4.2	4.3	5.1	5.2
553	Automotive and home supply stores.....	814	716	+14	715	629	+14	3.8	3.7	4.4	4.2
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	28,993	25,764	+13	21,481	19,284	+11	8.7	8.8	11.7	11.8
53	General merchandise group stores.....	15,376	13,628	+13	11,841	10,809	+10	5.8	5.9	7.5	7.4
531	Department stores.....	12,195	11,016	+11	9,279	8,633	+7	6.2	6.2	8.2	7.9
533	Variety stores.....	1,557	1,350	+15	1,289	1,155	+12	4.0	4.3	4.8	5.1
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	1,624	1,262	+29	1,273	1,021	+25	4.2	4.5	5.4	5.5
54	Food stores.....	5,955	5,453	+9	3,856	3,463	+11	15.6	15.5	24.1	24.3
541	Grocery stores.....	5,895	5,386	+9	3,814	3,417	+12	15.6	15.4	24.1	24.4
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	2,464	2,066	+19	2,051	1,739	+18	5.4	5.7	6.5	6.8
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	722	617	+17	617	532	+16	7.7	8.0	9.0	9.3
562	Women's ready-to-wear stores.....	675	587	+15	578	509	+14	8.0	8.1	9.3	9.4
565	Family clothing stores.....	623	535	+16	532	463	+15	4.9	5.1	5.7	5.9
566	Shoe stores.....	770	615	+25	623	503	+24	4.1	4.6	5.1	5.6
5812	Eating places.....	418	322	+30	279	234	+19	34.1	37.5	51.1	51.6
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	2,140	1,827	+17	1,687	1,412	+19	5.6	5.9	7.2	7.6

Note: U.S. and group totals include data for kinds of business not shown separately.

¹Data not adjusted for seasonal variations.

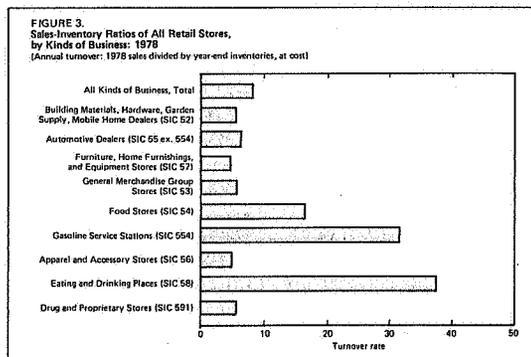


Table 9. Methods of Inventory Valuation by Kind of Business: 1978 and 1977

(Percent of estimated total store and warehouse inventory as shown in table 7)

1972 SIC code	Kind of business	Last in, first out methods ¹		All other methods		1972 SIC code	Kind of business	Last in, first out methods ¹		All other methods	
		1978	1977	1978	1977			1978	1977	1978	1977
	Retail trade, total.....	20	18	80	82		Nondurable goods stores, total.....	29	28	71	72
	Total (excluding automo- tive group).....	23	21	77	79	53 531	General merchandise group stores. Department stores.....	48 54	50 55	52 46	50 45
	Durable goods stores, total	10	9	90	91	54 541	Food stores..... Grocery stores.....	23 24	21 22	77 76	79 78
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	10	9	90	91	554	Gasoline service stations.....	10	8	90	92
55 ex 554	Automotive dealers.....	12	11	88	89	58	Apparel and accessory stores....	11	10	89	90
553	Automotive and home supply stores.....	27	27	73	73	591	Eating and drinking places.....	5	2	95	98
	Furniture, home furnishings, equipment stores.....	5	5	95	95	592 596l(pt)	Drug stores and proprietary stores Liquor stores..... Mail order houses (department store merchandise).....	27 4 49	21 3 46	73 96 51	79 97 54

¹Costs are based on the assumption that the last units placed in stock are the first to be sold. This category also includes the 'Retail' LIFO method, which estimates the purchase cost of inventory from the selling price.

Table 10. Estimated Merchandise Inventories of All Retail Stores and Warehouses by Legal Form of Ownership and Kind of Business: 1978

1972 SIC code	Kind of business	Total (millions of dollars)	Individual proprietorships (percent of total)	Partnerships (percent of total)	Corporations (percent of total)
	Retail trade, total.....	99,342	11	3	85
	Total (excluding automotive group).....	73,812	13	4	82
	Durable goods stores, total.....	49,815	12	4	84
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers...	8,288	11	6	82
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	25,530	7	3	90
57	Furniture, home furnishings, equipment stores.....	7,614	15	5	80
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	49,527	10	3	86
53	General merchandise group stores.....	17,766	2	(Z)	97
531	Department stores.....	13,160	(Z)	(Z)	99
54	Food stores.....	10,209	13	3	83
541	Grocery stores.....	9,815	13	3	83
554	Gasoline service stations.....	1,870	41	9	48
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	8,328	12	5	83
58	Eating and drinking places.....	1,846	27	5	67
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	4,195	9	3	88

Note: Totals include kinds of business and forms of ownership not shown separately.

(Z) The dollar amount is less than 1 percent of all forms of ownership combined.

ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE

Retail stores in the United States reported a total of \$37.3 billion of accounts-receivable balances owed to them by customers as of December 31, 1978. Credit balances on charge accounts and on installment accounts amounted to \$11.6 billion and \$25.7 billion, respectively, at the close of 1978.

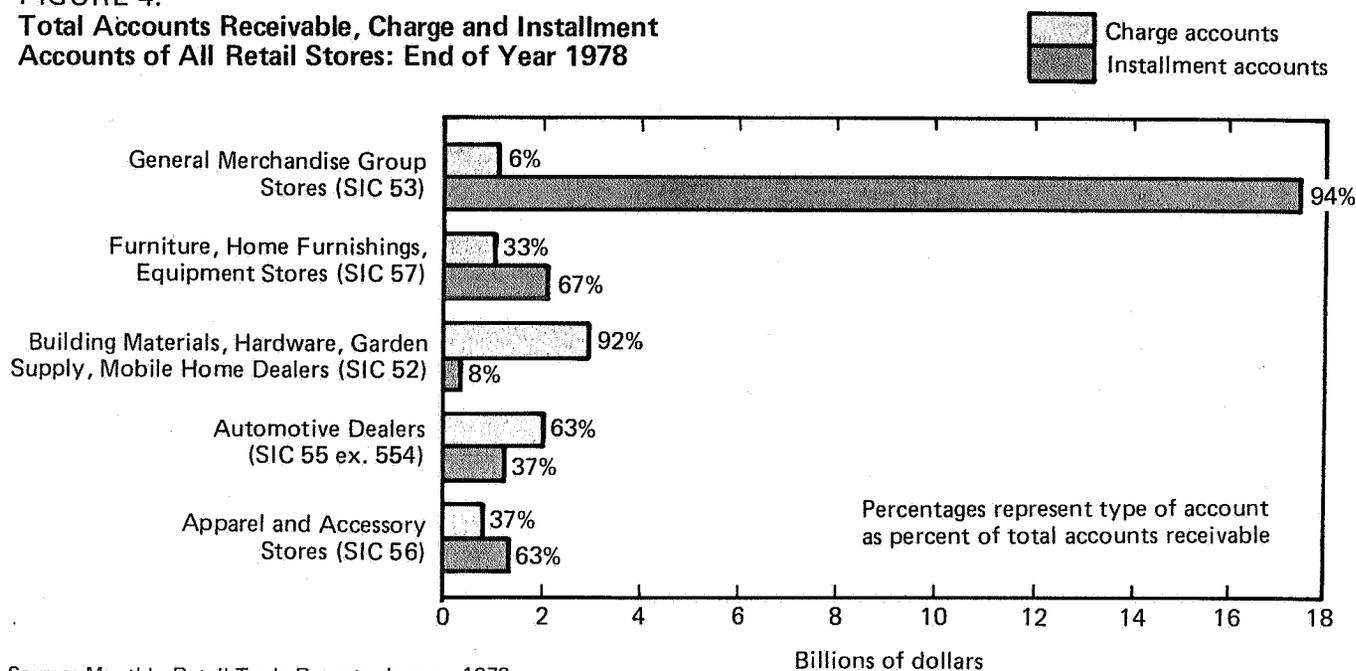
Receivable balances for nondurable goods stores amounted to \$26.4 billion in total. Department stores reported unpaid balances totaling \$17.9 billion at the end of 1978 (48 percent of the total for all retail stores) and apparel and accessory stores had \$2.1 billion unpaid balances.

Durable goods stores reported balances at \$10.9 billion. Contributing to these figures were dealers in building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers, with \$3.2 billion; automotive dealers, \$3.1 billion; and furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores, \$3.1 billion.

Approximately 94 percent of the 1978 year-end credit balances due from customers of the general merchandise group stores was on installment accounts. Installment accounts represented approximately 67 percent of total year-end 1978 outstanding balances for furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores. In contrast, the credit balances outstanding for building materials, hardware, garden supply and mobile home dealers, and gasoline service stations were predominately on charge accounts (92 percent and 88 percent, respectively). For automotive dealers, about 63 percent was outstanding due to charge accounts.

Stores of organizations operating 11 or more retail stores accounted for \$24.1 billion of total receivables at the end of 1978. Credit balances on charge accounts and on installment accounts amounted to \$2.5 billion and \$21.6 billion, respectively, at the close of 1978.

FIGURE 4.
Total Accounts Receivable, Charge and Installment
Accounts of All Retail Stores: End of Year 1978



Source: Monthly Retail Trade Reports, January 1979.

Table 11. Estimated Accounts Receivable of All Retail Stores in the United States, by Type of Account and Kind of Business:
End of Year 1978 and 1977

(Millions of dollars. Data NOT ADJUSTED for seasonal variations and holiday differences)

1972 SIC code	Kind of business	Total accounts receivable			Charge accounts			Total installment accounts			Open-end installment accounts			Closed-end installment accounts		
		1978	1977	Per- cent change	1978	1977	Per- cent change	1978	1977	Per- cent change	1978	1977	Per- cent change	1978	1977	Per- cent change
	Retail stores, total.....	37,316	34,149	+9	11,599	10,659	+9	25,717	23,490	+9	20,478	17,937	+14	5,239	5,553	-6
	Durable goods stores, total.....	10,903	10,089	+8	6,697	6,026	+11	4,206	4,063	+4	1,807	1,708	+6	2,399	2,355	+2
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	3,171	2,772	+14	2,914	2,521	+16	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
521,3	Building materials and supply stores.....	2,777	2,384	+16	2,606	2,209	+18	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
55ex.554	Automotive dealers.....	3,139	2,780	+13	1,971	1,663	+19	1,168	1,117	+5	358	294	+22	810	823	-2
551,2	Motor vehicle dealers.....	1,535	1,335	+15	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
551	Motor vehicle dealers (franchised).....	1,469	1,275	+15	1,244	1,056	+18	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
553	Automotive and home supply stores.....	1,539	1,389	+11	(S)	(S)	(S)	904	852	+6	(S)	(S)	(S)	650	642	+1
57	Furniture, home furnishings, equipment-stores.....	3,091	3,033	+2	1,008	1,031	-2	2,083	2,002	+4	825	824	0	1,258	1,178	+7
571	Furniture and home furnishings stores.....	2,325	2,262	+3	726	727	0	1,599	1,535	+4	619	615	+1	980	920	+7
5712	Furniture stores.....	2,043	1,976	+3	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, TV stores.....	620	645	-4	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
5722	Household appliance stores..	440	462	-5	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
5944	Jewelry stores.....	831	759	+9	273	272	0	558	487	+15	330	288	+15	(S)	(S)	(S)
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	26,413	24,060	+10	4,902	4,633	+6	21,511	19,427	+11	18,671	16,229	+15	2,840	3,198	-11
53	General merchandise group stores	18,610	16,695	+11	1,149	1,113	+3	17,461	15,582	+12	15,279	13,039	+17	2,182	2,543	-14
531,9	Department stores, miscel- laneous stores.....	18,589	16,684	+11	1,147	1,111	+3	17,442	15,573	+12	15,267	13,035	+17	2,175	2,538	-14
531	Department stores.....	17,881	16,001	+12	1,078	1,019	+6	16,803	14,982	+12	14,779	12,590	+17	2,024	2,392	-15
54	Food stores.....	284	266	+7	223	203	+10	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
541	Grocery stores.....	209	203	+3	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
554	Gasoline service stations.....	671	662	+1	591	584	+1	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
56	Apparel and accessory stores....	2,055	1,916	+7	755	738	+2	1,300	1,178	+10	1,252	1,120	+12	(S)	(S)	(S)
562	Women's ready-to-wear stores..	747	736	+1	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
58	Eating and drinking places.....	325	340	-4	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
5961(pt.)	Mail-order houses (department store merchandise).....	1,758	1,649	+7	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Monthly Retail Trade report, December 1979 and December 1978.

Note: Measure of sampling variability shown on page 17.

S Not shown because of high sampling variability.

Table 12. Estimated Accounts Receivable of Retail Stores of Group II Companies in the United States, by Type of Account and Kind of Business: End of Year 1978 and 1977

(Millions of dollars. Data NOT ADJUSTED for seasonal variations and holiday differences)

1972 SIC code	Kind of business	Total accounts receivable			Charge accounts			Total installment accounts			Open-end installment accounts			Closed-end installment accounts		
		1978	1977	Per- cent change	1978	1977	Per- cent change	1978	1977	Per- cent change	1978	1977	Per- cent change	1978	1977	Per- cent change
	Retail trade, total.....	24,128	21,693	+11	2,534	2,287	+11	21,594	19,406	+11	18,230	15,633	+17	3,364	3,773	-11
	Durable goods stores, total...	2,509	2,332	+8	755	698	+8	1,754	1,634	+7	774	682	+13	980	952	+3
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	841	788	+7	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods stores, total	21,619	19,361	+12	1,779	1,589	+12	19,840	17,772	+12	17,456	14,951	+17	2,384	2,821	-15
53	General merchandise group stores....	17,886	15,994	+12	940	894	+5	16,946	15,100	+12	14,869	12,632	+18	2,077	2,468	-16
531,9	Department stores, miscellaneous merchandise stores.....	17,874	15,989	+12	940	894	+5	16,934	15,095	+12	14,857	12,628	+18	2,077	2,467	-16
531	Department stores.....	17,341	15,502	+12	927	881	+5	16,414	14,621	+12	14,430	12,266	+18	1,984	2,355	-16
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	912	800	+14	196	169	+16	716	631	+13	695	613	+13	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Monthly Retail Trade report, December 1979 and December 1978.

(NA) Not available.

Explanatory Material

Definition of Terms

Retail Trade

This category includes establishments engaged in selling merchandise for personal or household consumption and rendering services incidental to the sale of the goods. In general, retail establishments are classified by kind of business according to the principal lines of commodities sold (groceries, hardware, etc.), or the usual trade designation (drug store, cigar store, etc.). Some of the important characteristics of retail trade establishments are: The establishment is usually a 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 may process its products, but such processing is incidental or subordinate to selling; the establishment is considered as retail in the trade; and the establishment sells to customers for personal or household use. Not all of these characteristics need be present, and some are modified by trade practice.

For the most part, establishments engaged in retail trade sell merchandise to the general public for personal or household consumption. Exceptions to this general rule are made necessary by trade practices. For example, lumber yards and paint, glass and wallpaper stores are included in retail trade if they sell to the general public, even if a higher proportion of their sales is made to contractors. However, establishments that sell exclusively to business establishments, institutional and industrial users, or contractors are classified in wholesale trade.

Buying of goods for resale to the consumer is a characteristic of retail trade establishments that particularly distinguishes them from the agricultural and extractive industries. For example, farmers who sell only their own produce at or from the point of production are not classified as retailers.

Processing, incidental or subordinate to selling, often is conducted at retail stores. For example, restaurants prepare meals and meat markets cut meat. Retail establishments of manufacturing concerns are included in retail trade.

Chain store warehouses are considered auxiliary to the retail establishment served and are classified on the basis of the activity carried on by such retail stores.

Sales

Sales include the following: Merchandise sold for cash or credit at retail and wholesale by establishments primarily engaged in retail trade; amounts received from customers for layaway purchases; receipts from rental or leasing of vehicles,

equipment, instruments, tools, etc.; receipts for delivery, installation, maintenance, repair, alteration, storage, and other services; and gasoline, liquor, tobacco, and other excise taxes which are paid by the manufacturer or wholesaler and passed along to the retailer. Sales are net after deductions for refunds and allowances for merchandise returned by customers. Trade-in allowances are not deducted from total sales. Total sales do not include commissions from vending machine operators or non-operating income from such sources as investments, rental or sale of real estate, etc.

Sales exclude sales and excise taxes collected directly from customers and paid directly to a local, State or Federal tax agency. The sales tax percentages shown in table 3 were derived from separate reporting of these taxes on the annual survey by the retail firms selected. Also excluded from sales are receipts from customers for carrying or other credit 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 others whose primary activity is other than retail trade.

Merchandise Inventories

Merchandise inventories include stocks of goods (valued at cost) held for sale through retail stores. Methods of valuation may vary according to the accounting practices of the firm. Merchandise inventories are shown for stores and warehouses combined and for stores only. Included are only those warehouses which maintained supplies of merchandise primarily intended for distribution to retail stores within the organization.

Merchandise inventories exclude 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 year, except for some businesses which used the fiscal year rather than the calendar year for accounting purposes. About 28 percent of the retail inventory total refers to a fiscal-year end other than December 31, but this varied by kind of business (from about 66 percent for stores in the general merchandise group to about 7 percent for stores in the automotive group). Inventory data for a date other than December 31 have been accepted and included in the tabulations without adjustment.

The sales-inventory ratios shown in table 7 indicate the relationship of annual sales to December 31 inventories and are derived by dividing annual sales (table 1) by the cost value of inventories (table 7).

In addition to reporting the total cost value of inventory, respondents in the annual survey were requested to report the accounting procedure used to determine that cost value. Table 9 shows, as a percent of total value, the alternative methods in common use for determining the cost value of the units remaining in inventory as of the end of the year.

Accounts Receivable

Retail accounts receivable are amounts owed to retail stores by their customers for purchases made on credit. The data in this report refer to receivables outstanding as of the end of the month, including receivables against which the firm has borrowed. However, credit paper discounted or sold to others (e.g., consumer credit paper sold to financial institutions or collecting agencies) and amounts actually charged off as bad debts are excluded. Also excluded are amounts charged on credit cards issued by oil companies, banks, and other such organizations that issue credit cards.

Charge accounts are credit accounts for which full payment is scheduled to be made at the end of the customary billing period.

Installment accounts are credit accounts for which payment is scheduled to be made in two or more parts. These accounts represent two major types—"open-end" and "closed-end."

"Open-end" installment accounts are primarily "revolving" or optional accounts where a deferred payment privilege is extended through a line of credit and the customer has the option of paying the balance in full (usually with no finance charge) or paying in two or more installments subject to some minimum required payment with a finance charge usually assessed.

"Closed-end" installment accounts are those generally requiring a new contract to cover each extension of credit. A precomputed finance charge is assessed at the time credit is extended, and specified fixed schedules of installment payments are established with the number and the amount of payments and due dates specified in the contract.

GAF—"GAF" includes the following: General merchandise group stores (SIC 53); apparel and accessory stores (SIC 56); furniture, home furnishings and equipment stores (SIC 57); and miscellaneous shopping goods stores (SIC 594). GAF represents stores which specialized in department store types of merchandise.

Unpublished Data

Selected additional data, such as dollar volume sales estimates for some kinds of business not separately shown in this report, are produced as a byproduct of the regularly published statistics. These additional data have not been included in this publication because their sampling variability is so high as to make them potentially misleading. The Bureau of the Census, on written request, will release such figures for individual use, though not for publication. It should be noted that some unpublished figures can be derived directly from this report by

subtracting published data from their respective totals. However, the figures obtained by such subtraction would be subject to the high sampling variability described above for unpublished kinds of business, and their use would be subject to the same hazards.

Sample Design and Reliability of the Data

Description of the Sample

The 1978 Annual Retail Trade sample consists of all sampling units tabulated in the production of monthly estimates of retail sales published in the Current Business Report Series BR, **Monthly Retail Trade**, for November and December 1978 and January 1979.

Specifically, the annual sample consists of all sampling units in the list component and one-fourth of the sampling units in the area component of the sample used to produce monthly estimates. The *list component* is comprised of a fixed panel of large businesses, most of which were selected with certainty, and three rotating panels of smaller businesses. The *area component* consists of twelve panels of land segments. In the monthly survey, only one rotating panel in the list component and only one rotating panel in the area component, plus the list component's fixed panel are canvassed in any given month. In the annual retail trade survey, all three rotating list panels, the fixed panel, and three rotating area panels are used, thereby reducing the sampling error of the annual estimates.

The list sample—The list sample originally was drawn from the Standard Statistical Establishment List (SSEL) as updated to December 31, 1974. The initial SSEL consisted of 2 lists. One list was composed of all Employer Identification (EI) numbers used by the International Revenue Service (IRS) with reported payroll in at least one quarter of 1973 or 1974, with payroll in the 1972 Census of Retail Trade, or with sales/receipts greater than \$100,000 in the 1972 census. The second list consisted of all establishments of known multiestablishment companies as of December 31, 1974. These lists contained information on sales/receipts, payroll, employment, name and address, kind-of-business classification, etc.

Prior to the availability of the 1974 SSEL, a study of the universe of retail businesses was carried out using files from the 1972 Census of Retail Trade. This study determined the stratification of the sampling units based on 1972 sales and kind of business, and also determined the optimal allocation of the sample necessary to meet specified variance objectives for sales estimates for different kind-of-business groups. The primary stratum boundary determined in the study was the certainty cutoff to be used for each kind of business. The cutoff was particularly important since it also determined the type of sampling unit.

Sampling units for the list sample consisted of both companies and EI numbers. To be eligible for the initial list sample, an EI had to be active; i.e., had payroll in 1974 and was on the IRS mailing list for Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) taxpayers. If a known multiestablishment company

had total retail sales (on a 1972 basis) above the cutoff for its major kind of business, the company was selected for the sample with certainty. The company, which could consist of one or more EI's, was then the sampling unit; therefore, any new retail establishments that the company might acquire, even if under new or different EI numbers, were in the sample with certainty.

All retail companies below the certainty cutoff as well as all single establishment retail companies were treated on an EI basis; that is, the EI number was the sampling unit. The EI numbers were then stratified according to their major kind of business and their estimated sales (on a 1972 basis). Within each stratum, a simple random sample of EI's was selected. The sampling rates for these EI numbers varied between 1 in 3 and 1 in 1,000. Three such samples of EI numbers, called panels, were drawn. Since all 3 panels were canvassed in the annual retail trade sample, the sampling rates varied between 1 in 1 and 1 in 333.

For those EI numbers in the initial sample that were not classified in a kind-of-business category and for all EI "births" after the initial selection, a two-phase selection procedure was used. EI "births," as used here, are new EI numbers recently assigned by the Social Security Administration (SSA) to FICA taxpayers. In the first phase, "births" were stratified by kind of business and size (expected employment or quarterly payroll). A relatively large sample was drawn and canvassed for a more reliable measure of size (sales in 2 recent months) and a more detailed kind-of-business code, if needed.

Using this more reliable information, the cases selected in the first phase were restratified and the final sample drawn with overall probabilities equivalent to those used in drawing the initial sample from the 1974 SSEL. Because of the lag in reporting "births" to the IRS and the SSA and the time needed to accomplish the two-phase birth-selection procedure, "births" are actually added to the sample about 8 or 9 months after they begin operation. During this period, they are represented by the area sample. The ongoing birth-selection procedure is carried out quarterly.

To be eligible for list sample canvass and tabulation in a given month, a retail business must meet the following requirements:

1. It must be on the IRS mailing list for FICA taxpayers from the previous quarter.
2. It must have been selected from either the SSEL or the file of employer "births." For this purpose, a universe file of all businesses ever given a chance of selection is maintained. This file shows, among other things, which EI numbers actually have been selected.

For businesses that were selected into the sample with certainty, the first requirement is changed. These certainty sampling units are not dropped from canvass and tabulation if they are no longer on the IRS mailing list. Rather, these businesses are contacted, and, if there are successor businesses, they are added to the survey. This is a tighter form of control for the larger businesses.

The area sample—The area sample is a two-stage sample. In the first stage, 10 primary sampling units (single counties or small groups of contiguous counties) were selected with certainty and 48 were drawn with probability proportionate to size (population). Each selected primary sampling unit (PSU) was then subdivided into small land segments containing, at the time of selection, an average of about four retail stores each. Twelve subsamples of these land segments were drawn in each PSU at an overall rate of 1 in 1,000 (1 in 2,000 or 1 in 3,000 in the smallest PSU's). A different subsample, or panel, is included in the area sample for each month of the year. Each of these 12 panels include approximately 420 land segments.

In the annual retail trade survey sample, three area sample panels are used. This reduces the overall sampling rate to 1 in 333 (1 in 667 or 1 in 1,000 in the smallest PSU's).

All retail establishments in these selected land segments are canvassed. Sufficient information (mainly concerning the EI number) is obtained to determine whether the business has had a chance of selection in the list sample component. If it has no EI number or if its EI number fails to match either the list sample universe or the current FICA mailing list, it is tabulated in the area sample. The area sample thus includes businesses without employees and employers, mainly recent EI "births," not represented in the list sources.

Group I and Group II Definitions

Group II consists of companies which had 11 or more retail establishments at the time the initial monthly retail trade sample was selected from the 1974 SSEL and qualified for certainty selection. To qualify for certainty, total annual sales of these companies (on a 1972 basis) had to exceed specified dollar volume cutoffs which varied by kind of business. The certainty cutoff ranged from annual sales of \$2 million to annual sales of \$25 million or more.

In previous sample designs, the sole criterion for classifying a company as being Group II was that the company had to have operated 11 or more retail stores at the time of the most recent retail census. Under the current sample design, a Group II company must meet both the establishment cutoff as well as the certainty sale-size cutoff. Group I consists of all other retail establishments.

Although separate tabulations are made for Group I and Group II in the list sample, only the data developed for Group II is published separately (table 3). Group I estimates are included in the "retail trade, total" figures shown in this report.

Estimation

The statistical estimates in this report were developed in the following manner:

1977 Sales—The 1977 sales estimates were taken from the 1977 Census of Retail Trade, after adjusting the census levels

to include the estimated sales of nonemployer direct sellers not directly measured in the Census and for different allocation of catalog desk sales made in department stores.

1978 Sales—The 1977 sales estimates (see above) at the kind-of-business levels were multiplied by the 1978/1977 ratios of sales estimated in the 1978 and 1977 Annual Retail Trade Surveys (ARTS) to produce the 1978 sales estimates. The 1978 and 1977 ARTS sales estimates are the total weighted sales reported by the sampling units, where the weights used are the inverse of the probability of selection (or sampling rate) of sampling units in the annual survey. The estimates at other levels of aggregation were obtained by summing the kind-of-business sales.

1978 Inventories—The 1978 sales estimates (see above) at the kind-of-business levels were multiplied by the inventories/sales ratios derived from the 1978 ARTS to produce the end-of-1978 inventories estimates. The estimates at other levels of aggregation were obtained by summing the kind-of-business inventories.

1977 Inventories—The 1977 sales estimates (see above) at the kind-of-business levels were multiplied by the inventories/sales ratios derived from the 1977 ARTS to produce the end-of-1977 inventories estimates. The estimates at other levels of aggregation were obtained by summing the kind-of-business inventories.

Accounts Receivable—The accounts receivable estimates were developed from summations of weighted data from the monthly retail trade sampling units. The estimates in this publication are the same as shown as the final estimates for December 1978 in the Current Business Reports, "Monthly Retail Trade, Sales, Accounts Receivable, and Inventories," (BR-79-01).

Reliability of the Data

Because the estimates were based on a sample, exact agreement with the results that would be obtained from a complete

census of retail stores using the same enumeration procedure was not expected. However, because every retail store in the United States had a chance of being selected for the sample, and because the probability of selection for each store in the sample was known, it was possible to approximate the sampling variability of the estimates made from the sample.

Approximate measures of the differences (which may exist because of sampling) for the estimates, are shown in tables 13 and 14. Measures of sampling variability for sales-inventory ratios of retail stores have not been computed but, in general, are expected to be less than those for merchandise inventory dollar-volume estimates.

The measures of sampling variability are at the one standard error level. The sampling error, or standard error of the estimate, is a measure of the variability among the estimates from all possible samples of the same size and design and, thus, is a measure of the precision with which an estimate from a particular sample approximates the results of a complete enumeration. The coefficient of variation (expressed as a percent) is the standard error of the estimate times 100 percent divided by the value being estimated. Note that measures of sampling variability, such as the standard error or coefficient of variation, are estimates derived from the sample and are also subject to sampling variability.

The coefficients of variation presented in tables 13 and 14 permit certain confidence statements about the sample estimates. The particular sample used in this survey was one of a large number of samples of the same size that could have been selected using the same design. In about two out of three of these samples, the estimate would differ from a complete enumeration by less than the corresponding percentage for that estimate shown in the sampling variability table. In about 19 out of 20 of these samples, the estimates would differ from the results of a complete enumeration by less than twice the percentages shown.

The coefficients of variation shown in this report do not measure biases which might arise from differences of response or nonreporting. Nonresponse amounted to about 5 percent for sales, 6 percent for inventories, and 10 percent for accounts receivable.

Table 13. Estimated Sampling Variability for Sales and Inventory Estimates

(Coefficients of variation in percent)

1972 SIC code	Kind of business	Dollar volume estimates		1972 SIC code	Kind of business	Dollar volume estimates	
		Sales	Inventory			Sales	Inventory
	Retail trade, total.....	0.5	0.8		Nondurable goods stores, total....	0.5	0.8
	Total (excluding automotive group).....	0.5	0.8	53 531,9	General merchandise group stores.....	0.4	0.9
	Durable goods stores, total.....	1.0	1.5	531 539	Department stores, miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	0.5	1.0
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply and mobile home dealers.....	1.9	3.3	54 541	Department stores.....	0	0
521,3,5	Building materials, supply, hardware stores.....	1.6	2.9	546 554	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	3.5	5.6
521,3	Building materials and supply stores	1.5	3.0	56	Variety stores.....	1.5	2.3
525	Hardware stores.....	5.6	7.1	561	Food stores.....	1.1	1.4
55 ex554	Automotive dealers.....	1.5	2.2	562,3,8	Grocery stores.....	1.1	3.6
551,2,5	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	1.6	2.4	562	Retail bakeries.....	4.0	(S)
6,7,9	Motor vehicle dealers.....	1.6	2.5	565	Gasoline service stations.....	1.7	3.6
551,2	Motor vehicle dealers (franchised)	1.7	2.6	566	Apparel and accessory stores.....	1.7	2.6
551	Motor vehicle dealers (franchised)	1.7	2.6		Men's, boys' clothing, furnishings stores.....	6.4	7.6
553	Automotive and home supply stores.....	3.6	4.4	58	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	1.4	3.1
57	Furniture, home furnishings, equipment stores.....	1.9	2.9	5812	Women's ready-to-wear stores.....	1.4	3.3
571	Furniture and home furnishings stores.	2.6	4.1	5812(pt)	Family clothing stores.....	3.2	3.7
5712	Furniture stores.....	3.2	4.2	5812(pt)	Shoe stores.....	3.9	6.1
5722,32	Household appliance, radio and TV stores.....	3.2	5.0	5813	Eating and drinking places.....	1.3	8.4
5722	Household appliance stores.....	3.8	5.6	591	Eating places.....	1.3	(S)
5944	Jewelry.....	6.3	6.9	592	Restaurants, lunchrooms, cafeterias...	1.8	(S)
				596	Refreshment places.....	1.5	(S)
				5961(pt.)	Drinking places (alcoholic beverages)...	5.2	(S)
				53,56	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	1.3	1.6
				57,594	Liquor stores.....	2.3	4.0
					Nonstore retailers.....	1.4	3.4
					Mail-order houses (department store merchandise).....	0	0
					GAF, total.....	(NA)	(NA)

Note: The estimates of sampling variability shown above are based on sales and inventory estimates derived from the 1978 Annual Retail Trade Survey.

(NA) Not available. (S) The coefficients of variation for these kinds of business exceed publication standard.

Table 14. Estimated Sampling Variability for Accounts Receivable Estimates

1972 SIC code	Kind of business	Dollar volume estimates	1972 SIC code	Kind of business	Dollar volume estimates
	TOTAL ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE			INSTALLMENT ACCOUNTS	
	Retail stores, total.....	1.0		Retail stores, total.....	0.7
	Durable goods stores, total.....	2.8		Durable goods stores, total.....	3.4
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply and mobile home dealers.....	3.0	55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	5.8
521,3	Building materials and supply stores.....	3.3	553	Auto and home supply stores.....	7.6
			57	Furniture, home furnishings, equipment stores.....	5.0
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	3.4	571	Furniture and home furnishings stores.....	5.7
551,2	Motor vehicle dealers.....	4.2			
551	Motor vehicle dealers (franchised).....	3.9	5944	Jewelry stores.....	4.2
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	6.5		Nondurable goods stores, total.....	0.4
57	Furniture, home furnishings, equipment stores.....	4.8			
571	Furniture and home furnishings stores.....	6.1	53	General merchandise group stores.....	0.2
5712	Furniture stores.....	6.5	531,9	Department stores, miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	0.2
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, TV stores.....	8.9		Department stores.....	0.0
5722	Household appliance stores.....	6.6	531	Apparel and accessory stores.....	2.1
5944	Jewelry stores.....	3.4	56		
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	0.5		OPEN-END INSTALLMENT ACCOUNTS	
53	General merchandise group stores.....	0.1		Retail stores, total.....	0.5
531,9	Department stores, miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	0.1		Durable goods stores, total.....	4.1
531	Department stores.....	0.0		Automotive dealers.....	5.5
54	Food stores.....	15.0	55 ex. 554	Furniture, home furnishings, equipment stores.....	6.2
541	Grocery stores.....	10.5	571	Furniture and home furnishings stores.....	7.3
554	Gasoline service station.....	7.5		Jewelry stores.....	5.0
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	2.5	5944	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	0.3
562	Women's ready-to-wear stores.....	4.7			
58	Eating and drinking places.....	6.3	53	General merchandise group stores.....	0.1
5961(pt.)	Mail order houses (department store merchandise)..	0.0	531,9	Department stores, miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	0.1
	CHARGE ACCOUNTS		531	Department stores.....	0.0
	Retail stores, total.....	2.2	56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	2.0
	Durable goods stores, total.....	3.2		CLOSED-END INSTALLMENT ACCOUNTS	
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	3.1		Retail stores, total.....	2.6
521,3	Building materials and supply stores.....	3.5		Durable goods stores, total.....	5.1
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	3.5	55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	7.7
551	Motor vehicle dealers (franchised).....	3.5	553	Automotive and home supply stores.....	9.9
57	Furniture, home furnishings, equipment stores.....	6.7	57	Furniture, home furnishings, equipment stores.....	7.1
571	Furniture and home furnishings stores.....	8.9	571	Furniture and home furnishings stores.....	7.9
5944	Jewelry stores.....	4.9		Nondurable goods stores, total.....	1.6
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	2.4			
53	General merchandise group stores.....	1.6	53	General merchandise group stores.....	0.6
531,9	Department stores, miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	1.6	531,9	Department stores, miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	0.5
531	Department stores.....	0.0	531	Department stores.....	0.0
54	Food stores.....	10.8			
554	Gasoline service stations.....	8.1			
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	4.5			

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Monthly Retail Trade report, January 1979.

Note: The measures of sampling variability shown above were calculated from June through November 1978 monthly estimates.

Kind-of-Business Classification

The kinds of business shown in this report parallel broad classifications defined in the 1972 edition of the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) manual. Descriptions of each kind of business follow. Data for some kinds of business are not shown separately but are included in the major group or other totals.

DURABLE GOODS

BUILDING MATERIALS, HARDWARE, GARDEN SUPPLY, AND MOBILE HOME DEALERS (SIC Major Group 52)

This major group includes retail establishments primarily engaged in selling lumber and other building materials; paint, glass, and wallpaper; hardware; nursery stock; lawn and garden supplies; and mobile homes.

It includes lumber and other building materials dealers and paint, glass, and wallpaper stores selling to the general public, even if sales to contractors account for a larger proportion of total sales. These establishments are known as "retail" in the trade. Establishments primarily selling these products but not selling to the general public are classified in wholesale trade.

Lumber and Other Building Materials Dealers (SIC 521)¹—Establishments engaged in selling primarily lumber, or lumber and a general line of building materials, to the general public. The lumber which they sell may include rough and dressed lumber, flooring, molding, doors, sashes, frames, and other millwork. The building materials may include roofing, siding, shingles, wallboard, paint, brick, tile, cement, sand, gravel, and other building materials and supplies. Hardware is often an important line of retail lumber and building materials dealers.

Paint, Glass, and Wallpaper Stores (SIC 523)¹—Establishments engaged in selling primarily paint, glass, and wallpaper, or any combination of these lines, to the general public.

Hardware Stores (SIC 525)—Establishments primarily selling a number of basic hardware lines such as tools, builders' hardware, paint and glass, housewares and household appliances, cutlery, and roofing materials, no one of which accounts for 50 percent or more of the sales of the establishments.

Retail Nurseries, Lawn and Garden Supply Stores (SIC 526)¹—Establishments primarily engaged in selling trees,

shrubs, other plants, seeds, bulbs, mulches, soil conditioners, fertilizers, pesticides, garden tools, and other garden supplies to the general public. These establishments primarily sell products purchased from others, but may sell some plants which they grow themselves.

Mobile Home Dealers (SIC 527)¹—Establishments primarily engaged in the retail sale of new and used mobile homes, including parts and accessories.

AUTOMOTIVE DEALERS (SIC Major Group 55 ex. 554)

This major group includes retail dealers selling new and used automobiles, boats, recreational and utility trailers, and motorcycles; and those selling new automobile parts and accessories. Automobile repair shops maintained by the establishments engaged in the sale of new automobiles are also included.

Motor Vehicle Dealers (Franchised)—New and Used (SIC 551)—Establishments primarily engaged in the sale of new automobiles or new and used foreign or domestic automobiles. These establishments frequently maintain repair departments and used car lots and carry stocks of replacement parts, tires, batteries, and automotive accessories. Used car lots and repair departments operated by franchised new passenger car dealers are not considered separate locations.

Motor Vehicle Dealers (Nonfranchised)—Used Cars Only (SIC 552)¹—Establishments primarily selling used cars and not holding a franchise for the sale of new cars.

Auto and Home Supply Stores (SIC 553)—Establishments primarily engaged in the retail sale of automobile tires, batteries, and other automobile parts and accessories. These establishments frequently sell additional lines of merchandise such as household appliances, radios and television sets, sporting goods, housewares, and hardware.

Boat Dealers (SIC 555)¹—Establishments primarily engaged in the retail sale of new and used motorboats and other watercraft, including parts, accessories, marine supplies, and outboard motors.

Recreational and Utility Trailer Dealers (SIC 556)¹—Establishments primarily engaged in the retail sale of new and used recreational trailers, campers (pickup coaches), utility

See footnotes on page 26.

trailers, and other trailers for passenger automobiles, and motor homes, including parts and accessories.

Motorcycle Dealers (SIC 557)¹—Establishments primarily engaged in the retail sale of new and used motorcycles and motor scooters, including parts and accessories.

Automotive Dealers, Not Elsewhere Classified (SIC 559)¹—Establishments primarily engaged in the retail sale of new and used automotive vehicles, such as snowmobiles, dunebuggies, and go-carts, and new automotive equipment and supplies, not elsewhere classified.

FURNITURE, HOME FURNISHINGS, AND EQUIPMENT STORES (SIC Major Group 57)

This major group includes retail stores selling goods used for furnishing the home, such as furniture, floor coverings, draperies, glass and chinaware, domestic stoves, refrigerators, and other household electrical and gas appliances.

Furniture Stores (SIC 5712)—Establishments primarily selling household furniture, beds, mattresses, springs, and other sleep equipment. Also included in this classification are establishments selling household appliances, phonographs, radio and TV sets, and floor coverings provided the receipts from sales of furniture and sleep equipment exceed those from sales of other merchandise.

Floor Covering Stores (SIC 5713)¹—Establishments primarily engaged in the retail sale of floor coverings and related products.

Drapery, Curtain, and Upholstery Stores (SIC 5714)¹—Establishments primarily selling draperies, curtains, slipcovers, and upholstery materials. Establishments primarily selling custom-made draperies and slipcovers for household use also are included.

Miscellaneous Home Furnishing Stores (SIC 5719)¹—Establishments primarily engaged in the retail sale of miscellaneous home furnishings, such as china, glassware, and metalware for kitchen and table use, bedding and linen, brooms, brushes, lamps and shades, mirrors and pictures, venetian blinds, and window shades.

Household Appliance Stores (SIC 5722)—Establishments primarily engaged in the retail sale of electric and gas refrigerators, stoves, and other household appliances, such as electric irons, percolators, hot plates, and vacuum cleaners. Many such stores also sell radio and television sets. Retail stores operated by public utility companies and primarily engaged in the sale of electric and gas appliances for household use are classified here.

Radio and Television Stores (SIC 5732)¹—Establishments primarily engaged in the retail sale and installation of radios, television sets, record players, high fidelity (hi-fi), and sound reproducing equipment. Such establishments also may sell additional lines, such as household appliances, musical instruments, or records.

Music Stores (SIC 5733)¹—Establishments primarily engaged in the retail sale of musical instruments, phonograph records and albums, sheet music, and similar musical supplies.

MISCELLANEOUS DURABLE GOODS STORES (SIC Major Group 59, part)

This includes all retail goods stores not elsewhere classified.

Used Merchandise Stores (SIC 593)²—This industry includes stores primarily engaged in the retail sale of used merchandise, antiques, and secondhand goods such as clothing and shoes; furniture; books and rare manuscripts; automobile parts, accessories, tires, batteries; musical instruments; office furniture; phonographs and phonograph records; and store fixtures and equipment. This industry also includes pawnshops.

Sporting Goods Stores and Bicycle Shops (SIC 5941)²—Establishments primarily selling a general or a specialized line of sporting goods and equipment for hunting, camping, fishing, skiing, riding, tennis, golf, and other sports; bicycles, bicycle parts and accessories; and gymnasium and playground equipment.

Book Stores (SIC 5942)²—Establishments primarily selling new books and periodicals. Stationery and related items may also be sold.

Jewelry Stores (SIC 5944)²—Establishments primarily engaged in the retail sale of any combination of the lines of jewelry, such as diamonds and other precious stones; rings, bracelets, and brooches; sterling and plated silverware; and watches and clocks.

Hobby, Toy, and Game Shops (SIC 5945)²—Establishments primarily engaged in the retail sale of toys, games, and hobby kits and supplies.

Camera and Photographic Supply Stores (SIC 5946)²—Establishments primarily engaged in the retail sale of cameras, film, and other photographic supplies and equipment. Excluded are establishments primarily engaged in finishing films.

Gift, Novelty, and Souvenir Shops (SIC 5947)²—Establishments primarily engaged in the retail sale of combined lines of gifts and novelty merchandise, souvenirs, and miscellaneous small art goods such as greeting cards and holiday decorations.

business location. Such establishments also may arrange for some entertainment but this should be a minor part of the business.

Cafeterias (SIC 5812 pt.)³—Establishments engaged in serving prepared food and beverages primarily through the use of a cafeteria line where the customer serves himself from displayed selections. Some limited waiter or waitress service may be provided. Table and/or booth seating facilities are usually provided.

Refreshment Places (SIC 5812 pt.)⁴—Establishments primarily selling limited lines of refreshments and prepared food items. Included in this group are establishments which prepare refreshment items such as pizza, barbecued chicken, and hamburgers for consumption either on or near the premises or for “take-home” consumption.

Contract Feeding (SIC 5812 pt.)³—Establishments primarily engaged in providing food service under contract to another company; hospital; or governmental, penal, or educational institution. The facilities and personnel of these establishments may be provided by the contracting company, institution, etc.; however, the management is always supplied by the contractor.

Ice Cream and Frozen Custard Stands (SIC 5812 pt.)⁴—Establishments primarily engaged in selling ice cream, frozen custard, or other frozen ices for consumption either on or near the premises. “Take-home” packages also may be provided for ice cream sold in bulk.

Drinking Places (SIC 5813)—Establishments primarily engaged in the retail sale of drinks such as beer, ale, wine, liquor, and other alcoholic beverages for consumption on the premises. Prepared foods are frequently sold at these establishments, but receipts from the sale of prepared foods may not exceed receipts from sales of alcoholic beverages.

Drug Stores and Proprietary Stores, (SIC 591)—Establishments engaged in the retail sale of prescription drugs and patent medicines, and which may carry a number of related lines such as cosmetics, toiletries, tobacco, and novelty merchandise. Included are drug stores which also have a soda fountain or lunch counter.

These stores are included on the basis of their usual trade designation rather than on the more strict interpretation of commodities handled.

Liquor Stores (SIC 592)—Establishments primarily selling packaged alcoholic beverages, such as ale, beer, wine, and whiskey, for consumption off the premises. Liquor stores operated by States, counties, and municipalities are included.

MISCELLANEOUS NONDURABLE GOODS STORES (SIC Major Group 59, part)

Stationery Stores (SIC 5943)⁵—Establishments primarily engaged in the retail sale of stationery, such as paper and paper products (including printing and engraving), post cards, novelties, and school and office supplies.

Sewing, Needlework, and Piece Goods Stores (SIC 5949)⁵—Establishments primarily engaged in the retail sale of sewing supplies, fabrics, patterns, and other needlework accessories.

Mail-Order Houses (Department Store Merchandise) (5961, pt.)⁶—Establishments with normally 25 or more employees primarily engaged in the retail sale by catalog and mail order of a general line of merchandise similar to that sold by department stores.

Other Mail-Order Houses (SIC 5961 pt.)⁷—Establishments primarily engaged in the retail sale of a specialized or limited line of merchandise such as food, automotive merchandise, apparel, books, stationery, etc., by catalog and mail order.

Automatic Merchandising Machine Operators (SIC 5962)⁷—Establishments primarily engaged in the retail sale of products by means of automatic merchandising units (vending machines) which are generally located on the premises of other businesses. Those products include candy, nut, and confectionery; milk and ice cream; other beverages; and tobacco products.

Direct Selling Establishments (SIC 5963)⁷—Establishments primarily selling merchandise by house-to-house canvass, by party plan, by telephone, or from a truck. The merchandise includes building materials, hardware, and garden supplies; general merchandise; milk; other foods; apparel and accessories; furniture, home furnishings, and equipment; mobile food service; and books and stationery.

Fuel and Ice Dealers, Not Elsewhere Classified (SIC 5982)⁵—Establishments primarily engaged in the retail sale of coal, coke, charcoal, wood, ice, or any combination of these lines.

Fuel Oil Dealers (SIC 5983)⁵—Establishments primarily engaged in the retail sale of fuel oil.

Liquefied Petroleum Gas Dealers (SIC 5984)⁵—Establishments primarily engaged in the retail sale of liquefied petroleum (LP) gas (bottled gas or in bulk.)

Florists (SIC 5992)⁵—Establishments primarily engaged in the retail sale of cut flowers and growing plants. Greenhouses and nurseries are included if receipts are primarily from the sale of products not grown on the premises.

Cigar Stores and Stands (SIC 5993)⁵—Establishments primarily engaged in the retail sale of cigars, cigarettes, tobacco, and smokers' supplies. Many of the establishments included in

¹Data for this kind of business are not shown separately but are included in the major group totals.

²Data for this kind of business are not shown separately but are included in the durable goods stores total.

³Data for this kind of business are not shown separately, but are included in the larger group, "Restaurants, lunchrooms, cafeterias."

this classification are operated as concessions in places of amusement, railway stations, airports, and other public places.

News Dealers and Newsstands (SIC 5994)⁵—Establishments primarily engaged in the retail sale of newspapers, magazines, and other periodicals.

⁴Data for this kind of business are not shown separately but are included in the larger group "Eating Places," (SIC 5812).

⁵Data for this kind of business are not shown separately but are included in the nondurable goods stores total.

⁶Sales made by mail-order catalog desks located within department stores of mail-order firms and the free-standing catalog-order stores of department store firms are included here.

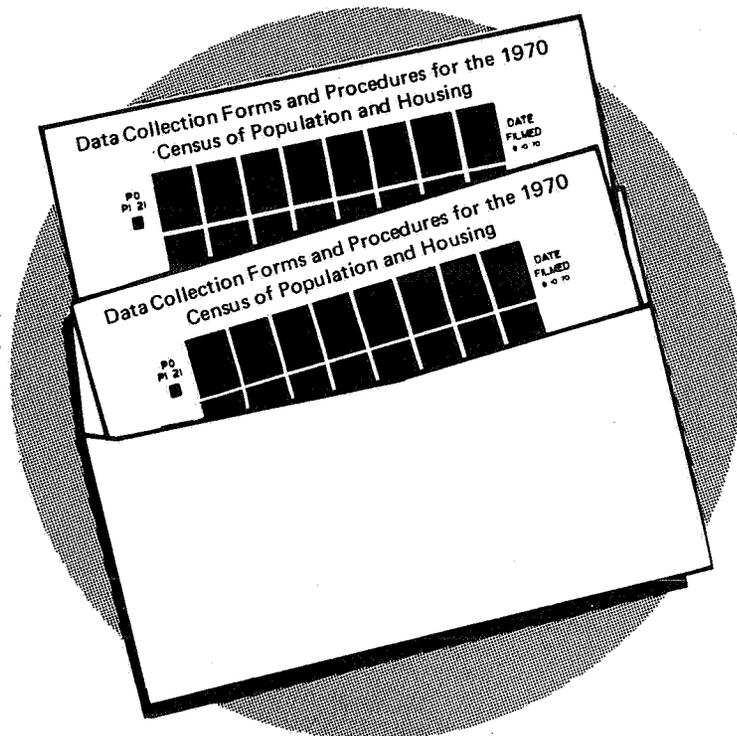
⁷Data for this kind of business are not shown separately but are included in the larger group "Nonstore Retailers," (SIC 596).



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