

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF
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Sinclair Weeks, Secretary

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ADVANCE REPORT ON RETAIL TRADE, AUGUST 1958

Total sales of retail stores in August were \$17.1 billion, the U. S. Department of Commerce announced today. This advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal factors and trading day differences was 1 percent above July and less than 1 percent below August 1957.

The August sales figures are based on the Advance Report on Retail Trade, a monthly survey of the Bureau of the Census conducted in cooperation with a representative cross-section of about 1,700 retail firms which, in total, operate some 35,000 stores in the United States. The firms which are cooperating in the early reporting of sales are part of a larger group which furnishes figures at a later date. The advance estimates are preliminary and subject to revision, but the revision of the total seldom exceeds $\frac{1}{2}$ percent.

The preliminary Census figures for August are shown in table 1 on the reverse side. The Office of Business Economics noted that after adjustment for seasonal factors and trading day differences, durable goods sales increased 2 percent from July to August with most groups contributing to the rise. August nondurable goods store sales were 1 percent higher than in the previous month with department store sales accounting for a significant part of the rise. Final estimates for July indicate that seasonally adjusted retail sales were 1 percent above June.

(more)

ADVANCE RETAIL SALES REPORT--PRELIMINARY ESTIMATES FOR AUGUST 1958
 Table 1.--SALES OF RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES, BY KIND-OF-BUSINESS GROUP
 (NOT ADJUSTED for seasonal factors and trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	Sales (millions of dollars)		
	1958		1957
	August	July	August
Retail stores, total ¹	17,068	16,596	17,490
Durable-goods stores, total ¹	5,463	5,443	5,980
Nondurable-goods stores, total ¹	11,605	11,153	11,510
Food group.....	4,421	4,251	4,353
Grocery stores.....	3,914	3,767	3,876
Eating and drinking places.....	1,391	1,373	1,420
General merchandise group.....	1,804	1,576	1,774
Department stores.....	² 1,035	893	(³)
Apparel group.....	936	867	967
Furniture and appliance group.....	886	840	912
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equip. group..	1,264	1,274	1,285
Automotive group.....	2,881	2,907	3,352
Gasoline service stations.....	1,435	1,410	1,374
Drug and proprietary stores.....	534	524	527

See footnotes below table 2.

Source: Bureau of the Census

Table 2.--SALES OF RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES, BY KIND-OF-BUSINESS GROUP
 (ADJUSTED for seasonal factors and trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	Percentage change, Aug. 1958 from--		Sales (millions of dollars)				Percentage change, July 1958 from--	
	July 1958	Aug. 1957	1958			1957	June 1958	July 1957
			Aug.	July	June	July		
Retail stores, total ¹	+1.2	-0.6	16,922	16,721	16,581	17,034	+1	-2
Durable-goods stores, total ¹ ..	+1.9	-7.3	5,322	5,221	5,149	5,839	+1	-11
Nondurable-goods stores, total ¹	+0.9	+2.7	11,600	11,500	11,432	11,195	+1	+3
Food group.....				4,216	4,272	4,027	-1	+5
Eating and drinking places.....				1,247	1,228	1,257	+2	-1
General merchandise group.....				1,879	1,787	1,861	+5	+1
Apparel group.....				1,060	1,012	1,038	+5	+2
Furniture and appliance group.....				851	843	877	+1	-3
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group....				1,118	1,138	1,200	-2	-7
Automotive group.....				2,803	2,736	3,304	+2	-15
Gasoline service stations.....				1,306	1,274	1,281	+3	+2
Drug and proprietary stores.....				536	532	525	+1	+2

Source: Office of Business Economic

¹ Totals include data for kinds of business not shown separately.

² Based on preliminary estimates supplied by Federal Reserve Board.

³ Comparable data not available.