

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF
COMMERCE

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ADVANCE REPORT ON RETAIL SALES, SEPTEMBER 1961

Total sales of retail stores in September were \$18.2 billion, the U.S. Department of Commerce announced today. This advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal variations and trading day differences, but not for price changes, was virtually unchanged from August 1961 and September 1960.

The September 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 2,000 retail firms which, in total, operate some 39,000 stores in the United States. The firms which are cooperating in the early reporting of sales are part of a larger sample group which furnishes figures at a later date. The advance estimates are subject to revision of the estimates subsequently derived from the full sample, but the revision of the total seldom exceeds $1\frac{1}{2}$ percent.

The advance Census figures for September are shown in table 1 of this release. The Office of Business Economics noted that, after adjustment for seasonal variations and trading day differences, sales changes from August to September among the major kinds of business were mixed. Automotive dealers' sales improved as the new model passenger cars were introduced. Estimates for August for the full sample indicate that seasonally adjusted retail sales were about 1 percent above July.

(more)

ADVANCE RETAIL SALES FOR SEPTEMBER 1961

Table 1. SALES OF RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES, BY KIND-OF-BUSINESS GROUP

(NOT ADJUSTED for seasonal variations or trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	Sales (millions of dollars)		
	1961		1960
	September ¹	August ²	September ^r
Retail stores, total ³	18,217 ⁷	18,354	17,898
Durable-goods stores, total ³	5,330	5,722	5,613
Nondurable-goods stores, total ³	12,887	12,632	12,285
Food group.....	4,899	4,649	4,517
Grocery stores.....	4,398	4,169	4,073
Eating and drinking places.....	1,520	1,508	1,394
General merchandise group.....	2,053	2,027	1,941
Department stores.....	4,206	1,175	1,141
Apparel group.....	1,134	1,039	1,142
Furniture and appliance group.....	898	925	881
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equip. group..	1,272	1,328	1,368
Automotive group.....	2,689	2,985	2,864
Gasoline service stations.....	1,510	1,627	1,470
Drug and proprietary stores.....	632	628	608

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 variations and trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	Percentage change, Sept. 1961 from--		Sales (millions of dollars)				Percentage change, Aug. 1961 from--	
	Aug. 1961	Sept. 1960	1961			1960	July 1961	Aug. 1960
			Sept. ¹	Aug. ²	July	Aug. ^r		
Retail stores, total ³	0	0	18,166	18,211	18,026	18,201	+1	0
Durable-goods stores, total ³	+1	-4	5,528	5,482	5,505	5,765	0	-5
Nondurable-goods stores, total ³	-1	+3	12,638	12,729	12,521	12,436	+2	+2
Food group.....				4,689	4,610	4,508	+2	+4
Eating and drinking places.....				1,345	1,335	1,319	+1	+2
General merchandise group.....				2,078	2,069	1,988	0	+5
Apparel group.....				1,176	1,118	1,180	+5	0
Furniture and appliance group.....				892	883	872	+1	+2
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group....				1,159	1,196	1,212	-3	-4
Automotive group.....				2,935	2,934	3,211	0	-9
Gasoline service stations.....				1,514	1,485	1,463	+2	+3
Drug and proprietary stores.....				642	649	628	-1	+2

Source: Office of Business Economics

^r Monthly sales by kind-of-business revised for 1960. See Monthly Retail Trade Report for January 1961.

¹ Advance sample estimates.

² Preliminary estimates of full sample.

³ Totals include data for kinds of business not shown separately.

⁴ Based on preliminary estimates supplied by Federal Reserve Board.