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Total sales of retail stores in September were \$18.6 billion, the U. S. Department of Commerce announced today. After adjustment for seasonal variations and trading day differences, but not for price changes, total retail sales amounted to \$19.4 billion, 1 percent below August and about 7 percent above September 1961.

The Office of Business Economics noted that, after adjustment for seasonal variations and trading day differences, the decline in retail sales from August to September was attributable to durable goods stores and more particularly to automotive dealers. Sales by nondurable goods stores in September held at the record August rate. Based on the full sample, seasonally adjusted sales of all retail stores in August were about 1 percent below the all time high in July.

The September sales figures are based on 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 40,000 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 in the estimates subsequently derived from the full sample, but the revision of the total seldom exceeds $1\frac{1}{2}$ percent.

(more)

ADVANCE RETAIL SALES FOR SEPTEMBER 1962

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)		
	1962		1961
	September ¹	August ²	September
Retail stores, total ³	18,551	19,833	18,149
Durable-goods stores, total ³	5,419	6,299	5,377
Nondurable-goods stores, total ³	13,132	13,534	12,772
Food group.....	4,796	5,000	4,816
Grocery stores.....	4,323	4,517	4,357
Eating and drinking places.....	1,541	1,632	1,440
General merchandise group.....	2,170	2,228	2,070
Department stores.....	41,260	1,268	1,225
Apparel group.....	1,211	1,099	1,153
Furniture and appliance group.....	856	938	879
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equip. group	1,352	1,448	1,264
Automotive group.....	2,661	3,386	2,722
Gasoline service stations.....	1,548	1,674	1,519
Drug and proprietary stores.....	637	658	629

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. 1962 from--		Sales (millions of dollars)				Percentage change, Aug. 1962 from--	
	Aug. 1962	Sept. 1961	1962			1961	July 1962	Aug. 1961
			Sept.	Aug.	July	Aug.		
Retail stores, total ³	-1.0 -1	+7	19,351	19,551	19,682	18,172	-1	+8
Durable-goods stores, total ³ ...	-3.3 -3	+5	5,905	6,107	6,378	5,463	-4	+12
Nondurable-goods stores, total ³	0.010	+7	13,446	13,444	13,304	12,709	+1	+6
Food group.....				4,859	4,835	4,684	0	+4
Eating and drinking places.....				1,463	1,404	1,345	+4	+9
General merchandise group.....				2,280	2,287	2,082	0	+10
Apparel group.....				1,229	1,200	1,177	+2	+4
Furniture and appliance group.....				899	908	883	-1	+2
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.....				1,274	1,269	1,164	0	+9
Automotive group.....				3,388	3,658	2,926	-7	+16
Gasoline service stations.....				1,557	1,525	1,503	+2	+4
Drug and proprietary stores.....				673	674	644	0	

Source: Office of Business Economics

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.