

# Advance Monthly Retail Sales

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## SEPTEMBER 1974

The Bureau of the Census, U. S. Department of Commerce, announced today that total sales of retail stores in September were estimated at \$43.8 billion. The Bureau, part of the Department's Social and Economic Statistics Administration (SESA), said this advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal and holiday variations and trading day differences but not for price changes was \$46.2 billion, about 1 percent below August but about 9 percent above September sales last year. Adjusted July-through-September total sales were about 4 percent above the prior 3 months and 9 percent above the comparable period a year ago.

Based on the full sample, the total U. S. adjusted sales estimate for August was about \$0.2 billion more than the \$46.5 billion published earlier in the August Advance Monthly Retail Sales report released September 10, 1974. The seasonally adjusted sales for August as revised were about 1 percent above July.

The advance sales estimates are based on early reporting, by a small subsample of the Census Bureau's retail survey panel, of sales figures for the weeks and part-weeks comprising the month. Because retailers' weekly records often differ

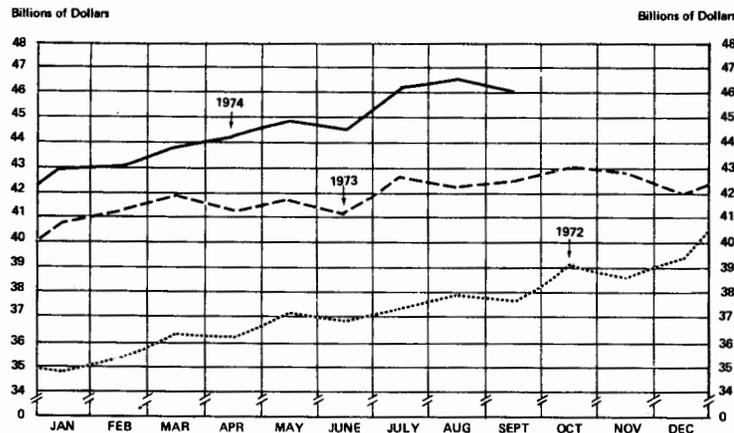
from their monthly records (in reflecting such elements as carrying charges, sales taxes, merchandise returns), the sales figures estimated for the advance report can differ from the subsequently issued report based on the monthly records of the full sample of retailers. Additionally, sampling variability between sub-sample and later full sample results can be a cause of difference. For most months, such differences have been reduced by modifying the advance estimate, prior to publication, on the basis of the relationship between the advance and full-sample data for previous months.

The differences between the month-to-month change in advance and full-sample estimates for total retail sales seldom exceed 1.0 percent and for the past year has averaged 0.7 percent. For individual kind of business groups, differences have been greater, ranging on the average from 0.3 percent for the Food group to 2.2 percent for the Gasoline group

Even for figures derived from the full sample sale movements from one month to the next can be relatively irregular. Data for 3 months are generally required to indicate the underlying trend.

MONTHLY SALES OF ALL RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES

(Data ADJUSTED for seasonal, holiday, and trading day differences)



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE | Social and Economic Statistics Administration | BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

Data on the retail trade, published in the Weekly Retail Sales Report, Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report, the Monthly Retail Trade Report, and the Annual Retail Trade Report are available on a single subscription from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 20402, at \$30.10 per year. Add \$7.55 for each subscription to a foreign address. Single copies of the Monthly Retail Trade Report are available from Publications Distribution Section, Social and Economic Statistics Administration, Washington, D.C., 20233 at 40 cents each.

Table 1. Sales of Retail Stores in the United States, by Kind-of-Business Group

Part A. NOT ADJUSTED for seasonal variations or trading day differences

Kind-of-business group	Sales (millions of dollars)		
	1974		1973
	September <sup>1</sup>	August <sup>2</sup>	September
Total, retail stores <sup>3</sup> .....	43,803	48,154	40,916
Total (excluding automotive group).....	35,890	39,232	33,073
Durable goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	14,149	15,533	13,718
Nondurable goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	29,654	32,621	27,198
Food group.....	9,700	10,925	8,859
Grocery stores.....	8,975	10,169	8,242
Eating and drinking places.....	3,502	3,901	3,339
General merchandise group with nonstores.....	6,907	7,593	6,594
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....	6,364	7,030	6,072
Department stores.....	4,305	4,724	4,142
Apparel group.....	1,995	2,104	1,974
Furniture and appliance group.....	2,044	2,210	1,972
Bldg. materials, hardware, farm equipment group.....	2,871	3,008	2,740
Automotive group.....	7,913	8,922	7,843
Gasoline service stations.....	3,437	3,757	2,837
Drug and proprietary stores.....	1,314	1,405	1,226

Part B. ADJUSTED for seasonal variations and trading day differences

Kind-of-business group	Sales (millions of dollars)					Percentage change August 1974 from--	
	1974		1973		July 1974	August 1973	
	September <sup>1</sup>	August <sup>2</sup>	July	September			August
Total, retail stores <sup>3</sup> .....	46,186	46,771	46,356	42,529	42,355	+1	+10
Total (excluding automotive group)..	37,641	37,775	37,793	34,072	33,710	0	+12
Durable goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	14,740	15,303	14,963	14,267	14,481	+2	+6
Nondurable goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	31,446	31,468	31,393	28,262	27,874	0	+13
Food group.....		10,178	10,090	8,992	8,964	+1	+14
Eating and drinking places.....		3,461	3,473	3,261	3,158	0	+10
General merchandise group with nonstores.....		7,494	7,541	6,989	6,923	-1	+8
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....		6,929	6,986	6,486	6,402	-1	+8
Department stores.....		2,108	2,148	2,042	1,967	-2	+7
Furniture and appliance group.....		2,178	2,237	2,063	2,025	-3	+8
Bldg. materials, hardware, farm equipment group.....		2,729	2,812	2,529	2,582	-3	+6
Automotive group <sup>4</sup> .....		8,996	8,563	8,457	8,645	+5	+4
Gasoline service stations.....		3,498	3,453	2,880	2,836	+1	+23
Drug and proprietary stores.....		1,384	1,421	1,278	1,298	-3	+7

<sup>1</sup>Advance sample estimates. <sup>2</sup>Preliminary estimates of full sample. <sup>3</sup>Totals include data for kinds of business not shown separately. <sup>4</sup>During months of model changeover seasonal adjustment factors are less reliable than in other months.

Table 2. Percentage Changes for Retail Sales

(ADJUSTED for seasonal variations and trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	September 1974 from--		July 1974 through September 1974 from--	
	August 1974	September 1973	April 1974 through June 1974	July 1973 through September 1973
Total, retail stores.....	-1	+9	+4	+9
Total (excluding automotive group).....	0	+10	+3	+11
Durable goods stores, total.....	-4	+3	+6	+4
Nondurable goods stores, total.....	0	+11	+3	+12

Source: Bureau of the Census