

Advance Monthly Retail Sales

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AUGUST 1975

The Bureau of the Census, U. S. Department of Commerce, announced today that total sales of retail stores in August were estimated at \$50.2 billion. This advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal and holiday variations and trading day differences, but not for price changes was \$49.5 billion, about 1 percent below July but 5 percent above August sales last year. Adjusted June-through-August total sales were about 5 percent above the prior 3 months and 7 percent above the comparable period a year ago.

Based on the full sample, the total U. S. adjusted sales estimate for July was little changed from the \$49.9 billion published earlier in the July Advance Monthly Retail Sales report released August 11, 1975. The seasonally adjusted sales for July, as revised, were about 2 percent above June.

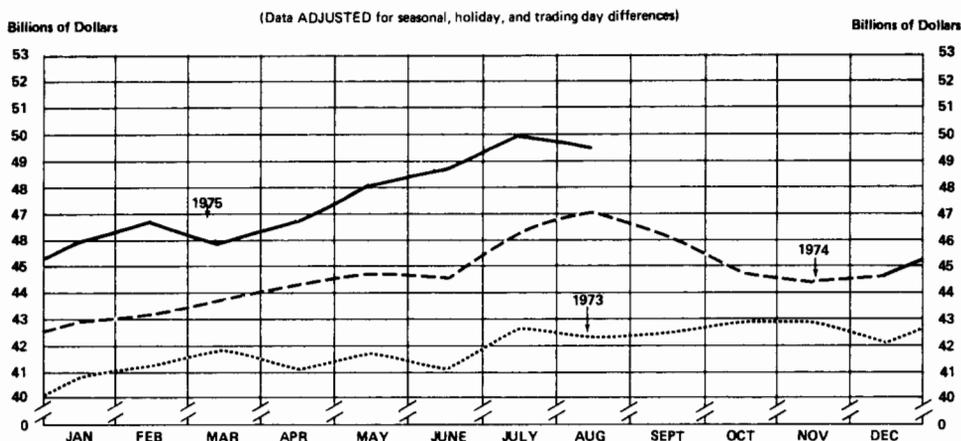
The advance sales estimates are based on early reporting, by a small subsample of the Census Bureau's retail survey panel, of sales figures for the weeks and part-weeks comprising the month. Because retailers' weekly records often differ

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 0.8 percent. For individual kind of business groups, differences have been greater, ranging on the average from 0.8 percent for the Food group to 3.0 percent for the Automotive 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



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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE | BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

Date on 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 Weekly Retail Trade Report are available from Subscriber Services Section (Publications), Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233, at 25 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)		
	1975		1974
	Aug. ¹	July ²	Aug.
Total, retail stores ³	50,176	50,102	48,444
Total (excluding automotive group).....	41,435	40,517	39,475
Durable goods stores, total ³	15,390	16,345	15,614
Nondurable goods stores, total ³	34,786	33,757	32,830
Food stores, total.....	11,660	11,497	11,014
Grocery stores.....	10,878	10,696	10,250
Eating and drinking places.....	4,449	4,244	3,942
General merchandise group with nonstores.....	7,889	7,299	7,625
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....	7,335	6,766	7,059
Department stores.....	4,993	4,620	4,749
Apparel and accessory stores, total.....	2,240	1,989	2,125
Furniture home furnishings and equipment stores, total.....	2,167	2,172	2,244
Bldg. materials, hardware, farm equipment dealers, total.....	2,970	3,138	2,997
Automotive dealers, total.....	8,741	9,585	8,969
Gasoline service stations.....	4,000	4,006	3,738
Drug and proprietary stores.....	1,515	1,476	1,429

Part B. ADJUSTED for seasonal variations and trading day differences

Kind-of-business group	Sales (millions of dollars)					Percentage change July 1975 from--	
	1975			1974		June 1975	July 1974
	Aug. ¹	July ²	June	Aug.	July		
Total, retail stores ³	49,548	49,948	48,779	47,056	46,356	+2	-8
Total (excluding automotive group).....	40,610	40,919	40,131	38,013	37,793	-2	-8
Durable goods stores, total ³	15,454	15,606	15,166	15,381	14,963	+3	+4
Nondurable goods stores, total ³	34,094	34,342	33,613	31,675	31,393	+2	+9
Food stores, total.....	11,345	11,023	10,261	10,261	10,090	-3	-12
Eating and drinking places.....	3,948	3,984	3,498	3,498	3,473	-1	-14
General merchandise group with nonstores.....	7,915	7,994	7,527	7,527	7,541	-1	+5
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....	7,329	7,421	6,959	6,959	6,986	-1	+7
Apparel and accessory stores, total.....	2,257	2,223	2,129	2,129	2,148	+2	+5
Furniture home furnishings and equipment stores, total.....	2,175	2,168	2,212	2,212	2,237	0	-3
Bldg. materials, hardware, farm equipment dealers, total.....	2,876	2,848	2,715	2,715	2,812	+1	+2
Automotive dealers, total.....	9,029	8,648	9,043	9,043	8,563	+4	+5
Gasoline service stations.....	3,733	3,616	3,480	3,480	3,453	+3	+8
Drug and proprietary stores.....	1,528	1,532	1,408	1,408	1,421	0	+8

¹Advance sample estimates.

²Preliminary estimates of full sample.

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

Table 2. Percentage Changes for Retail Sales

(ADJUSTED for seasonal variations and trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	August 1975 from--		June 1975 through August 1975 from--	
	July 1975	August 1974	March 1975 through May 1975	June 1974 through August 1974
Total, retail stores.....	-1	+5	+5	+7
Total (excluding automotive group).....	-1	+7	+5	+8
Durable goods stores, total.....	-1	0	+10	+4
Nondurable goods stores, total.....	-1	+8	+3	+9

Source: Bureau of the Census