

# Advance Monthly Retail Sales

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## APRIL 1978

The Bureau of the Census, U. S. Department of Commerce, announced today that total sales of retail stores in April, after adjusting for seasonal variations and trading day differences, but not for price changes were estimated at \$63.6 billion. This adjusted figure was about 2 percent above March 1978 and 9 percent greater than April a year ago. The adjusted April estimate, excluding the automotive group, was about 1 percent above March and 9 percent above April last year.

Adjusted sales of durable goods stores increased 5 percent above March, while sales of nondurable goods stores were virtually unchanged. Compared with sales for April 1977, both durable goods and nondurable goods stores increased about 9 percent.

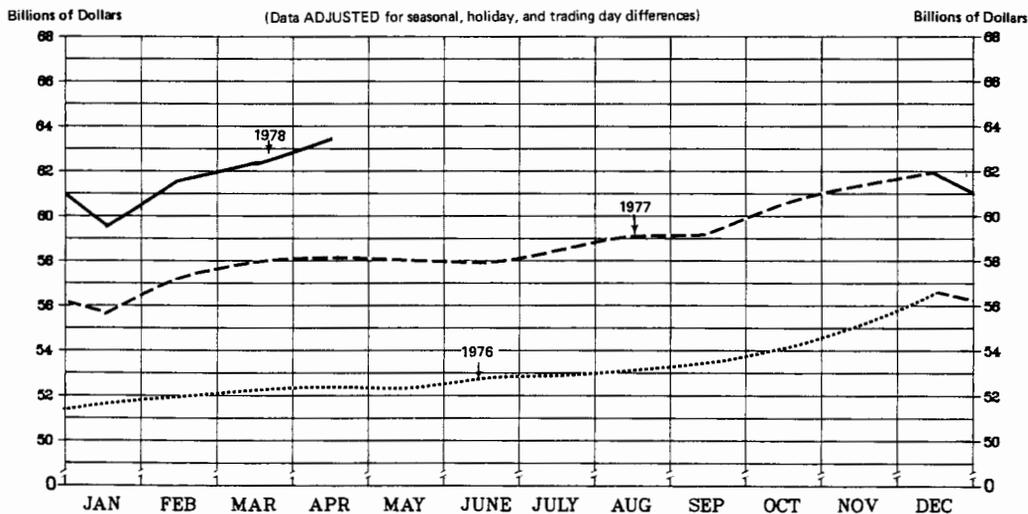
The revised estimate of retail sales for March, based on preliminary results from the full sample of retail stores, was about \$62.3 billion, \$0.5 billion below the advance estimate published earlier. Seasonally adjusted sales for March as revised, were about 1 percent above February and 7 percent above March 1977. Excluding the automotive group, retail sales were 1 percent above February and 9 percent over March 1977. For nondurable goods stores, adjusted March sales were 1 percent above the previous month and 9 percent above the same month a year earlier. For durable goods stores, adjusted sales for March were 1 percent above February and 4 percent higher than March 1977.

The advance sales estimates are based on early reporting of sales by a small subsample of the Bureau's retail survey panel. Because of the early reporting, the advance estimates can differ from the subsequent estimates which are based on monthly reports obtained from the full sample of retail stores. In addition, sampling variability between the sub-sample used for the advance estimates and the full sample can cause a difference. For most months, such differences have been reduced by modifying the advance estimates prior to publication on the basis of the relationship between the advance and full-sample data for previous months.

In the past, differences between advance and full-sample estimates of month-to-month percentage change in seasonally adjusted total retail store sales have averaged less than 1 percent. However, most modifications being applied to the current advance monthly estimates are based on the relationship between the advance and the redesigned fullsample data for only the months since May 1977. The differences now, therefore, may vary from the past experience.

Preliminary estimates for March 1978 and final estimates for February 1978 based on the full sample will also be published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade report for March (BR-78-3). The complete report will provide sales estimates in greater detail and will present a description of the sample design and the techniques used in developing the estimates. In addition, the complete report will include approximate measures of sampling variability.

### ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES FOR THE UNITED STATES: JANUARY 1976 - APRIL 1978



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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, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402, at \$55 per year. Add \$13.75 for each subscription to a foreign address. Postage stamps not acceptable; currency submitted at sender's risk. Remittances from foreign countries must be by international money order or by draft on a U.S. bank. Single copies of the Advance Monthly Retail Sales report are for sale by Subscriber Services (Publications), Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233, at 70 cents each.

Table 1. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales by Kind of Business for the United States

(Sales in millions of dollars)

1972 SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted					Adjusted <sup>1</sup>				
		1978			1977		1978			1977	
		Apr. <sup>2</sup> advance	Mar. prelim.	Feb. final	Apr.	Mar.	Apr. <sup>2</sup> advance	Mar. prelim.	Feb. final	Apr.	Mar.
	Retail trade, total.....	62,017	62,976	52,479	58,634	57,203	63,559	62,339	61,661	58,142	57,990
	Total (excl. automotive group)....	48,139	49,151	41,769	45,783	44,146	50,202	49,825	49,388	46,087	45,855
	Durable goods stores, total.....	22,030	21,611	17,230	20,559	20,328	21,710	20,698	20,558	19,833	19,863
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	3,621	3,126	2,419	3,251	2,865	3,567	3,355	3,382	3,135	3,123
521,3	Building materials and supply stores.....	(*)	2,149	1,664	2,189	2,043	(*)	2,257	2,181	2,190	2,186
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	493	387	579	477	(*)	531	520	544	526
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	13,878	13,825	10,710	12,851	13,057	13,357	12,514	12,273	12,055	12,135
551,2,5, 6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous auto- motive dealers.....	(*)	12,799	9,872	11,800	12,036	(*)	11,479	11,218	11,069	11,092
551	Motor vehicle dealers (franchised)....	(*)	11,186	8,810	10,280	10,659	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	1,026	838	1,051	1,021	(*)	1,035	1,055	986	1,043
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	2,688	2,869	2,523	2,730	2,787	2,806	2,874	2,921	2,836	2,819
571	Furniture and home furnishings stores....	(*)	1,760	1,541	1,691	1,722	(*)	1,736	1,761	1,721	1,719
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores	(*)	827	732	825	846	(*)	848	857	884	874
5722	Household appliance stores.....	(*)	390	350	420	418	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	39,987	41,365	35,249	38,075	36,875	41,849	41,641	41,103	38,309	38,127
53	General merchandise group stores.....	7,440	7,306	5,488	6,911	6,347	7,946	7,854	7,763	7,059	6,995
531	Department stores.....	5,969	5,852	4,404	5,470	5,044	6,411	6,320	6,309	5,588	5,577
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	648	482	673	584	(*)	664	660	679	655
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.	(*)	806	602	(NA)	(NA)	(*)	870	794	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	13,675	14,356	12,617	13,047	12,695	14,217	13,922	13,906	12,933	12,784
541	Grocery stores.....	12,735	13,405	11,796	12,172	11,858	13,266	12,977	12,977	12,060	11,938
554	Gasoline service stations.....	4,606	4,737	4,313	4,631	4,477	4,714	4,914	4,952	4,723	4,642
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	2,587	2,838	2,080	2,754	2,524	2,874	2,877	2,755	2,726	2,780
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	511	402	542	475	(*)	552	537	554	550
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	(*)	1,115	814	1,010	977	(*)	1,147	1,054	1,033	1,068
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	511	394	579	527	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	551	364	505	437	(*)	506	485	454	457
58	Eating and drinking places.....	5,637	5,556	4,761	5,250	5,073	5,694	5,716	5,510	5,232	5,290
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	1,859	1,991	1,793	1,797	1,792	1,973	1,973	1,957	1,834	1,825
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,061	928	1,066	1,012	(*)	1,124	1,101	1,093	1,079
5961 (pt.)	Mail-order houses (department store merchandise) <sup>3</sup> .....	(*)	598	437	514	601	(*)	574	550	564	559

NOTE: Totals include data for kinds of business not shown separately.

\*Advance estimates are not available from the subsample panel for these kinds of business.

NA Not available.

<sup>1</sup>Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. (See Explanatory Material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-78-3).<sup>2</sup>Advance estimates are based on early reporting by a small subsample of the full survey panel. All other estimates are based on the full sample.<sup>3</sup>Includes sales made by mail-order catalog desks located within department stores of mail-order firms.

Table 2. Percent Change in Estimated Monthly Retail Sales by Kind of Business for the United States

(Adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences)

1972 SIC code	Kind of business	Percent change					
		April 1978 advance from--		March 1978 preliminary from--		February 1978 through April 1978 from--	
		Mar. 1978 preliminary	Apr. 1977 final	Feb. 1978 final	Mar. 1977 final	Nov. 1977 through Jan. 1978	Feb. 1977 through Apr. 1977
	Retail trade, total.....	+2 1.95	+9	+1	+7	+2	+8
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	+1.75	+9	+1	+9	+2	+9
	Durable goods stores, total.....	+5 4.86	+9	+1	+4	+2	+7
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	+6 5.94	+14	-1	+7	+7	+11
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	+7 6.31	+11	+2	+3	+3	+6
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	-2 2.12	-1	-2	+2	-3	+2
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	0.50	+9	+1	+9	+2	+9
53	General merchandise group stores.....	+1 1.76	+13	+1	+12	0	+12
531	Department stores.....	+1 1.42	+15	0	+13	0	+14
54	Food stores.....	+2 2.57	+10	0	+9	+4	+10
541	Grocery stores.....	+2 2.18	+10	0	+9	+4	+10
554	Gasoline service stations.....	-4 4.22	0	-1	+6	+1	+4
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	0 1.10	+5	+4	+3	-1	+2
58	Eating and drinking places.....	0 1.39	+9	+4	+8	+3	+7
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	0 0	+8	+1	+8	+1	+8

Table 3. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales of Group II Companies by Kind of Business for the United States: MARCH 1978

(Sales in millions of dollars)

1972 SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted		Adjusted <sup>1</sup>	
		Mar. 1978 preliminary	Feb. 1978 final	Mar. 1978 preliminary	Feb. 1978 final
	Retail trade, total.....	21,446	17,477	21,428	21,264
53	General merchandise group stores.....	6,505	4,875	6,926	6,917
531	Department stores.....	5,553	4,183	5,971	5,993
533	Variety stores.....	495	359	500	489
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	457	333	455	435
54	Food stores.....	7,869	6,877	7,577	7,577
541	Grocery stores.....	7,765	6,792	7,474	7,488
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	1,037	673	1,026	988
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	436	287	444	423
566	Shoe stores.....	279	163	253	229
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	957	825	954	934

Note: The Group II component of the sample consists of companies which had 11 or more retail establishments according to the most recent update of multi-establishment files and which were selected with certainty (i.e., their sales size exceeded specified dollar volume cutoffs which vary by kind of business).

<sup>1</sup>Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. (See Explanatory Material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-78-3).

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Official Business

Table 4. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales by Selected Kinds of Business for Specified Areas and Cities

(Sales in millions of dollars)

Area	Not adjusted		Area	Not adjusted	
	March 1978 preliminary	February 1978 final		March 1978 preliminary	February 1978 final
Standard Consolidated Areas <sup>1</sup>			Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas <sup>1--Con.</sup>		
Chicago, Ill.--Northwestern			Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minn.-Wis., total.....	747	619
Indiana, total.....	2,449	2,042	Nondurable goods stores.....	478	415
Nondurable goods stores.....	1,717	1,467	GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	208	169
GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	576	445	Nassau-Suffolk, N.Y., total.....	850	728
New York, N.Y.--Northeastern N.J., total.....	3,864	3,298	Nondurable goods stores.....	591	524
Nondurable goods stores.....	2,848	2,480	GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	183	144
GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	1,031	826	New York, N.Y.-N.J., total.....	2,054	1,764
			Nondurable goods stores.....	1,539	1,342
			GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	612	490
			Newark, N.J., total.....	503	428
			Nondurable goods stores.....	377	320
			GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	123	101
			Philadelphia, Pa.-N.J., total.....	1,517	1,242
			Nondurable goods stores.....	1,032	881
			GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	369	286
			Pittsburgh, Pa., total.....	680	553
			Nondurable goods stores.....	460	386
			GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	172	131
			St. Louis, Mo.-Ill., total.....	615	525
			Nondurable goods stores.....	481	419
			GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	164	126
			San Diego, Calif., total.....	481	427
			Nondurable goods stores.....	312	271
			GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	140	119
			San Francisco-Oakland, Calif., total.....	1,005	919
			Nondurable goods stores.....	656	610
			GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	271	243
			Seattle-Everett, Wash., total.....	531	443
			Nondurable goods stores.....	358	304
			Washington, D.C.-Md.-Va., total.....	975	840
			Nondurable goods stores.....	640	559
			GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	257	211
			Cities		
			Chicago, Ill., total.....	757	617
			Nondurable goods stores.....	570	462
			GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	187	149
			Detroit, Mich., total.....	219	184
			Nondurable goods stores.....	140	119
			GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	45	36
			Los Angeles, Calif., total.....	649	578
			Nondurable goods stores.....	527	453
			GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	175	149
			New York, N.Y., total.....	1,338	1,141
			Nondurable goods stores.....	1,018	884
			GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	441	350
			Philadelphia, Pa., total.....	327	267
			Nondurable goods stores.....	273	223
			GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	82	61

<sup>1</sup>Definitions of standard consolidated areas and standard metropolitan statistical areas are shown in the Monthly Retail Trade Report BR-78-3. <sup>2</sup>Includes the following: General merchandise group stores (SIC 53); apparel and accessory stores (SIC 56); furniture, home furnishings and equipment stores (SIC 57); and miscellaneous shopping goods stores (SIC 594). GAP represents stores which specialize in department store types of merchandise. <sup>3</sup>Statistics for the Boston SMSA include retail establishments in all Essex, Middlesex, Norfolk, and Suffolk Counties.

