

# Advance Monthly Retail Sales

## October 1985

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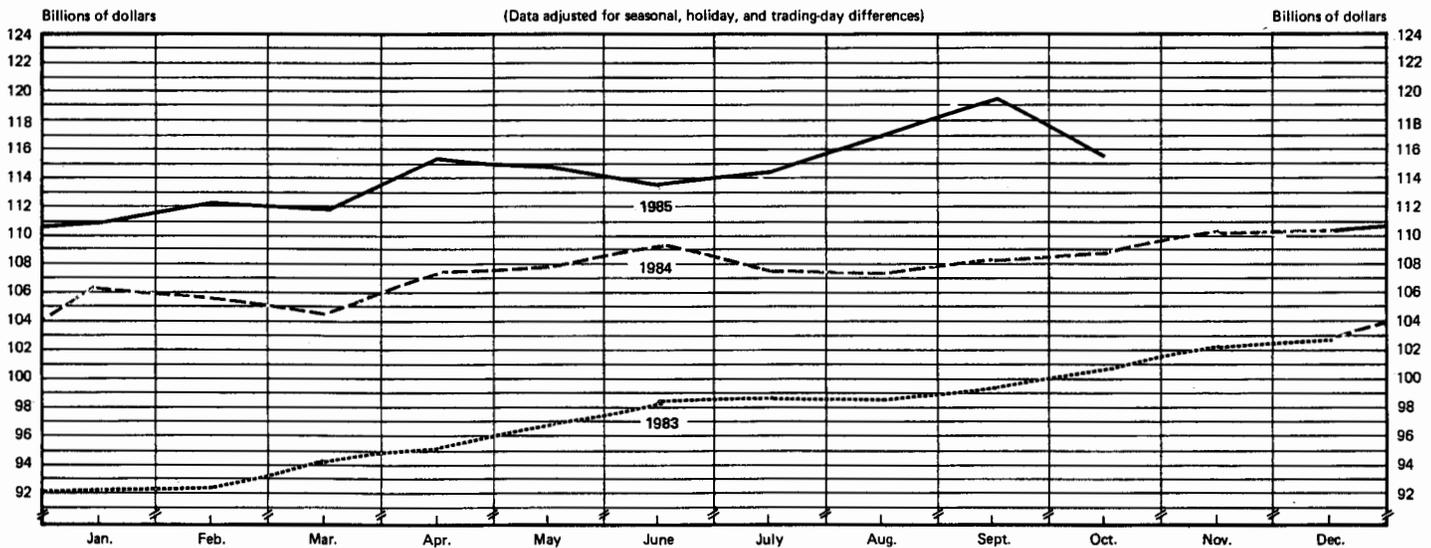
Advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for October adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences but not for price changes, were \$115.5 billion, 3.3 percent below September but 6.0 percent above October last year. The revised September sales were 2.1 percent above August. Excluding the automotive group, October sales were little changed from September but were 5.4 percent above the year-ago level. Total sales in the August through October period were 2.6 percent above the prior three months and were 8.4 percent above the same months last year.

Durable goods decreased 8.0 percent during the month but were 8.8 percent above October last year. The decline was due to automotive sales, which dropped 14.6 percent in October after gains of 8.0 and 6.1 percent in September and August, respectively. Building materials increased 4.7 percent in October and were 11.7 percent above the same month a year ago. Furniture showed little change from September but was 7.8 percent above October 1984.

Nondurable goods were about the same as September but were 4.4 percent above October last year. General merchandise group sales were virtually unchanged in October but were 4.7 percent above the same month a year ago. Drug stores increased 2.3 percent in October and were 9.6 percent above last year. Eating and drinking establishments increased 2.0 percent from September and were 8.1 percent above October last year. Sales of apparel were virtually unchanged from September but were 9.4 percent above October last year.

The Advance Monthly Retail Sales report for November is scheduled to be released December 12, 1985, at 8:30 a.m.

### ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES January 1983-October 1985



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The 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 \$37 per year. Add \$9.25 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 a draft on a U.S. bank. This report is available electronically in CENDATA, the Bureau's on-line information service, through a commercial vendor. For further information, contact Customer Services, DUSD, Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233, or call (301) 763-4100 or (301) 763-7561.

Table 1. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales, by Kind of Business

(Sales in millions of dollars)

SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted					Adjusted <sup>1</sup>				
		1985			1984		1985			1984	
		Oct. <sup>2</sup> adv.	Sept. prel.	Aug. final	Oct.	Sept.	Oct. <sup>2</sup> adv.	Sept. prel.	Aug. final	Oct.	Sept.
	Retail trade, total.....	116,709	114,045	121,122	109,550	104,025	115,512	119,409	116,977	108,974	108,373
	Total (excl. auto group)..	91,073	85,724	92,839	85,793	82,928	90,186	89,742	89,520	85,594	85,866
	Durable goods, total.....	43,431	44,838	45,816	39,962	36,668	42,757	46,454	44,277	39,281	38,301
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers..	6,850	6,402	6,802	6,160	6,026	6,337	6,054	6,096	5,674	5,738
521,3	Building mat. and supply stores..	(*)	4,793	5,085	4,605	4,493	(*)	4,397	4,476	4,123	4,156
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	798	888	795	779	(*)	847	872	788	815
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	25,636	28,321	28,283	23,757	21,097	25,326	29,667	27,457	23,380	22,507
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	23,415	26,280	26,044	21,587	19,075	23,275	27,605	25,384	21,352	20,489
551	Motor vehicle (franchised)....	(*)	24,105	23,787	19,850	17,452	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	2,041	2,239	2,170	2,022	(*)	2,062	2,073	2,028	2,018
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	5,986	5,658	6,015	5,548	5,303	5,944	5,951	5,832	5,513	5,485
571	Furniture and home furnishings..	(*)	3,058	3,291	3,079	2,923	(*)	3,169	3,125	3,001	2,992
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores.....	(*)	2,161	2,301	2,113	2,017	(*)	2,351	2,278	2,141	2,134
5722	Household appliance stores....	(*)	686	755	667	668	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total.....	73,278	69,207	75,306	69,588	67,357	72,755	72,955	72,700	69,693	70,072
53	General merchandise group stores..	13,395	12,118	13,588	12,636	11,902	13,460	13,467	13,570	12,853	12,994
531	Department stores.....	11,225	10,186	11,460	10,668	10,077	11,270	11,255	11,414	10,830	10,953
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	668	749	709	671	(*)	779	730	744	762
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	1,264	1,379	1,259	1,154	(*)	1,433	1,426	1,279	1,279
54 - 541	Food stores.....	23,543	22,633	24,774	22,450	22,223	23,537	23,832	23,380	22,802	22,836
541	Grocery stores.....	22,126	21,295	23,320	21,067	20,876	22,082	22,416	21,938	21,366	21,411
554	Gasoline service stations.....	8,649	8,546	9,182	8,568	8,331	8,413	8,529	8,622	8,375	8,323
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	6,080	5,698	6,372	5,514	5,394	6,074	6,107	6,055	5,551	5,611
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	599	654	688	627	(*)	668	691	693	684
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	(*)	2,454	2,594	2,352	2,272	(*)	2,625	2,551	2,322	2,345
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	1,505	1,866	1,408	1,376	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	898	998	857	898	(*)	898	923	846	874
58	Eating and drinking places.....	11,318	10,914	11,926	10,425	10,537	11,151	10,936	10,901	10,312	10,474
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	4,004	3,742	3,978	3,642	3,468	4,119	4,028	4,047	3,759	3,753
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,612	1,671	1,588	1,561	(*)	1,730	1,598	1,644	1,631
5961 (pt.)	Mail-order houses (department store merchandise).....	(*)	321	341	508	361	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
53,56,57 594	GAP. <sup>3</sup> .....	(*)	26,752	29,565	26,958	25,782	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)

\*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-85-09).

<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>GAP represents stores which specialize in department store types of merchandise.

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

**Table 2. Percent Change in Estimated Monthly Retail Sales, by Kind of Business**

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

SIC code	Kind of business	Percent change					
		Oct. 1985 advance from--		Sept. 1985 preliminary from--		Aug. 1985 through Oct. 1985	
		Sept. 1985 prelim.	Oct. 1984 final	Aug. 1985 final	Sept. 1984 final	May 1985 through July 1985	Aug. 1984 through Oct. 1984
	Retail trade, total.....	-3.3	+6.0	+2.1	+10.2	+2.6	+8.4
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	+0.5	+5.4	+0.2	+4.5	+1.6	+5.1
	Durable goods, total.....	-8.0	+8.8	+4.9	+21.3	+4.9	+15.4
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	+4.7	+11.7	-0.7	+5.5	+3.4	+7.8
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	-14.6	+8.3	+8.0	+31.8	+5.9	+20.6
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	-15.7	+9.0	+8.7	+34.7	+6.6	+22.4
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	-0.1	+7.8	+2.0	+8.5	+2.2	+8.9
	Nondurable goods, total.....	-0.3	+4.4	+0.4	+4.1	+1.2	+4.5
53	General merchandise group stores.....	-0.1	+4.7	-0.8	+3.6	+2.6	+5.0
531	Department stores.....	+0.1	+4.1	-1.4	+2.8	+2.3	+4.5
54	Food stores.....	-1.2	+3.2	+1.9	+4.4	+0.9	+3.7
541	Grocery stores.....	-1.5	+3.4	+2.2	+4.7	+0.8	+3.9
554	Gasoline service stations.....	-1.4	+0.5	-1.1	+2.5	-1.7	+2.6
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	-0.5	+9.4	+0.9	+8.8	+2.9	+9.8
58	Eating and drinking places.....	+2.0	+8.1	+0.3	+4.4	+0.7	+5.1
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	+2.3	+9.6	-0.5	+7.3	+3.9	+8.9

**Table 3. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales of Group II Companies, by Kind of Business**

(Sales in millions of dollars)

SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted			Adjusted <sup>1</sup>		
		Sept. 1985 prelim.	Aug. 1985 final	Sept. 1984	Sept. 1985 prelim.	Aug. 1985 final	Sept. 1984
	Retail trade, total.....	37,031	40,610	35,971	39,698	39,670	37,945
53	General merchandise group stores.....	11,158	12,553	11,010	12,423	12,568	12,061
531	Department stores.....	9,749	10,987	9,637	10,772	10,943	10,486
533	Variety stores.....	572	632	564	672	617	645
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	837	934	809	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	12,414	13,570	12,134	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
541	Grocery stores.....	12,265	13,413	11,987	13,076	12,702	12,383
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	2,234	2,607	2,068	2,390	2,399	2,147
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	991	1,092	898	1,080	1,040	944
566	Shoe stores.....	443	519	426	451	478	425
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	2,066	2,195	1,912	2,253	2,254	2,090

<sup>1</sup>Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. (See Explanatory Material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-85-09).

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).



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### Sample Design and Reliability of Data

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 subsample used for the advance estimates and the full sample can cause a difference.

Percentage differences between advance and full sample preliminary estimates of month-to-month percentage change in seasonally adjusted total retail store sales have ranged from approximately -0.6 percent to +1.6 percent with the average of the absolute differences about 0.5 percent for the past 12 months. For individual kind-of-business groups, these differences tend to be higher. Sampling variability of and revisions to advance-to-preliminary estimates are shown in table 4 below.

Preliminary estimates for September 1985 and final estimates for August 1985 based on the full sample will be published late this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for September (BR-85-09). The complete report will provide sales estimate in greater detail and will present a description of revisions, and the techniques used in developing the estimates. The complete report will include additional measures of sampling variability.

Table 4. Sampling Variability of and Revision to Advance-to-Preliminary Estimate

SIC code	Kind of business	Estimated coefficient of variation in percent of the advance-to-preliminary ratio			Preliminary-to-final percent change minus the advance-to-preliminary percent change			
		Range <sup>1</sup>		Median	Range <sup>2</sup>		Mean	Average of absolute difference
		From	To		From	To		
	Retail trade, total.....	0.7	0.9	0.8	-0.6	+1.6	+0.2	0.5
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	0.8	0.9	0.8	-0.7	+1.1	-0.1	0.4
	Durable goods stores, total.....	1.3	1.7	1.6	-1.1	+3.8	+0.4	0.9
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	0.9	2.0	1.3	-3.7	+5.8	-0.1	1.8
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	1.5	2.2	1.7	-1.8	+4.9	+1.0	1.4
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	0.9	1.6	1.2	-1.8	+5.3	+1.1	1.5
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	1.8	2.5	2.1	-3.8	+3.4	-0.1	1.5
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	0.5	0.7	0.6	-0.8	+1.2	0.0	0.4
53	General merchandise group stores.....	0.5	1.0	0.6	-1.7	+1.6	+0.1	0.6
531	Department stores.....	0.2	0.5	0.2	-1.1	+1.9	+0.2	0.8
54	Food stores.....	1.0	1.2	1.0	-1.0	+1.0	-0.2	0.6
541	Grocery stores.....	0.3	0.5	0.4	-1.3	+0.9	-0.2	0.5
554	Gasoline service stations.....	0.6	1.3	0.9	-2.4	+4.2	+0.2	1.2
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	1.1	3.1	1.7	-1.6	+2.8	-0.1	1.2
58	Eating and drinking places.....	0.8	1.3	0.9	-2.5	+2.8	0.0	1.1
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	0.3	1.8	0.6	-1.1	+2.2	+0.4	1.1

<sup>1</sup>The ranges of sampling variability shown are based on sales estimates unadjusted for seasonal variation, holiday, and trading-day differences for the data months of November 1984-July 1985.

<sup>2</sup>The ranges shown for the retail trade total are based on sales estimates adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences for the 12-month period, October 1984-September 1985. The ranges for all other totals and kinds of business are based on the 12-month period August 1934-July 1985.

Note: See appendix B, Reliability of Data, in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for a discussion on the measures of sampling variability.