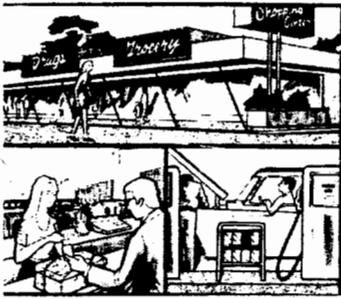


Advance Monthly Retail Sales

November 1985



FOR WIRE TRANSMISSION 8:30 A.M. EST, Thursday, December 12, 1985

CB-85-219

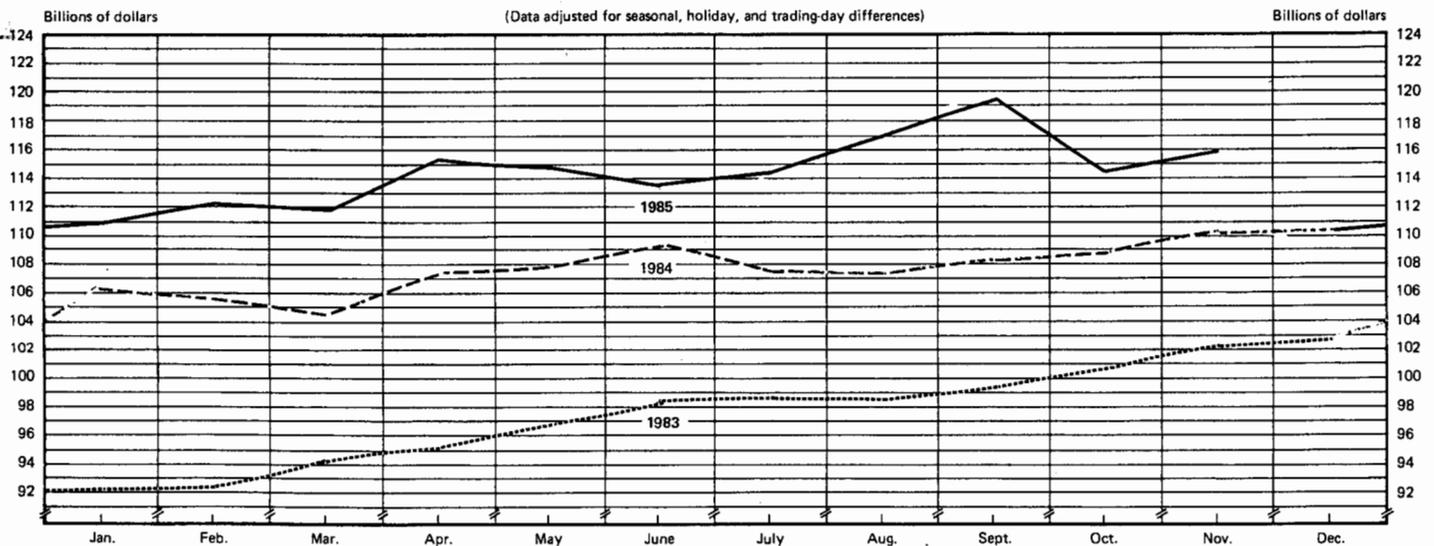
Advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for November adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences but not for price changes, were \$115.9 billion, 5.1 percent above November last year. The revised October sales were 4.2 percent below September. Total sales in the September through November period were 1.4 percent above the prior three months and 6.8 percent above the same months a year ago.

Durable goods increased 5.8 percent from November 1984. Automotive sales increased 4.7 percent from the previous year while building materials increased 5.3 percent during the same period. Furniture stores were about the same as October but increased 9.2 percent from last year.

Nondurable goods increased 1.3 percent from October and 4.7 percent above November a year ago. General merchandise group sales increased 1.7 percent from the previous month and were 3.1 percent above November 1984. Food stores increased 4.6 percent from the same month a year ago, while apparel stores increased 5.6 percent during the same period.

The Advance Monthly Retail Sales report for December is scheduled to be released January 14, 1986, at 8:30 a.m.

ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES January 1983-November 1985



Inquiries concerning this report should be addressed to Ronald Piencykoski, Business Division, Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233. Telephone (301) 763-5294/7561.



U.S. Department of Commerce
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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 ¹ | | | | |
|---------------|---|------------------------|------------|------------|---------|---------|------------------------|------------|------------|---------|---------|
| | | 1985 | | | 1984 | | 1985 | | | 1984 | |
| | | Nov. ² adv. | Oct. prel. | Sep. final | Nov. | Oct. | Nov. ² adv. | Oct. prel. | Sep. final | Nov. | Oct. |
| | Retail trade, total..... | 118,959 | 115,818 | 114,171 | 113,543 | 109,550 | 115,854 | 114,546 | 119,538 | 110,255 | 108,974 |
| | Total (excl. auto group).. | 96,034 | 90,940 | 85,833 | 91,165 | 85,793 | 91,050 | 89,973 | 89,855 | 86,563 | 85,594 |
| | Durable goods stores, total. | 41,107 | 42,602 | 44,972 | 39,313 | 39,962 | 42,249 | 41,889 | 46,592 | 39,934 | 39,281 |
| 52 | Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.. | 6,010 | 6,783 | 6,456 | 5,744 | 6,160 | 6,202 | 6,232 | 6,107 | 5,889 | 5,674 |
| 521,3 | Building mat. and supply stores. | (*) | 5,120 | 4,832 | 4,235 | 4,605 | (*) | 4,584 | 4,433 | 4,299 | 4,123 |
| 525 | Hardware stores..... | (*) | 952 | 811 | 805 | 795 | (*) | 937 | 861 | 798 | 788 |
| 55 ex. 554 | Automotive dealers..... | 22,925 | 24,878 | 28,338 | 22,378 | 23,757 | 24,804 | 24,573 | 29,683 | 23,692 | 23,380 |
| 551,2,5,6,7,9 | Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers..... | 20,806 | 22,664 | 26,252 | 20,361 | 21,587 | 22,739 | 22,529 | 27,576 | 21,730 | 21,352 |
| 551 | Motor vehicle (franchised).... | (*) | 20,813 | 24,152 | 18,829 | 19,850 | (*) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) |
| 553 | Auto and home supply stores..... | (*) | 2,214 | 2,086 | 2,017 | 2,170 | (*) | 2,044 | 2,107 | 1,962 | 2,028 |
| 57 | Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores..... | 6,631 | 6,180 | 5,703 | 6,006 | 5,548 | 6,117 | 6,140 | 6,000 | 5,600 | 5,513 |
| 571 | Furniture and home furnishings.. | (*) | 3,251 | 3,045 | 3,263 | 3,079 | (*) | 3,135 | 3,155 | 3,021 | 3,001 |
| 5722,32 | Household appliance, radio, and TV stores..... | (*) | 2,452 | 2,217 | 2,356 | 2,113 | (*) | 2,505 | 2,412 | 2,200 | 2,141 |
| 5722 | Household appliance stores.... | (*) | 787 | 714 | 737 | 667 | (*) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) |
| | Nondurable goods total..... | 77,852 | 73,216 | 69,199 | 74,230 | 69,588 | 73,605 | 72,657 | 72,946 | 70,321 | 69,693 |
| 53 | General merchandise group stores.. | 16,514 | 13,298 | 12,095 | 16,109 | 12,636 | 13,573 | 13,352 | 13,442 | 13,168 | 12,853 |
| 531 | Department stores..... | 13,849 | 11,232 | 10,175 | 13,533 | 10,668 | 11,427 | 11,277 | 11,243 | 11,084 | 10,830 |
| 533 | Variety stores..... | (*) | 711 | 668 | 855 | 709 | (*) | 736 | 779 | 795 | 744 |
| 539 | Misc. general mdse. stores..... | (*) | 1,355 | 1,252 | 1,721 | 1,259 | (*) | 1,339 | 1,420 | 1,289 | 1,277 |
| 54 | Food stores..... | 24,208 | 23,509 | 22,694 | 22,760 | 22,450 | 23,887 | 23,502 | 23,896 | 22,843 | 22,802 |
| 541 | Grocery stores..... | 22,746 | 22,126 | 21,375 | 21,343 | 21,067 | 22,388 | 22,082 | 22,500 | 21,364 | 21,366 |
| 554 | Gasoline service stations..... | 8,530 | 8,776 | 8,545 | 8,339 | 8,568 | 8,607 | 8,537 | 8,528 | 8,372 | 8,375 |
| 56 | Apparel and accessory stores..... | 6,884 | 6,049 | 5,667 | 6,413 | 5,514 | 6,060 | 6,061 | 6,073 | 5,737 | 5,551 |
| 561 | Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores..... | (*) | 690 | 608 | 869 | 688 | (*) | 696 | 678 | 741 | 693 |
| 562,3,8 | Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers..... | (*) | 2,616 | 2,443 | 2,682 | 2,352 | (*) | 2,552 | 2,613 | 2,395 | 2,322 |
| 565 | Family clothing stores..... | (*) | 1,585 | 1,485 | 1,718 | 1,408 | (*) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) |
| 566 | Shoe stores..... | (*) | 911 | 893 | 906 | 857 | (*) | 889 | 893 | 867 | 846 |
| 58 | Eating and drinking places..... | 10,896 | 11,175 | 10,919 | 10,088 | 10,425 | 11,268 | 11,010 | 10,941 | 10,530 | 10,312 |
| 591 | Drug and proprietary stores..... | 3,926 | 3,954 | 3,699 | 3,763 | 3,642 | 4,010 | 4,068 | 3,982 | 3,805 | 3,759 |
| 592 | Liquor stores..... | (*) | 1,562 | 1,626 | 1,646 | 1,588 | (*) | 1,599 | 1,745 | 1,628 | 1,644 |
| 5961 (pt.) | Mail-order houses (department store merchandise)..... | (*) | 437 | 321 | 558 | 508 | (*) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) |
| 53,56,57 | GAF. ³ | (*) | 29,069 | 26,749 | 32,582 | 26,958 | (*) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) |

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

NA Not available.

¹Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. (See Explanatory Material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-85-10).

²Advance estimates are based on early reporting by a small subsample of the full survey panel. All other estimates are based on the full sample.

³GAF 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 | | | | | |
|---------------|---|--------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | | Nov. 1985 advance from-- | | Oct. 1985 preliminary from-- | | Sep. 1985 through Nov. 1985 | |
| | | Oct. 1985 prelim. | Nov. 1984 final | Sep. 1985 final | Oct. 1984 final | June 1985 through Aug. 1985 | Sep. 1984 through Nov. 1984 |
| | Retail trade, total..... | +1.1 | +5.1 | -4.2 | +5.1 | +1.4 | +6.8 |
| | Total (excl. automotive group)..... | +1.2 | +5.2 | +0.1 | +5.1 | +1.8 | +5.0 |
| | Durable goods stores, total..... | +0.9 | +5.8 | -10.1 | +6.6 | +1.6 | +11.2 |
| 52 | Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers..... | -0.5 | +5.3 | +2.0 | +9.8 | +2.8 | +7.2 |
| 55 ex. 554 | Automotive dealers..... | +0.9 | +4.7 | -17.2 | +5.1 | -0.1 | +13.6 |
| 551,2,5,6,7,9 | Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers..... | +0.9 | +4.6 | -18.3 | +5.5 | -0.1 | +14.6 |
| 57 | Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores..... | -0.4 | +9.2 | +2.3 | +11.4 | +5.8 | +10.0 |
| | Nondurable goods stores, total..... | +1.3 | +4.7 | -0.4 | +4.3 | +1.3 | +4.3 |
| 53 | General merchandise group stores..... | +1.7 | +3.1 | -0.7 | +3.9 | +1.5 | +3.5 |
| 531 | Department stores..... | +1.3 | +3.1 | +0.3 | +4.1 | +1.5 | +3.3 |
| 54 | Food stores..... | +1.6 | +4.6 | -1.6 | +3.1 | +1.5 | +4.1 |
| 541 | Grocery stores..... | +1.4 | +4.8 | -1.9 | +3.4 | +1.4 | +4.4 |
| 554 | Gasoline service stations..... | +0.8 | +2.8 | +0.1 | +1.9 | -0.8 | +2.4 |
| 56 | Apparel and accessory stores..... | 0.0 | +5.6 | -0.2 | +9.2 | +2.0 | +7.7 |
| 58 | Eating and drinking places..... | +2.3 | +7.0 | +0.6 | +6.8 | +1.6 | +6.1 |
| 591 | Drug and proprietary stores..... | -1.4 | +5.4 | +2.2 | +8.2 | +1.2 | +6.6 |

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 ¹ | | |
|----------|---|-------------------|-----------------|-----------|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------|
| | | Oct. 1985 prelim. | Sep. 1985 final | Oct. 1984 | Oct. 1985 prelim. | Sep. 1985 final | Oct. 1984 |
| | Retail trade, total..... | 39,492 | 36,948 | 37,335 | 39,590 | 39,608 | 37,758 |
| 53 | General merchandise group stores..... | 12,266 | 11,140 | 11,656 | 12,370 | 12,403 | 11,880 |
| 531 | Department stores..... | 10,731 | 9,738 | 10,201 | 10,785 | 10,760 | 10,346 |
| 533 | Variety stores..... | 601 | 573 | 583 | 634 | 673 | 620 |
| 539 | Miscellaneous general merchandise stores..... | 934 | 829 | 872 | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) |
| 54 | Food stores..... | 12,938 | 12,408 | 12,298 | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) |
| 541 | Grocery stores..... | 12,777 | 12,260 | 12,144 | 12,880 | 13,070 | 12,417 |
| 56 | Apparel and accessory stores..... | 2,346 | 2,212 | 2,067 | 2,387 | 2,367 | 2,103 |
| 562,3,8 | Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers..... | 1,052 | 981 | 911 | 1,051 | 1,069 | 920 |
| 566 | Shoe stores..... | 458 | 438 | 422 | 467 | 446 | 425 |
| 591 | Drug stores and proprietary stores..... | 2,142 | 2,016 | 1,970 | 2,262 | 2,198 | 2,100 |

¹Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. (See Explanatory Material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-85-10).

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 -0.9 percent to +1.6 percent with the average of the absolute differences about 0.6 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 October 1985 and final estimates for September 1985 based on the full sample will be published late this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for October (BR-85-10). 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 ¹ | | Median | Range ² | | Mean | Average of absolute difference |
| | | From | To | | From | To | | |
| | Retail trade, total..... | 0.7 | 0.9 | 0.8 | -0.9 | +1.6 | +0.1 | 0.6 |
| | 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 |

¹The 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.

²The 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, November 1984-October 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.