

Advance Monthly Retail Sales

October 1987

FOR WIRE TRANSMISSION 8:30 A.M. EDT, Friday, November 13, 1987

CB-87-183

Advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for October adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences but not for price changes, were \$127.4 billion, a decrease of 0.1 percent (+1.3%) from the previous month but 4.2 percent above October 1986. Total sales in the August through October period increased 1.5 percent from the prior three months and were 2.9 percent above the same period a year ago.

Durable goods decreased 1.0 percent (+2.6%) from the previous month but were 3.5 percent above the previous year. Automotive sales were 3.2 percent above October 1986. Building materials were 1.9 percent above last year, while furniture stores were up 3.5 percent from October 1986.

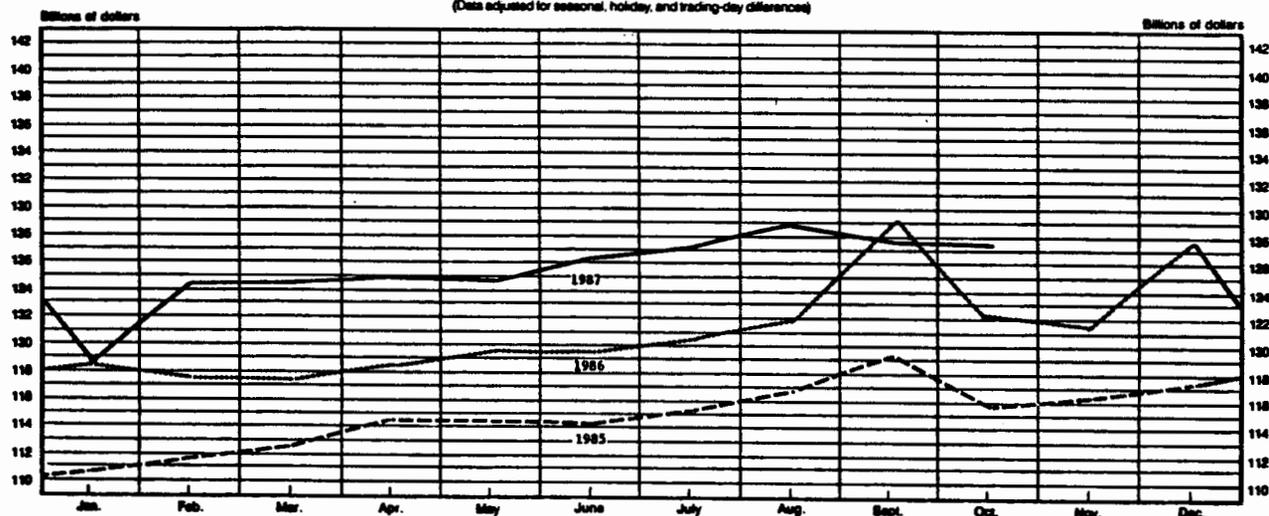
Nondurable goods increased 0.5 percent (+1.0%) from the previous month and 4.6 percent above the previous year. The general merchandise group increased 1.3 percent from September and was 6.9 percent above a year ago. Food stores were 1.8 percent above the previous year while gasoline service stations were 11.8 percent above October 1986.

Data in this report are based on a sample and, therefore, are subject to sampling as well as nonsampling errors. A discussion of the reliability of the data is on page 4.

The Advance Monthly Retail Sales report for November is scheduled to be released December 11, 1987, at 8:30 a.m.

ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES January 1985-October 1987

(Data adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences)



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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. 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 ¹					Adjusted ¹				
		1987			1986		1987			1986	
		Oct. ² adv.	Sept. prel.	Aug. final	Oct.	Sept.	Oct. ² adv.	Sept. prel.	Aug. final	Oct. ²	Sept. ²
	Retail trade, total.....	129,010	124,245	131,017	123,835	125,444	127,418	127,555	128,931	122,288	129,101
	Total (excl. auto group)..	100,866	94,657	98,926	95,763	90,401	98,422	97,778	98,049	94,183	93,783
	Durable goods, total.....	49,468	49,787	52,714	48,479	54,806	49,635	50,141	51,143	47,945	55,088
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers..	8,306	7,987	8,188	8,148	7,993	7,684	7,559	7,503	7,540	7,496
521,3	Building mat. and supply stores.	(*)	6,489	6,663	6,176	5,965	(*)	6,031	5,992	5,589	5,488
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	973	994	929	880	(*)	1,003	966	924	909
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	28,144	29,588	32,091	28,072	35,043	28,996	29,777	30,882	28,105	35,318
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	25,538	27,139	29,584	25,663	32,730	26,574	27,413	28,501	25,870	33,061
551	Motor vehicle (franchised)....	(*)	25,045	26,973	23,439	30,438	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	2,449	2,507	2,409	2,313	(*)	2,364	2,381	2,235	2,257
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	7,145	6,722	6,805	6,822	6,572	6,944	6,838	6,850	6,712	6,697
571	Furniture and home furnishings..	(*)	3,652	3,715	3,713	3,570	(*)	3,648	3,639	3,581	3,574
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores.....	(*)	2,584	2,609	2,649	2,509	(*)	2,709	2,704	2,652	2,633
5722	Household appliance stores....	(*)	823	848	818	774	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total.....	79,542	74,458	78,303	75,356	70,638	77,783	77,414	77,788	74,343	74,013
53	General merchandise group stores..	14,028	12,506	13,647	12,907	11,757	13,903	13,723	13,876	13,011	12,985
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts.)	11,996	10,711	11,706	11,001	10,122	11,865	11,706	11,836	11,079	11,123
531	Dept. stores (in. leased depts) ³	(*)	11,520	12,553	11,887	10,936	(*)	12,576	12,693	11,983	12,004
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	640	697	665	571	(*)	721	722	692	660
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	1,155	1,244	1,241	1,064	(*)	1,296	1,318	1,240	1,202
54	Food stores.....	26,070	24,910	25,637	25,284	23,837	25,453	25,405	25,472	24,994	24,810
541	Grocery stores.....	24,629	23,523	24,193	23,792	22,403	24,005	23,954	24,025	23,487	23,312
554	Gasoline service stations.....	7,891	7,676	8,071	7,061	6,911	7,691	7,707	7,761	6,882	6,904
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	7,354	6,854	7,308	6,826	6,449	7,245	7,171	7,168	6,855	6,784
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	713	727	782	705	(*)	807	806	795	808
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	(*)	2,876	2,978	2,948	2,756	(*)	2,971	3,008	2,893	2,865
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	1,571	1,783	1,532	1,422	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	1,364	1,460	1,256	1,257	(*)	1,345	1,366	1,266	1,252
58	Eating and drinking places.....	13,065	12,502	13,698	12,762	12,119	12,648	12,577	12,648	12,366	12,229
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	4,486	4,236	4,332	4,113	3,910	4,536	4,516	4,457	4,180	4,160
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,511	1,609	1,630	1,549	(*)	1,574	1,591	1,663	1,636
5961 (pt.)	Mail-order houses (department store merchandise).....	(*)	251	263	337	271	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
53,56,57	GAF ⁴	(*)	30,522	32,288	30,556	28,598	(*)	32,622	32,691	30,866	30,706

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

NA Not available. ²Revised

¹Data are concurrently adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. Concurrent seasonal adjustment uses all available unadjusted estimates as input to the X-11 program and the factors derived from the program are used in calculating all seasonally adjusted data shown in this publication. Factors and explanatory material are contained in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-87-09.

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.

³Includes data for leased departments operated within department stores. Data for this line not included in broader kind-of-business totals.

⁴GAF 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. 1987 advance from--		Sept. 1987 preliminary from--		Aug. 1987 through Oct. 1987	
		Sept. 1987 prelim.	Oct. 1986 final	Aug. 1987 final	Sept. 1986 final	May 1987 through July 1987	Aug. 1986 through Oct. 1986
	Retail trade, total.....	-0.1	+4.2	-1.1	-1.2	+1.5	+2.9
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	+0.7	+4.5	-0.3	+4.3	+0.7	+4.6
	Durable goods, total.....	-1.0	+3.5	-2.0	-9.0	+3.0	0.0
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	+1.7	+1.9	+0.7	+0.8	+1.5	+1.3
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	-2.6	+3.2	-3.6	-15.7	+4.0	-2.2
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	-3.1	+2.7	-3.8	-17.1	+4.0	-2.9
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	+1.6	+3.5	-0.2	+2.1	+2.0	+2.7
	Nondurable goods, total.....	+0.5	+4.6	-0.5	+4.6	+0.5	+4.9
53	General merchandise group stores.....	+1.3	+6.9	-1.1	+5.7	+1.1	+6.1
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	+1.4	+7.1	-1.1	+5.2	+1.4	+6.0
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.).....	(NA)	(NA)	-.9	+4.8	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	+0.2	+1.8	-0.3	+2.4	+0.3	+2.9
541	Grocery stores.....	+0.2	+2.2	-0.3	+2.8	+0.2	+3.3
554	Gasoline service stations.....	-0.2	+11.8	-0.7	+11.6	+2.8	+12.3
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	+1.0	+5.7	0.0	+5.7	+1.4	+5.1
58	Eating and drinking places.....	+0.6	+2.3	-0.6	+2.8	-0.8	+2.8
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	+0.4	+8.5	+1.3	+8.6	+1.8	+8.0

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		
		Sept. 1987 prelim.	Aug. 1987 final	Sept. 1986	Sept. 1987 prelim.	Aug. 1987 final	Sept. 1986 ²
	Retail trade, total.....	44,242	46,545	41,070	46,509	46,648	43,638
53	General merchandise group stores.....	11,588	12,691	10,965	12,716	12,881	12,121
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	10,378	11,356	9,827	11,317	11,448	10,787
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.).....	11,150	12,166	10,592	12,159	12,264	11,627
533	Variety stores.....	505	560	442	578	585	514
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	705	775	696	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	14,049	14,418	13,211	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
541	Grocery stores.....	13,866	14,230	13,008	14,178	14,447	13,707
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	3,700	4,059	3,342	3,870	3,862	3,549
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	1,553	1,650	1,421	1,623	1,645	1,525
566	Shoe stores.....	816	900	737	825	821	749
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	2,427	2,504	2,234	2,621	2,589	2,405

NA Not available. ² Revised

¹Data are concurrently adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. Concurrent seasonal adjustment uses all available unadjusted estimates as input to the X-11 program and the factors derived from the program are used in calculating all seasonally adjusted data shown in this publication. Factors and explanatory material are contained in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, RR-87-09.

²Includes data for leased departments operated within department stores. Data for this line not included in broader kind-of-business totals.

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 -1.6 percent to +1.0 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 September 1987 and final estimates for August 1987 based on the full sample will be published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for September (BR-87-09). The complete report will provide sales estimates in greater detail and will present a description of revisions, and the techniques used in developing the estimates.

Whenever a statement such as "up 0.8 percent ($\pm 1.3\%$)" appears in the text, this indicates a range from -0.5 percent to +2.1 percent. All ranges given are 90 percent confidence intervals. If the range contains 0, it is uncertain whether there was an increase or decrease. The Monthly Retail Trade Report includes explanations of confidence intervals and sampling variability along with 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	-1.6	+1.0	+0.1	0.6
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	0.8	0.9	0.8	-0.7	+0.6	0.0	0.4
	Durable goods stores, total.....	1.3	1.7	1.6	-2.1	+0.8	-0.3	0.7
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	0.9	2.0	1.3	-2.6	+4.2	+0.5	1.7
55 ex. 354	Automotive dealers.....	1.5	2.2	1.7	-2.6	+1.7	-0.5	1.1
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	0.9	1.6	1.2	-2.6	+1.7	-0.5	1.2
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	1.8	2.5	2.1	-3.4	+2.7	+0.1	1.5
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	0.5	0.7	0.6	-0.7	+0.8	0.0	0.3
53	General merchandise group stores.....	0.5	1.0	0.6	-0.6	+1.1	+0.1	0.4
531	Department stores.....	0.2	0.5	0.2	-0.7	+0.6	+0.1	0.3
54	Food stores.....	1.0	1.2	1.0	-0.6	+0.5	-0.1	0.3
541	Grocery stores.....	0.3	0.5	0.4	-0.7	+0.5	-0.1	0.3
554	Gasoline service stations.....	0.6	1.3	0.9	-5.2	+3.1	-0.5	1.8
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	1.1	3.1	1.7	-1.3	+2.2	+0.6	0.9
58	Eating and drinking places.....	0.8	1.3	0.9	-2.1	+1.5	0.0	1.0
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	0.3	1.8	0.6	-0.8	+1.2	+0.2	0.6

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 January-December 1983.

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, October 1986-September 1987. The ranges for all other totals and kinds of business are based on the 12-month period August 1985-July 1986.

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

