

Advance Monthly Retail Sales

CURRENT BUSINESS REPORTS

September 1988

CR 88-166

FOR WIRE TRANSMISSION 8:30 A.M. EDT, October 14, 1988

Advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for September adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences but not for price changes, were \$133.7 billion, a decrease of 0.4 percent ($\pm 1.0\%$) from the previous month but 4.3 percent ($+ 1.5\%$) above September 1987. Excluding automotive sales, September sales were unchanged ($+ 1.0\%$) from August but were 5.6 percent ($+ 1.6\%$) above the previous year. Total sales in the third quarter were 1.0 percent ($+ 1.7\%$) above the previous quarter and 4.6 percent ($+ 1.7\%$) above the same quarter a year ago.

Durable goods decreased 1.0 percent ($+ 2.3\%$) from the previous month but were 2.8 percent ($+ 3.7\%$) above the previous year. Automotive sales decreased 1.9 percent ($+ 2.8\%$) from August. Building materials were up 6.8 percent from September 1987, while furniture stores were up 9.2 percent for the same period.

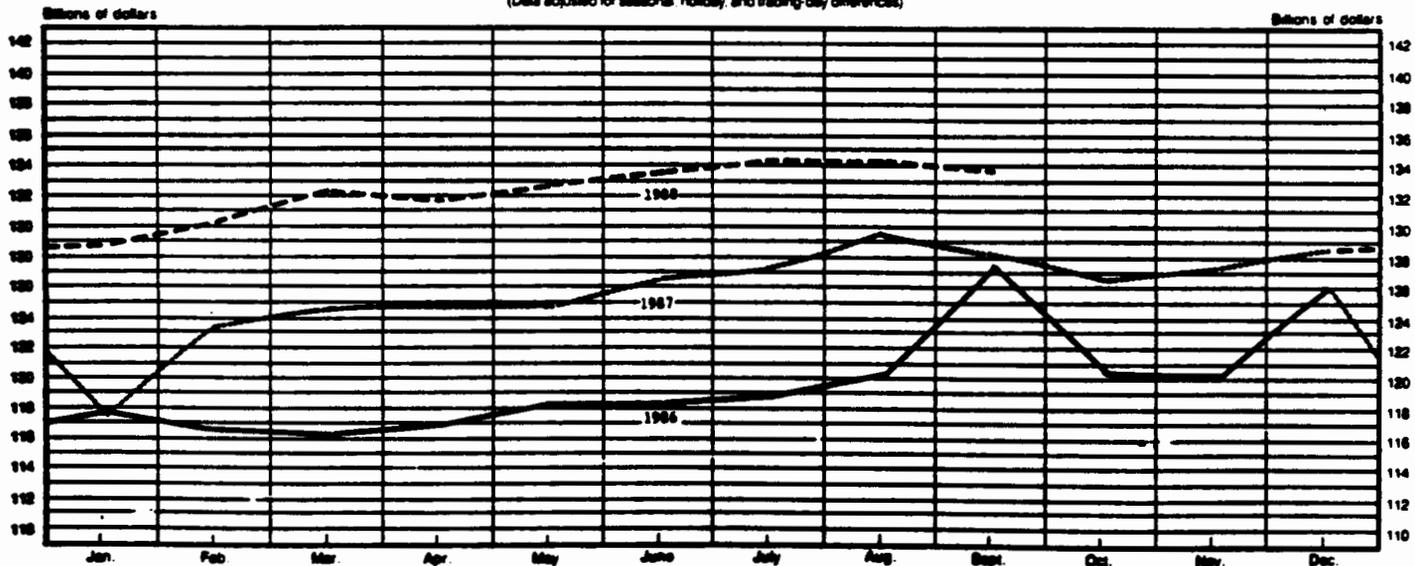
Nondurable goods were unchanged ($+ 1.0\%$) from the previous month but were 5.3 percent ($+ 1.6\%$) above the previous year. General merchandise stores were up 3.6 percent from September a year ago and food stores were up 5.5 percent during the same period.

The Advance Monthly Sales Report for October is scheduled to be released November 15, 1988 at 8:30 a.m.

ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES

January 1986-September 1988

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



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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. 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) 763-7861.

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

(Sales in millions of dollars)

SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted					Adjusted ¹				
		1988			1987		1988			1987	
		Sep. ² adv.	Aug. prel.	July final	Sep.	Aug.	Sep. ² adv.	Aug. prel.	July final	Sep. ²	Aug. ²
	Retail trade, total.....	131,392	138,089	134,098	124,515	131,536	133,661	134,180	134,342	128,110	129,448
	Total (excl. auto group)..	102,630	106,378	103,183	96,003	100,618	105,002	104,954	104,452	99,426	99,640
	Durable goods, total.....	49,509	53,098	51,451	47,675	50,627	49,525	50,019	50,754	48,172	49,239
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers..	7,451	7,713	7,457	6,890	7,080	7,003	6,930	6,904	6,555	6,494
521,3	Building mat. and supply stores.	(*)	5,924	5,669	5,347	5,489	(*)	5,178	5,182	4,960	4,910
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	1,303	1,352	1,136	1,174	(*)	1,275	1,282	1,175	1,157
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	28,762	31,711	30,915	28,512	30,918	28,659	29,226	29,890	28,684	29,808
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	26,282	29,009	28,318	26,107	28,462	26,256	26,761	27,440	26,371	27,500
551	Motor vehicle (franchised)....	(*)	25,817	25,017	23,802	25,510	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores....	(*)	2,702	2,597	2,405	2,456	(*)	2,465	2,450	2,313	2,308
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	7,579	7,750	7,451	6,929	7,116	7,702	7,673	7,672	7,054	7,134
571	Furniture and home furnishings..	(*)	4,023	3,870	3,727	3,793	(*)	3,876	3,933	3,723	3,719
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores.....	(*)	3,210	3,110	2,748	2,869	(*)	3,262	3,206	2,881	2,937
5722	Household appliance stores....	(*)	1,000	1,035	880	943	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total.....	81,883	84,991	82,647	76,840	80,909	84,136	84,161	83,588	79,938	80,209
53	General merchandise group stores..	13,962	14,758	13,310	13,268	14,555	15,152	15,069	15,126	14,619	14,779
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts.)	11,763	12,448	11,198	11,132	12,198	12,676	12,625	12,682	12,193	12,296
531	Dept. stores (in. leased depts) ³	(*)	12,868	11,581	11,521	12,591	(*)	13,064	13,130	12,591	12,705
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	686	650	612	678	(*)	713	724	696	703
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	1,624	1,462	1,524	1,679	(*)	1,731	1,720	1,730	1,780
54	Food stores.....	27,733	28,273	28,940	25,867	26,707	27,852	27,962	27,656	26,390	26,450
541	Grocery stores.....	26,156	26,635	27,264	24,370	25,146	26,235	26,345	25,990	24,842	24,897
554	Gasoline service stations.....	9,147	9,649	9,469	8,845	9,348	9,092	9,111	8,950	8,845	8,920
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	6,712	7,133	6,190	6,403	6,823	6,955	6,908	6,925	6,663	6,633
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	680	649	678	687	(*)	758	771	762	761
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	(*)	2,628	2,429	2,544	2,620	(*)	2,657	2,684	2,617	2,644
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	1,851	1,554	1,519	1,716	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	1,408	1,122	1,228	1,325	(*)	1,282	1,281	1,200	1,214
58	Eating and drinking places.....	13,215	14,119	14,092	12,223	13,290	13,228	13,122	13,060	12,334	12,306
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	4,789	4,942	4,759	4,468	4,582	5,041	5,017	4,962	4,758	4,704
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,609	1,690	1,562	1,635	(*)	1,611	1,606	1,625	1,628
5961 (pt.)	Mail-order houses (department store merchandise).....	(*)	310	261	281	294	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
53,56,57	GAF ⁴	(*)	34,500	31,501	31,024	33,067	(*)	34,770	34,941	33,241	33,406

*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-88-08.

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					
		Sep. 1988 advance from--		Aug. 1988 preliminary from--		July 1988 through Sep. 1988	
		Aug. 1988 prelim.	Sep. 1987 final	July 1988 final	Aug. 1987 final	Apr. 1988 through June 1988	July 1987 through Sep. 1987
	Retail trade, total.....	-0.4	+4.3	-0.1	+3.7	+1.0	+4.8
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	0.0	+5.6	+0.6	+5.3	+1.6	+6.4
	Durable goods, total.....	-1.0	+2.0	-1.4	+1.6	-0.0	+3.7
82	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	+1.1	+6.0	+0.4	+6.7	-1.4	+6.6
55 ex. 564	Automotive dealers.....	-1.0	-0.1	-2.2	-2.0	-1.0	+1.6
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	-1.0	-0.4	-2.6	-2.7	-0.9	+1.0
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	+0.4	+9.2	0.0	+7.6	-0.0	+0.1
	Nondurable goods, total.....	0.0	+6.3	+0.7	+4.9	+2.1	+6.1
53	General merchandise group stores.....	+0.6	+3.6	-0.4	+2.0	+1.1	+3.1
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	+0.4	+4.0	-0.4	+2.7	+1.0	+3.7
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.).....	(NA)	(NA)	-0.8	+2.8	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	-0.4	+6.5	+1.1	+5.7	+2.1	+5.6
541	Grocery stores.....	-0.4	+6.6	+1.4	+6.0	+2.1	+5.5
554	Gasoline service stations.....	-0.2	+2.0	+1.0	+2.1	+1.2	+2.2
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	+0.7	+4.4	-0.2	+4.1	+3.2	+4.3
58	Eating and drinking places.....	+0.0	+7.2	+0.5	+6.6	+2.9	+6.9
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	+0.6	+6.9	+1.1	+6.7	+0.4	+6.1

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		
		Aug. 1988 prelim.	July 1988 final	Aug. 1987	Aug. 1988 prelim.	July 1988 final	Aug. ² 1987
			Retail trade, total.....	49,069	47,931	47,017	60,030
53	General merchandise group stores.....	13,739	12,290	13,424	14,019	14,062	13,627
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	12,069	10,939	11,933	12,216	12,275	11,904
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.).....	12,488	11,290	12,204	12,632	12,690	12,290
533	Variety stores.....	889	603	846	604	679	667
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	1,102	930	1,046	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	16,791	16,223	16,010	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
541	Grocery stores.....	16,677	16,009	16,006	16,763	16,463	16,001
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	3,082	3,272	3,766	3,687	3,736	3,670
662,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	1,413	1,329	1,449	1,422	1,441	1,452
666	Shoe stores.....	661	707	626	666	626	751
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	2,688	2,747	2,662	2,937	2,899	2,743

NA Not available. ² Revised

¹ Data are concurrently adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. Concurrent seasonal adjustment uses all available unadjusted estimates as input to the E-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, 98-88-00.

² Includes 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 -0.8 percent to +0.9 percent with the average of the absolute differences about 0.4 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 August 1988 and final estimates for July 1988 based on the full sample will be published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for August (BR-88-7). 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 ($\pm 1.0\%$)" appears in the text, this indicates a range from -0.2 percent to +1.8 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					Preliminary-to-final percent change minus the Advance-to-preliminary percent change				
		Advance-to- preliminary ratio		Ratio to same month a year ago	Dollar volume sales est.	Ratio of current quarter to prev. quarter	Range		Mean	Aver. of absolute diff.	
		From	To	Median	Median	Median	From	To			
	Retail trade, total.....	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.0	1.0	-0.0	+0.9	0.0	0.4
	Total (excl. auto).	0.5	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.0	-1.0	+1.0	0.0	0.4
	Durable goods, total..	1.4	1.7	1.6	2.3	1.7	2.2	-1.6	+1.0	+0.3	1.0
52	Building materials, group stores.....	0.6	3.6	1.6	3.9	3.3	3.1	-5.2	+1.5	-0.9	1.6
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	1.7	2.2	1.9	3.1	2.3	3.0	-2.1	+2.7	+0.4	1.2
551, 2, 5, 6, 7, 9 57	Motor vehicle and misc. automotive dealers.....	1.2	2.2	1.8	3.7	2.4	3.2	-2.5	+2.0	+0.3	1.2
	Furniture, home furn. and equipment stores.....	1.6	2.3	1.9	3.7	3.3	2.7	-3.3	+4.4	+0.5	1.5
	Vendor, stores, total...	0.5	0.7	0.6	1.0	0.7	0.9	-0.0	+0.7	0.0	0.4
53	General merch. group, total.	0.2	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.5	-2.6	+1.0	-0.2	0.0
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts.).....	0.0	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	-2.1	+2.0	-0.2	0.0
54	Food stores.....	0.0	1.4	1.0	1.6	1.3	1.6	-0.9	+0.8	+0.1	0.3
541	Grocery stores.....	0.3	1.1	0.5	1.0	1.4	1.6	-0.8	+0.9	+0.1	0.3
554	Gasoline service stations...	0.7	1.2	0.8	2.0	2.2	2.0	-1.4	+2.3	-0.1	1.0
56	Apparel and acc. stores....	1.2	3.4	1.5	2.4	1.0	1.0	-2.0	+2.2	-0.5	1.3
59	Eating and drinking	0.0	1.3	1.1	2.7	2.3	2.6	-1.7	+1.0	+0.3	0.0
591	Drug and proprietary	0.4	0.7	0.5	2.3	1.7	2.1	-1.6	+1.3	-0.1	0.7

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 March - July 1988.
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, September 1987 - August 1988. The ranges for all other totals and kinds of business are based on the 12-month period May 1987-April 1988.

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

