



Advance Monthly Retail Sales

December 1989

U.S. Department of Commerce
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

CB-90-09

INTENTION TO REVISE ESTIMATES. The unadjusted and adjusted monthly retail sales estimates will be revised based on the results of the 1987 Census of Retail Trade and the 1988 Annual Retail Trade Survey. Revised estimates for January 1982 through February 1990 are scheduled for release the week of March 19, 1990. Estimates shown in this report do not reflect this revision.

FOR WIRE TRANSMISSION 8:30 A.M. EST., Friday, January 12, 1990

The Census Bureau of the Department of Commerce announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for December adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes were \$ 144.4 billion, an increase of 0.2 percent ($\pm 1.0\%$) from the previous month, and 3.8 percent above December 1988. Total sales in the fourth quarter were 3.6 percent above the same quarter a year ago. Total sales for the 12 months of 1989 were \$1,711.2 billion, up 5.0 percent from the 1988 total.

Durable goods decreased 0.6 percent ($\pm 2.8\%$) from the previous month.

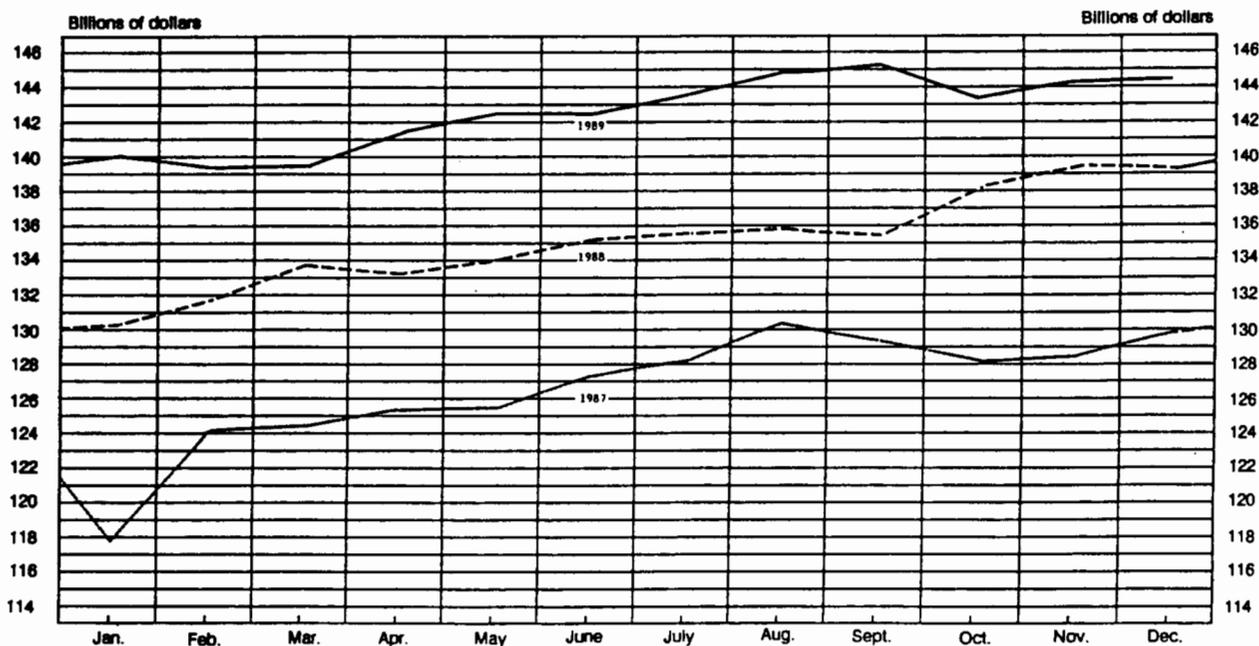
Nondurable goods increased 0.6 percent ($\pm 1.0\%$) from the previous month and were 6.7 percent above last year. General merchandise stores were up 4.4 percent from a year ago, while food stores were up 8.1 percent.

The Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report for January is scheduled to be released February 13, 1990 at 8:30 a.m.

ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES

January 1987-December 1989

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



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This report is available the day of issue through the Department of Commerce's online Economic Bulletin Board (N-8-1) (202-377-3870) and through the Census Bureau's online information service-CENDATA. CENDATA is available from Dialog Information Services, INC. (1-800-334-2464) and CompuServe (1-800-848-8199). The CENDATA staff at the Bureau of the Census (301-763-2074) can provide content information and general guidance.

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

(Sales in millions of dollars)

SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted							Adjusted				
		12 month total		1989			1988		1989			1988	
		1989	Percent change from 1988	Dec. ² adv.	Nov. prel.	Oct. final	Dec.	Nov.	Dec. ² adv.	Nov. prel.	Oct. final	Dec. ^F	Nov. ^F
	Retail trade, total.....	1,711,167	+ 5.0	174,815	146,270	140,220	170,811	140,249	144,440	144,184	143,426	139,145	139,561
	Total (excl. auto group)..	1,334,093	+ 5.9	147,764	118,038	110,649	142,198	111,483	113,611	113,125	112,253	107,309	107,690
	Durable goods, total.....	649,410	+ 3.3	58,458	52,191	51,934	59,847	51,683	53,720	54,026	53,980	54,125	53,992
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers..	90,456	+ 1.8	6,854	7,299	7,923	7,255	7,318	7,540	7,535	7,481	7,760	7,602
521,3	Building mat. and supply stores.	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,203	5,746	4,979	5,337	(*)	5,266	5,306	5,594	5,468
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,208	1,221	1,370	1,182	(*)	1,217	1,210	1,177	1,194
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	377,074	+ 2.2	27,051	28,232	29,571	28,613	28,766	30,829	31,059	31,173	31,836	31,871
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	345,915	+ 2.0	24,368	25,516	26,780	26,180	26,281	28,074	28,351	28,520	29,383	29,430
551	Motor vehicle (franchised)....	(*)	(*)	(*)	22,825	23,778	23,395	23,896	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,716	2,791	2,433	2,485	(*)	2,708	2,653	2,453	2,441
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	99,464	+ 7.0	11,326	9,025	8,154	11,130	8,643	8,353	8,440	8,380	7,943	8,024
571	Furniture and home furnishings..	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,352	3,957	4,636	4,236	(*)	4,071	3,914	3,962	3,940
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,998	3,591	5,493	3,844	(*)	3,712	3,828	3,412	3,536
5722	Household appliance stores....	(*)	(*)	(*)	923	803	1,208	935	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total.....	1,061,757	+ 6.1	116,357	94,079	88,286	110,964	88,566	90,720	90,158	89,446	85,020	85,569
53	General merchandise group stores..	193,320	+ 5.2	30,521	20,081	15,832	29,944	18,800	16,374	16,436	16,308	15,686	15,681
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts.)	162,220	+ 5.3	25,338	16,858	13,332	24,941	15,792	13,726	13,784	13,660	13,182	13,160
531	Dept. stores (in. leased depts)	(*)	(*)	(*)	17,384	13,771	25,731	16,293	(*)	14,249	14,095	13,636	13,600
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	788	682	1,326	715	(*)	742	718	688	692
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,435	1,818	3,677	2,293	(*)	1,910	1,930	1,816	1,829
54	Food stores.....	354,827	+ 6.9	32,858	29,622	29,191	30,888	27,764	30,297	30,106	30,023	28,014	28,490
541	Grocery stores.....	332,800	+ 7.1	30,590	27,784	27,383	28,705	26,007	28,429	28,236	28,172	26,239	26,701
554	Gasoline service stations.....	109,272	+ 7.2	9,217	9,036	9,329	8,499	8,365	9,386	9,268	9,146	8,568	8,544
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	87,926	+ 7.2	12,536	8,313	7,248	12,026	7,780	7,493	7,483	7,388	7,065	7,022
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	886	764	1,512	859	(*)	781	772	766	761
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,183	2,785	4,585	3,068	(*)	2,834	2,788	2,739	2,747
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,326	1,927	3,404	2,119	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,347	1,251	1,774	1,243	(*)	1,336	1,309	1,271	1,227
58	Eating and drinking places.....	164,852	+ 4.7	13,948	13,347	13,961	13,792	12,955	13,796	13,918	13,836	13,642	13,565
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	62,628	+ 6.6	6,962	5,351	5,172	6,498	4,884	5,384	5,438	5,360	4,904	5,009
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,639	1,552	2,303	1,574	(*)	1,636	1,620	1,592	1,572
5961 (pt.)	Mail-order houses (department store merchandise).....	(*)	(*)	(*)	401	328	366	418	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
53,56,57	GAF ⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	43,496	36,091	64,149	40,872	(*)	37,795	37,509	35,824	35,798

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

NA Not available. ^F 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, BR-89-11.

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					
		Dec. 1989 advance from--		Nov. 1989 preliminary from--		Oct. 1989 through Dec. 1989	
		Nov. 1989 prelim.	Dec. 1988 final	Oct. 1989 final	Nov. 1988 final	July 1989 through Sep. 1989	Oct. 1988 through Dec. 1988
	Retail trade, total.....	+0.2	+3.8	+0.5	+3.3	-0.4	+3.6
	Total (excl. automotive group)....	+0.4	+5.9	+0.8	+5.0	+0.8	+5.3
	Durable goods, total.....	-0.6	-0.7	+0.1	+0.1	-2.8	+0.2
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	+0.1	-2.8	+0.7	-0.9	-1.6	-1.2
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	-0.7	-3.2	-0.4	-2.5	-4.6	-2.2
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	-1.0	-4.5	-0.6	-3.7	-5.3	-3.3
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	-1.0	+5.2	+0.7	+5.2	+1.0	+5.6
	Nondurable goods, total.....	+0.6	+6.7	+0.8	+5.4	+1.1	+5.8
53	General merchandise group stores.....	-0.4	+4.4	+0.8	+4.8	+1.4	+4.7
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	-0.4	+4.1	+0.9	+4.7	+1.4	+4.4
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.).....	(NA)	(NA)	+1.1	+4.8	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	+0.6	+8.1	+0.3	+5.7	+0.9	+6.8
541	Grocery stores.....	+0.7	+8.3	+0.2	+5.7	+0.8	+6.9
554	Gasoline service stations.....	+1.3	+9.5	+1.3	+8.5	+1.3	+8.1
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	+0.1	+6.1	+1.3	+6.6	+0.7	+5.9
58	Eating and drinking places.....	-0.9	+1.1	+0.6	+2.6	+0.5	+2.1
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	-1.0	+9.8	+1.5	+8.6	+2.6	+8.7

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		
		Nov. 1989 prelim.	Oct. 1989 final	Nov. 1988	Nov. 1989 prelim.	Oct. 1989 final	Nov. ² 1988
	Retail trade, total.....	58,837	52,459	54,671	54,240	53,750	50,955
53	General merchandise group stores.....	18,681	14,609	17,565	15,228	15,072	14,569
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	16,283	12,901	15,301	13,314	13,205	12,740
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.).....	16,790	13,324	15,776	13,751	13,638	13,169
533	Variety stores.....	626	522	571	587	549	551
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	1,772	1,186	1,693	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	16,807	16,241	15,595	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
541	Grocery stores.....	16,565	16,012	15,363	16,665	16,541	15,677
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	4,626	3,928	4,263	4,080	4,033	3,766
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	1,776	1,523	1,674	1,557	1,546	1,479
566	Shoe stores.....	864	782	783	850	830	764
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	3,198	3,039	2,860	3,260	3,243	2,955

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, BR-89-11.

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).



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 - 0.4 percent to + 0.6 percent with the average of the absolute differences about 0.3 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 November 1989 and final estimates for October 1989 based on the full sample are published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for November (BR-89-11). 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.

The margin of sampling error, as used on page 1, indicates a range about the estimate which corresponds to a 90 percent confidence interval. If, for example, the estimate is up .8 percent and the margin of sampling error is 1.2 percentage points above or below the estimate, then the indicated range is - .4 percent to + 2.0 percent. 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 ¹		Mean	Aver. of absolute diff.	
		From	To	Median	Median	Median	From	To			
		Range ¹	Median	Median	Median	Median	From	To			
	Retail trade, total.....	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.9	0.8	1.0	-0.4	+0.6	0.0	0.3
	Total (excl. auto).....	0.5	0.7	0.6	0.8	0.7	0.9	-0.3	+0.5	+0.1	0.2
	Durable goods, total..	1.4	2.0	1.6	2.3	1.8	2.2	-0.9	+1.7	-0.1	0.7
52	Building materials, group stores.....	1.1	3.0	1.7	3.8	3.2	3.1	-1.9	+3.1	0.0	0.7
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	1.6	2.4	2.0	3.2	2.6	3.0	-2.1	+2.9	-0.1	0.9
551,2,5, 6,7,9	Motor vehicle and misc. automotive dealers.....	1.3	2.0	1.6	4.0	2.8	3.3	-2.5	+3.3	-0.1	1.0
57	Furniture, home furn. and equipment stores.....	1.3	3.8	2.1	4.2	3.9	3.1	-1.9	+5.0	+0.5	1.5
	Nondur. stores, total...	0.5	0.7	0.6	1.0	0.7	0.9	-0.2	+0.7	+0.1	0.2
53	General merch. group, total.	0.2	0.9	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.5	-0.9	+1.3	0.0	0.4
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts.).....	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	-0.5	+1.2	+0.1	0.4
54	Food stores.....	0.8	1.3	1.0	1.7	1.3	1.6	-0.4	+1.5	+0.2	0.4
541	Grocery stores.....	0.2	0.5	0.3	1.8	1.3	1.6	-0.5	+1.3	+0.2	0.4
554	Gasoline service stations...	0.6	1.0	0.9	2.9	2.1	2.7	-1.8	+1.9	0.0	0.7
56	Apparel and acc. stores.....	1.1	3.6	1.7	2.5	2.0	1.9	-3.9	+3.8	+0.2	1.4
58	Eating and drinking	0.4	1.9	0.8	2.7	2.3	2.6	-1.3	+1.6	+0.2	0.8
591	Drug and proprietary	0.6	1.8	0.7	2.5	1.9	2.1	-1.7	+2.1	+0.3	0.7

¹ 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 1988 - October 1989.

² 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, December 1988 - November 1989. The ranges for all other totals and kinds of business are based on the 12-month period October 1988 - September 1989.

Notes: Coefficients of variation for the ratio of current quarter to current quarter a-year-ago estimates are approximately the same as those for the ratio of current quarter to previous quarter. See appendix B, Reliability of Data, in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for a discussion on the measures of sampling variability.