

Advance Monthly Retail Sales



U.S. Department of Commerce
ECONOMICS AND STATISTICS ADMINISTRATION
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

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The Census Bureau of the Department of Commerce announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for April adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$169.7 billion, an increase of 1.2 percent ($\pm 1.2\%$) from the previous month and were 5.9 percent ($\pm 1.6\%$) above April 1992. Total sales in the February through April period were 5.2 percent ($\pm 1.6\%$) above the same period a year ago. The February to March 1993 percent change was revised from -1.0 percent ($\pm 1.3\%$) as published in the March advance, to -0.8 percent ($\pm 0.4\%$).

Durable goods increased 2.2 percent ($\pm 3.0\%$) from the previous month and were 8.8 percent above April 1992.

Nondurable goods increased 0.6 percent ($\pm 1.0\%$) from March end were 4.4 percent above April 1992. General merchandise stores increased 2.2 percent from March and were 7.9 percent above the previous year.

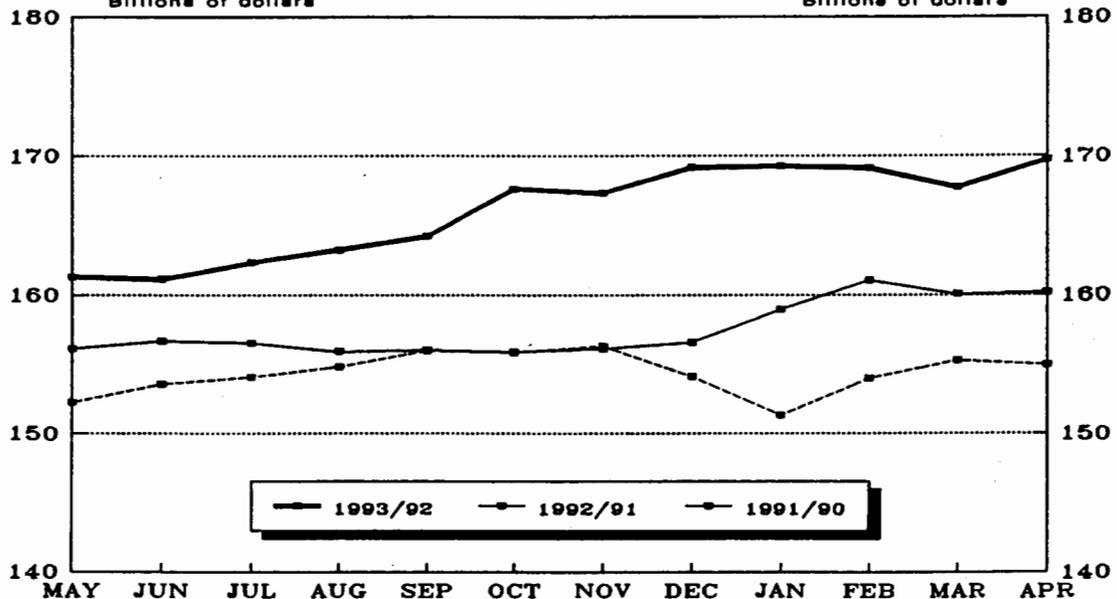
The advance estimates are based on a small subsample of the Bureau's full retail sales sample. Estimates from the advance and the subsequent full survey can differ because of the earlier reporting in the advance and because of sampling variability present in both surveys.

The Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report for May is scheduled to be released June 11, 1993 at 8:30 a.m.

ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES

May 1990 - April 1993

(Data adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes)
Billions of dollars



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This report is available the day of issue through the Department of Commerce's online Economic Bulletin Board. For information call (202) 482-1986. The data are also available through the Census Bureau's online information service - CENDATA. CENDATA is available from Dialog Information Services, INC. (1-800-334-2564) 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 ¹				
		1993			1992		1993			1992	
		Apr. ² adv.	Mar. prel.	Feb. final	Apr.	Mar.	Apr. ² adv.	Mar. prel.	Feb. final	Apr. ¹	Mar. ¹
	Retail trade, total.....	169,607	164,893	145,341	159,068	154,738	169,700	167,720	169,116	160,182	160,048
	Total (excl. auto group)...	130,575	127,619	114,584	124,635	121,259	133,792	132,852	134,385	128,119	127,768
	Durable goods, total.....	64,562	61,538	52,415	58,709	56,463	62,087	60,775	60,978	57,073	57,281
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	9,470	8,278	6,962	9,092	7,939	8,834	8,766	8,974	8,593	8,544
521.3	Building met. and supply stores.....	(*)	6,174	5,101	6,367	5,768	(*)	6,499	6,590	6,146	6,176
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	979	806	1,091	973	(*)	1,058	1,058	1,043	1,053
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	39,032	37,274	30,757	34,433	33,479	35,908	34,868	34,731	32,063	32,280
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	35,945	34,397	28,260	31,568	30,753	32,917	31,938	31,682	29,284	29,429
551	Motor vehicle (franchised).....	(*)	30,276	25,222	26,827	26,925	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	2,877	2,497	2,865	2,726	(*)	2,930	3,049	2,779	2,851
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	8,573	8,939	8,029	8,078	8,235	9,072	9,142	9,182	8,513	8,602
571	Furniture and home furnishings.....	(*)	4,539	4,105	4,329	4,310	(*)	4,576	4,628	4,408	4,439
5722,31,4	Household appliance, radio, TV and computer stores.....	(*)	3,502	3,103	3,031	3,155	(*)	3,622	3,621	3,309	3,342
5722	Household appliance stores.....	(*)	766	688	764	756	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total.....	105,045	103,355	92,926	100,359	98,275	107,613	106,945	108,138	103,109	102,767
53	General merchandise group stores.....	20,212	19,085	16,345	18,737	17,872	21,622	21,164	21,638	20,038	19,997
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts).....	15,306	14,331	12,092	14,248	13,651	16,266	15,835	16,296	15,174	15,151
531	Dept. stores (in. leased depts) ³	(*)	14,731	12,442	14,693	14,080	(*)	16,277	16,723	15,631	15,151
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	464	416	561	496	(*)	525	534	562	562
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	4,290	3,837	3,928	3,725	(*)	4,804	4,808	4,302	4,222
54	Food stores.....	32,084	31,888	29,498	31,340	30,807	32,372	32,267	32,887	31,807	31,532
541	Grocery stores.....	30,108	29,988	27,685	29,424	29,031	30,412	30,322	30,864	29,902	29,684
554	Gasoline service stations.....	11,065	10,966	10,003	10,539	10,376	11,647	11,519	11,537	11,024	10,980
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	8,831	7,829	6,489	8,444	7,573	8,752	8,524	8,900	8,400	8,370
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	634	553	739	656	(*)	741	768	758	775
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	(*)	2,885	2,407	3,112	2,816	(*)	3,079	3,275	3,072	3,044
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	2,384	1,976	2,458	2,183	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	1,319	1,068	1,602	1,387	(*)	1,351	1,396	1,454	1,460
58	Eating and drinking places.....	17,442	17,184	15,381	16,450	16,766	17,338	17,253	17,205	16,516	16,850
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	6,641	6,648	6,202	6,511	6,365	6,621	6,641	6,662	6,511	6,468
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,891	1,770	1,940	1,874	(*)	2,049	2,080	2,084	2,057
5961 (pt)	Mail-order houses (department store merchandise).....	(*)	341	284	289	328	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
53,56,57	GAF ⁴	(*)	41,279	35,944	40,682	38,835	(*)	45,161	46,071	43,294	43,157

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

NA Not available.

¹Revised.

¹Data are concurrently adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes. 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-93-03.

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, but not for price changes)

SIC code	Kind of business	Percent change					
		Apr. 1993 advance from--		Mar. 1993 preliminary from--		Feb. 1993 through Apr. 1993 from--	
		Mar. 1993 prelim.	Apr. 1992 final	Feb. 1993 final	Mar. 1992 final	Nov. 1992 through Jan. 1993	Feb. 1992 through Apr. 1992
	Retail trade, total.....	+1.2	+5.9	-0.8	+4.8	+0.2	+5.2
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	+0.7	+4.4	-1.1	+4.0	+0.1	+4.4
	Durable goods, total.....	+2.2	+8.8	-0.3	+6.1	-0.5	+6.8
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	+0.8	+2.8	-2.3	+2.6	-0.2	+3.5
55 ex. 554 551,2,5, 6,7,9	Automotive dealers.....	+3.0	+12.0	+0.4	+8.0	+0.6	+8.5
	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	+3.1	+12.4	+0.8	+8.5	+0.5	+8.7
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	-0.8	+6.6	-0.4	+6.3	-1.8	+6.5
	Nondurable goods, total.....	+0.6	+4.4	-1.1	+4.1	+0.5	+4.4
53	General merchandise group stores.....	+2.2	+7.9	-2.2	+5.8	+1.1	+6.6
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	+2.7	+7.2	-2.8	+4.6	-0.3	+5.6
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.) ²	(NA)	(NA)	-2.7	+4.5	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	+0.3	+1.8	-1.9	+2.3	0.0	+2.7
541	Grocery stores.....	+0.3	+1.7	-1.8	+2.1	+0.2	+2.5
554	Gasolina service stations.....	+1.1	+5.7	-0.2	+4.9	+4.2	+5.6
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	+2.7	+4.2	-4.2	+1.8	-4.0	+3.6
58	Eating and drinking places.....	+0.5	+5.0	+0.3	+2.4	-0.9	+3.0
	Drug and proprietary stores.....	-0.3	+1.7	-0.3	+2.7	+4.7	+2.5

Table 3. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales of Large (Group II) Companies, by Kind of Business

(Sales in millions of dollars)

SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted			Adjusted ¹		
		Mar. 1993 prelim.	Feb. 1993 final	Mar. 1992	Mar. 1993 prelim.	Feb. 1993 final	Mar. 1992
	Retail trade, total.....	66,072	58,466	62,374	69,527	70,517	66,265
53	General merchandise group stores.....	18,202	15,590	16,985	20,265	20,614	18,968
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	14,141	11,930	13,435	15,695	16,078	14,878
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.) ²	14,532	12,273	13,853	16,075	16,496	15,324
533	Variety stores.....	318	289	314	360	374	362
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores....	3,743	3,371	3,236	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	19,195	17,723	18,547	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
541	Grocery stores.....	18,904	17,438	18,240	18,923	19,269	18,518
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	4,917	3,930	4,793	5,383	5,557	5,361
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	1,780	1,437	1,729	1,965	2,013	1,930
566	Shoe stores.....	911	724	926	954	995	979
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	4,037	3,806	3,867	4,094	4,101	3,991

NA Not available.

¹Revised.

¹Data are concurrently adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes. 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-93-03.

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

Note: The large (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).

Official Business

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Sample Design and Reliability of Data

The advance estimates are based on a small subsample of the Bureau's full retail sales sample. Estimates from the advance and the subsequent full survey can differ because of the earlier reporting in the advance and because of sampling variability present in both surveys.

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 +1.0 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 March 1993 and final estimates for February 1993 based on the full sample are published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for March (BR-93-03). 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 0.8 percent and the margin of sampling error is 1.2 percentage points above or below the estimate, then the indicated range is -0.4 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 ²		Mean	Avg. of absolute diff.	
		Range ¹		Median	Median	Median	Median	From	To		
		From	To								
	Retail trade, total.....	0.8	1.1	0.9	1.0	0.9	1.0	-0.9	+1.0	0.0	0.5
	Total (excl. auto).....	0.8	0.9	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.9	-0.7	+1.3	+0.1	0.4
	Durable goods, total.....	1.8	2.8	2.2	2.5	2.2	2.3	-2.5	+2.2	+0.2	0.7
52	Building materials, group stores.....	1.2	2.0	1.7	3.3	2.5	2.5	-3.4	+4.0	+0.4	2.0
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	2.2	4.1	3.1	3.4	3.6	3.3	-3.0	+2.6	+0.5	1.0
551, 2, 5,	Motor vehicle and misc. automotive dealers.....	1.6	4.1	2.9	4.8	3.9	3.5	-3.2	+2.6	+0.5	1.1
57	Furniture, home furn., and equipment stores.....	1.8	4.3	2.4	4.5	4.2	3.1	-2.5	+2.3	-0.2	1.2
	Nondurable goods, total.....	0.7	0.9	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.9	-0.6	+0.9	+0.2	0.4
53	General merch. group, total.....	0.2	0.8	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.5	-1.4	+1.7	+0.1	0.7
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts.).....	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	-1.7	+1.6	+0.1	0.8
54	Food stores.....	0.9	1.5	1.0	1.7	1.4	1.5	-0.5	+0.6	0.0	0.4
541	Grocery stores.....	0.2	0.9	0.3	1.8	1.3	1.5	-0.5	+0.7	0.0	0.3
554	Gasoline service stations.....	1.1	4.7	1.3	3.3	2.6	2.8	-1.4	+1.9	+0.3	0.8
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	1.1	2.9	2.0	3.0	2.6	2.0	-2.7	+4.8	+0.5	1.5
58	Eating and drinking places.....	0.6	1.3	0.9	3.1	2.7	2.7	-0.9	+2.3	+0.3	0.8
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	0.5	3.2	0.8	2.4	1.7	2.0	-3.7	+1.1	+0.1	1.0

¹The ranges of sampling variability shown are based on sales estimates not adjusted for seasonal variation, holiday, and trading-day differences for the data months of November 1990 - March 1991.

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, April 1992 - March 1993. The ranges for all other totals and kinds of business are based on the 12-month period April - March 1991.

Note: 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 of the measures of sampling variability.

