

COMMERCE

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Lewis L. Strauss,
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ADVANCE REPORT ON RETAIL TRADE, JANUARY 1959

Total sales of retail stores in January were \$16.3 billion, the U. S. Department of Commerce announced today. This advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal factors and trading day differences was virtually unchanged from December and about 5 percent above January 1958.

The January sales figures are based on the Advance Report on Retail Trade, a monthly survey of the Bureau of the Census conducted in cooperation with a representative cross-section of about 1,700 retail firms which, in total, operate some 35,000 stores in the United States. The firms which are cooperating in the early reporting of sales are part of a larger group which furnishes figures at a later date. The advance estimates are preliminary and subject to revision, but the revision of the total seldom exceeds $1\frac{1}{2}$ percent.

The preliminary Census figures for January are shown in table 1 on the reverse side. The Office of Business Economics noted that after adjustment for seasonal factors and trading day differences, January sales by the major lines of trade were maintained at, or slightly below, their high December rates. Final estimates for December indicate that seasonally adjusted retail sales were 4 percent above November.

(more)

Table 1.--SALES OF RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES, BY KIND-OF-BUSINESS GROUP

(NOT ADJUSTED for seasonal factors and trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	Sales (millions of dollars)		
	1959	1958	
	January	December	January
Retail stores, total ¹	16,340	21,174	15,286
Durable-goods stores, total ¹	5,138	6,390	4,803
Nondurable-goods stores, total ¹	11,202	14,784	10,483
Food group.....	4,397	4,475	4,126
Grocery stores.....	3,927	3,947	3,662
Eating and drinking places.....	1,190	1,243	1,133
General merchandise group.....	1,440	3,359	1,377
Department stores.....	822	1,952	781
Apparel group.....	883	1,854	854
Furniture and appliance group.....	770	1,176	777
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equip. group..	899	1,132	851
Automotive group.....	3,066	3,214	2,810
Gasoline service stations.....	1,261	1,369	1,209
Drug and proprietary stores.....	584	738	538

See footnotes below table 2.

Source: Bureau of the Census

Table 2.--SALES OF RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES, BY KIND-OF-BUSINESS GROUP

(ADJUSTED for seasonal factors and trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	Percentage change, Jan. 1959 from--		Sales (millions of dollars)				Percentage change Dec. 1958 from--	
	Dec. 1958	Jan. 1958	1959		1958		Nov. 1958	Dec. 1957
			Jan.	Dec.	Nov.	Dec.		
Retail stores, total ¹	-0.3	+5.0	17,558	17,605	16,961	16,846	+4	+4
Durable-goods stores, total ¹ ..	+0.4	+5.7	5,852	5,827	5,521	5,588	+6	+4
Nondurable-goods stores, total ¹	-0.6	+4.7	11,706	11,778	11,441	11,257	+3	+5
Food group.....			4,242	4,215	4,135		+1	+3
Eating and drinking places.....			1,243	1,232	1,226		+1	+1
General merchandise group.....			1,887	1,777	1,801		+6	+5
Apparel group.....			1,101	1,033	1,087		+7	+1
Furniture and appliance group.....			868	883	895		-2	-3
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group..			1,219	1,237	1,135		-1	+7
Automotive group.....			3,256	2,906	3,087		+12	+5
Gasoline service stations.....			1,356	1,342	1,260		+1	+8
Drug and proprietary stores.....			580	565	546		+3	+6

Source: Office of Business Economic

¹ Totals include data for kinds of business not shown separately.² Based on preliminary estimates supplied by Federal Reserve Board.