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Total sales of retail stores in April were \$20.4 billion, the U. S. Department of Commerce announced today. After adjustment for seasonal variations and trading day differences, but not for price changes, total retail sales amounted to \$20.2 billion, about 1 percent below March 1963 and 3 percent above April 1962.

The Office of Business Economics noted that, after adjustment for seasonal variations and trading day differences, sales of durables and nondurables were each off about 1 percent from March to April. By major lines, the automotive group was up slightly and all other lines of trade were unchanged or lower. Based on the full sample, seasonally adjusted sales of all retail stores in March 1963 were virtually unchanged from February.

The April sales figures are based on a monthly survey of the Bureau of the Census conducted in cooperation with a representative cross-section of about 2,000 retail firms which, in total, operate some 40,000 stores in the United States. The firms which are cooperating in the early reporting of sales are part of a larger sample group which furnishes figures at a later date. The advance estimates are subject to revision in the estimates subsequently derived from the full sample, but the revision of the total sellon exceeds $1\frac{1}{2}$ percent.

(more)

ADVANCE RETAIL SALES FOR APRIL 1963

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

(NOT ADJUSTED for seasonal variations or trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	Sales (millions of dollars)		
	1963		1962
	April ¹	March ²	April
Retail stores, total ³	20,392	19,714	19,251
Durable-goods stores, total ³	6,917	6,394	6,284
Nondurable-goods stores, total ³	13,475	13,320	12,967
Food group.....	4,671	5,004	4,520
Grocery stores.....	4,237	4,551	4,073
Eating and drinking places.....	1,406	1,425	1,371
General merchandise group.....	2,371	2,092	2,152
Apparel group.....	1,309	1,074	1,307
Furniture and appliance group.....	837	834	789
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equip. group.....	1,331	1,130	1,287
Automotive group.....	4,233	3,934	3,763
Gasoline service stations.....	1,528	1,531	1,511
Drug and proprietary stores.....	652	667	643

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 variations and trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	Percentage change, April 1963 from--		Sales (millions of dollars)				Percentage change, March 1963 from--	
	Mar. 1963	Apr. 1962	1963			1962	Feb. 1963	Mar. 1962
			April ¹	March ²	Feb.	Mar.		
Retail stores, total ³	-1.2 -1	+3	20,178	20,424	20,350	19,328	0	+6
Durable-goods stores, total ³	-0.9 -1	+4	6,574	6,636	6,583	6,180	+1	+7
Nondurable-goods stores, total ³	-1.3 -1	+2	13,604	13,788	13,767	13,148	0	+5
Food group.....				4,835	4,897	4,680	-1	+3
Eating and drinking places.....				1,516	1,502	1,441	+1	+5
General merchandise group.....				2,440	2,319	2,246	+5	+9
Apparel group.....				1,202	1,214	1,217	-1	-1
Furniture and appliance group.....				950	951	888	0	+7
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.....				1,304	1,261	1,225	+3	+6
Automotive group.....				3,786	3,792	3,557	0	+6
Gasoline service stations.....				1,594	1,608	1,552	-1	+3
Drug and proprietary stores.....				679	688	658	-1	+2

¹ Advance sample estimates.

Source: Office of Business Economic

² Preliminary estimates of full sample.

³ Totals include data for kinds of business not shown separately