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The U.S. Department of Commerce announced today that total sales of retail stores in October were estimated at \$22.8 billion. Statistics prepared by the Department's Bureau of the Census show that this advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal variations and trading day differences, but not for price changes, was 4 percent above October 1963 but about 3 percent below the September 1964 level.

The Office of Business Economics noted that the decline in seasonally adjusted retail sales was due to a sharp drop in automotive dealer sales in the wake of the recent work stoppage at a major producer's plant. In most other lines of trade, October sales showed moderate advances. Based on the full sample, seasonally adjusted sales of all retail stores in September were little changed from August 1964.

The October sales figures are based on a monthly survey of the Bureau of the Census conducted in cooperation with a representative cross-section of about 2,500 retail firms which, in total, operate some 48,000 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 by the estimates subsequently derived from the full sample.

The revision of the total seldom exceeds 1.5 percent and for the past year has averaged 0.6 percent. For individual kind-of-business groups, revisions have been greater, ranging on the average from 1.0 percent for the food group to 3.6 percent for the lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.

(more)

ADVANCE RETAIL SALES FOR OCTOBER 1964

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)		
	1964		1963
	October <sup>1</sup>	September <sup>2</sup>	October
Retail stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	22,781	21,246	21,528
Durable-goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	7,058	6,786	7,599
Nondurable-goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	15,723	14,460	13,929
Food group.....	5,639	5,149	4,910
Grocery stores.....	5,138	4,658	4,449
Eating and drinking places.....	1,757	1,680	1,556
General merchandise group.....	2,836	2,553	2,417
Department stores.....	1,688	1,521	1,404
Apparel group.....	1,375	1,272	1,191
Furniture and appliance group.....	1,239	1,075	1,095
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equip. group.....	1,471	1,381	1,526
Automotive group.....	3,689	3,660	4,387
Gasoline service stations.....	1,781	1,691	1,649
Drug and proprietary stores.....	756	708	667

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<sup>4</sup>)

Kind-of-business group	Percentage change, Oct. 1964 from--		Sales (millions of dollars)				Percentage change, Sept. 1964 from--	
	Sept. 1964	Oct. 1963	1964			1963	Aug. 1964	Sept. 1963
			Oct. <sup>1</sup>	Sept. <sup>2</sup>	Aug.	Sept.		
Retail stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	-3	+4	21,536	22,175	22,266	20,426	0	+9
Durable-goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> ...	-13	-7	6,428	7,421	7,324	6,606	+1	+12
Nondurable-goods stores, total <sup>3</sup>	+2	+10	15,108	14,754	14,942	13,820	-1	+7
Food group.....				5,301	5,234	4,897	+1	+8
Eating and drinking places.....				1,609	1,633	1,470	-1	+9
General merchandise group.....				2,594	2,734	2,390	-5	+9
Apparel group.....				1,267	1,363	1,204	-7	+5
Furniture and appliance group.....				1,054	1,094	985	-4	+7
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.....				1,270	1,273	1,318	0	-4
Automotive group.....				4,448	4,259	3,717	+4	+20
Gasoline service stations.....				1,685	1,690	1,605	0	+5
Drug and proprietary stores.....				741	722	688	+3	+8

<sup>1</sup> Advance sample estimates.

<sup>2</sup> Preliminary estimates of full sample.

<sup>3</sup> Totals include data for kinds of business not shown separately.

<sup>4</sup> Data adjusted for seasonal variations and trading day differences.