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The U.S. Department of Commerce announced today that total sales of retail stores in September were estimated at \$22.4 billion. Statistics prepared by the Department's Bureau of the Census show that this advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal and holiday variations and trading day differences, but not for price changes, was about 1 percent below the August 1965 level but 5 percent above September 1964.

The Office of Business Economics noted that, after adjustment, the sales decline from August to September occurred entirely among the durable-goods lines, particularly among automotive dealers. Nondurable goods sales in September remained at their near-record August rate.

The September 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 estimates subsequently derived from the full sample.

The revision of the total seldom exceeds 1.5 percent and for the past year has averaged 0.9 percent. For individual kind-of-business groups, revisions have been greater, ranging on the average from 1.0 percent for drug and proprietary stores to 3.0 percent for the lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.

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For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. Annual subscription to Current Retail Trade Reports (Weekly Retail Sales Report, Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report, Monthly Retail Trade Report, and Annual Retail Trade Report sold as a single subscription) \$6.00. Single copies, available only from the Bureau of the Census, 10¢ each.

ADVANCE RETAIL SALES FOR SEPTEMBER 1965

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)		
	1965		1964
	September <sup>1</sup>	August <sup>2</sup>	September
Retail stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	22,388	23,098	21,313
Durable-goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	7,028	7,590	6,893
Nondurable-goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	15,360	15,508	14,420
Food group.....	5,442	5,427	5,099
Grocery stores.....	4,945	4,891	4,612
Eating and drinking places.....	1,777	1,997	1,671
General merchandise group.....	2,792	2,789	2,550
Department stores.....	1,703	1,661	1,519
Apparel group.....	1,333	1,193	1,289
Furniture and appliance group.....	1,151	1,142	1,088
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equip. group	1,503	1,523	1,397
Automotive group.....	3,661	4,267	3,728
Gasoline service stations.....	1,790	1,944	1,701
Drug and proprietary stores.....	752	750	701

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, Sept. 1965 from--		Sales (millions of dollars)				Percentage change, Aug. 1965 from--	
	Aug. 1965	Sept. 1964	1965			1964	July 1965	Aug. 1964
			Sept. <sup>1</sup>	Aug. <sup>2</sup>	July	Aug.		
Retail stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	-1	+5	23,344	23,653	23,743	22,266	0	+6
Durable-goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> ...	-4	+1	7,608	7,891	7,922	7,324	0	+8
Nondurable-goods stores, total <sup>3</sup>	0	+7	15,736	15,762	15,821	14,942	0	+5
Food group.....				5,541	5,546	5,234	0	+6
Eating and drinking places.....				1,801	1,814	1,633	-1	+10
General merchandise group.....				2,885	2,912	2,734	-1	+6
Apparel group.....				1,332	1,347	1,363	-1	-2
Furniture and appliance group.....				1,131	1,135	1,094	0	+3
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.....				1,388	1,384	1,273	0	+9
Automotive group.....				4,685	4,720	4,259	-1	+10
Gasoline service stations.....				1,839	1,835	1,690	0	+9
Drug and proprietary stores.....				774	776	722	0	+7

<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.