



CURRENT BUSINESS REPORTS

**advance monthly
RETAIL SALES**

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The Bureau of the Census, U. S. Department of Commerce, announced today that total sales of retail stores in October were estimated at \$30.4 billion. This advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal and holiday variations and trading day differences but not for price changes, was \$29.4 billion. The advance estimate, after adjustment, was about one half of one percent above September sales and about 2 percent above October sales last year. Adjusted total August-through-October sales averaged about the same as the prior three months but 3 percent above the comparable period a year ago.

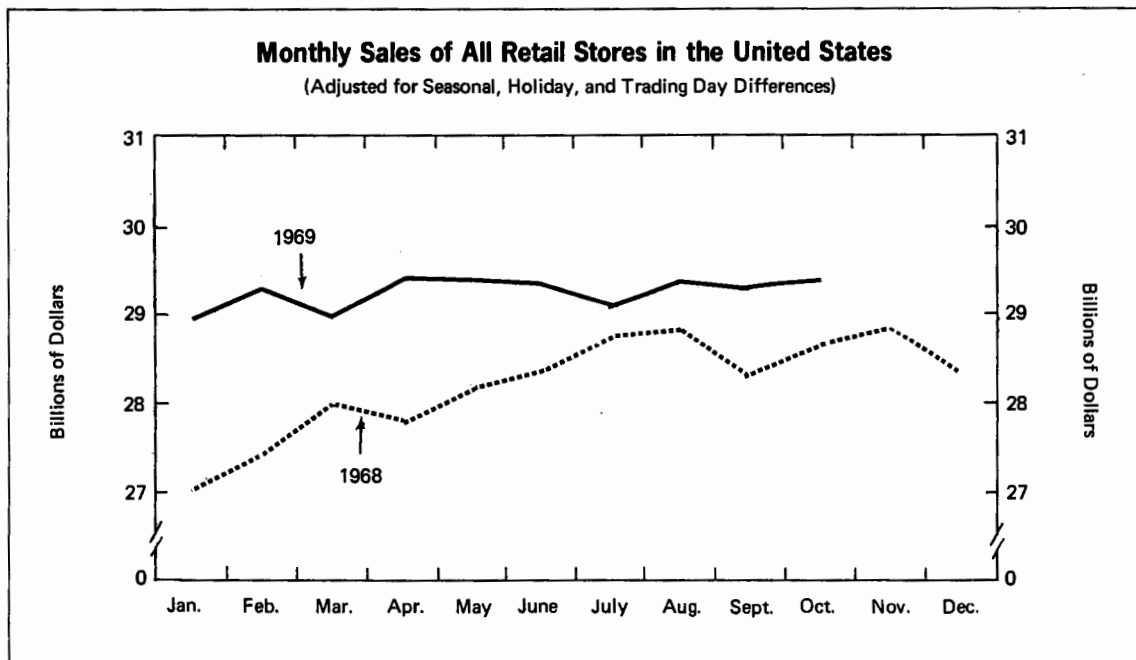
Based on the full sample, the total U.S. unadjusted sales estimate for September was about \$0.2 billion less than the \$28.8 billion published earlier in the September Advance Monthly Retail Sales report released October 10, 1969. However, a larger difference of \$0.45 billion between advance and full sample adjusted estimates resulted because a change in the automotive seasonal factor was put into effect when the full sample figures were prepared.

The advance sales estimates are based on early reporting, by a small subsample of the Census Bureau's retail survey panel, of sales figures for the weeks and

part-weeks comprising the month. Because retailers' weekly records often differ from their monthly records (e.g., in reflecting such elements as carrying charges, sales taxes, merchandise returns), the sales figures estimated for the advance report can differ from the subsequently issued report based on the monthly records of the full sample of retailers. Additionally, sampling variability between subsample and later full sample results can be a cause of difference. For most months, such differences have been reduced by modifying the advance estimate, prior to publication, on the basis of the relationship between the advance and full-sample data for previous months.

The differences between the published advance and full-sample estimates of total retail sales seldom exceeds 1.5 percent and for the past year has averaged 1.1 percent. For individual kind-of-business groups, differences have been greater, ranging on the average from 1.2 percent for general merchandise stores to 4.7 percent for the lumber group.

It should be noted that even for figures derived from the full sample, sales movements from one month to the next tend to be relatively irregular. Data for several months are generally required to indicate the underlying trend.



For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. 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¢.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE Maurice H. Stans, Secretary
 Rocco C. Siciliano, Under Secretary
 Harold C. Passer, Assistant Secretary for Economic Affairs
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS George Hay Brown, Director

Table 1. Sales of Retail Stores in the United States, by Kind-of-Business Group
Part A. NOT ADJUSTED for seasonal variations or trading day differences

Kind-of-business group	Sales (millions of dollars)		
	1969		1968
	October ¹	September ²	October
Retail stores, total ³	30,366	28,572	29,418
Durable goods stores, total ³	9,878	9,351	10,039
Nondurable goods stores, total ³	20,488	19,221	19,379
Food group.....	6,543	6,098	6,108
Grocery stores.....	6,102	5,679	5,685
Eating and drinking places.....	2,211	2,192	2,161
General merchandise group with nonstores.....	5,170	4,709	4,697
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....	4,626	4,228	4,209
Department stores.....	3,180	2,915	2,843
Apparel group.....	1,718	1,646	1,654
Furniture and appliance group.....	1,413	1,384	1,450
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.....	1,777	1,721	1,837
Automotive group.....	5,942	5,482	5,992
Gasoline service stations.....	2,116	2,054	2,064
Drug and proprietary stores.....	1,009	972	941

Part B. ADJUSTED for seasonal variations and trading day differences

Kind-of-business group	Sales (millions of dollars)					Percentage change September 1969 from--	
	1969			1968		Aug. 1969	Sept. 1968
	Oct. ¹	Sept. ²	Aug.	Oct.	Sept.		
Retail stores, total ³	29,371	29,249	29,346	28,697	r28,316	0	+3
Durable goods stores, total ³	9,193	9,373	9,161	9,342	r9,101	+2	+3
Nondurable goods stores, total ³ ..	20,178	19,876	20,185	19,355	19,215	-2	+3
Food group.....		6,298	6,429	6,149	6,155	-2	+2
Eating and drinking places.....		2,166	2,150	2,146	2,149	+1	+1
General merchandise group with nonstores.....		4,904	5,000	4,640	4,520	-2	+8
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....		4,405	4,524	4,154	4,061	-3	+8
Apparel group.....		1,680	1,738	1,640	1,619	-3	+4
Furniture and appliance group.....		1,348	1,352	1,372	1,395	0	-3
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.....		1,601	1,580	1,631	1,638	+1	-2
Automotive group.....		5,666	5,412	5,556	r5,313	+5	+7
Gasoline service stations.....		2,083	2,075	2,050	2,049	0	+2
Drug and proprietary stores.....		1,022	1,013	967	971	+1	+5

¹Advance sample estimates. ²Preliminary estimates of full sample.
³Totals include data for kinds of business not shown separately. ⁴During months of model change over, seasonal adjustment factors are less reliable than in other months. r Revised.

Table 2. Percentage Changes for Retail Sales
(ADJUSTED for seasonal variations and trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	October 1969 from--		August through October 1969 from--	
	Sept. 1969	Oct. 1968	May through July 1969	Aug. through Oct. 1968
Retail stores, total.....	+½	+2	0	+3
Durable goods stores, total.....	-2	-1½	-2	0
Nondurable goods stores, total.....	+1½	+4	+1	+4

Source: Bureau of the Census