

# 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 November were estimated at \$44.7 billion. The Bureau, part of the Department's Social and Economic Statistics Administration (SESA), said this advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal and holiday variations and trading day differences but not for price changes was \$43.1 billion, virtually unchanged from October but about 11 percent above November sales last year. Adjusted total September-through-November sales were about 2 percent above the prior 3 months and 11 percent above the comparable period a year ago.

Based on the full sample, the total U. S. adjusted sales estimate for October was about \$0.3 billion less than the \$43.4 billion published earlier in the October Advance Monthly Retail Sales report released November 9, 1973. The seasonally adjusted sales for October as revised were about 1 percent above September.

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

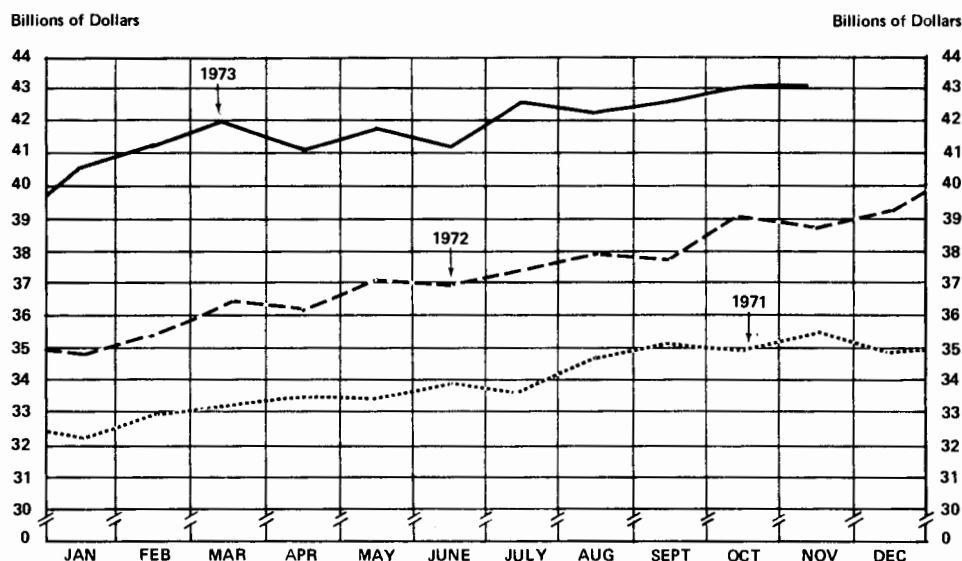
from their monthly records (in reflecting such elements as carrying charges, sales taxes, merchandise returns), the sales figures estimated for the advance report can differ from the subsequently issued report based on the monthly records of the full sample of retailers. Additionally, sampling variability between sub-sample 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 month-to-month change in advance and full-sample estimates for total retail sales seldom exceed 1.0 percent and for the past year has averaged 0.9 percent. For individual kind of business groups, differences have been greater, ranging on the average from 0.8 percent for the Food group to 2.8 percent for the Apparel group.

Even for figures derived from the full sample, sales movements from one month to the next can be relatively irregular. Data for 3 months are generally required to indicate the underlying trend.

### MONTHLY SALES OF ALL RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES

(Data ADJUSTED for seasonal, holiday, and trading day differences)



Annual subscription to current retail trade reports are for sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. (Weekly Retail Sales Report, Advance Monthly Retail Trade Report, Monthly Retail Trade Report, and Annual Retail Trade Report sold as a single subscription.) Price: \$13.00. Single copies of the Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report are available only from the Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233, at 15 cents each.

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)		
	1973		1972
	November <sup>1</sup>	October <sup>2</sup>	November
Total, retail stores <sup>3</sup> .....	44,681	43,709	39,790
Total (excluding automotive group).....	36,400	34,711	32,015
Durable goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	14,320	15,190	13,229
Nondurable goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	30,361	28,519	26,561
Food group.....	9,272	8,945	7,991
Grocery stores.....	8,655	8,324	7,441
Eating and drinking places.....	3,203	3,343	2,782
General merchandise group with nonstores.....	8,380	7,159	7,487
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....	7,764	6,543	6,887
Department stores.....	5,222	4,379	4,642
Apparel group.....	2,257	2,024	2,055
Furniture and appliance group.....	2,142	2,057	1,959
Bldg. materials, hardware, farm equipment group.....	2,596	2,936	2,291
Automotive group.....	8,281	8,998	7,775
Gasoline service stations.....	3,013	2,948	2,668
Drug and proprietary stores.....	1,304	1,304	1,201

Part B. ADJUSTED for seasonal variations and trading day differences

Kind-of-business group	Sales (millions of dollars)					Percentage change October 1973 from—	
	1973			1972		September 1973	October 1972
	November <sup>1</sup>	October <sup>2</sup>	September	November	October		
Total, retail stores <sup>3</sup> .....	43,127	43,081	42,525	38,713	39,106	+1	+10
Total (excluding automotive group).....	34,737	34,584	34,068	30,888	31,253	+2	+11
Durable goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	14,310	14,346	14,267	13,173	13,168	+1	+9
Nondurable goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	28,817	28,735	28,258	25,540	25,938	+2	+11
Food group.....	9,210	8,992	8,992	8,134	8,209	+2	+12
Eating and drinking places.....	3,310	3,261	3,261	2,913	2,873	+2	+15
General merchandise group with nonstores.....	6,982	6,989	6,989	6,354	6,548	0	+7
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....	6,449	6,486	6,486	5,833	6,065	-1	+6
Apparel group.....	2,041	2,042	2,042	1,891	1,947	0	+5
Furniture and appliance group.....	2,013	2,063	2,063	1,846	1,846	-2	+9
Bldg. materials, hardware, farm equipment group.....	2,608	2,529	2,529	2,341	2,340	+3	+11
Automotive group <sup>4</sup> .....	8,497	8,457	8,457	7,825	7,853	0	+8
Gasoline service stations.....	3,017	2,876	2,876	2,681	2,686	+5	+12
Drug and proprietary stores.....	1,336	1,278	1,278	1,250	1,226	+5	+9

<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>During months of model changeover, seasonal adjustment factors are less reliable than in other months.

Table 2. Percentage Changes for Retail Sales

(ADJUSTED for seasonal variations and trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	November 1973 from—		September 1973 through November 1973 from—	
	October 1973	November 1972	June 1973 through August 1973	September 1972 through November 1972
	Total, retail stores.....	0	+11	+2
Total (excluding automotive group).....	0	+12	+2	+12
Durable goods stores, total.....	0	+9	+1	+10
Nondurable goods stores, total.....	0	+13	+3	+12

Source: Bureau of the Census