



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 February, after adjusting for seasonal variations and trading day differences, but not for price changes, were estimated at \$52.3 billion. This adjusted figure was about 2 percent above January 1976 and 12 percent greater than sales for February of last year. The adjusted February estimate, excluding the automotive group, was 1 percent higher than January and 10 percent above February of last year.

Adjusted sales of durable goods stores increased 4 percent from January, while sales of nondurable goods stores rose about 1 percent. Compared with sales for February 1975, durable goods stores increased 17 percent, while nondurable goods stores increased 9 percent.

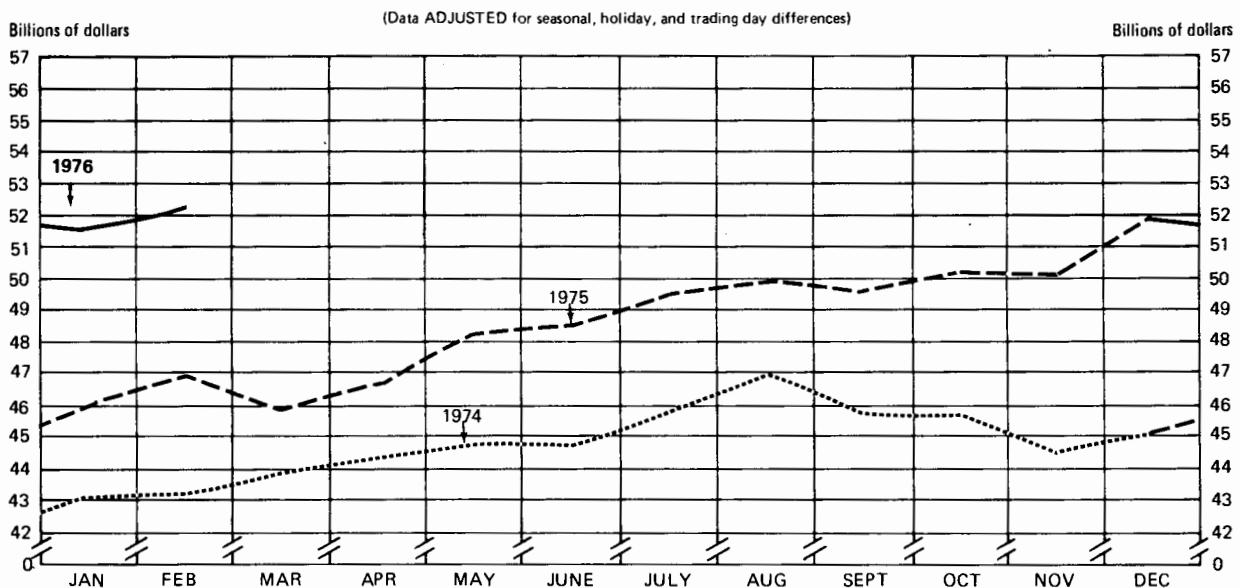
The revised estimate of retail sales for January, based on preliminary results from the full sample of retail stores, was virtually the same as the advance estimate of \$51.5 billion published earlier. Seasonally adjusted sales for January, as revised, were 1 percent below December but were 12 percent above January 1975. Excluding the automotive group, these estimates were virtually unchanged from December but were 10 percent over January of last year. For nondurable goods stores, adjusted January sales decreased 1 percent from the previous month but decreased 9 percent above the same month a year ago. For durable goods stores, adjusted sales for January decreased 1 percent below December but increased 18 percent over January 1975.

The advance sales estimates are based on early reporting of sales for the weeks and part-weeks of the month by a small subsample of the Bureau's retail survey panel. Because retailers' weekly records often differ from their monthly records (in reflecting such items as carrying charges, sales taxes, merchandise returns), the advance estimate can differ from the subsequent estimates which are based on monthly reports obtained from the full sample of retail stores. In addition, sampling variability between the sub-sample used for the advance estimates and the full sample can cause a difference. For most months, such differences have been reduced by modifying the advance estimates, prior to publication, on the basis of the relationship between the advance and full-sample data for previous months.

The differences between advance and full-sample estimates of month-to-month percentage change in seasonally adjusted total retail store sales have ranged from 0 to 2 during the last 12 months with a median value of 1. For individual kind of business groups, these differences tend to be higher.

Preliminary estimates for January 1976 and final estimates for December 1975 based on the full sample will also be published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade report for January (BR-76-1). The complete report will provide sales estimates in greater detail and will present a description of the sample design and the techniques used in developing the estimates. In addition, the complete report will include approximate measures of sampling variability.

MONTHLY SALES OF ALL RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES



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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

Data on retail trade, published in the Weekly Retail Sales Report, Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report, the Monthly Retail Trade Report, and the Annual Retail Trade Report are available on a single subscription from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 20402, at \$30.10 per year. Add \$7.55 for each subscription to a foreign address. Single copies of the Advance Monthly Retail Trade Report are available from Subscriber Services Section (Publications), Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C., 20233 at 25 cents each.

Table 1. ESTIMATED SALES OF RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES BY KIND OF BUSINESS

(Sales in millions of dollars)

Kind of business	Not adjusted					Adjusted ¹				
	1976		1975			1976		1975		
	Feb. ² advance	Jan. prelim.	Dec. final	Feb.	Jan.	Feb. ² advance	Jan. prelim.	Dec. final	Feb.	Jan.
Retail stores, total.....	44,980	46,674	60,681	38,602	41,315	52,345	51,305	51,990	46,914	46,006
Total (excl. automotive group).....	36,243	38,404	52,269	32,544	34,583	42,245	41,932	42,068	38,494	38,259
Durable goods stores, total.....	14,605	14,143	16,855	12,279	12,051	17,224	16,635	16,877	14,664	14,126
Nondurable goods stores, total.....	30,375	32,531	43,826	27,523	29,264	35,121	34,868	35,113	32,250	31,880
Food stores, total.....	10,301	11,634	11,778	9,678	10,568	11,200	11,318	11,270	10,643	10,672
Grocery stores.....	9,629	10,893	10,925	9,032	9,895	10,466	10,555	10,485	9,925	9,945
Eating and drinking places.....	3,770	3,868	4,110	3,288	3,443	4,226	4,191	4,220	3,828	3,784
General merchandise group with nonstores.....	6,243	6,322	14,005	5,521	5,588	8,442	8,118	8,499	7,533	7,261
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....	5,739	5,828	13,353	5,036	5,108	7,879	7,545	7,912	7,000	6,704
Department stores.....	3,853	3,973	9,437	3,334	3,418	5,427	5,146	5,424	4,743	4,497
Variety stores.....	*	560	1,456	542	524	*	760	770	746	720
Mail-order houses (department store merchandise).....	*	363	722	385	346	*	520	556	489	485
Apparel and accessory stores, total.....	1,831	2,010	3,894	1,606	1,770	2,455	2,352	2,354	2,189	2,118
Men's, boys' wear stores.....	*	472	969	375	428	*	518	535	518	473
Women's apparel, accessory stores.....	*	767	1,435	626	687	*	906	883	828	844
Shoe stores.....	*	307	485	247	272	*	359	358	344	323
Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores, total.....	2,016	2,139	2,925	1,793	1,931	2,278	2,273	2,337	2,051	2,040
Furniture, home furnishings stores.....	*	1,229	1,534	1,079	1,149	*	1,327	1,367	1,235	1,237
Household appliance, TV, radio stores.....	*	698	1,042	554	610	*	718	757	633	625
Household appliance dealers.....	*	403	562	342	389	*	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
Building materials, hardware, farm equipment dealers, total.....	2,432	2,265	2,856	2,059	2,156	3,123	3,046	2,958	2,739	2,886
Lumber and other building materials dealers.....	*	1,328	1,477	1,092	1,152	*	1,754	1,558	1,415	1,424
Hardware stores.....	*	375	596	347	346	*	491	501	477	471
Automotive dealers, total.....	8,737	8,270	8,412	7,258	6,732	10,100	9,571	9,922	8,420	7,747
Passenger car, other automotive dealers.....	*	7,600	7,568	6,693	6,148	*	8,756	9,140	7,675	7,022
Passenger car dealers (franchised).....	*	6,684	6,650	5,865	5,385	*	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
Tire, battery, accessory dealers.....	*	670	844	565	584	*	815	782	745	725
Gasoline service stations.....	3,460	3,626	3,817	3,053	3,278	3,845	3,837	3,859	3,465	3,465
Drug and proprietary stores.....	1,430	1,489	2,114	1,332	1,379	1,538	1,530	1,578	1,449	1,436
Liquor stores.....	*	829	1,268	745	801	*	887	916	882	871

NOTE: Totals include data for kinds of businesses not shown separately.

¹Advance estimates are not available from the subsample panel for these kinds of businesses.²Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. (See explanatory material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-76-1). ³Advance estimates are based on early reporting by a small subsample of the full survey panel. All other estimates are based on the full sample.

Table 2. PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN SALES OF RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

(Adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading day differences)

Kind of business	Percent change					
	February 1976 advance from--		January 1976 preliminary from--		December 1975 through February 1976 from--	
	Jan. 1976 preliminary	Feb. 1975 final	Dec. 1975 final	Jan. 1975 final	Sept. 1975 through Nov. 1975	Dec. 1974 through Feb. 1975
Total, retail stores.....	+2	+12	-1	+12	+4	+13
Total (excluding automotive group).....	+1	+10	0	+10	+2	+11
Durable goods stores, total.....	+4	+17	-1	+18	+8	+20
Nondurable goods stores, total.....	+1	+9	-1	+9	+2	+10
Food stores, total.....	-1	+5	+1	+6	+1	+7
Grocery stores.....	-1	+5	+1	+6	+1	+7
Eating and drinking places.....	+1	+10	-1	+11	+4	+12
General merchandise group with nonstores.....	+4	+12	-4	+12	+3	+13
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....	+4	+13	-5	+13	+3	+14
Department stores.....	+5	+14	-5	+14	+3	+16
Apparel and accessory stores, total.....	+4	+12	0	+11	+6	+13
Furniture, home furnishings and equipment stores, total.....	0	+11	-3	+11	+1	+13
Building materials, hardware, farm equipment dealers, total..	+3	+14	+3	+6	+2	+12
Automotive dealers, total.....	+6	+20	-4	+24	+12	+24
Gasoline service stations.....	0	+11	-1	+11	+3	+12
Drug and proprietary stores.....	+1	+6	-3	+7	+1	+7

Table 3. ESTIMATED SALES OF STORES OF FIRMS OPERATING 11 OR MORE RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS: JANUARY 1976

(Sales in millions of dollars)

Kind of business	Not adjusted			Adjusted ¹		
	1976	1975		1976	1975	
	Jan. prelim.	Dec. final	Jan.	Jan. prelim.	Dec. final	Jan.
Retail stores, total.....	14,198	21,871	12,693	15,767	16,007	14,390
Food stores, total.....	6,254	6,202	5,719	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
Grocery stores	6,183	6,108	5,646	5,844	5,828	5,574
General merchandise group with nonstores...	4,943	11,299	4,308	6,458	6,724	5,722
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....	4,728	11,010	4,098	6,187	6,439	5,459
Department stores.....	3,542	8,353	3,051	4,594	4,831	4,030
Variety stores.....	444	1,196	406	618	625	581
Apparel and accessory stores, total.....	448	1,014	415	580	606	548
Shoe stores.....	121	234	117	150	165	149
Drug and proprietary stores.....	581	937	489	629	631	535

¹Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday and trading day differences. (See Explanatory Material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-76-1). NA Not available.

Table 4. ESTIMATED SALES OF RETAIL STORES BY SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS FOR SPECIFIED STANDARD METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREAS AND CITIES

(Sales in millions of dollars)

Area	Not adjusted		
	1976	1975	
	Jan. preliminary	Dec. final	Jan.
Standard Consolidated Areas¹			
Chicago, Ill.--Northwestern Ind., total.....	1,857	2,474	1,670
Nondurable goods stores.....	1,304	1,849	1,214
GAF ²	510	1,013	473
New York-Northeastern N.J., total.....	3,149	4,142	2,969
Nondurable goods stores.....	2,400	3,180	2,301
GAF ²	863	1,600	793
Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas¹			
Baltimore, Md., GAF ²	100	204	88
Boston, Mass., GAF ²	170	361	156
Chicago, Ill., total.....	1,663	2,276	1,519
Nondurable goods stores.....	1,201	1,713	1,124
GAF ²	476	948	444
Cleveland, Ohio, GAF ²	100	212	93
Dallas, Texas, GAF ²	127	239	112
Detroit, Mich., total.....	844	1,164	808
Nondurable goods stores.....	592	851	573
GAF ²	213	431	220
Houston, Texas, GAF ²	145	274	122

Table 4. ESTIMATED SALES OF RETAIL STORES BY SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS FOR SPECIFIED STANDARD METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREAS AND CITIES--Continued

(Sales in millions of dollars)

Area	Not adjusted		
	1976	1975	
	Jan. preliminary	Dec. final	Jan.
Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas¹--Con.			
Kansas City, Mo.-Kansas, GAF ²	114	221	98
Los Angeles-Long Beach, Calif., total.....	1,646	2,132	1,472
Nondurable goods stores.....	1,188	1,625	1,087
GAF ²	438	849	400
Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minn., GAF ²	122	233	103
New York, N.Y.--Nassau-Suffolk, N.Y., total ³	2,149	2,768	2,092
Nondurable goods stores.....	1,657	2,139	1,632
GAF ²	590	1,063	565
Nassau-Suffolk, N.Y., total ⁴	609	757	578
Nondurable goods stores.....	446	559	430
GAF ²	158	269	146
New York, N.Y., total ⁵	1,540	2,011	1,514
Nondurable goods stores.....	1,211	1,580	1,202
GAF ²	432	794	419
Philadelphia, Pa., total.....	994	1,336	913
Nondurable goods stores.....	739	1,029	705
GAF ²	246	516	217
Pittsburgh, Pa., total.....	499	685	477
Nondurable goods stores.....	394	557	362
GAF ²	142	281	119
St. Louis, Mo.-Ill., total.....	481	638	440
Nondurable goods stores.....	331	477	305
GAF ²	114	234	101
San Francisco-Oakland, Calif., total.....	737	974	624
Nondurable goods stores.....	551	751	463
GAF ²	173	333	158
Washington, D.C.-Md.-Va., total.....	705	915	626
Nondurable goods stores.....	493	673	450
GAF ²	160	305	140
Cities			
Chicago, Ill., total.....	667	957	618
Nondurable goods stores.....	513	764	487
GAF ²	246	476	233
Detroit, Mich., total.....	200	276	191
Nondurable goods stores.....	149	202	133
GAF ²	40	88	51
Los Angeles, Calif., total.....	576	747	536
Nondurable goods stores.....	432	587	425
GAF ²	179	322	169
New York, N.Y., total.....	1,300	1,684	1,281
Nondurable goods stores.....	1,027	1,322	1,013
GAF ²	373	666	363
Philadelphia, Pa., total.....	353	479	344
Nondurable goods stores.....	280	385	290
GAF ²	102	200	96

¹Definitions of standard consolidated areas and standard metropolitan statistical areas are shown in the Monthly Retail Trade Report BR-76-1. ²Stores in the general merchandise, apparel, and furniture and appliance groups; these stores specialize in department store types of merchandise. ³Formerly New York, N.Y. SMSA. ⁴Includes Nassau and Suffolk Counties formerly included in the New York, N.Y., SMSA. ⁵Includes New York City, Rockland and Westchester Counties, N.Y.