



Advance Monthly Retail Sales

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MAY 1976

The Bureau of the Census, U. S. Department of Commerce announced today that total sales of retail stores in May, after adjusting for seasonal variations and trading day differences, but not for price changes, were estimated at \$52.6 billion. This adjusted figure was about 1 percent below April 1976 but 9 percent greater than sales for May of last year. The adjusted May estimate, excluding the automotive group, was 1 percent lower than April but 6 percent above May of last year.

Adjusted sales of durable goods stores decreased 3 percent from April, while sales of nondurable goods stores were virtually unchanged. Compared with sales for May 1975, durable goods stores increased 18 percent, while nondurable goods stores increased 5 percent.

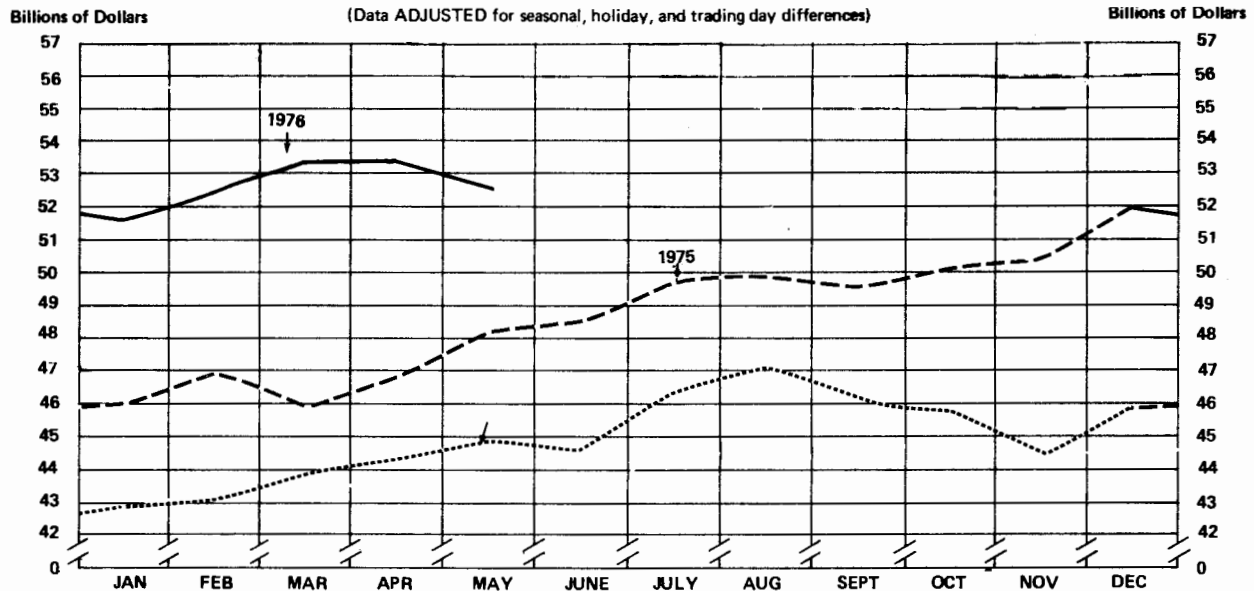
The revised estimate of retail sales for April, based on preliminary results from the full sample of retail stores, were virtually unchanged from the advance estimate of \$53.3 billion published earlier. Seasonally adjusted sales for April as revised, were virtually unchanged from March but 4 percent above April 1975. Excluding the automotive group, these estimates were about 1 percent below March but 10 percent over April of last year. For nondurable goods stores, adjusted April sales decreased about 1 percent from the previous month but increased 9 percent from the same month a year ago. For durable goods stores, adjusted sales for April were 3 percent above March and 26 percent over April of last year.

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 and a median value of 1. For individual kind of business groups, these differences tend to be higher.

Preliminary estimates for April 1976 and final estimates for March 1976 based on the full sample will also be published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade report for April (BR-76-4). 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



Inquiries concerning this report should be addressed to Mr. Irving True, Business Division, Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233. Telephone (301) 763-7660.



U.S. Department of Commerce
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The Weekly Retail Sales Report, Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report, Monthly Retail Trade Report, and Annual Retail Trade Report are available on a single subscription from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402 at \$30.10 per year. Add \$7.55 for each subscription to a foreign address. Postage stamps not acceptable; currency submitted at sender's risk. Remittances from foreign countries must be by international money order or by draft on a U.S. bank. Single copies of the Advance Monthly Retail Sales 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	
	May ² advance	Apr. prelim.	Mar. final	May	Apr.	May ² advance	Apr. prelim.	Mar. final	May	Apr.
Retail stores, total.....	54,249	54,221	51,752	51,204	45,896	52,644	53,300	53,344	48,173	46,813
Total (excl. automotive group).....	43,216	43,030	40,820	42,024	37,474	42,494	42,736	43,182	39,910	38,912
Durable goods stores, total.....	18,437	18,487	17,758	15,987	14,588	17,344	17,874	17,403	14,703	14,165
Nondurable goods stores, total.....	35,812	35,734	33,994	35,217	31,308	35,300	35,426	35,941	33,470	32,648
Food stores, total.....	11,434	11,401	11,176	11,687	10,178	11,296	11,314	11,567	10,875	10,598
Grocery stores.....	10,653	10,589	10,384	10,893	9,452	10,516	10,515	10,749	10,105	9,846
Eating and drinking places.....	4,452	4,212	4,083	4,183	3,773	4,248	4,298	4,321	3,935	3,898
General merchandise group with nonstores.....	8,003	8,253	7,696	8,047	7,059	8,243	8,298	8,606	7,981	7,638
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....	7,460	7,675	7,074	7,488	6,503	7,681	7,722	7,996	7,429	7,068
Department stores.....	5,267	5,353	4,776	5,170	4,449	5,397	5,374	5,471	5,094	4,825
Variety stores.....	*	671	670	798	660	*	662	785	788	746
Mail-order houses (department store merchandise).....	*	519	579	435	458	*	526	568	482	476
Apparel and accessory stores, total.....	2,159	2,349	2,050	2,232	1,949	2,228	2,206	2,377	2,216	2,179
Men's, boys' wear stores.....	*	492	438	516	436	*	491	529	506	506
Women's apparel, accessory stores.....	*	924	810	869	749	*	908	915	854	819
Shoe stores.....	*	400	329	354	311	*	329	375	356	337
Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores, total.....	2,311	2,312	2,304	2,124	2,010	2,380	2,386	2,388	2,139	2,132
Furniture, home furnishings stores.....	*	1,400	1,366	1,260	1,207	*	1,410	1,392	1,216	1,244
Household appliance, TV, radio stores.....	*	705	728	679	620	*	755	792	716	686
Household appliance dealers.....	*	433	442	411	368	*	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
Building materials, hardware, farm equipment dealers, total.....	3,415	3,392	3,020	3,185	2,825	3,138	3,246	3,208	2,842	2,707
Lumber and other building materials dealers.....	*	1,837	1,668	1,628	1,418	*	1,817	1,815	1,517	1,415
Hardware stores.....	*	549	469	571	461	*	550	549	489	468
Automotive dealers, total.....	11,033	11,191	10,932	9,180	8,422	10,150	10,564	10,162	8,263	7,901
Passenger car, other automotive dealers.....	*	10,333	10,135	8,347	7,663	*	9,748	9,307	7,508	7,164
Passenger car dealers (franchised).....	*	8,814	8,746	6,926	6,488	*	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
Tire, battery, accessory dealers.....	*	858	797	833	759	*	816	855	755	737
Gasoline service stations.....	4,003	3,855	3,779	3,715	3,468	3,875	3,890	3,892	3,565	3,532
Drug and proprietary stores.....	1,553	1,560	1,571	1,529	1,407	1,564	1,574	1,643	1,499	1,455
Liquor stores.....	*	892	848	945	806	*	947	939	919	884

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

*Advance estimates are not available from the subsample panel for these kinds of businesses.

¹Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. (See explanatory material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-76-4). ²Advance 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					
	May 1976 advance from--		April 1976 preliminary from--		March 1976 through May 1976 from--	
	Apr. 1976 preliminary	May 1975 final	Mar. 1976 final	Apr. 1975 final	Dec. 1975 through Feb. 1976	Mar. 1975 through May 1975
Total, retail stores.....	-1	+9	0	+14	+2	+13
Total (excluding automotive group).....	-1	+6	-1	+10	+2	+9
Durable goods stores, total.....	-3	+18	+3	+26	+3	+25
Nondurable goods stores, total.....	0	+5	-1	+9	+1	+8
Food stores, total.....	0	+4	-2	+7	0	+6
Grocery stores.....	0	+4	-2	+7	0	+6
Eating and drinking places.....	-1	+8	-1	+10	+2	+10
General merchandise group with nonstores.....	-1	+3	-4	+9	+1	+8
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....	-1	+3	-3	+9	+1	+9
Department stores.....	0	+6	-2	+11	+2	+10
Apparel and accessory stores, total.....	+1	+1	-1	+1	-3	+5
Furniture, home furnishings and equipment stores, total.....	0	+11	0	+12	+3	+13
Building materials, hardware, farm equipment dealers, total..	-3	+10	+1	+20	+5	+19
Automotive dealers, total.....	-4	+23	+4	+34	+3	+31
Gasoline service stations.....	0	+9	0	+10	+1	+10
Drug and proprietary stores.....	-1	+4	-4	+8	+2	+8

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

(Sales in millions of dollars)

Kind of business	Not adjusted			Adjusted ¹		
	1976		1975	1976		1975
	Apr. prelim.	Mar. final	Apr.	Apr. prelim.	Mar. final	Apr.
Retail stores, total.....	16,147	15,389	13,917	15,907	16,420	14,624
Food stores, total.....	6,092	5,941	5,339	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
Grocery stores	6,016	5,877	5,268	5,904	6,009	5,510
General merchandise group with nonstores...	6,561	6,122	5,574	6,591	6,844	6,012
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....	6,285	5,796	5,305	6,322	6,534	5,730
Department stores.....	4,779	4,270	3,983	4,789	4,886	4,297
Variety stores.....	538	549	532	530	647	598
Apparel and accessory stores, total.....	598	498	502	524	581	545
Shoe stores.....	165	133	138	130	158	152
Drug and proprietary stores.....	630	639	531	638	691	558

¹Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday and trading day differences. (See Explanatory Material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-76-4). 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
	Apr. preliminary	Mar. final	Apr.
Standard Consolidated Areas¹			
Chicago, Ill.--Northwestern Ind., total.....	2,168	2,075	1,801
Nondurable goods stores.....	1,481	1,427	1,288
GAF ²	665	645	555
New York-Northeastern N.J., total.....	3,319	3,253	3,001
Nondurable goods stores.....	2,416	2,350	2,247
GAF ²	1,015	905	870
Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas¹			
Baltimore, Md., GAF ²	139	126	113
Boston, Mass., GAF ²	208	184	192
Chicago, Ill., total.....	1,993	1,909	1,651
Nondurable goods stores.....	1,369	1,318	1,192
GAF ²	624	605	524
Cleveland, Ohio, GAF ²	139	123	118
Dallas, Texas, GAF ²	152	148	128
Detroit, Mich., total.....	1,034	992	828
Nondurable goods stores.....	656	619	561
GAF ²	271	252	247
Houston, Texas, GAF ²	176	169	139

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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
	Apr. preliminary	Mar. final	Apr.
Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas ¹ --Con.			
Kansas City, Mo.-Kansas, GAF ²	149	144	129
Los Angeles-Long Beach, Calif., total.....	1,806	1,757	1,548
Nondurable goods stores.....	1,248	1,206	1,134
GAF ²	525	502	453
Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minn., GAF ²	148	132	134
New York, N.Y.--Nassau-Suffolk, N.Y., total ³	2,215	2,166	2,076
Nondurable goods stores.....	1,647	1,607	1,573
GAF ²	690	613	614
Nassau-Suffolk, N.Y., total ⁴	630	608	566
Nondurable goods stores.....	427	412	403
GAF ²	165	141	136
New York, N.Y., total ⁵	1,585	1,558	1,510
Nondurable goods stores.....	1,220	1,195	1,170
GAF ²	525	472	478
Philadelphia, Pa., total.....	1,132	1,085	987
Nondurable goods stores.....	809	769	712
GAF ²	314	295	270
Pittsburgh, Pa., total.....	609	569	538
Nondurable goods stores.....	445	417	392
GAF ²	174	156	145
St. Louis, Mo.-Ill., total.....	555	522	502
Nondurable goods stores.....	343	331	329
GAF ²	162	139	124
San Francisco-Oakland, Calif., total.....	826	796	693
Nondurable goods stores.....	601	582	505
GAF ²	207	199	187
Washington, D.C.-Md.-Va., total.....	786	738	709
Nondurable goods stores.....	549	510	490
GAF ²	200	177	173
Cities			
Chicago, Ill., total.....	774	768	668
Nondurable goods stores.....	582	583	527
GAF ²	336	339	288
Detroit, Mich., total.....	237	235	203
Nondurable goods stores.....	153	148	131
GAF ²	52	48	58
Los Angeles, Calif., total.....	636	627	567
Nondurable goods stores.....	453	450	445
GAF ²	210	208	200
New York, N.Y., total.....	1,330	1,316	1,270
Nondurable goods stores.....	1,030	1,014	986
GAF ²	452	406	411
Philadelphia, Pa., total.....	400	386	341
Nondurable goods stores.....	312	303	271
GAF ²	137	130	116

¹Definitions of standard consolidated areas and standard metropolitan statistical areas are shown in the Monthly Retail Trade Report BR-76-4. 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.

