

Advance Monthly Retail Sales

CB-79-190

FOR RELEASE 3:30 P.M., FRIDAY,
OCTOBER 12, 1979

SEPTEMBER 1979

The Bureau of the Census, U. S. Department of Commerce, announced today that total sales of retail stores in September, after adjusting for seasonal variations and trading-day differences, but not for price changes were estimated at \$76.3 billion. This adjusted figure was about 2 percent above August and 12 percent higher than September a year ago. The adjusted September estimate, excluding the automotive group was 2 percent above August and 13 percent above September last year.

Adjusted sales of both durable goods and nondurable goods stores were 2 percent above August. Compared with sales for September 1978, durable goods stores increased 11 percent, and nondurable goods stores increased 13 percent.

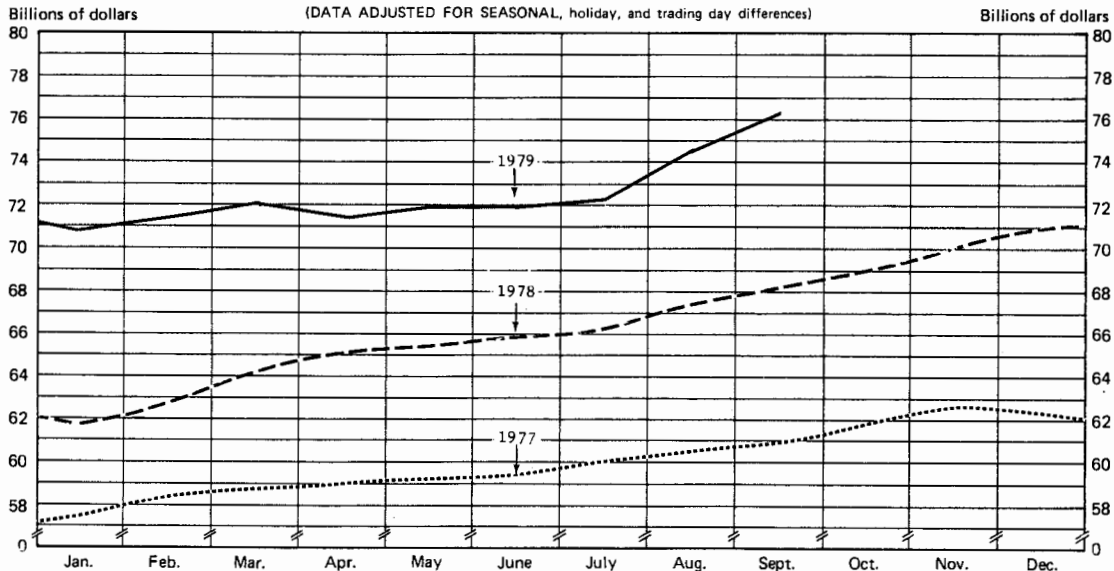
The revised estimate of retail sales for August, based on preliminary results from the full sample of retail stores, was about \$74.6 billion, \$1.8 billion above the August Advance estimate published earlier. Seasonally adjusted preliminary sales for August were about 3 percent above July 1979 estimates and 11 percent above the August 1978 sales. Excluding the automotive group, retail sales were about 2 percent above July and 13 percent over August 1978. For nondurable goods stores, adjusted August sales increased about 2 percent from the previous month and 12 percent above the same month a year earlier. For durable goods stores, adjusted sales for August were about 6 percent above July and 9 percent higher than August 1978.

The advance sales estimates are based on early reporting of sales by a small subsample of the Bureau's retail survey panel. Because of the early reporting, the advance estimates 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.

In the past, differences between advance and full-sample estimates of month-to-month percentage change in seasonally adjusted total retail stores sales have averaged less than 1 percent. However, most modifications being applied to the current advance monthly estimates are based on the relationship between the advance and the redesigned full-sample data for only the months since June 1977. The differences now, therefore, may vary from the past experience.

Preliminary estimates for August 1979 and final estimates for July 1979 based on the full sample will also be published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade report for August (BR-79-8). The complete report will provide sales estimates in greater detail and will present a description of the sample design, the basis and methodology used in developing revisions, and the techniques used in developing the estimates. In addition, the completed report will include approximate measures of sampling variability.

Estimated Monthly Retail Sales for the United States
JANUARY 1977 - SEPTEMBER 1979



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U.S. Department of Commerce
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The 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, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402, at \$25 per year. Add \$6.25 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 a draft on a U.S. bank. Single copies of the Advance Monthly Retail Sales report are for sale by Subscriber Services (Publications), Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233, at 70 cents each.

Table 1. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales by Kind of Business for the United States

(Sales in millions of dollars)

1972 SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted				Adjusted ¹					
		1979			1978		1979			1978	
		Sept. ² advance	Aug. prelim.	July final	Sept.	Aug.	Sept. ² advance	Aug. prelim.	July final	Sept.	Aug.
	Retail trade, total.....	72,153	77,623	72,075	66,219	69,102	76,263	74,621	72,370	68,085	67,303
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	58,995	62,168	57,828	53,486	54,460	61,260	60,145	58,974	54,052	53,408
	Durable goods stores, total.....	24,385	27,493	25,366	22,563	24,898	26,441	25,830	24,471	23,872	23,617
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	4,682	4,986	4,610	4,034	4,308	4,468	4,408	4,196	3,798	3,809
521,3	Building materials and supply stores.....	(*)	3,333	3,142	2,861	3,079	(*)	2,832	2,803	2,613	2,625
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	786	729	600	582	(*)	777	696	599	580
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	13,158	15,455	14,247	12,733	14,642	15,003	14,476	13,396	14,033	13,895
551,2,5, 6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous auto- motive dealers.....	(*)	13,961	12,855	11,512	13,385	(*)	13,072	12,059	12,791	12,699
551	Motor vehicle dealers (franchised).....	(*)	12,175	11,073	10,115	11,608	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	1,494	1,392	1,221	1,257	(*)	1,404	1,337	1,242	1,196
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	3,604	3,859	3,534	3,138	3,224	3,766	3,769	3,610	3,228	3,170
571	Furniture and home furnishings stores....	(*)	2,367	2,182	1,897	1,999	(*)	2,250	2,209	1,978	1,922
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores	(*)	1,159	1,070	930	930	(*)	1,165	1,091	938	935
5722	Household appliance stores.....	(*)	567	539	464	469	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	47,768	50,130	46,709	43,656	44,204	49,822	48,791	47,899	44,213	43,686
53	General merchandise group stores.....	8,555	8,985	7,984	8,024	8,165	9,244	9,104	8,854	8,379	8,361
531	Department stores.....	6,871	7,177	6,396	6,468	6,520	7,364	7,294	7,162	6,696	6,701
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	711	626	605	649	(*)	713	683	658	660
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.	(*)	1,097	962	951	996	(*)	1,097	1,009	1,025	1,000
54	Food stores.....	16,060	16,878	16,256	14,942	14,858	16,566	16,104	16,262	14,775	14,629
541	Grocery stores.....	14,841	15,584	14,963	13,892	13,781	15,284	14,842	14,993	13,687	13,577
554	Gasoline service stations.....	6,608	6,846	6,377	5,191	5,387	6,668	6,452	5,910	5,191	5,082
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	3,362	3,622	3,015	3,236	3,194	3,498	3,596	3,479	3,261	3,221
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	608	553	552	554	(*)	662	650	629	614
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	(*)	1,353	1,163	1,310	1,249	(*)	1,361	1,329	1,274	1,272
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	768	586	594	639	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	674	525	594	571	(*)	629	606	547	543
58	Eating and drinking places.....	6,521	6,977	6,681	6,134	6,527	6,425	6,257	6,232	5,996	5,923
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	2,234	2,363	2,267	2,041	2,109	2,418	2,370	2,364	2,158	2,135
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,346	1,346	1,147	1,161	(*)	1,314	1,306	1,167	1,151
5961 (pt.)	Mail-order houses (department store merchandise) ³	(*)	427	369	552	588	(*)	431	421	593	584

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

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

NA Not available.

¹Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. (See Explanatory Material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-79-08.)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.³Includes sales made by mail-order catalog desks located within department stores of some mail-order firms.

Table 2. Percent Change in Estimated Monthly Retail Sales by Kind of Business for the United States

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

1972 SIC code	Kind of business	Percent change					
		Sept. 1979 advance from--		Aug. 1979 preliminary from--		July 1979 through Sept. 1979 from --	
		Aug. 1979 preliminary	Sept. 1978 final	July 1979 final	Aug. 1978 final	Apr. 1979 through June 1979	July 1978 through Sept. 1978
	Retail trade, total.....	+2	+12	+3	+11	+4	+11
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	+2	+13	+2	+13	+4	+13
	Durable goods stores, total.....	+2	+11	+6	+9	+4	+9
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	+1	+18	+5	+16	+7	+16
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	+4	+7	+8	+4	+3	+4
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	0	+17	+4	+19	+9	+17
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	+2	+13	+2	+12	+4	+12
53	General merchandise group stores.....	+2	+10	+3	+9	+4	+9
531	Department stores.....	+1	+10	+2	+9	+5	+9
54	Food stores.....	+3	+12	-1	+10	+2	+11
541	Grocery stores.....	+3	+12	-1	+9	+3	+10
554	Gasoline service stations.....	+3	+28	+9	+27	+10	+26
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	-3	+7	+3	+12	+5	+10
58	Eating and drinking places.....	+3	+7	0	+6	-1	+6
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	+2	+12	0	+11	+5	+12

Table 3. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales of Group II Companies by Kind of Business for the United States: AUGUST 1979

(Sales in millions of dollars)

1972 SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted			Adjusted ¹		
		Aug. 1979 preliminary	July 1979 final	Aug. 1978	Aug. 1979 preliminary	July 1979 final	Aug. 1978
	Retail trade, total.....	25,213	23,151	22,570	24,827	24,362	22,698
53	General merchandise group stores.....	7,935	7,069	7,224	8,009	7,811	7,380
531	Department stores.....	6,805	6,064	6,176	6,867	6,723	6,315
533	Variety stores.....	572	509	521	581	564	535
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.	558	496	527	(S)	(S)	(S)
54	Food stores.....	8,741	8,360	7,683	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
541	Grocery stores.....	8,638	8,263	7,602	8,378	8,440	7,671
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	1,294	986	1,162	1,248	1,186	1,140
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	536	438	489	503	509	470
566	Shoe stores.....	321	229	280	300	288	268
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	1,135	1,102	978	1,145	1,154	991

Note: The Group II component of the sample consists of companies which had 11 or more retail establishments according to the most recent update of multi-establishment files and which were selected with certainty (i.e., their sales size exceeded specified dollar volume cutoffs which vary by kind of business).

¹Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. (See Explanatory Material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-79-08.)