



Advance Monthly Retail Sales

CB-60-72

MARCH 1980

FOR WIRE TRANSMISSION 3:00 P.M. THURSDAY, APRIL 10, 1980

SEE "NOTICE OF REVISED RETAIL SALES ESTIMATES" BELOW TABLE 1 ON PAGE 2. THE SALES COMPARISONS IN THIS REPORT ARE BASED ON REVISED DATA.

The Bureau of the Census, U. S. Department of Commerce, announced today that total sales of retail stores in March, after adjusting for seasonal variations and trading-day differences, but not for price changes were estimated at \$77.2 billion. This adjusted figure was about 1 percent below February but 7 percent higher than March a year ago. The adjusted March estimate excluding the automotive group was little changed from February but 11 percent above March last year.

Adjusted sales of durable goods stores were about 4 percent below February while sales of nondurable goods stores were virtually unchanged. Compared with sales for March, 1979 durable goods stores decreased 1 percent and nondurable goods stores increased 11 percent.

The revised estimate of retail sales for February, based on preliminary results from the full sample of retail stores, was about \$78.2 billion, \$0.8 billion below the February Advance estimate published earlier. Seasonally adjusted preliminary sales for February were about 2 percent below January 1980 estimates but were 10 percent above the February 1979 sales. Excluding the automotive group, retail sales were about 1 percent below January but were 13 percent over February 1979. For nondurable goods stores, adjusted February sales were about 1 percent lower than the previous month but were 12 percent above the same month a year earlier. For durable goods stores, adjusted sales for February were about 3 percent below January and 5 percent higher than February 1979.

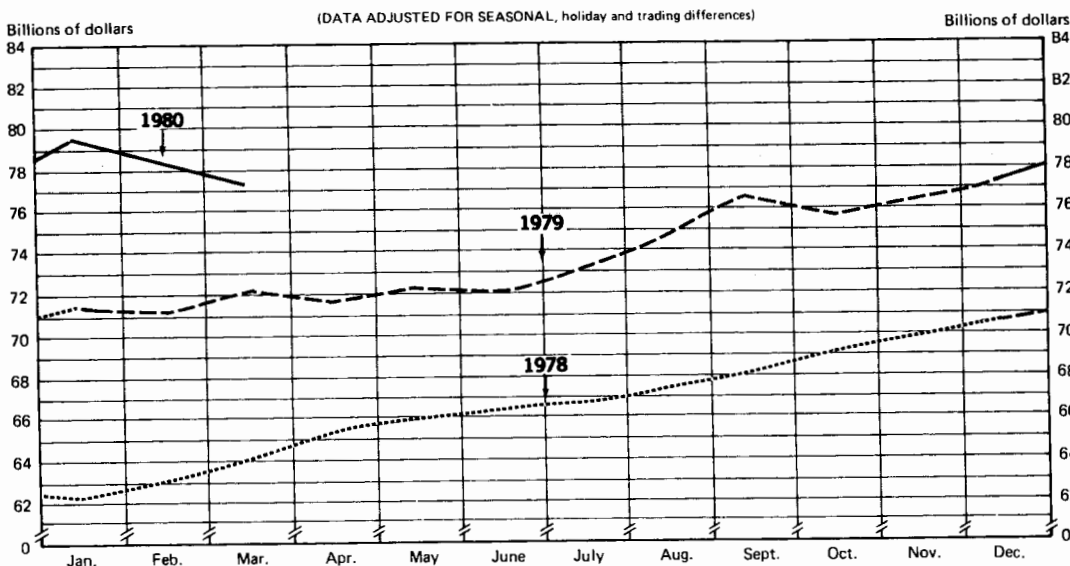
The advance sales estimates are based on early reporting of sales by a small subsample of the Bureau's retail survey panel. Because of the early reporting, the advance estimates can differ from the subsequent estimates which are based on monthly reports obtained from the full sample of retail stores. In addition, sampling variability between the subsample 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 difference now, therefore, may vary from the past experience.

Revised preliminary estimates for February 1980 and final estimates for January 1980 based on the full sample will be published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for February (BR-60-2). 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 1978 — MARCH 1980



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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				
		1980			1979		1980			1979	
		Mar. ² advance	Feb. prelim.	Jan. final	Mar.	Feb.	Mar. ² advance	Feb. prelim.	Jan. final	Mar.	Feb.
	Retail trade, total.....	75,612	69,736	69,449	72,397	60,690	77,223	78,209	79,464	72,045	71,266
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	60,510	55,891	56,083	55,646	47,174	63,175	63,063	63,773	56,737	55,924
	Durable goods stores, total.....	25,615	23,226	22,707	26,534	21,450	25,556	26,584	27,268	25,705	25,367
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	3,978	3,354	3,400	3,897	2,825	4,420	4,396	4,679	4,216	3,843
521,3	Building materials and supply stores.....	(*)	2,204	2,315	2,573	1,890	(*)	2,874	3,180	2,824	2,561
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	575	593	687	481	(*)	754	788	732	658
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	15,102	13,845	13,366	16,751	13,516	14,048	15,146	15,691	15,308	15,342
551,2,5, 6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	(*)	12,583	12,055	15,454	12,492	(*)	13,618	14,182	14,011	14,052
551	Motor vehicle dealers (franchised).....	(*)	11,355	11,031	13,732	11,200	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	1,262	1,311	1,297	1,024	(*)	1,528	1,509	1,297	1,290
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	3,483	3,254	3,317	3,291	2,854	3,636	3,623	3,733	3,329	3,313
571	Furniture and home furnishings stores....	(*)	2,087	2,105	2,167	1,850	(*)	2,301	2,363	2,156	2,129
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores	(*)	896	938	904	807	(*)	1,004	1,068	940	953
5722	Household appliance stores.....	(*)	448	464	463	402	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	49,997	46,510	46,742	45,863	39,240	51,667	51,625	52,196	46,340	45,899
53	General merchandise group stores.....	8,155	6,917	6,817	8,040	6,044	9,089	9,434	9,709	8,790	8,641
531	Department stores.....	6,689	5,579	5,488	6,492	4,840	7,474	7,685	7,851	7,134	6,994
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	521	513	578	455	(*)	687	726	628	628
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.	(*)	817	816	970	749	(*)	1,062	1,132	1,028	1,015
54	Food stores.....	17,025	16,124	16,349	15,949	13,974	17,133	16,728	16,997	15,373	15,326
541	Grocery stores.....	15,754	14,947	15,204	14,806	12,965	15,881	15,457	15,739	14,250	14,200
554	Gasoline service stations.....	7,011	6,670	6,675	5,343	4,773	7,220	7,250	7,056	5,419	5,412
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	3,365	2,770	3,061	3,274	2,513	3,610	3,637	3,793	3,554	3,442
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	522	604	641	524	(*)	683	696	734	717
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	(*)	1,043	1,112	1,239	948	(*)	1,335	1,420	1,304	1,269
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	596	649	666	528	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	461	540	567	391	(*)	635	649	601	559
58	Eating and drinking places.....	6,492	5,961	6,023	6,266	5,237	6,700	6,736	6,860	6,407	6,154
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	2,391	2,342	2,326	2,154	1,994	2,450	2,452	2,464	2,160	2,182
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,291	1,294	1,158	1,044	(*)	1,462	1,460	1,219	1,236

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-80-2.

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.

NOTICE OF REVISED RETAIL SALES ESTIMATES - The adjusted and unadjusted monthly estimates of retail sales from January 1973 to February 1980 have been revised utilizing the results from the 1977 Census of Retail Trade and the 1978 Annual Retail Trade Survey. The revised estimates and a more complete description of methodology are contained in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for January 1980 (BR-80-1).

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 differences¹)

1972 SIC code	Kind of business	Percent change					
		Apr. 1980 advance from--		Mar. 1980 preliminary from--		Feb. 1980 through Apr. 1980	
		Mar. 1980 preliminary	Apr. 1979 final	Feb. 1980 final	Mar. 1979 final	Nov. 1979 through Jan. 1980	Feb. 1979 through Apr. 1979
	Retail trade, total.....	-1	+5	-2	+6	-1	+7
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	+1	+11	0	+11	0	+11
	Durable goods stores, total.....	-5	-9	-8	-6	-7	-4
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	+1	-2	-6	-3	-8	+3
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	-10	-17	-10	-12	-9	-10
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	0	+5	-4	+5	-2	+6
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	+1	+13	+1	+12	+1	+12
53	General merchandise group stores.....	0	+5	-1	+6	-3	+7
531	Department stores.....	-1	+5	-1	+6	-3	+7
54	Food stores.....	+1	+12	+3	+12	+2	+11
541	Grocery stores.....	+1	+12	+3	+12	+2	+11
554	Gasoline service stations.....	+2	+34	+1	+36	+8	+35
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	+1	+6	-2	+1	-1	+5
58	Eating and drinking places.....	-1	+6	0	+4	-1	+6
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	+1	+11	0	+13	+3	+12

Table 3. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales of Group II Companies by Kind of Business for the United States: MARCH 1980

(Sales in millions of dollars)

1972 SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted			Adjusted ¹		
		Mar. 1980 preliminary	Feb. 1980 final	Mar. 1979	Mar. 1980 preliminary	Feb. 1980 final	Mar. 1979
	Retail trade, total.....	24,936	22,209	23,402	26,060	25,799	23,725
53	General merchandise group stores.....	7,295	5,997	6,974	8,180	8,219	7,637
531	Department stores.....	6,377	5,245	6,114	7,157	7,205	6,711
533	Variety stores.....	485	405	466	530	540	501
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.	433	347	394	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	9,129	8,607	8,706	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
541	Grocery stores.....	9,018	8,497	8,609	9,009	8,724	8,183
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	1,115	861	1,099	1,186	1,228	1,203
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	462	354	457	495	504	497
566	Shoe stores.....	301	219	286	301	298	304
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	1,169	1,140	1,063	1,210	1,234	1,084

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-80-3.)

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