

# Advance Monthly Retail Sales

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Advance U.S. retail sales for August, adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences but not for price changes, were \$97,602 million, down 1.4 percent from the revised July level of \$98,953 million. (The revised July estimate represented a decrease of 0.2 percent from June.) The August month-to-month decline is the largest since June 1982; however, August sales were 9.6 percent above the year-ago level. Excluding the automotive group, total sales were 0.5 percent above July and 7.3 percent above August 1982 sales.

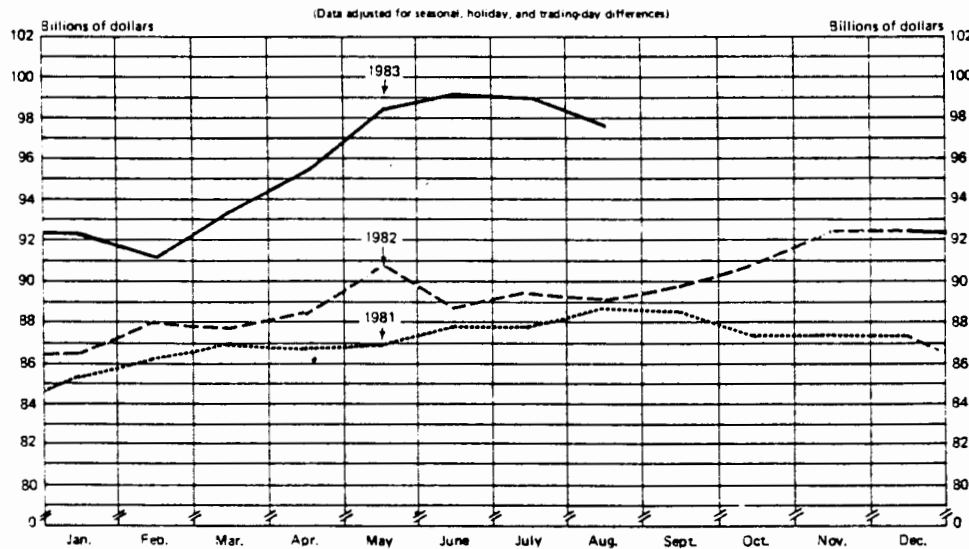
Sales of durable goods declined 4.9 percent from July but increased 19.4 percent from August 1982 sales. The decline in August sales is due primarily to a sharp decrease in automotive group sales, which were 9.2 percent below July but 21.5 percent above August 1982. This is the largest decline in automotive group sales since June 1982 and may be due to low dealer inventories. The sales of furniture stores and building materials dealers declined 0.4 percent and 0.7 percent, respectively, from July but were well above the depressed sales of a year ago.

Nondurable goods sales increased 0.4 percent over July, with mixed results in the kind-of-business categories. General merchandise group sales were up 0.5 percent in August and were 8.0 percent above the previous-year level. Sales of apparel stores showed the largest decline in nondurable goods, down 1.8 percent in August after a revised decrease of 2.5 percent in the previous month. After reaching a peak in May, this is the third consecutive month-to-month decrease for the apparel group. Sales of gasoline service stations increased 2.1 percent from July for the fourth monthly increase in the last 5 months and were 3.3 percent above previous year sales.

For a description of the sample design and reliability of the data, see back page.

The Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report for September is scheduled to be released October 13, 1983, at 2:30 p.m.

## ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES January 1981—August 1983



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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 \$39 per year. Add \$9.75 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 \$1.75 each.

Table 1. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales, by Kind of Business

(Sales in millions of dollars)

SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted					Adjusted <sup>1</sup>				
		1983			1982		1983			1982	
		Aug. <sup>2</sup> adv.	July prel.	June final	Aug.	July	Aug. <sup>2</sup> adv.	July prel.	June final	Aug.	July
	Retail trade, total.....	100015	98,996	100611	89,642	91,213	97,602	98,953	99,173	89,069	89,469
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	80,814	79,374	79,373	74,321	75,754	80,031	79,604	79,664	74,606	74,819
	Durable goods stores, total.....	32,923	32,746	34,999	26,922	27,204	30,837	32,426	32,663	25,831	26,124
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	5,399	5,257	5,685	4,395	4,561	4,838	4,874	4,951	4,014	4,134
521,3	Building materials and supply stores.....	(*)	3,858	4,061	3,191	3,274	(*)	3,520	3,537	2,821	2,905
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	783	813	656	731	(*)	750	740	666	684
55 ex. 551	Automotive dealers.....	19,201	19,622	21,238	15,321	15,459	17,571	19,349	19,509	14,463	14,650
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	17,094	17,568	19,170	13,472	13,521	15,611	17,411	17,571	12,709	12,865
551	Motor vehicle dealers (franchised).....	(*)	15,545	16,843	11,978	11,867	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	2,054	2,068	1,849	1,938	(*)	1,938	1,938	1,754	1,785
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	4,382	4,235	4,187	3,865	3,926	4,271	4,289	4,227	3,807	3,889
571	Furniture and home furnishings stores....	(*)	2,423	2,464	2,261	2,229	(*)	2,460	2,449	2,187	2,216
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores	(*)	1,520	1,423	1,272	1,386	(*)	1,493	1,445	1,268	1,326
5722	Household appliance stores.....	(*)	754	696	610	697	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	67,092	66,250	65,612	62,720	64,009	66,765	66,527	66,510	63,238	63,345
53	General merchandise group stores.....	11,388	10,512	11,156	10,452	10,061	11,706	11,649	11,884	10,841	10,925
531	Department stores.....	9,321	8,623	9,189	8,553	8,206	9,560	9,570	9,776	8,845	8,929
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	716	714	718	693	(*)	776	752	738	729
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.	(*)	1,173	1,253	1,181	1,162	(*)	1,303	1,356	1,258	1,267
54	Food stores.....	22,287	23,275	22,234	20,838	22,674	22,203	22,197	22,030	21,213	21,247
541	Grocery stores.....	20,989	21,909	20,885	19,471	21,228	20,885	20,846	20,719	19,808	19,879
554	Gasoline service stations.....	9,508	9,444	9,119	9,169	9,463	9,029	8,843	8,735	8,741	8, .
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	4,582	4,072	4,238	4,374	4,020	4,444	4,526	4,642	4,321	4,364
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	586	666	618	604	(*)	683	692	667	689
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	(*)	1,551	1,560	1,575	1,511	(*)	1,684	1,735	1,575	1,601
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	840	841	974	866	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	775	830	863	742	(*)	879	893	829	830
58	Eating and drinking places.....	10,798	10,729	10,368	9,778	9,786	10,063	9,962	9,856	9,113	9,028
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	3,207	3,147	3,185	2,899	2,924	3,279	3,282	3,250	3,001	2,999
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,659	1,571	1,559	1,690	(*)	1,589	1,577	1,573	1,591
5961 (pt.)	Mail-order houses (department store merchandise).....	(*)	364	383	391	352	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
53,56,57	GAF.....	(*)	21,651	22,629	21,416	20,646	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
594											

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

NA Not available.

<sup>1</sup>Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. (See Explanatory Material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-83-07).

<sup>2</sup>Advance estimates are based on early reporting by a small subsample of the full survey panel. All other estimates are based on the full sample.

<sup>3</sup>GAF represents stores which specialize in department store types of merchandise.

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

**Table 2. Percent Change in Estimated Monthly Retail Sales, by Kind of Business**

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

SIC code	Kind of business	Percent change					
		Aug. 1983 advance from--		July 1983 preliminary from--		June 1983 through Aug. 1983	
		July 1983 prelim.	Aug. 1982 final	June 1983 final	July 1982 final	Mar. 1983 through May 1983	June 1982 through Aug. 1982
	Retail trade, total.....	-1.4	+9.6	-0.2	+10.6	+3.0	+10.7
	Total (excl. automotive group)....	+0.5	+7.3	-0.1	+6.4	+2.7	+7.1
	Durable goods stores, total.....	-4.9	+19.4	-0.7	+24.1	+4.3	+22.8
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	-0.7	+20.5	-1.6	+17.9	+6.1	+19.3
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	-9.2	+21.5	-0.8	+32.1	+4.4	+29.0
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	-10.3	+22.8	-0.9	+35.3	+4.2	+31.7
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	-0.4	+12.2	+1.5	+10.3	+2.0	+10.6
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	+0.4	+5.6	0.0	+5.0	+2.4	+5.7
53	General merchandise group stores.....	+0.5	+8.0	-2.0	+6.6	+3.1	+8.2
531	Department stores.....	-0.1	+8.1	-2.1	+7.2	+3.2	+8.7
54	Food stores.....	0.0	+4.7	+0.8	+4.5	+2.0	+4.6
541	Grocery stores.....	+0.2	+5.4	+0.6	+5.1	+2.0	+5.4
554	Gasoline service stations.....	+2.1	+3.3	+1.2	+0.5	+4.9	+1.6
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	-1.8	+2.8	-2.5	+3.7	+0.6	+5.4
58	Eating and drinking places.....	+1.0	+10.4	+1.1	+10.3	+1.6	+10.7
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	-0.1	+9.3	+1.0	+9.4	+1.5	+9.0

**Table 3. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales of Group II Companies, by Kind of Business**

(Sales in millions of dollars)

SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted			Adjusted <sup>1</sup>		
		July 1983 prelim.	June 1983 final	July 1982	July 1983 prelim.	June 1983 final	July 1982
	Retail trade, total.....	33,595	33,773	32,291	34,498	34,746	32,537
53	General merchandise group stores.....	9,522	10,157	9,096	10,579	10,830	9,906
531	Department stores.....	8,299	8,843	7,895	9,190	9,417	9,572
533	Variety stores.....	558	562	562	609	600	600
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	665	752	639	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	12,323	11,697	12,046	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
541	Grocery stores.....	12,174	11,549	11,886	11,695	11,607	11,129
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	1,643	1,689	1,534	1,865	1,866	1,722
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	731	720	668	782	793	708
566	Shoe stores.....	341	365	314	407	406	372
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	1,738	1,751	1,554	1,805	1,801	1,594

<sup>1</sup> Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. (See Explanatory Material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-83-7).

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).

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### Sample Design and Reliability of Data

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.

Percentage differences between advance and full sample preliminary estimates of month-to-month percentage change in seasonally adjusted total retail store sales have ranged from approximately -0.8 percent to +1.4 percent with the average of the absolute differences about 0.5 percent for the past 12 months. For individual kind-of-business groups, these differences tend to be higher. Sampling variability of and revisions to advance-to-preliminary estimates are shown in table 4 below.

Preliminary estimates for July 1983 and final estimates for June 1983 based on the full sample will be published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for July (BR-83-07). The complete report will provide sales estimates in greater detail and will present a description of revisions, and the techniques used in developing the estimates. The complete report will include additional measures of sampling variability.

**Table 4. Sampling Variability of and Revision to Advance-to-Preliminary Estimate**

SIC code	Kind of business	Estimated coefficient of variation in percent of the advance-to-preliminary ratio			Preliminary-to-final percent change minus the advance-to-preliminary percent change			
		Range <sup>1</sup>		Median	Range <sup>2</sup>		Mean	Average of absolute difference
		From	To		From	To		
	Retail trade, total.....	0.6	0.8	0.8	-0.8	+1.4	0.0	0.5
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	0.7	0.9	0.8	-1.1	-0.9	-0.1	0.5
	Durable goods stores, total.....	1.2	2.1	1.5	-3.7	-2.3	-0.2	1.2
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	1.6	4.2	2.4	-4.7	-4.9	-0.4	2.5
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	1.5	2.7	2.0	-4.5	-2.7	-0.2	1.6
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	1.1	2.3	1.6	-4.6	+3.0	-0.2	1.8
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	1.6	6.7	2.7	-2.7	-3.9	-0.2	1.9
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	0.6	0.8	0.7	-0.8	-0.9	-0.1	0.6
53	General merchandise group stores.....	0.4	0.7	0.5	-1.8	-2.2	-0.1	1.1
531	Department stores.....	0.2	0.5	0.3	-1.3	-2.6	-0.1	0.9
54	Food stores.....	0.7	1.6	1.0	-1.6	+1.4	-0.1	0.7
541	Grocery stores.....	0.3	0.7	0.4	-1.6	+1.4	-0.2	0.7
554	Gasoline service stations.....	0.7	1.2	1.0	-3.6	-3.2	-0.1	1.4
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	1.2	3.0	1.9	-3.6	-8.7	-0.4	2.1
58	Eating and drinking places.....	0.8	1.5	1.0	-3.0	+4.0	-0.5	1.5
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	0.3	2.5	1.1	-1.9	+2.4	-0.2	0.9

<sup>1</sup>The ranges of sampling variability shown are based on sales estimates unadjusted for seasonal variation, holiday, and trading-day differences for the data months of January-December 1982.

<sup>2</sup>The ranges shown for the retail trade total are based on sales estimates adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences for the 12-month period, August 1982-July 1983. The ranges for all other totals and kinds of business are based on the 12-month period January-December 1982.

Note: See appendix B, Reliability of Data, in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for a discussion on the measures of sampling variability.