

Advance Monthly Retail Sales

January 1985

FOR WIRE TRANSMISSION 8:30 A.M. EST, Wednesday, February 13, 1985

CB-85-26

The unadjusted and adjusted monthly retail sales estimates will be revised utilizing the results from the 1982 Census of Retail Trade and 1983 Annual Retail Trade Survey. Revised estimates for the period January 1977 through February 1985 along with the previously published estimates for the same period are scheduled for release during the week of March 18th

Advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for January, adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences but not for price changes, were \$110.7 billion, up 0.7 percent from the revised level of \$109.9 billion in December and 3.8 percent above a year ago. Excluding the automotive group, total sales declined 0.1 percent in January. November through January sales were 2.3 percent higher than the prior 3 months and 6.4 percent above the same period last year.

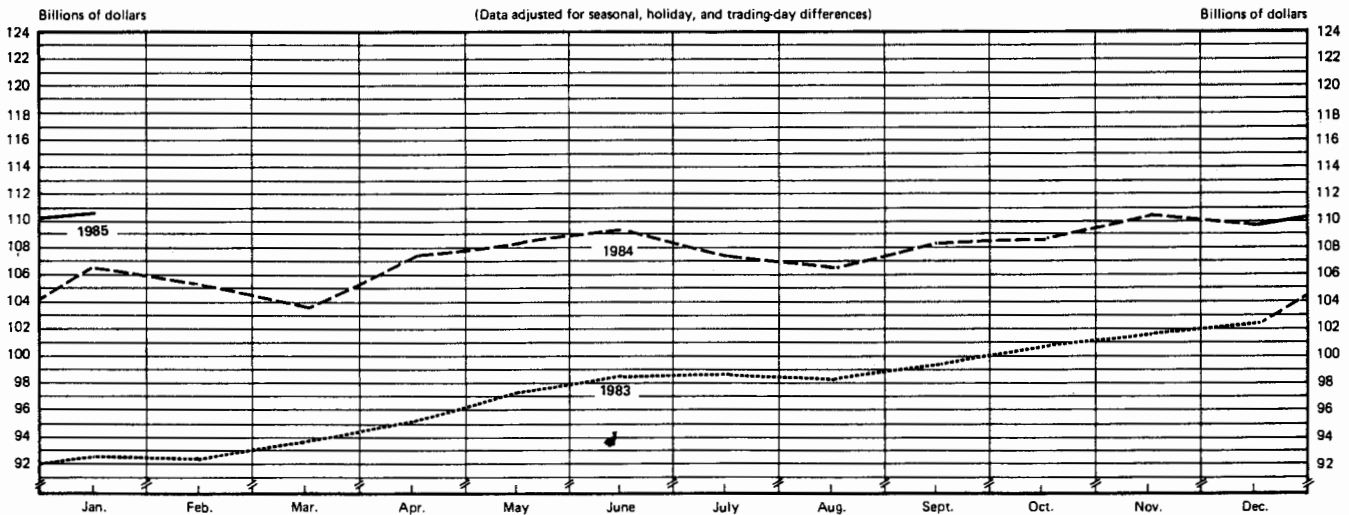
Durable goods sales rose 2.5 percent in January and were 7.4 above the previous year. All major groups showed increases from last month, with the automotive group showing the largest gain, up 4.0 percent. This is the fourth monthly increase in the last 5 months. Building materials rose 1.1 percent in January and were 9.6 percent above the previous year. Furniture group sales gained 0.4 percent in January and were 10.4 percent above sales a year ago. This is the only major group showing double-digit increases from previous year levels.

The nondurable goods group declined 0.2 percent in January after a revised drop of 0.3 percent in December. The general merchandise group dropped 4.6 percent in January and showed a gain of only 2.3 percent from the previous year. This decline follows strong increases in November and December and may have been caused by the record cold during the month. Food store sales increased 2.7 percent after a revised decrease of 1.7 percent in December, and rose 4.9 percent compared to year ago sales. The apparel group, which also might have been affected by bad weather, dropped 5.1 percent in January, the largest decline since October 1967. Gasoline service stations increased 1.1 percent from December but were 1.1 below January last year. Eating and drinking places declined 1.2 percent while drug stores rose 1.0 percent during the month.

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

The Advance Monthly Retail Sales report for February is scheduled to be released March 13, 1985, at 8:30 a.m.

ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES January 1983-January 1985



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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 \$37 per year. Add \$9.25 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 75 cents each.

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

(Sales in millions of dollars)

SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted					Adjusted ¹				
		1985		1984		1983	1985		1984		1983
		Jan. ² adv.	Dec. prel.	Nov. final	Jan.	Dec.	Jan. ² adv.	Dec. prel.	Nov. final	Jan.	Dec.
	Retail trade, total.....	98,618	131,652	113,276	93,089	125,759	110,686	109,872	110,397	106,602	102,438
	Total (excl. auto group)..	77,940	111,811	91,927	74,297	106,849	87,099	87,195	87,406	84,569	81,274
	Durable goods, total.....	34,431	40,981	38,252	31,170	38,188	39,857	38,873	39,158	37,127	35,532
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers..	4,588	5,304	5,749	4,141	4,863	6,021	5,953	5,883	5,494	5,293
521,3	Building mat. and supply stores.	(*)	3,748	4,286	3,068	3,294	(*)	4,478	4,325	4,042	3,826
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	983	865	687	1,016	(*)	839	869	874	843
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	20,678	19,841	21,349	18,792	18,910	23,587	22,677	22,991	22,033	21,164
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	19,012	18,004	19,453	17,135	16,916	21,654	20,814	21,168	20,041	19,201
551	Motor vehicle (franchised)....	(*)	16,394	17,745	15,667	15,546	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores....	(*)	1,837	1,896	1,657	1,994	(*)	1,863	1,823	1,992	1,963
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	4,931	6,867	5,593	4,279	6,207	5,291	5,269	5,192	4,791	4,629
571	Furniture and home furnishings..	(*)	3,416	3,226	2,543	3,208	(*)	3,004	2,982	2,829	2,737
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores.....	(*)	2,865	2,001	1,427	2,426	(*)	1,915	1,853	1,622	1,557
5722	Household appliance stores....	(*)	971	784	591	862	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total.....	64,187	90,671	75,024	61,919	87,571	70,829	70,999	71,239	69,475	66,906
53	General merchandise group stores..	9,304	25,235	16,505	8,853	23,492	13,135	13,763	13,490	12,835	12,330
531	Department stores.....	7,598	20,534	13,517	7,266	18,980	10,732	11,295	11,098	10,546	10,042
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	1,561	926	592	1,530	(*)	825	869	836	786
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	3,140	2,062	995	2,982	(*)	1,643	1,523	1,453	1,502
54	Food stores.....	22,734	24,825	23,168	21,110	24,304	23,570	22,958	23,347	22,468	21,754
541	Grocery stores.....	21,494	23,212	21,803	19,918	22,675	22,251	21,613	21,913	21,189	20,410
554	Gasoline service stations.....	8,296	8,597	8,643	8,340	8,917	8,651	8,554	8,713	8,751	8,759
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	3,930	8,327	5,680	3,765	7,910	4,822	5,081	5,108	4,704	4,665
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	1,494	889	563	1,330	(*)	780	756	698	685
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	(*)	3,288	2,324	1,513	3,100	(*)	2,082	2,097	1,901	1,888
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	2,065	1,309	770	1,985	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	1,114	851	677	1,107	(*)	819	816	814	788
58	Eating and drinking places.....	9,511	10,603	10,191	9,210	9,724	10,544	10,667	10,660	10,268	9,714
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	3,571	4,865	3,617	3,249	4,428	3,708	3,672	3,650	3,434	3,258
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	2,316	1,689	1,481	2,470	(*)	1,628	1,672	1,689	1,699
5961 (pt.)	Mail-order houses (department store merchandise).....	(*)	521	570	332	485	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
53,56,57	GAF.....	(*)	48,132	32,053	19,712	44,572	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
594		(*)					(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)

*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-84-12).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.³GAF 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					
		Jan. 1985 advance from--		Dec. 1984 preliminary from--		Nov. 1984 through Jan. 1985	
		Dec. 1984 prelim.	Jan. 1984 final	Nov. 1984 final	Dec. 1983 final	Aug. 1984 through Oct. 1984	Nov. 1983 through Jan. 1984
	Retail trade, total.....	+0.7	+3.8	-0.5	+7.3	+2.3	+6.4
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	-0.1	+3.0	-0.2	+7.3	+1.2	+5.8
	Durable goods, total.....	+2.5	+7.4	-0.7	+9.4	+5.0	+9.9
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	+1.1	+9.6	+1.2	+12.5	+4.3	+11.8
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	+4.0	+7.1	-1.4	+7.1	+6.6	+9.1
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	+4.0	+8.0	-1.7	+8.4	+7.3	+10.4
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	+0.4	+10.4	+1.5	+13.8	+4.1	+13.1
	Nondurable goods, total.....	-0.2	+1.9	-0.3	+6.1	+0.8	+4.6
53	General merchandise group stores.....	-4.6	+2.3	+2.0	+11.6	+2.8	+7.8
531	Department stores.....	-5.0	+1.8	+1.8	+12.5	+2.5	+8.2
54	Food stores.....	+2.7	+4.9	-1.7	+5.5	+0.7	+5.6
541	Grocery stores.....	+3.0	+5.0	-1.4	+5.9	+0.8	+5.7
554	Gasoline service stations.....	+1.1	-1.1	-1.8	-2.3	+0.1	-1.0
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	-5.1	+2.5	-0.5	+8.9	+2.7	+6.9
58	Eating and drinking places.....	-1.2	+2.7	+0.1	+9.8	+0.7	+6.4
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	+1.0	+8.0	+0.6	+12.7	+2.6	+10.3

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 ¹		
		Dec. 1984 prelim.	Nov. 1984 final	Dec. 1983	Dec. 1984 prelim.	Nov. 1984 final	Dec. 1983
	Retail trade, total.....	55,095	42,156	51,970	38,795	38,446	35,456
53	General merchandise group stores.....	22,963	15,014	21,353	12,484	12,233	11,155
531	Department stores.....	19,646	12,933	18,159	10,836	10,610	9,628
533	Variety stores.....	1,255	724	1,231	648	667	614
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	2,062	1,357	1,963	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	13,854	12,694	13,571	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
541	Grocery stores.....	13,572	12,529	13,276	12,361	12,492	11,544
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	3,847	2,510	3,568	2,217	2,204	1,996
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	1,633	1,094	1,564	970	971	895
566	Shoe stores.....	631	462	610	440	435	413
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	2,096	2,117	2,717	2,138	2,134	1,813

¹Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. (See Explanatory Material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-84-12).

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.

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 -1.1 percent to +1.1 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 December 1984 and final estimates for November 1984 based on the full sample will be published late this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for December (BR-84-12). 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 ¹		Median	Range ²		Mean	Average of absolute difference
		From	To		From	To		
	Retail trade, total.....	0.7	0.9	0.7	-1.1	+1.1	0.0	0.5
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	0.6	1.0	0.7	-0.8	+1.3	0.0	0.6
	Durable goods stores, total.....	1.0	2.2	1.4	-1.4	+3.2	+0.4	1.0
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	1.9	3.1	2.7	-1.5	+5.1	+1.3	2.0
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	1.4	2.2	1.8	-1.0	+4.2	+0.6	1.1
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	0.9	1.9	1.3	-1.3	+4.8	+0.7	1.2
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	1.2	4.1	2.4	-3.5	+2.5	-0.5	1.5
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	0.5	0.8	0.6	-0.6	+1.2	0.0	0.4
53	General merchandise group stores.....	0.4	0.9	0.5	-1.3	+1.0	+0.1	0.5
531	Department stores.....	0.1	0.6	0.3	-1.1	+1.0	+0.2	0.5
54	Food stores.....	0.7	1.1	0.9	-0.9	+1.3	-0.2	0.5
541	Grocery stores.....	0.2	0.7	0.5	-0.8	+1.1	-0.2	0.5
554	Gasoline service stations.....	0.6	1.1	1.0	-3.8	+3.0	-0.1	1.6
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	1.6	3.7	2.0	-3.0	+2.1	0.0	1.4
58	Eating and drinking places.....	0.6	1.4	1.1	-2.4	+3.0	-0.1	1.2
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	0.4	1.6	0.9	-2.1	+1.5	-0.4	0.7

¹The 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 1983.

²The 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, January 1984-December 1984. The ranges for all other totals and kinds of business are based on the 12-month period March 1983-February 1984.

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