

Advance Monthly Retail Sales

December 1986

FOR WIRE TRANSMISSION 8:30 A.M. EST, Wednesday, January 14, 1987

CB-87-0

INTENTION TO REVISE: The retail sales estimates will be revised utilizing the results from the 1985 Annual Retail Trade Survey and the 1982 Census of Retail Trade. Revised estimates for the period December 1980 through February 1987 along with the previously published estimates for the same period are scheduled for release in early April 1987.

Beginning with the March 1987 Advance Monthly Retail Sales publication, the preliminary and final estimates will be based on a new sample of retail firms. Also beginning with the March publication, sales of leased departments and concessions will be tabulated in the kind of business of the leased department and concession, and not as currently tabulated in the kind of business of the stores in which they are located.

For a further description of the changes, please see the October 1986 Monthly Retail Trade Report, page 8.

Advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for December adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences but not for price changes, were \$126.3 billion, 4.4 percent above November and 8.1 percent above December 1985. The revised November showed a decline of 0.6 percent from October. Total sales in the fourth quarter were 0.2 percent below the third quarter but were 6.3 percent above the same quarter a year ago. Total sales for the 12 months of 1986 were \$1,445.4 billion, up 5.2 percent from the 1985 total.

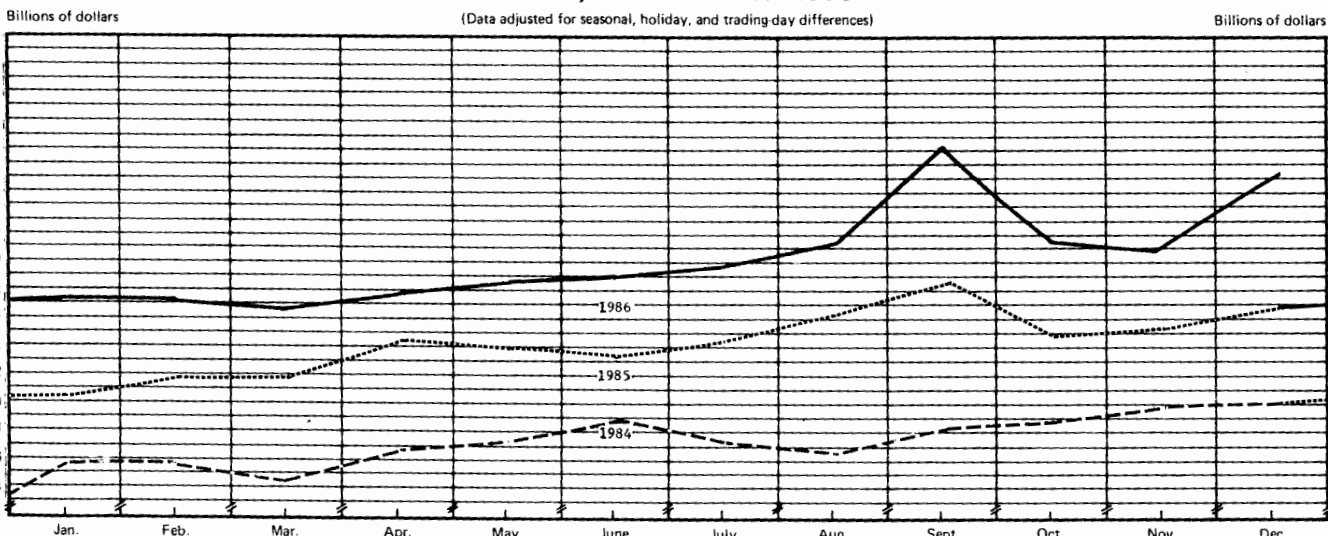
Durable goods increased 10.2 percent from November and were 17.9 percent above December 1985. Automotive sales increased 16.2 percent from the previous month and were 22.9 percent above sales a year ago.

Nondurable goods were 2.3 percent above December a year ago. The general merchandise group increased 1.3 percent from November and was 3.9 percent above sales a year ago. Gasoline service stations were 18.4 percent below December 1985.

The Advance Monthly Retail Sales report for January is scheduled to be released February 12, 1987, at 8:30 a.m.

ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES

January 1984-December 1986



Inquiries concerning this report should be addressed to Ronald Piencykoski, Business Division, Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233. Telephone (301) 763-5294/7561.



U.S. Department of Commerce
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

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. This report is available electronically in CENDATA, the Bureau's on-line information service, through a commercial vendor. For further information, contact Customer Services, DUSD, Bureau of the Cen-

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

(Sales in millions of dollars)

SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted						Adjusted ¹					
		12 month total		1986			1985		1986			1985	
		1986	Percent change from 1985	Dec. ² adv.	Nov. prel.	Oct. final	Dec.	Nov.	Dec. ² adv.	Nov. prel.	Oct. final	Dec. ²	Nov. ²
	Retail trade, total.....	1,445,436	+5.2	150,829	121,091	123,055	138,646	118,060	126,255	120,937	121,655	116,743	115,354
	Total (excl. auto group)..	1,108,328	+4.4	121,519	96,756	94,868	115,553	94,957	94,338	93,479	93,221	90,763	90,106
	Durable goods, total.....	562,811	+9.5	55,443	44,033	48,012	46,346	41,120	51,447	46,706	47,679	43,639	42,560
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers..	85,990	+16.1	6,836	6,877	7,935	5,993	6,236	7,351	7,223	7,317	6,634	6,471
521,3	Building mat. and supply stores.	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,163	5,925	4,218	4,538	(*)	5,367	5,314	4,893	4,674
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	968	1,008	1,084	953	(*)	981	994	939	945
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	337,108	+7.8	29,310	24,335	28,187	23,093	23,103	31,917	27,458	28,434	25,980	25,248
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	312,873	+8.5	27,320	22,266	25,994	21,054	20,938	29,956	25,418	26,390	23,925	23,162
551	Motor vehicle (franchised)....	(*)	(*)	(*)	20,035	23,442	19,442	19,192	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,069	2,193	2,039	2,165	(*)	2,040	2,044	2,055	2,086
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	76,150	+11.8	9,025	6,937	6,652	8,102	6,406	6,578	6,536	6,522	5,996	5,878
571	Furniture and home furnishings..	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,685	3,652	3,693	3,422	(*)	3,496	3,515	3,214	3,157
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,725	2,512	3,675	2,533	(*)	2,512	2,502	2,333	2,278
5722	Household appliance stores....	(*)	(*)	(*)	758	756	1,016	785	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total.....	882,625	+2.7	95,386	77,058	75,043	92,300	76,940	74,808	74,231	73,976	73,104	72,794
53	General merchandise group stores..	165,658	+3.9	25,759	16,567	13,761	24,720	16,422	13,933	13,760	13,898	13,413	13,490
531	Department stores.....	141,980	+5.4	22,094	14,282	11,810	20,903	13,910	12,014	11,872	11,929	11,404	11,439
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	689	668	1,344	775	(*)	653	699	728	726
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,596	1,283	2,473	1,737	(*)	1,235	1,270	1,281	1,325
54	Food stores.....	293,921	+4.2	26,667	24,656	25,101	25,409	24,297	25,193	24,991	24,800	24,331	23,969
541	Grocery stores.....	277,689	+4.4	25,025	23,301	23,706	23,765	22,964	23,811	23,608	23,379	22,939	22,625
554	Gasoline service stations.....	86,405	-14.3	7,016	6,798	7,022	8,618	8,285	6,885	6,937	6,831	8,441	8,377
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	75,040	+7.7	10,550	7,057	6,349	9,783	6,809	6,390	6,328	6,352	5,978	5,968
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	862	734	1,342	854	(*)	721	740	709	709
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,976	2,745	3,963	2,835	(*)	2,667	2,668	2,515	2,491
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,886	1,615	2,885	1,864	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,031	966	1,190	948	(*)	985	971	902	894
58	Eating and drinking places.....	141,385	+7.9	11,856	11,658	12,471	10,728	10,754	12,286	12,182	12,073	11,106	11,121
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	49,290	+7.1	5,733	4,046	4,101	5,186	3,832	4,266	4,193	4,180	3,896	3,906
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,488	1,460	2,077	1,544	(*)	1,459	1,482	1,496	1,482
5961 (pt.)	Mail-order houses (department store merchandise).....	(*)	(*)	(*)	327	372	461	494	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
53,56,57	GAF ³	(*)	(*)	(*)	35,280	30,751	50,548	33,946	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)

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

NA Not available. ²Revised

¹Data are concurrently adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. Concurrent seasonal adjustment uses all available unadjusted estimates as input to the X-11 program and the factors derived from the program are used in calculating all seasonally adjusted data shown in this publication. Factors and explanatory material are contained in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-86-11.

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					
		Dec. 1986 advance from--		Nov. 1986 preliminary from--		Oct. 1986 through Dec. 1986	
		Nov. 1986 prelim.	Dec. 1985 final	Oct. 1986 final	Nov. 1985 final	July 1986 through Sep. 1986	Oct. 1985 through Dec. 1985
	Retail trade, total.....	+4.4	+8.1	-0.6	+4.8	-0.2	+6.3
	Total (excl. automotive group)....	+0.9	+3.9	+0.3	+3.7	+1.0	+3.9
	Durable goods, total.....	+10.2	+17.9	-2.0	+9.7	-2.0	+13.3
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	+1.8	+10.8	-1.3	+11.6	+1.2	+12.1
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	+16.2	+22.9	-3.4	+8.8	-4.1	+14.9
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	+17.9	+25.2	-3.7	+9.7	-4.3	+16.4
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	+0.6	+9.7	+0.2	+11.2	+0.5	+10.5
	Nondurable goods, total.....	+0.8	+2.3	+0.3	+2.0	+1.0	+2.1
53	General merchandise group stores.....	+1.3	+3.9	-1.0	+2.0	-0.5	+3.4
531	Department stores.....	+1.2	+5.3	-0.5	+3.8	-0.5	+4.9
54	Food stores.....	+0.8	+3.5	+0.8	+4.3	+2.1	+4.0
541	Grocery stores.....	+0.9	+3.8	+1.0	+4.3	+2.2	+4.1
554	Gasoline service stations.....	-0.7	-18.4	+1.6	-17.2	+0.6	-18.1
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	+1.0	+6.9	-0.4	+6.0	+0.4	+6.8
58	Eating and drinking places.....	+0.9	+10.6	+0.9	+9.5	+2.3	+9.7
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	+1.7	+9.5	+0.3	+7.3	+1.2	+7.6

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		
		Nov. 1986 prelim.	Oct. 1986 final	Nov. 1985	Nov. 1986 prelim.	Oct. 1986 final	Nov. 1985
	Retail trade, total.....	44,451	41,309	44,041	41,155	41,225	40,026
53	General merchandise group stores.....	15,538	12,806	15,387	12,839	12,991	12,578
531	Department stores.....	13,702	11,331	13,333	11,399	11,457	10,983
533	Variety stores.....	558	524	660	522	550	606
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	1,278	951	1,394	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	13,702	13,858	13,516	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
541	Grocery stores.....	13,534	13,685	13,340	13,685	13,563	13,002
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	3,005	2,569	2,849	2,626	2,617	2,451
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	1,366	1,160	1,260	1,193	1,171	1,095
566	Shoe stores.....	540	484	495	505	488	453
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	2,259	2,238	2,147	2,307	2,326	2,171

^r Revised

¹ Data are concurrently adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. Concurrent seasonal adjustment uses all available unadjusted estimates as input to the X-11 program and the factors derived from the program are used in calculating all seasonally adjusted data shown in this publication. Factors and explanatory material are contained in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-86-11.

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).

Official Business
 Penalty for Private Use, \$300

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 +0.8 percent with the average of the absolute differences about 0.4 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 November 1986 and final estimates for October 1986 based on the full sample will be published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for November (BR-86-11). 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	0.8	-1.1	+0.8	0.0	0.4
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	0.8	0.9	0.8	-0.7	+0.6	0.0	0.4
	Durable goods stores, total.....	1.3	1.7	1.6	-2.1	+0.8	-0.3	0.7
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	0.9	2.0	1.3	-2.6	+4.2	+0.5	1.7
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	1.5	2.2	1.7	-2.6	+1.7	-0.5	1.1
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	0.9	1.6	1.2	-2.6	+1.7	-0.5	1.2
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	1.8	2.5	2.1	-3.4	+2.7	+0.1	1.5
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	0.5	0.7	0.6	-0.7	+0.8	0.0	0.3
53	General merchandise group stores.....	0.5	1.0	0.6	-0.6	+1.1	+0.1	0.4
531	Department stores.....	0.2	0.5	0.2	-0.7	+0.6	+0.1	0.3
54	Food stores.....	1.0	1.2	1.0	-0.6	+0.5	-0.1	0.3
541	Grocery stores.....	0.3	0.5	0.4	-0.7	+0.5	-0.1	0.3
554	Gasoline service stations.....	0.6	1.3	0.9	-5.2	+3.1	-0.5	1.8
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	1.1	3.1	1.7	-1.3	+2.2	+0.6	0.9
58	Eating and drinking places.....	0.8	1.3	0.9	-2.1	+1.5	0.0	1.0
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	0.3	1.8	0.6	-0.8	+1.2	+0.2	0.6

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, December 1985-November 1986. The ranges for all other totals and kinds of business are based on the 12-month period August 1985-July 1986.

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