

# Advance Monthly Retail Sales



U.S. Department of Commerce  
ECONOMICS AND STATISTICS ADMINISTRATION  
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

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The Census Bureau of the Department of Commerce announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for July adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$153.7 billion, an increase of 0.5 percent ( $\pm 1.3\%$ ) from the previous month and were 2.0 percent ( $\pm 1.7\%$ ) above July 1990. Total sales in the May through July period were 2.2 percent ( $\pm 1.7\%$ ) above the same period a year ago.

Durable goods increased 0.7 percent ( $\pm 2.5\%$ ) from the previous month.

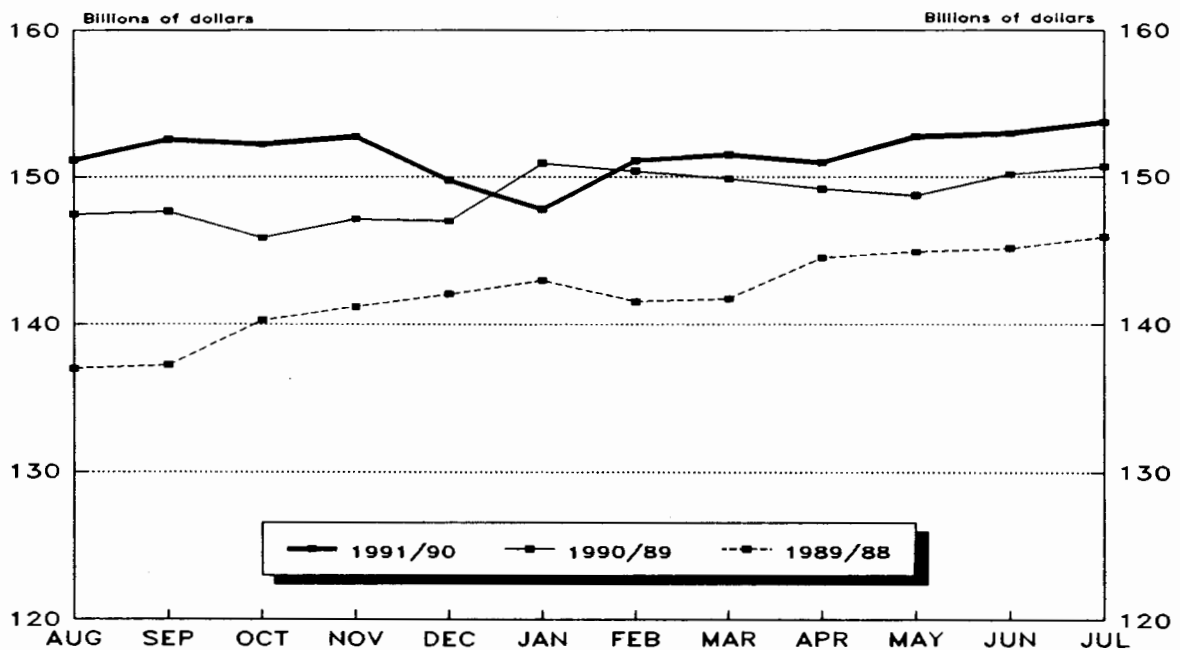
Nondurable goods increased 0.4 percent ( $\pm 1.3\%$ ) from the previous month and were 3.2 percent above last year. General merchandise stores increased 2.8 percent from June and were 3.5 percent above July a year ago. Drug stores were up 10.5 percent above the previous year.

The Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report for August is scheduled to be released September 13, 1991 at 8:30 a.m.

## ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES

August 1988 - July 1991

(Data adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences)



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This report is available the day of issue through the Department of Commerce's online Economic Bulletin Board. For information call (202) 377-1986. The data are also available through the Census Bureau's online information service - CENDATA. CENDATA is available from Dialog Information Services, INC. (1-800-334-2564) and CompuServe (1-800-848-8199). The CENDATA staff at the Bureau of the Census (301-763-2074) can provide content information and general guidance.

**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>				
		1991			1990		1991			1990	
		July <sup>2</sup> adv.	June prel.	May final	July	June	July <sup>2</sup> adv.	June prel.	May final	July <sup>1</sup>	June <sup>1</sup>
	Retail trade, total.....	155,175	154,071	159,835	149,719	154,371	153,669	152,929	152,710	150,669	150,156
	Total (excl. auto group)...	120,106	120,410	124,804	116,151	119,440	121,738	121,349	121,403	118,790	118,684
	Durable goods, total.....	57,796	56,550	58,949	56,090	58,482	54,589	54,213	54,074	54,648	54,280
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	8,573	8,775	9,282	8,558	9,052	7,730	7,789	7,814	7,796	7,889
521,3	Building mat. and supply stores.....	(*)	6,433	6,454	6,212	6,351	(*)	5,718	5,666	5,561	5,566
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	1,203	1,282	1,185	1,269	(*)	1,100	1,120	1,120	1,143
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	35,069	33,661	35,031	33,568	34,931	31,931	31,580	31,307	31,879	31,472
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	32,220	30,862	32,178	30,842	32,103	29,291	28,924	28,628	29,290	28,870
551	Motor vehicle (franchised).....	(*)	26,884	27,951	27,142	28,027	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	2,799	2,853	2,726	2,828	(*)	2,656	2,679	2,589	2,602
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	7,567	7,325	7,518	7,494	7,731	7,690	7,544	7,607	7,792	7,772
571	Furniture and home furnishings.....	(*)	4,013	4,219	4,183	4,348	(*)	4,066	4,124	4,308	4,309
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores.....	(*)	2,615	2,626	2,710	2,765	(*)	2,696	2,724	2,794	2,782
5722	Household appliance stores.....	(*)	831	863	924	920	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total.....	97,379	97,521	100,886	93,629	95,889	99,080	98,716	98,636	96,021	95,876
53	General merchandise group stores.....	16,057	17,015	18,091	15,466	16,913	18,463	17,959	18,324	17,837	17,735
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts).....	12,999	13,727	14,582	12,475	13,650	14,924	14,465	14,864	14,323	14,293
531	Dept. stores (in. leased depts) <sup>3</sup> .....	(*)	14,113	15,009	12,852	14,048	(*)	14,856	15,253	14,789	14,725
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	542	593	544	557	(*)	600	607	611	611
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	2,746	2,916	2,447	2,706	(*)	2,894	2,853	2,903	2,831
54	Food stores.....	32,191	31,703	32,652	30,855	31,211	31,205	31,304	31,125	30,284	30,192
541	Grocery stores.....	30,017	29,544	30,512	28,825	29,214	29,086	29,136	29,087	28,288	28,226
554	Gasoline service stations.....	11,390	11,145	11,219	10,988	10,896	10,685	10,789	10,746	10,356	10,477
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	7,244	7,538	8,004	7,150	7,675	8,112	8,100	8,147	8,060	8,143
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	742	770	660	805	(*)	754	787	799	806
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	(*)	2,564	2,853	2,550	2,710	(*)	2,821	2,836	2,849	2,952
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	2,305	2,375	2,128	2,254	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	1,410	1,502	1,355	1,463	(*)	1,454	1,484	1,517	1,510
58	Eating and drinking places.....	17,035	16,866	16,596	16,253	16,156	16,010	16,017	15,791	15,290	15,213
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	6,128	6,043	6,296	5,481	5,549	6,337	6,295	6,227	5,733	5,680
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,787	1,790	1,794	1,778	(*)	1,768	1,769	1,730	1,720
5961 (pt)	Mail-order houses (department store merchandise).....	(*)	351	371	339	385	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
53,56,57	GAF <sup>4</sup> .....	(*)	36,936	38,835	35,023	37,456	(*)	39,242	39,681	39,369	39,252

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

NA Not available.

<sup>1</sup>Revised.

<sup>1</sup>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-91-06.

<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>Includes data for leased departments operated within department stores. Data for this line not included in broader kind-of-business totals.

<sup>4</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					
		July 1991 advance from--		June 1991 preliminary from--		May 1991 through July 1991 from--	
		June 1991 prelim.	July 1990 final	May 1991 final	June 1990 final	Feb. 1991 through Apr. 1991	May 1990 through July 1990
	Retail trade, total.....	+0.5	+2.0	+0.1	+1.8	+1.3	+2.2
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	+0.3	+2.5	0.0	+2.2	+1.0	+2.8
	Durable goods, total.....	+0.7	-0.1	+0.3	-0.1	+1.5	-0.2
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	-0.8	-0.8	-0.3	-1.3	+1.6	+0.1
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	+1.1	+0.2	+0.9	+0.3	+2.2	-0.1
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	+1.3	0.0	+1.0	+0.2	+2.2	-0.4
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	+1.9	-1.3	-0.8	-2.9	+1.0	-2.7
	Nondurable goods, total.....	+0.4	+3.2	+0.1	+3.0	+1.1	+3.5
53	General merchandise group stores.....	+2.8	+3.5	-2.0	+1.3	+0.9	+3.5
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.) <sup>2</sup> .....	+3.2	+4.2	-2.7	+1.2	+0.1	+4.1
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.).....	(NA)	(NA)	-2.6	+0.9	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	-0.3	+3.0	+0.6	+3.7	+1.7	+3.6
541	Grocery stores.....	-0.2	+2.8	+0.2	+3.2	+1.3	+3.4
554	Gasoline service stations.....	-1.0	+3.2	+0.4	+3.0	+0.3	+3.7
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	+0.1	+0.6	-0.6	-0.5	+1.7	+0.9
58	Eating and drinking places.....	0.0	+4.7	+1.4	+5.3	+2.1	+4.8
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	+0.7	+10.5	+1.1	+10.8	+1.1	+10.8

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

(Sales in millions of dollars)

SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted			Adjusted <sup>1</sup>		
		June 1991 prelim.	May 1991 final	June 1990	June 1991 prelim.	May 1991 final	June <sup>2</sup> 1990
	Retail trade, total.....	57,013	59,740	56,440	58,442	58,895	57,213
53	General merchandise group stores.....	15,542	16,504	15,508	16,387	16,746	16,293
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	13,360	14,167	13,244	14,034	14,412	13,868
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.).....	13,732	14,581	13,629	14,455	14,788	14,316
533	Variety stores.....	400	443	436	443	455	480
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	1,782	1,894	1,828	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	17,398	18,173	17,250	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
541	Grocery stores.....	17,177	17,940	17,039	17,194	17,184	16,672
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	4,282	4,602	4,335	4,600	4,717	4,606
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	1,538	1,682	1,577	1,650	1,689	1,687
566	Shoe stores.....	894	963	922	921	945	951
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	3,648	3,787	3,366	3,804	3,757	3,467

NA Not available.

<sup>1</sup>Revised.

<sup>1</sup>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-91-06.

<sup>2</sup>Includes data for leased departments operated within department stores. Data for this line not included in broader kind-of-business totals.

Note: The large (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

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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 +1.2 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 June 1991 and final estimates for May 1991 based on the full sample are published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for June (BR-91-06). 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 margin of sampling error, as used on page 1, indicates a range about the estimate which corresponds to a 90 percent confidence interval. If, for example, the estimate is up 0.8 percent and the margin of sampling error is 1.2 percentage points above or below the estimate, then the indicated range is -0.4 percent to +2.0 percent. If the range contains 0, it is uncertain whether there was an increase or decrease. The Monthly Retail Trade Report includes explanations of confidence intervals and sampling variability along with 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						Preliminary-to-final percent change minus the Advance-to-preliminary percent change			
		Advance-to-preliminary ratio		Ratio to same month a year ago	Dollar volume sales est.	Ratio of current quarter to prev. quarter	Range <sup>2</sup>		Mean	Avg. of absolute diff.	
		Range <sup>1</sup>		Median	Median	Median	Median	From			To
		From	To								
	Retail trade, total.....	0.8	1.1	0.9	1.0	0.9	1.0	-1.1	+1.2	+0.1	0.5
	Total (excl. auto).....	0.8	0.9	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.9	-0.7	+1.3	+0.1	0.4
	Durable goods, total.....	1.8	2.8	2.2	2.5	2.2	2.3	-2.5	+2.2	+0.2	0.7
52	Building materials, group stores.....	1.2	2.0	1.7	3.3	2.5	2.5	-3.4	+4.0	+0.4	2.0
55 ex. 554 551,2,5, 6,7,9	Automotive dealers.....	2.2	4.1	3.1	3.4	3.6	3.3	-3.0	+2.6	+0.5	1.0
	Motor vehicle and misc. automotive dealers.....	1.6	4.1	2.9	4.8	3.9	3.5	-3.2	+2.6	+0.5	1.1
57	Furniture, home furn., and equipment stores.....	1.8	4.3	2.4	4.5	4.2	3.1	-2.5	+2.3	-0.2	1.2
	Nondurable goods, total.....	0.7	0.9	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.9	-0.6	+0.9	+0.2	0.4
53	General merch. group, total.....	0.2	0.8	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.5	-1.4	+1.7	+0.1	0.7
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts.).....	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	-1.7	+1.6	+0.1	0.8
54	Food stores.....	0.9	1.5	1.0	1.7	1.4	1.5	-0.5	+0.6	0.0	0.4
541	Grocery stores.....	0.2	0.9	0.3	1.8	1.3	1.5	-0.5	+0.7	0.0	0.3
554	Gasoline service stations.....	1.1	4.7	1.3	3.3	2.6	2.8	-1.4	+1.9	+0.3	0.8
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	1.1	2.9	2.0	3.0	2.6	2.0	-2.7	+4.8	+0.5	1.5
58	Eating and drinking places.....	0.6	1.3	0.9	3.1	2.7	2.7	-0.9	+2.3	+0.3	0.8
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	0.5	3.2	0.8	2.4	1.7	2.0	-3.7	+1.1	+0.1	1.0

<sup>1</sup>The ranges of sampling variability shown are based on sales estimates not adjusted for seasonal variation, holiday, and trading-day differences for the data months of November 1990 - March 1991.

<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, July 1990 - June 1991. The ranges for all other totals and kinds of business are based on the 12-month period April 1990 - March 1991.

Note: Coefficients of variation for the ratio of current quarter to current quarter a-year-ago estimates are approximately the same as those for the ratio of current quarter to previous quarter. See appendix B, Reliability of Data in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for a discussion of the measures of sampling variability.

