

FOR WIRE TRANSMISSION 8:30 A.M. ET, Friday, February 11, 2000

**ADVANCE MONTHLY RETAIL SALES
JANUARY 2000**

Intention to Revise Retail Estimates: Monthly retail sales estimates will be revised based on the results of the 1998 Annual Retail Trade Survey. Unadjusted estimates will be revised for the months of January 1993 through March 2000, while corresponding adjusted data will be revised for January 1990 through March 2000. Revised data are scheduled for release the week of April 24.

The Census Bureau of the Department of Commerce announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for January adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$262.2 billion, an increase of 0.3 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$) from the previous month and up 9.6 percent ($\pm 0.9\%$) from January 1999. Total sales for the November through January period were up 9.9 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$) from the same period a year ago. The November to December 1999 percent change was revised from +1.2 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$) to +1.7 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$).

Durable goods increased 1.4 percent ($\pm 1.4\%$) from December and were 11.2 percent above last year. Automotive sales were up 13.4 percent from January a year ago, while building materials sales were up 7.6 percent from last year.

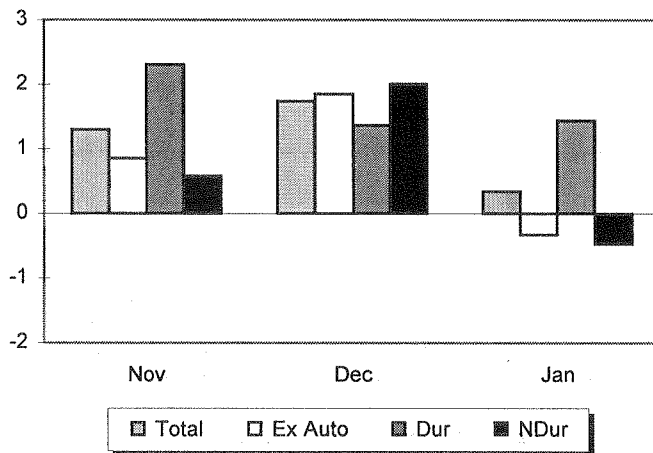
Nondurable goods decreased 0.5 percent ($\pm 0.6\%$) from December but were up 8.4 percent from January 1999. Gasoline sales were up 23.2 percent from January a year ago, while drug store sales were up 8.5 percent from last year.

The advance estimates are based on a small subsample of the Bureau's full retail sales sample. Estimates from the advance and the subsequent full survey can differ because of the earlier reporting in the advance and because of sampling variability present in both surveys.

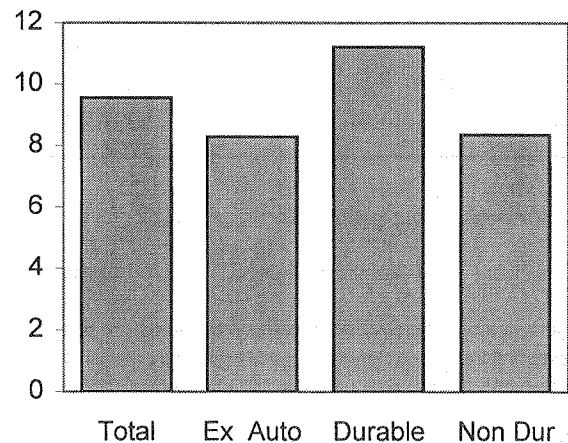
Percent Change in Retail Sales

(Data adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes)

From Previous Month



From Previous Year



The Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report for February is scheduled to be released March 14, 2000 at 8:30 a.m.

Address inquiries concerning this report to Scott Scheleur, Service Sector Statistics Division, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC 20233. Telephone: 301-457-2713 or 301-457-2666.

This report is available the day of issue through the Department of Commerce's online Economic Bulletin Board. For information call 202-482-1986. The data are also available on the Internet - <http://www.census.gov/svsd/www/advtable.html>.

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

(In Millions of Dollars and Annual Percent Change)

SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted							Adjusted ¹				
		1 month total		2000	1999			1998	2000	1999			1998
		2000	Change from 1999	Jan. ² (a)	Dec. (p)	Nov. (r)	Jan.	Dec.	Jan. ² (a)	Dec. (p)	Nov. (r)	Jan. (r)	Dec. (r)
	Retail trade, total.....	228,574	9.2	228,574	312,668	257,734	209,407	281,619	262,208	261,332	256,854	239,331	236,466
	Total (excl. auto dealers).....	171,072	7.9	171,072	253,291	198,959	158,474	228,459	195,310	195,951	192,391	180,351	177,756
	Durable goods, total.....	93,816	10.8	93,816	120,342	104,171	84,709	108,445	111,389	109,806	108,319	100,153	99,299
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.	11,773	8.2	11,773	14,357	15,176	10,879	13,347	15,974	15,858	15,792	14,842	14,570
521,3	Building mat. and supply stores..	(*)	(*)	(*)	10,969	11,844	8,419	9,899	(*)	12,352	12,135	11,225	11,048
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,350	1,271	1,091	1,337	(*)	1,284	1,292	1,313	1,278
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	57,502	12.9	57,502	59,377	58,775	50,933	53,160	66,898	65,381	64,463	58,980	58,710
551,2,5, 6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	54,666	13.5	54,666	56,183	55,466	48,182	50,164	63,565	62,012	61,086	55,766	55,553
551	Motor vehicle (franchised)....	(*)	(*)	(*)	48,905	48,123	42,123	44,131	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,194	3,309	2,751	2,996	(*)	3,369	3,377	3,214	3,157
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	12,843	5.6	12,843	20,098	15,089	12,164	18,520	14,021	14,073	13,830	13,145	13,067
571	Furniture and home furnishings.	(*)	(*)	(*)	8,003	7,202	5,415	7,516	(*)	6,507	6,488	6,050	6,146
5722,31,4	Household appliance, radio, TV and computer stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	10,183	6,764	5,833	9,158	(*)	6,532	6,263	6,082	5,924
5722	Household appliance stores.	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,200	1,011	813	1,082	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total.....	134,758	8.1	134,758	192,326	153,563	124,698	173,174	150,819	151,526	148,535	139,178	137,167
53	General merchandise group stores.	25,812	7.0	25,812	54,578	36,810	24,132	49,791	32,984	32,725	32,384	30,920	30,072
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts)..	19,774	6.1	19,774	43,459	28,911	18,640	40,127	25,647	25,429	25,184	24,271	23,730
531	Dept. stores (in. leased depts) ³ ..	(*)	(*)	(*)	44,281	29,469	18,995	40,890	(*)	26,028	25,601	24,772	24,189
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,047	1,377	767	1,697	(*)	1,220	1,222	1,051	1,013
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	9,072	6,522	4,725	7,967	(*)	6,076	5,978	5,598	5,329
54	Food stores.....	38,234	5.0	38,234	44,475	38,613	36,424	40,655	39,621	40,498	39,256	37,459	37,360
541	Grocery stores.....	36,383	5.0	36,383	41,724	36,583	34,640	38,129	37,508	38,385	37,178	35,455	35,403
554	Gasoline service stations.....	15,285	22.0	15,285	16,632	15,553	12,526	13,301	16,668	16,599	16,018	13,527	13,408
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	8,200	2.1	8,200	18,142	12,387	8,034	17,154	11,264	11,188	11,151	11,104	10,753
561	Men's and boy's clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,604	1,078	780	1,574	(*)	919	951	921	910
562,3	Women's clothing, specialty stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,876	3,163	2,220	4,775	(*)	2,959	2,956	3,029	2,931
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,847	5,319	2,974	7,281	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,317	1,669	1,335	2,328	(*)	1,747	1,722	1,839	1,784
58	Eating and drinking places.....	22,540	6.2	22,540	24,879	23,504	21,225	23,095	24,742	24,780	24,689	23,021	23,141
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	9,967	8.6	9,967	12,665	9,960	9,174	11,234	10,254	10,347	10,163	9,448	9,223
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,421	2,380	1,897	3,037	(*)	2,426	2,371	2,163	2,196
5961	Total mail order.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	11,017	8,863	5,882	9,101	(*)	7,567	7,271	6,557	6,285
53,56,57, 594	GAF ⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	112,324	74,148	51,097	103,202	(*)	67,025	66,210	63,670	62,126

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

NA Not available. (a) Advance estimates. (p) Preliminary. (r) Revised.

- (1) Data are concurrently adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes. 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-99-12.
- (2) 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.
- (3) Includes data for leased departments operated within department stores. Data for this line not included in broader kind-of-business totals.
- (4) GAF represents stores which specialize in department store types of merchandise (general merchandise, apparel, furniture, and miscellaneous shopping goods stores).

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, but not for price changes)

SIC code	Kind of business	Percent change ¹					
		Jan. 2000 Advance from --		Dec. 1999 Preliminary from --		Nov. 1999 through Jan. 2000 from --	
		Dec. 1999 (p)	Jan. 1999 (r)	Nov. 1999 (r)	Dec. 1998 (r)	Aug. 1999 through Oct. 1999	Nov. 1998 through Jan. 1999
	Retail trade, total	0.3	9.6	1.7	10.5	2.8	9.9
	Total (excl. automotive dealers)	-0.3	8.3	1.9	10.2	2.7	9.1
	Durable goods, total	1.4	11.2	1.4	10.6	3.5	10.9
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers	0.7	7.6	0.4	8.8	5.3	9.1
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	2.3	13.4	1.4	11.4	3.0	12.3
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	2.5	14.0	1.5	11.6	3.0	12.7
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	-0.4	6.7	1.8	7.7	0.7	7.0
	Nondurable goods, total.....	-0.5	8.4	2.0	10.5	2.3	9.1
53	General merchandise group stores.....	0.8	6.7	1.1	8.8	2.0	7.6
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	0.9	5.7	1.0	7.2	1.7	6.4
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.) ²	(NA)	(NA)	1.7	7.6	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	-2.2	5.8	3.2	8.4	2.8	6.7
541	Grocery stores.....	-2.3	5.8	3.2	8.4	2.6	6.7
554	Gasoline service stations.....	0.4	23.2	3.6	23.8	4.8	22.3
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	0.7	1.4	0.3	4.0	-1.0	3.0
58	Eating and drinking places.....	-0.2	7.5	0.4	7.1	2.8	7.3
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	-0.9	8.5	1.8	12.2	2.1	10.2

NA Not available. (p) Preliminary. (r) Revised.

(1) Percent change rounded to nearest tenth.

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

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Reliability of Data

The Advance estimates are based on a small subsample of the Bureau's full retail sales sample. Estimates from the Advance and the subsequent full survey can differ because of the earlier reporting in the Advance and because of sampling variability present in each survey. The margin of sampling error, as used on page 1, gives a range about the estimate which is a 90% confidence interval. If, for example, the trend estimate is +1.2% and the standard error is 0.9%, then the margin of sampling error is $\pm 1.65 \times 0.9\%$ or $\pm 1.5\%$, and the 90% confidence interval is -0.3% to +2.7%. If the interval contains 0, it is uncertain whether there was an increase or decrease. For monthly level, the coefficient of variation (CV) is given. The resulting confidence interval is the estimated value $\pm 1.65 \times CV \times$ (the estimated value).

Estimates of sampling variability are given in Table 3. They are based on two components. The first component is a measure of the average

difference between the Advance and the Preliminary estimates. The second reflects the variability of the Preliminary estimate. Additionally, both the Advance and the full survey are subject to nonsampling errors. Such errors can occur because of nonresponse, insufficient coverage of the universe of retail businesses, and response errors, among others. Precautionary steps are taken to minimize these errors, but their magnitude is not directly measured.

Preliminary estimates for the current month and final estimates for the previous month based on the full sample are published next month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report. This report will provide sales estimates in greater detail and additional measures of sampling variability. It will also present a description of revisions and the techniques used in developing the estimates, and an explanation of confidence intervals and sampling variability (Appendix B, Reliability of Data).

Table 3. Measures of Variability of and Revision to Advance Estimates for Level and Trend

SIC code	Kind of Business	Level of sales: Estimated CV ¹ for Current Mo. (x 100)	Trend (percent change): Estimated standard error ¹ for			Revision for month- to-month change ²	
			Current Mo. to Previous Mo.	Current Qtr. to Previous Qtr.	Current Mo. to Current Mo. Last Yr.	Average revision	Median absolute revision
	Retail trade, total	7.0	0.4	0.3	0.6	0.3	0.4
	Total (excl. auto dealers)	1.0	0.6	0.3	0.7	0.3	0.3
	Durable goods, total	1.4	0.9	0.6	1.1	0.3	0.5
52	Building materials group stores	3.5	1.9	1.1	2.7	0.3	1.3
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	1.6	1.2	0.8	1.5	0.3	0.6
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and misc. automotive dealers.....	1.8	1.3	0.9	1.6	0.6	0.9
57	Furniture, home furn, and equipment stores	2.0	1.4	0.7	1.8	0.1	0.5
	Nondurable goods, total	1.1	0.4	0.2	0.5	0.3	0.3
53	General merch. group, total.....	0.6	0.6	0.2	0.6	0.1	0.3
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts.)...	0.4	0.5	0.1	0.4	0.0	0.3
54	Food stores.....	1.2	0.2	0.3	0.6	0.3	0.4
541	Grocery stores	1.2	0.2	0.3	0.6	0.3	0.4
554	Gasoline service stations	2.2	1.2	1.4	1.4	0.6	0.9
56	Apparel and accessory stores	1.9	1.5	0.6	1.6	-0.2	0.8
58	Eating and drinking places	5.1	1.0	0.9	2.2	0.3	0.4
591	Drug and proprietary stores	1.7	0.8	0.4	1.2	0.0	0.4



- (1) The coefficients of variation (CVs) for level of sales and the standard errors for trends are medians based on estimates for the preceding 12 months.
- (2) These columns measure the difference between the Advance/Preliminary ratio and the Preliminary/Final ratio estimates -- i.e., the difference between estimates of trend for the same pair of data months. The revisions are based on the latest 12 months of data.