

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF  
COMMERCE**

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ADVANCE REPORT ON RETAIL TRADE, AUGUST 1955

Total sales of retail stores in August were \$15.4 billion, the U. S. Department of Commerce announced today. This advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal factors and trading day differences, showed no change from July but was about 9 percent above August a year ago.

The August sales figures are based on the Advance Report on Retail Trade, a monthly survey of the Bureau of the Census conducted in cooperation with a representative cross-section of about 1,800 retail firms which, in total, operate some 37,000 stores in the United States. The firms which are cooperating in the early reporting of sales are part of a larger group which furnishes figures at a later date. Therefore, the advance estimates are preliminary and subject to revision.

The preliminary Census figures are shown in table 1 on the reverse side. The Office of Business Economics commented that, after allowance for seasonal variations, sales trends from July to August among the major trades were mixed and offsetting. Most noteworthy were the higher sales by automotive dealers and the moderate sales reduction among general merchandise establishments from the high July rate.

(more)

ADVANCE RETAIL SALES REPORT--PRELIMINARY ESTIMATES FOR AUGUST 1955

Table 1.--SALES OF RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES, BY KIND-OF-BUSINESS GROUP  
(NOT ADJUSTED for seasonal factors and trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	Sales (millions of dollars)		
	1955		August 1954
	August	July	
Retail stores, total <sup>1</sup> .....	15,368	15,398	13,897
Food group.....	3,577	3,761	3,374
Grocery stores.....	3,000	3,198	2,829
Eating and drinking places.....	1,232	1,274	1,207
General merchandise group.....	1,578	1,413	1,424
Department stores <sup>2</sup> .....	849	745	761
Apparel group.....	745	756	681
Furniture and appliance group.....	875	825	730
Lumber, building, hardware group <sup>3</sup> .....	1,266	1,250	1,164
Automotive group.....	3,295	3,271	2,672
Gasoline service stations.....	1,099	1,117	1,026
Drug and proprietary stores.....	440	434	396

See footnotes below table 2.

Source: Bureau of the Census

Table 2.--SALES OF RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES, BY KIND-OF-BUSINESS GROUP  
(ADJUSTED for seasonal factors and trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	Sales (millions of dollars)			Percent change, July 1955 from--	
	1955		July 1954	June 1955	July 1954
	July	June			
Retail stores, total <sup>1</sup> .....	15,484	15,345	14,272	+1	+8
Durable goods stores, total <sup>1</sup> .....	5,640	5,570	4,911	+1	+15
Nondurable goods stores, total <sup>1</sup> ..	9,844	9,775	9,361	+1	+5
Food group.....	3,561	3,635	3,443	-2	+3
Eating and drinking places.....	1,158	1,140	1,141	+2	+1
General merchandise group.....	1,723	1,630	1,569	+6	+10
Apparel group.....	905	878	855	+3	+6
Furniture and appliance group.....	887	823	775	+8	+14
Lumber, building, hardware group <sup>3</sup> ..	1,178	1,174	1,114	0	+6
Automotive group.....	3,148	3,171	2,640	-1	+19
Gasoline service stations.....	1,034	1,030	955	0	+8
Drug and proprietary stores.....	439	431	403	+2	+7

Source: Office of Business Economics

<sup>1</sup> Totals include data for kinds of business not shown separately.

<sup>2</sup> Based on preliminary estimates supplied by Federal Reserve Board.

<sup>3</sup> Includes farm equipment dealers.