

# ADVANCE RETAIL SALES REPORT

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
Frederick H. Mueller, Secretary

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS  
Robert W. Burgess, Director

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For release  
November 10, 1959

## ADVANCE REPORT ON RETAIL SALES, OCTOBER 1959

Total sales of retail stores in October were \$19.0 billion, the U. S. Department of Commerce announced today. This advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal factors and trading day differences, was about 3 percent above September of this year and about 8 percent above October 1958.

The October 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 1,700 retail firms which, in total, operate some 35,000 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. The advance estimates are preliminary and subject to revision, but the revision of the total seldom exceeds  $1\frac{1}{2}$  percent.

The preliminary Census figures for October are shown in table 1 of this release. The Office of Business Economics noted that the 3 percent rise in sales from September to October, after adjustment for seasonal factors and trading day differences, was due entirely to a substantial increase at automotive dealers attributable to brisk sales of 1960 models. Seasonally adjusted sales other than automotive, were virtually the same as in September with the major lines of trade showing moderate and offsetting changes. Final estimates for September indicate that seasonally adjusted retail sales were 2 percent below August.

(more)

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 (million of dollars)		
	1959		1958
	October	September	October
Retail stores, total <sup>1</sup> .....	19,024	17,570	17,360
Durable-goods stores, total <sup>1</sup> .....	6,371	5,708	5,379
Nondurable-goods stores, total <sup>1</sup> .....	12,653	11,862	11,981
Food group.....	4,590	4,215	4,344
Grocery stores.....	4,102	3,746	3,875
Eating and drinking places.....	1,368	1,378	1,280
General merchandise group.....	2,109	1,917	1,932
Department stores.....	<sup>2</sup> 1,266	1,126	1,146
Apparel group.....	1,200	1,120	1,135
Furniture and appliance group.....	1,003	921	932
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equip. group.	1,374	1,419	1,381
Automotive group.....	3,474	2,878	2,613
Gasoline service stations.....	1,445	1,419	1,384
Drug and proprietary stores.....	605	591	556

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	Percentage change, Oct. 1959 from--		Sales (millions of dollars)				Percentage change Sept. 1959 from--	
	Sept. 1959	Oct. 1958	1959			1958	Aug. 1959	Sept. 1958
			Oct.	Sept.	Aug.	Sept.		
Retail stores, total <sup>1</sup> .....	+2.7	+7.8	18,260	17,783	18,109	16,562	-2	+7
Durable-goods stores, total <sup>1</sup> ..	+9.1	+17.3	6,302	5,774	6,095	5,095	-5	+13
Nondurable-goods stores, total <sup>1</sup>	-0.4	+3.4	11,958	12,009	12,014	11,468	0	+5
Food group.....				4,267	4,305	4,169	-1	+2
Eating and drinking places.....				1,319	1,295	1,221	+2	+8
General merchandise group.....				1,958	1,989	1,817	-2	+8
Apparel group.....				1,111	1,096	1,042	+1	+7
Furniture and appliance group.....				928	952	858	-3	+8
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group..				1,260	1,297	1,187	-3	+6
Automotive group.....				3,105	3,350	2,600	-7	+19
Gasoline service stations.....				1,411	1,392	1,338	+1	+5
Drug and proprietary stores.....				618	600	563	+3	+10

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.

Note: Excludes Alaska and Hawaii which in 1954 according to the Retail Census, had retail sales of approximately 0.1 and 0.3 of one percent, respectively, of the United States total.