

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF  
**COMMERCE**

Office of the Secretary

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ADVANCE REPORT ON RETAIL SALES, NOVEMBER 1959

Total sales of retail stores in November were \$17.9 billion, the U. S. Department of Commerce announced today. This advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal factors and trading day differences, was about 1 percent below October of this year and about 7 percent above November 1958.

The November 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 November are shown in table 1 of this release. The Office of Business Economics noted that the 1 percent decline in sales from October to November, after adjustment for seasonal factors and trading day differences, was due to a substantial drop in sales of automotive dealers as the result of supply shortages. Sales by stores other than automotive, advanced from October to November with gains widespread among the trades. Final estimates for October indicate that seasonally adjusted retail sales were 3 percent above September.

(More)

ADVANCE RETAIL SALES REPORT -- PRELIMINARY ESTIMATES FOR NOVEMBER 1959  
 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)		
	1959		1958
	November	October	November.
Retail stores, total <sup>1</sup> .....	17,902	19,095	17,039
Durable-goods stores, total <sup>1</sup> .....	5,660	6,420	5,343
Nondurable-goods stores, total <sup>1</sup> .....	12,242	12,675	11,696
Food group.....	4,134	4,594	4,188
Grocery stores.....	3,666	4,115	3,720
Eating and drinking places.....	1,294	1,374	1,204
General merchandise group.....	2,201	2,107	2,018
Department stores.....	<sup>2</sup> 1,311	1,255	1,201
Apparel group.....	1,160	1,198	1,119
Furniture and appliance group.....	1,002	988	937
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equip. group..	1,214	1,413	1,154
Automotive group.....	2,890	3,520	2,756
Gasoline service stations.....	1,447	1,462	1,338
Drug and proprietary stores.....	582	608 <del>574</del>	540

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, Nov. 1959 from--		Sales (millions of dollars)				Percentage change, Oct. 1959 from--	
	Oct. 1959	Nov. 1958	1959			1958 Oct.	Sept. 1959	Oct. 1958
			Nov.	Oct.	Sept.			
Retail stores, total <sup>1</sup> ....	-1	+7	18,087	18,341	17,783	16,941	+3	+8
Durable-goods stores, total <sup>1</sup> .	-8	+6	5,840	6,360	5,774	5,374	+10	+18
Nondurable-goods store, total <sup>1</sup>	+2	+7	12,247	11,981	12,009	11,567	-0	+4
Food group.....				4,294	4,267	4,187	+1	+3
Eating and drinking places.....				1,335	1,319	1,244	+1	+7
General merchandise group.....				1,940	1,958	1,805	-1	+7
Apparel group.....				1,079	1,111	1,068	-3	+1
Furniture and appliance group.....				924	928	871	0	+6
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group..				1,245	1,260	1,228	-1	+1
Automotive group.....				3,690	3,105	2,819	+19	+31
Gasoline service stations.....				1,435	1,411	1,358	+2	+6
Drug and proprietary stores.....				609	618	568	-1	+7

Source: Office of Business Econom<sup>1</sup>

<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.