

COMMERCE

Office of the Secretary

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ADVANCE REPORT ON RETAIL SALES, APRIL 1961

Total sales of retail stores in April were \$17.5 billion, the U. S. Department of Commerce announced today. After adjustment for seasonal variations and trading day differences, but not for price changes, total retail sales amounted to \$18.0 billion, about 1 percent below March and 5 percent below April 1960.

The April 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 2,000 retail firms which, in total, operate some 39,000 stores in the United States. The firms which are cooperating in the early reporting of sales are part of a larger sample group which furnishes figures at a later date. The advance estimates are subject to revision, on the basis of estimates subsequently derived from the full sample, but the revision of the total seldom exceeds $1\frac{1}{2}$ percent.

The advance Census figures for April are shown in table 1 of this release. The Office of Business Economics noted that, after adjustment for seasonal variations and trading day differences, April sales in most major lines of trade were lower than in the previous month. Sales in March had advanced sharply from the earlier months of 1961 with the improvement in weather. Estimates for March for the full sample indicate that seasonally adjusted retail sales were two and one-half percent above February.

(more)

ADVANCE RETAIL SALES FOR APRIL 1961

Table 1. SALES OF RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES, BY KIND-OF-BUSINESS GROUP

(NOT ADJUSTED for seasonal variations or trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	Sales (millions of dollars)		
	1961		1960
	April ¹	March ²	April ^r
Retail stores, total ³	17,460	18,019	19,200
Durable-goods stores, total ³	5,499	5,519	6,351
Nondurable-goods stores, total ³	11,961	12,500	12,849
Food group.....	4,483	4,712	4,586
Grocery stores.....	4,024	4,231	4,129
Eating and drinking places.....	1,274	1,288	1,308
General merchandise group.....	1,829	1,925	2,094
Department stores.....	4,064	1,106	1,219
Apparel group.....	1,025	1,187	1,360
Furniture and appliance group.....	750	780	835
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equip. group..	1,160	1,087	1,323
Automotive group.....	3,139	3,229	3,755
Gasoline service stations.....	1,443	1,423	1,457
Drug and proprietary stores.....	611	632	607

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 variations and trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	Percentage change, Apr. 1961 from--		Sales (millions of dollars)				Percentage change, Mar. 1961 from--	
	Mar. 1961	Apr. 1960	1961		1960		Feb. 1961	Mar. 1960
			Apr. ¹	Mar. ²	Feb.	Mar. ^r		
Retail stores, total ³	-1	-5	17,963	18,235 ⁵	17,795	18,219	+2	0
Durable-goods stores, total ³ .	-1	-12	5,518	5,597	5,348	5,924	+5	-6
Nondurable-goods stores, total ³ .	-2	-1	12,445	12,638 ⁵	12,447	12,295	+2	+3
Food group.....				4,612	4,590	4,474	0	+3
Eating and drinking places.....				1,397	1,339	1,314	+4	+6
General merchandise group.....				2,063 ⁵	1,998	1,958	+3	+5
Apparel group.....				1,164 ⁵	1,130	1,149	+3	+1
Furniture and appliance group.....				837	812	868	+3	-4
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.				1,199	1,171	1,133	+2	+6
Automotive group.....				3,079	2,890	3,459	+7	-11
Gasoline service stations.....				1,485	1,473	1,452	+1	+2
Drug and proprietary stores.....				639	629	612	+2	+4

Source: Office of Business Economics

^r Monthly sales by kind-of-business revised for 1960. See Monthly Retail Trade Report for January 1961.

¹ Advance sample estimates. ² Preliminary estimates of full sample.

³ Totals include data for kinds of business not shown separately.

⁴ Based on preliminary estimates supplied by Federal Reserve Board.

⁵ Revised.