



For release
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MAY 1965

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The U.S. Department of Commerce announced today that total sales of retail stores in May were estimated at \$23.9 billion. Statistics prepared by the Department's Bureau of the Census show that this advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal and holiday variations and trading day differences, but not for price changes, was 2 percent above the April 1965 level and 8 percent above May 1964.

The Office of Business Economics noted that after adjustment, most major lines of trade showed sales advances from April to May. Larger than average relative gains were shown by department and apparel stores. Based on the full sample, seasonally adjusted sales of all retail stores in April 1965 were virtually unchanged from March 1965.

The May sales figures are based on a monthly survey of the Bureau of the Census conducted in cooperation with a representative cross-section of about 2,500 retail firms which, in total, operate some 48,000 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 by estimates subsequently derived from the full sample.

The revision of the total seldom exceeds 1.5 percent and for the past year has averaged 0.9 percent. For individual kind-of-business groups, revisions have been greater, ranging on the average from 1.5 percent for the food group to 3.0 percent for the automotive group.

(more)

ADVANCE RETAIL SALES FOR MAY 1965

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)		
	1965		1964
	May ¹	April ²	May
Retail stores, total ³	23,929	23,558	22,508
Durable-goods stores, total ³	8,160	8,076	7,693
Nondurable-goods stores, total ³	15,769	15,482	14,815
Food group.....	5,515	5,403	5,248
Grocery stores.....	4,998	4,905	4,739
Eating and drinking places.....	1,830	1,696	1,650
General merchandise group.....	2,791	2,820	2,479
Department stores.....	1,666	1,673	1,463
Apparel group.....	1,313	1,413	1,282
Furniture and appliance group.....	1,067	1,009	1,043
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equip. group	1,497	1,423	1,484
Automotive group.....	4,982	5,053	4,551
Gasoline service stations.....	1,881	1,783	1,708
Drug and proprietary stores.....	745	730	713

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, May 1965 from--		Sales (millions of dollars)				Percentage change, April 1965 from--	
	April 1965	May 1964	1965			1964	March 1965	April 1964
			May ¹	April ²	March	April		
Retail stores, total ³	+2	+8	23,467	22,901	22,805	21,392	0	+7
Durable-goods stores, total ³ ...	+1	+6	7,648	7,564	7,669	7,010	-1	+8
Nondurable-goods stores, total ³	+3	+9	15,819	15,337	15,136	14,382	+1	+7
Food group.....				5,423	5,301	5,064	+2	+7
Eating and drinking places.....				1,738	1,699	1,599	+2	+9
General merchandise group.....				2,822	2,801	2,514	+1	+12
Apparel group.....				1,255	1,261	1,272	0	-1
Furniture and appliance group.....				1,096	1,094	1,095	0	0
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.....				1,334	1,303	1,257	+2	+6
Automotive group.....				4,470	4,592	4,026	-3	+11
Gasoline service stations.....				1,812	1,774	1,674	+2	+8
Drug and proprietary stores.....				754	748	689	+1	+9

¹ Advance sample estimates.

² Preliminary estimates of full sample.

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