



For release
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MAY 1967

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The U.S. Department of Commerce announced today that total sales of retail stores in May were estimated at \$26.7 billion; this advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal and holiday variations and trading day differences but not price changes, was \$26.1 billion. The advance estimate, after adjustment was about $\frac{1}{2}$ of 1 percent above April and 7 percent above May sales last year. Adjusted March-through-May sales averaged about 1 percent above the prior three months and 3 percent above the comparable period in 1966.

The Office of Business Economics noted that after adjustment, sales of nondurable goods stores were up 1 percent in May from the April peak, with increases for most major kinds of business. Sales of durable goods stores showed relatively little change from April to May with a further increase in automotive dealers' sales approximately offset by declines for other kinds of business. Average monthly sales for durable goods stores during the March-May period were about 1 percent above the average for the prior 3 months, and the average for nondurable goods stores for the comparable period increased 2 percent. The year-to-year gain in the three month average for nondurable goods stores was about 4 percent, and about 1 percent in durable goods stores.

Based on the full sample the total U.S. unadjusted sales estimate for April was \$25.1 billion, about \$0.2 billion more than the \$24.9 billion published earlier in the April Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report released on May 10, 1967. The seasonally adjusted sales for April as revised were 1 percent above March.

The May sales figures are based on advance reporting of a small subsample of the Census Bureau's panel of retail firms. 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 1.1 percent. For individual kind-of-business groups revisions have been greater, ranging on the average from 0.9 percent for food stores to 3.7 percent for the apparel group.

It should be noted that even for figures derived from the full sample, sales movements between individual pairs of months tend to be relatively irregular. Data for several months are generally required to indicate the underlying trend.

(more)

ADVANCE RETAIL SALES FOR MAY 1967

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)		
	1967		1966
	May ¹	April ²	May
Retail stores, total ³	26,739	25,085	24,763
Durable-goods stores, total ³	8,844	8,235	8,069
Nondurable-goods stores, total ³	17,895	16,850	16,694
Food group.....	5,954	5,812	5,747
Grocery stores.....	5,468	5,345	5,240
Eating and drinking places.....	2,108	1,983	1,965
General merchandise group.....	3,281	3,052	3,034
Department stores.....	2,146	2,017	2,003
Apparel group.....	1,549	1,379	1,341
Furniture and appliance group.....	1,204	1,158	1,129
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equip. group	1,524	1,450	1,476
Automotive group.....	5,432	4,997	4,787
Gasoline service stations.....	2,044	1,941	1,947
Drug and proprietary stores.....	914	849	819

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 1967 from		Sales (millions of dollars)				Percentage change, April 1967 from	
	Apr. 1967	May 1966	1967			1966	Mar. 1967	Apr. 1966
			May ¹	Apr. ²	Mar.	Apr.		
Retail stores, total ³	+1	+7	26,069	25,923	25,739	24,949	+1	+4
Durable-goods stores, total ³ ..	0	+8	8,099	8,132	8,150	7,939	0	+2
Nondurable-goods stores, total ³	+1	+6	17,970	17,791	17,589	17,010	+1	+5
Food group.....				5,988	6,041	5,981	-1	0
Eating and drinking places.....				2,026	2,046	1,924	-1	+5
General merchandise group.....				3,482	3,327	3,194	+5	+9
Apparel group.....				1,590	1,443	1,389	+10	+14
Furniture and appliance group.....				1,284	1,278	1,202	0	+7
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group....				1,424	1,517	1,432	-6	-1
Automotive group.....				4,700	4,602	4,580	+2	+3
Gasoline service stations.....				1,993	1,964	1,927	+1	3
Drug and proprietary stores.....				904	889	843	+2	7

¹Advance sample estimates.

²Preliminary estimates of full sample.

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