

# advance monthly RETAIL SALES



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## OCTOBER 1968

The Bureau of the Census, U. S. Department of Commerce, announced today that total sales of retail stores in October were estimated at \$29.5 billion; this advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal and holiday variations and trading day differences but not for price changes, was \$28.8 billion. The advance estimate, after adjustment, was about one half of one percent below September sales but about 10 percent above October sales last year. Adjusted August-through-October sales averaged about 2 percent above the prior 3 months and 9 percent above the comparable period a year ago.

After adjustment, sales of durable goods stores decreased about 4 percent but sales of nondurable goods stores were up 1 percent over the

previous month. Average monthly sales for durable goods stores during the August-through-October period were about 3 percent above the average for the prior 3 months, and the average for nondurable goods stores for the comparable period increased 1 percent. The year-to-year gain in the 3 month average for nondurable goods stores was about 8 percent and about 12 percent for durable goods stores.

Based on the full sample, the total U.S. unadjusted sales estimate for September was about \$0.1 billion below the \$27.2 billion published earlier in the September Advance Monthly Retail Sales report released October 15, 1968. The seasonally adjusted sales for September as revised were virtually unchanged from August.

### Sample Revision

The full sample on which the advance monthly data are linked has been revised beginning with the August 1968 data month. For a detailed explanation of the sample revision see the August 1968 Monthly Retail Trade Report.

The October sales figures are based on advance reporting of a small sample of retail firms. Beginning with the October 1967 report, the advance figures have been modified on the basis of the relationship between the advance estimates and full sample estimates. 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 0.5 percent. For individual kind-of-business groups revisions have been greater, ranging on the average from 0.7 percent for food stores to 3.5 percent for the lumber 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.

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For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. Annual subscription to Current Retail Trade Reports (Weekly Retail Sales Report, Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report, Monthly Retail Trade Report, and Annual Retail Trade Report sold as a single subscription) \$6.00. Single copies, available only from the Bureau of the Census, 10¢.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE C. R. Smith, Secretary  
William H. Chartener, Assistant Secretary for Economic Affairs  
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS A. Ross Eckler, Director

## SALES OF RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES, BY KIND-OF-BUSINESS GROUP

Part A. NOT ADJUSTED for seasonal variations or trading day differences

Kind-of-business group	Sales (millions of dollars)		
	1968		1967
	October <sup>1</sup>	September <sup>2</sup>	October
Retail stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	29,498	27,085	26,188
Durable goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	9,943	8,733	8,617
Nondurable goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	19,555	18,352	17,571
Food group.....	6,262	5,886	5,597
Grocery stores.....	5,808	5,464	5,194
Eating and drinking places.....	2,202	2,184	2,000
General merchandise group with nonstores.....	4,653	4,259	4,217
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....	4,170	3,828	3,712
Department stores.....	2,798	2,593	2,469
Apparel group.....	1,687	1,574	1,473
Furniture and appliance group.....	1,497	1,421	1,328
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.....	1,888	1,723	1,676
Automotive group.....	5,829	4,845	4,932
Gasoline service stations.....	2,073	2,008	1,927
Drug and proprietary stores.....	954	914	872

Part B. ADJUSTED for seasonal variations and trading day differences

Kind-of-business group	Percentage change, October 1968 from		Sales (millions of dollars)				Percentage change, September 1968 from	
	Sept. 1968	Oct. 1967	1968			1967	Aug. 1968	Sept. 1967
			Oct. <sup>1</sup>	Sept. <sup>2</sup>	Aug.	Sept.		
Retail stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	-½	+10	28,789	28,941	29,037	26,773	0	+8
Durable goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	-4	+10	9,309	9,736	9,567	8,784	+2	+11
Nondurable goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	+1	+9	19,480	19,205	19,470	17,989	-1	+7
Food group.....				6,171	6,194	5,786	0	+7
Eating and drinking places.....				2,160	2,139	1,991	+1	+8
General merchandise group with nonstores.....				4,499	4,676	4,215	-4	+7
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....				4,044	4,241	3,780	-5	+7
Department stores.....				1,638	1,697	1,567	-3	+5
Apparel group.....				1,411	1,446	1,310	-2	+8
Furniture and appliance group.....				1,639	1,599	1,485	+3	+10
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.....				5,945	5,736	5,287	+4	+12
Automotive group <sup>4</sup> .....				2,028	2,073	1,920	-2	+6
Gasoline service stations.....				969	972	887	0	+9
Drug and proprietary stores.....								

Source: Bureau of the Census

<sup>1</sup>Advance sample estimates.

<sup>2</sup>Preliminary estimates of full sample.

<sup>3</sup>Totals include data for kinds of business not shown separately.

<sup>4</sup>During months of model change over, seasonal adjustment factors are less reliable than in other months.

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OFFICE  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1968

Advance Retail Sales Statement  
G 68-109

The U. S. Department of Commerce announced today that total sales of retail stores in September, adjusted for seasonal and holiday variations were virtually unchanged from August. Adjusted sales of durable goods stores were up 2% from August while adjusted sales of nondurable goods stores were down 1%

Because of the transition to a new retail sample, the full advance monthly report on retail sales usually released on the tenth of the month will be delayed for several days. Although the revision being made in the sample is a major one, measures of the total volume and trends in sales are substantially similar to those provided by the previous sample. A brief description of the new sample will be included in the full advance report to be issued in several days. A more detailed description will be contained in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for August which also will contain monthly data from both the old and new samples beginning with August 1967.

The September figures in this report are based on advance reporting of a small subsample of the Census Bureau's panel of retail firms. The advance figures in this report have been modified on the basis of the relationship between advance estimates and full sample estimates of the previous sample. The advance estimates are subject to revision by estimates subsequently derived from the full sample. The revision of the total seldom exceeds 1.5% and for the past year has averaged 0.5%.

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