

advance monthly RETAIL SALES



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The Bureau of the Census, U. S. Department of Commerce, announced today that total sales of retail stores in January were estimated at \$25.9 billion; this advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal and holiday variations and trading day differences but not for price changes, was \$28.7 billion. The advance estimate, after adjustment, was about 2 percent above December sales and about 6 percent above January sales last year. Adjusted November-through-January sales averaged about 1 percent below the prior 3 months but 7 percent above the comparable period a year ago.

After adjustment, sales of most major kinds-of-business in both the nondurable and durable goods store categories showed increases over December.

Average monthly sales for durable goods stores during the November-through-January period were about 3 percent below the average for the prior 3 months, while the average for nondurable goods stores for the comparable period was virtually unchanged. The year-to-year gain in the 3-month average for nondurable goods stores was about 6 percent and about 10 percent for durable goods stores.

Based on the full sample, the total U.S. unadjusted sales estimate for December was about \$0.3 billion below the \$34.4 billion published earlier in the December Advance Monthly Retail Sales report released January 10, 1969. The seasonally adjusted sales for December as revised were 2 percent below November.

The January 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 0.6 percent. For individual kind-of-business groups revisions have been greater, ranging on the average from 0.9 percent for food stores to 3.4 percent for the furniture 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)

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 Maurice H. Stans, 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)		
	1969	1968	
	January ¹	December ²	January
Retail stores, total ³	25,938	34,132	24,094
Durable goods stores, total ³	8,270	9,704	7,517
Nondurable goods stores, total ³	17,668	24,428	16,577
Food group.....	6,158	6,393	5,596
Grocery stores.....	5,790	5,965	5,232
Eating and drinking places.....	1,914	2,045	1,836
General merchandise group with nonstores.....	3,499	7,739	3,289
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....	3,176	7,224	2,916
Department stores.....	2,237	5,026	1,949
Apparel group.....	1,379	2,666	1,277
Furniture and appliance group.....	1,198	1,755	1,205
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.....	1,349	1,526	1,098
Automotive group.....	5,034	5,078	4,642
Gasoline service stations.....	1,996	2,089	1,874
Drug and proprietary stores.....	954	1,308	901

Part B. ADJUSTED for seasonal variations and trading day differences

Kind-of-business group	Percentage change, Jan. 1969 from--		Sales (millions of dollars)					Percentage change, Dec. 1968 from--	
	Dec. 1968	Jan. 1968	1969	1968			1967	Nov. 1968	Dec. 1967
			Jan. ¹	Dec. ²	Nov.	Jan.	Dec.		
Retail stores, total ³	+2	+6	28,673	28,083	28,779	26,936	26,368	-2	+7
Durable goods stores, total ³ ...	+4	+11	9,396	9,074	9,272	8,502	8,422	-2	+8
Nondurable goods stores, total ³	+1	+5	19,277	19,009	19,507	18,434	17,946	-3	+6
Food group.....			6,133	6,236	5,886	5,920	5,920	-2	+4
Eating and drinking places.....			2,051	2,132	2,015	2,023	2,023	-4	+1
General merchandise group with nonstores.....			4,479	4,749	4,269	4,295	4,295	-6	+4
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....			4,075	4,281	3,859	3,770	3,770	-5	+8
Apparel group.....			1,555	1,663	1,530	1,473	1,473	-6	+6
Furniture and appliance group.....			1,335	1,350	1,362	1,323	1,323	-1	+1
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.....			1,645	1,585	1,497	1,581	1,581	+4	+4
Automotive group.....			5,268	5,497	4,951	4,738	4,738	-4	+11
Gasoline service stations.....			2,054	2,065	1,975	1,910	1,910	-1	+8
Drug and proprietary stores.....			992	935	941	934	934	+6	+6

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

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

Source: Bureau of the Census