

advance monthly
RETAIL SALES



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MAY 1969

The Bureau of the Census, U. S. Department of Commerce, announced today that total sales of retail stores in May were estimated at \$30.9 billion; this advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal and holiday variations and trading day differences but not for price changes, was \$29.4 billion. The advance estimate, after adjustment, was virtually unchanged from April sales but about 5 percent above May sales last year. Adjusted March-through-May sales averaged about 1 percent above the prior 3 months and 4 percent above the comparable period a year ago.

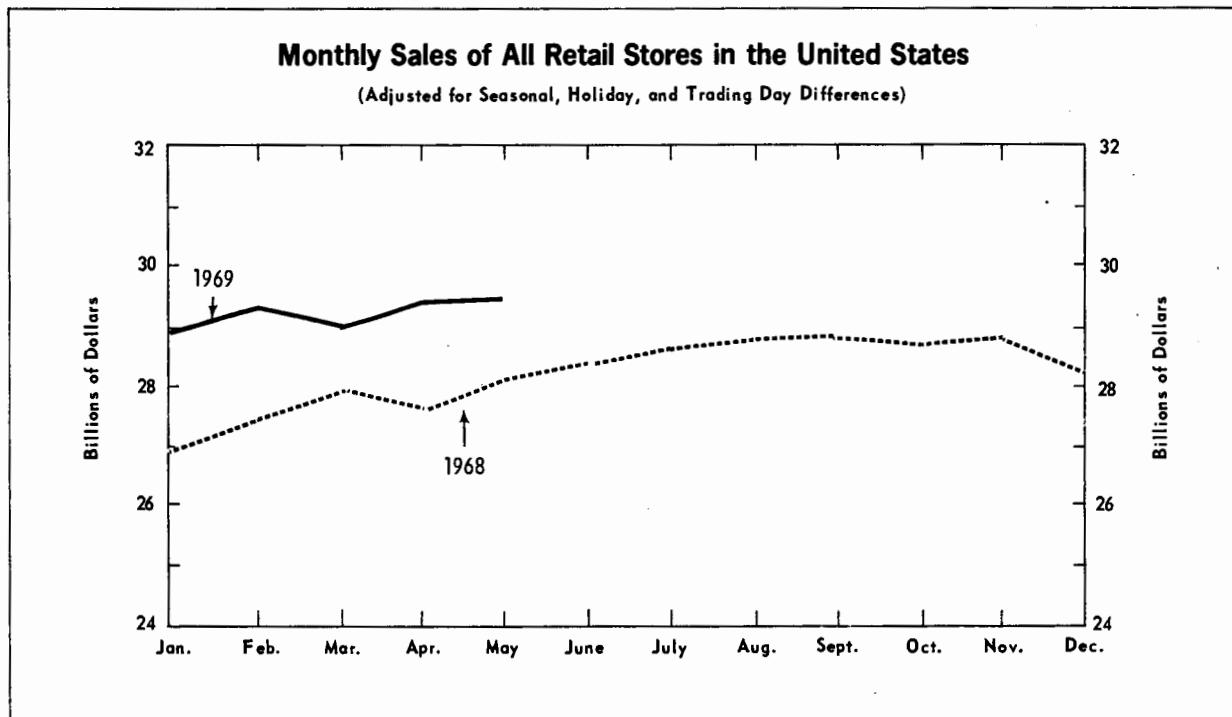
After adjustment, the increase over April was about 1 percent for durable goods stores, while there was virtually no change for nondurable goods

stores. Average monthly sales for durable goods stores during the March-through-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 also increased 1 percent. The year-to-year gain in the 3-month average for durable goods stores was about 5 percent and about 4 percent for nondurable goods stores.

Based on the full sample, the total U. S. unadjusted sales estimate for April was about \$0.1 billion below the \$28.8 billion published earlier in the April Advance Monthly Retail Sales report released May 9, 1969. The seasonally adjusted sales for April as revised were about 1½ percent above March.

Monthly Sales of All Retail Stores in the United States

(Adjusted for Seasonal, Holiday, and Trading Day Differences)



Data on the retail trade published in the Weekly Retail Sales Report, Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report, Monthly Retail Trade Report, and the Annual Retail Trade Report are available on a single subscription from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 20402, at \$6.00 per year. Single copies of the Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report are available from the Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C., 20233, at 10¢ each.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE Maurice H. Stans, Secretary
 Rocco C. Siciliano, Under Secretary
 William H. Chartener, Assistant Secretary for Economic Affairs
 BUREAU OF THE CENSUS A. Ross Eckler, Director

The May sales figures are based on advance reporting of a small subsample of the Census Bureau's panel 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

0.8 percent. For individual kind-of-business groups revisions have been greater, ranging on the average from 1.0 percent for the general merchandise group to 4.5 percent for the lumber group.

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 are generally required to indicate the underlying trend.

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
	May ¹	April ²	May
Retail stores, total ³	30,886	28,746	29,285
Durable goods stores, total ³	10,415	9,714	9,917
Nondurable goods stores, total ³	20,471	19,032	19,368
Food group.....	6,717	6,035	6,310
Grocery stores.....	6,292	5,640	5,883
Eating and drinking places.....	2,227	2,053	2,189
General merchandise group with nonstores.....	4,713	4,438	4,342
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....	4,268	4,015	3,911
Department stores.....	2,944	2,745	2,628
Apparel group.....	1,711	1,655	1,538
Furniture and appliance group.....	1,326	1,252	1,314
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.....	1,936	1,755	1,717
Automotive group.....	6,262	5,910	6,112
Gasoline service stations.....	2,176	2,084	2,097
Drug and proprietary stores.....	966	915	953

Part B. ADJUSTED for seasonal variations and trading day differences

Kind-of-business group	Percentage change, May 1969 from--		Sales (millions of dollars)					Percentage change, April 1969 from--	
	Apr. 1969	May 1968	1969			1968		Mar. 1969	Apr. 1968
			May ¹	Apr. ²	Mar.	May	Apr.		
Retail stores, total ³	0	+5	29,434	29,370	28,916	28,158	27,791	+1½	+6
Durable goods stores, total ³ ...	+1	+5	9,618	9,547	9,377	9,132	8,975	+2	+6
Nondurable goods stores, total ³ ...	0	+4	19,816	19,823	19,539	19,026	18,816	+1	+5
Food group.....				6,263	6,284	6,117	6,063	0	+3
Eating and drinking places.....				2,112	2,107	2,114	2,099	0	+1
General merchandise group with nonstores.....				4,853	4,637	4,452	4,401	+5	+10
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....				4,423	4,211	4,035	3,995	+5	+11
Apparel group.....				1,762	1,613	1,575	1,558	+9	+13
Furniture and appliance group.....				1,400	1,409	1,370	1,356	-1	+3
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.....				1,675	1,599	1,551	1,582	+5	+6
Automotive group.....				5,559	5,518	5,408	5,227	+1	+6
Gasoline service stations.....				2,120	2,132	2,038	2,036	-1	+4
Drug and proprietary stores.....				946	960	957	932	-1	+2

Source: Bureau of the Census

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

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