



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE • Social and Economic Statistics Administration • BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

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The Bureau of the Census, U. S. Department of Commerce, announced today that total sales of retail stores in November were estimated at \$40.1 billion. The Bureau, part of the Department's Social and Economic Statistics Administration (SESA), said this advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal and holiday variations and trading day differences but not for price changes, was \$39.0 billion, virtually unchanged from October but about 9 1/2 percent above November sales last year. Adjusted total September-through-November sales averaged about 3 percent above the prior 3 months and 10 percent above the comparable period a year ago.

Based on the full sample, the total U. S. adjusted sales estimate for October was about \$0.3 billion more than the \$38.8 billion published earlier in the October Advance Monthly Retail Sales report released November 10, 1972. The seasonally adjusted sales for October as revised were about 3 1/2 percent above September.

The advance sales estimates are based on early reporting, by a small subsample of the Census Bureau's retail survey panel, of sales figures for the weeks and part-weeks comprising the month. Because retailers' weekly records often differ

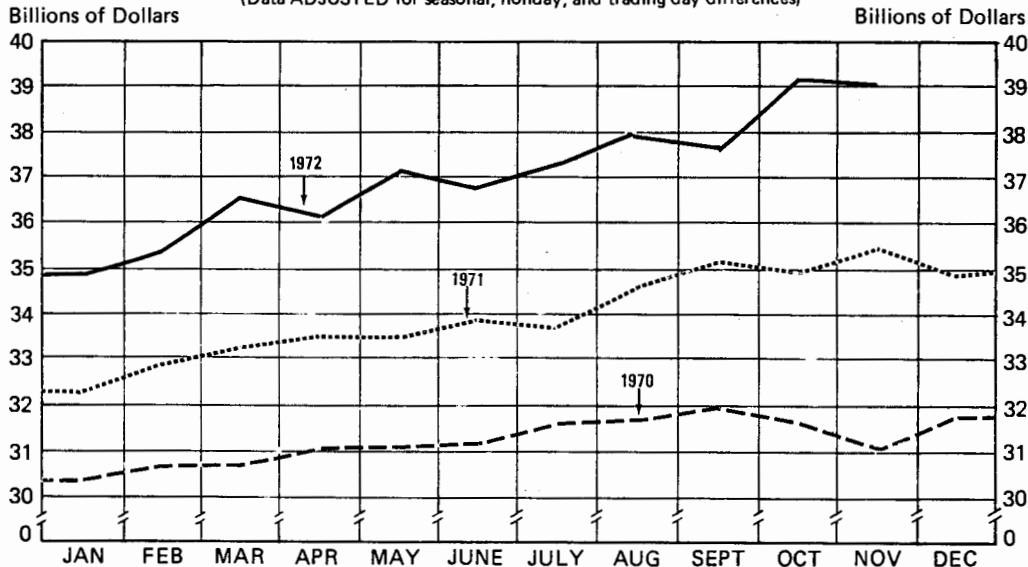
from their monthly records (in reflecting such elements as carrying charges, sales taxes, merchandise returns), the sales figures estimated for the advance report can differ from the subsequently issued report based on the monthly records of the full sample of retailers. Additionally, sampling variability between sub-sample and later full sample results can be a cause of difference. For most months, such differences have been reduced by modifying the advance estimate, prior to publication, on the basis of the relationship between the advance and full-sample data for previous months.

The differences between the month-to-month change in advance and full-sample estimates for total retail sales seldom exceed 1.0 percent and for the past year has averaged 0.5 percent. For individual kind of business groups, differences have been greater, ranging on the average from 0.8 percent for the general merchandise group to 2.4 percent for the Building materials group.

Even for figures derived from the full sample, sales movements from one month to the next can be relatively irregular. Data for 3 months are generally required to indicate the underlying trend.

MONTHLY SALES OF ALL RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES

(Data ADJUSTED for seasonal, holiday, and trading day differences)



Annual subscription to current retail trade reports are for sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. (Weekly Retail Sales Report, Advance Monthly Retail Trade Report, Monthly Retail Trade Report, and Annual Retail Trade Report sold as a single subscription.) Price: \$6.00. Single copies of the Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report are available only from the Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233, at 10 cents each.

Table 1. 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)		
	1972		1971
	November ¹	October ²	November
Total, retail stores ³	40,117	39,003	36,018
Total (excluding automotive group).....	32,314	30,971	28,918
Durable goods stores, total ³	13,208	13,542	11,796
Nondurable goods stores, total ³	26,909	25,461	24,222
Food group.....	8,117	7,883	7,185
Grocery stores.....	7,539	7,311	6,673
Eating and drinking places.....	2,755	2,901	2,530
General merchandise group with nonstores.....	7,670	6,557	6,824
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....	7,098	5,968	6,245
Department stores.....	4,755	3,999	4,195
Apparel group.....	2,092	1,928	1,897
Furniture and appliance group.....	1,942	1,849	1,677
Bldg. materials, hardware, farm equip. group.....	2,285	2,589	2,035
Automotive group.....	7,803	8,032	7,100
Gasoline service stations.....	2,633	2,668	2,493
Drug and proprietary stores.....	1,185	1,195	1,099

Part B. ADJUSTED for seasonal variations and trading day differences

Kind-of-business group	Sales (millions of dollars)					Percentage change October 1972 from--	
	1972			1971		September 1972	October 1971
	November ¹	October ²	September	November	October		
Total, retail stores ³	39,013	39,089	37,746	35,574	34,964	+4	+12
Total (excluding automotive group).	31,163	31,248	30,243	28,326	27,855	+3	+12
Durable goods stores, total ³	13,147	13,138	12,614	11,885	11,695	+4	+12
Nondurable goods stores, total ³	25,866	25,951	25,132	23,689	23,269	+3	+12
Food group.....		8,230	8,005	7,474	7,391	+3	+11
Eating and drinking places.....		2,872	2,830	2,677	2,632	+1	+9
General merchandise group with nonstores.....		6,561	6,333	5,954	5,817	+4	+13
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....		6,048	5,858	5,387	5,247	+3	+15
Apparel group.....		1,954	1,836	1,775	1,700	+6	+15
Furniture and appliance group.....		1,833	1,750	1,575	1,583	+5	+16
Bldg. materials, hardware, farm equip. group.....		2,347	2,254	2,122	2,011	+4	+17
Automotive group ⁴		7,841	7,503	7,248	7,109	+5	+10
Gasoline service stations.....		2,668	2,611	2,521	2,494	+2	+7
Drug and proprietary stores.....		1,232	1,204	1,141	1,133	+2	+9

¹Advance sample estimates. ²Preliminary estimates of full sample. ³Totals include data for kinds of business not shown separately. ⁴During months of model changeover, seasonal adjustment factors are less reliable than in other months.

Table 2. Percentage Changes for Retail Sales

(ADJUSTED for seasonal variations and trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	November 1972 from--		September 1972 through November 1972 from--	
	October 1972	November 1971	June 1972 through August 1972	September 1971 through November 1971
	Total, retail stores.....	0	+9 ¹ / ₂	+3
Total (excluding automotive group).....	- ¹ / ₂	+10	+3	+10
Durable goods stores, total.....	0	+10 ¹ / ₂	+4	+10
Nondurable goods stores, total.....	- ¹ / ₂	+9	+3	+9

Source: Bureau of the Census