

# 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 September were estimated at \$40.3 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 \$41.8 billion, about 1 percent below August but about 11 percent above September sales last year. Adjusted total July-through-September sales were about 2 percent above the prior 3 months and 12 percent above the comparable period a year ago.

Based on the full sample, the total U. S. adjusted sales estimate for August was about \$0.5 billion less than the \$42.7 billion published earlier in the August Advance Monthly Retail Sales report released September 10, 1973. The seasonally adjusted sales for August as revised were about 1 percent below July.

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

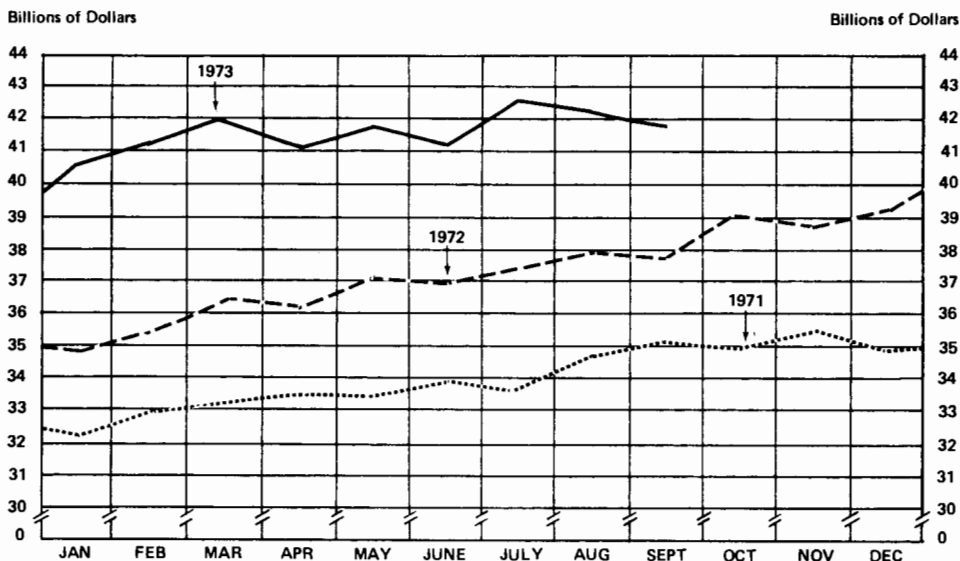
from their monthly records (in reflecting such elements as carrying charges, sales taxes, merchandise returns), the sales figures estimated for the advance report can differ from the subsequently issued report based on the monthly records of the full sample of retailers. Additionally, sampling variability 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 0.9 percent. For individual kind of business groups, differences have been greater, ranging on the average from 0.9 percent for the Food group to 2.9 percent for the Apparel 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: \$13.00. Single copies of the Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report are available only from the Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233, at 15 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)		
	1973		1972
	September	August	September
Total, retail stores <sup>3</sup> .....	40,263	43,015	37,522
Total (excluding automotive group).....	32,585	34,503	30,330
Durable goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	13,418	14,581	12,501
Nondurable goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	26,845	28,434	25,021
Food group.....	8,769	9,268	8,253
Grocery stores.....	8,147	8,618	7,676
Eating and drinking places.....	3,294	3,558	2,943
General merchandise group with nonstores.....	6,534	6,920	6,151
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....	6,000	6,391	5,627
Department stores.....	4,105	4,303	3,835
Apparel group.....	1,944	1,932	1,846
Furniture and appliance group.....	1,881	2,019	1,760
Bldg. materials, hardware, farm equipment group.....	2,700	2,850	2,483
Automotive group.....	7,678	8,512	7,192
Gasoline service stations.....	2,822	3,083	2,606
Drug and proprietary stores.....	1,232	1,287	1,184

Part B. ADJUSTED for seasonal variations and trading day differences

Kind-of-business group	Sales (millions of dollars)					Percentage change August 1973 from--	
	1973			1972		July 1973	August 1972
	September	August	July	September	August		
Total, retail stores <sup>3</sup> .....	41,842	42,231	42,778	37,746	37,969	-1	+11
Total (excluding automotive group).....	33,541	33,591	34,124	30,243	30,246	-2	+11
Durable goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	13,980	14,411	14,409	12,614	12,842	0	+12
Nondurable goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	27,862	27,820	28,369	25,132	25,127	-2	+11
Food group.....	8,891	8,891	9,128	8,005	8,039	-3	+11
Eating and drinking places.....	3,160	3,160	3,122	2,830	2,797	+1	+13
General merchandise group with nonstores.....	6,929	6,929	7,051	6,333	6,288	-2	+10
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....	6,403	6,403	6,538	5,858	5,772	-2	+11
Apparel group.....	1,967	1,967	2,039	1,836	1,813	-4	+8
Furniture and appliance group.....	1,997	1,997	2,000	1,750	1,797	0	+11
Bldg. materials, hardware, farm equipment group.....	2,564	2,564	2,551	2,254	2,246	+1	+14
Automotive group <sup>4</sup> .....	8,640	8,640	8,654	7,503	7,723	0	+12
Gasoline service stations.....	2,892	2,892	2,908	2,611	2,622	-1	+10
Drug and proprietary stores.....	1,282	1,282	1,305	1,204	1,246	-2	+3

<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 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	September 1973 from--		July 1973 through September 1973 from--	
	August 1973	September 1972	April 1973 through June 1973	July 1972 through September 1972
Total, retail stores.....	-1	+11	+2	+12
Total (excluding automotive group).....	0	+11	+2	+12
Durable goods stores, total.....	-3	+11	+1	+13
Nondurable goods stores, total.....	0	+11	+3	+12

Source: Bureau of the Census