

Advance Monthly Retail Sales

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APRIL 1977

The Bureau of the Census, U. S. Department of Commerce, announced today that total sales of retail stores in April, after adjusting for seasonal variations and trading day differences, but not for price changes, were estimated at \$59.4 billion. This adjusted figure was virtually unchanged from March 1977, but 11 percent greater than April a year ago. The adjusted April estimate, excluding the automotive group, was 1 percent above March and 10 percent above April of last year.

Adjusted sales of durable goods stores decreased 2 percent from March, while sales of nondurable goods stores increased 1 percent. Compared with sales for April 1976, durable goods stores increased 12 percent, while nondurable goods stores increased 10 percent.

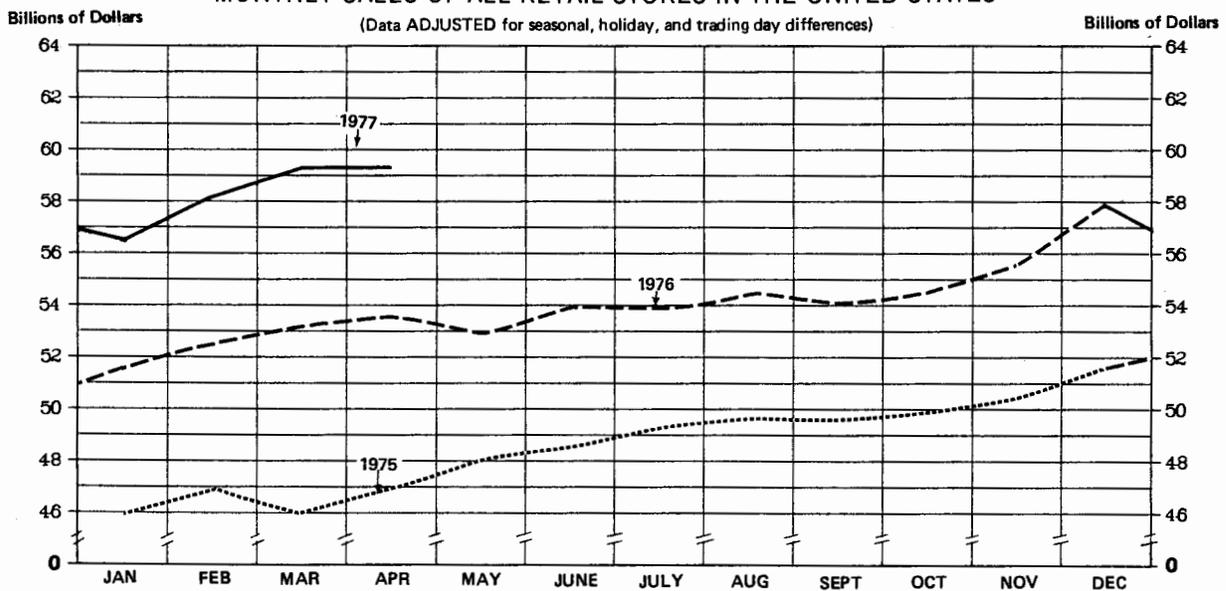
The revised estimate of retail sales for March, based on preliminary results from the full sample of retail stores, was about \$59.4 billion, about \$0.2 billion below the advance estimate published earlier. Seasonally adjusted sales for March as revised, were about 2 percent above February and 11 percent above March 1976. Excluding the automotive group, these estimates were about 1 percent above February and 9 percent over March of last year. For nondurable goods stores, adjusted March sales were about 1 percent above the previous month and 8 percent above the same month a year earlier. For durable goods stores, adjusted sales for March were 4 percent above February and 18 percent higher than March 1976.

The advance sales estimates are based on early reporting of sales for the weeks and part-weeks of the month by a small subsample of the Bureau's retail survey panel. Because retailers' weekly records often differ from their monthly records (in reflecting such items as carrying charges, sales taxes, merchandise returns), the advance estimate can differ from the subsequent estimates which are based on monthly reports obtained from the full sample of retail stores. In addition, sampling variability between the sub-sample used for the advance estimates and the full sample can cause a difference. For most months, such differences have been reduced by modifying the advance estimates prior to publication on the basis of the relationship between the advance and full-sample data for previous months.

The differences between advance and full-sample estimates of month-to-month percentage change in seasonally adjusted total retail store sales have ranged from 0 to 2 percent during the last 12 months, with a median of 1 percent. For individual kind-of-business groups, these differences tend to be higher.

Preliminary estimates for March 1977 and final estimates for February 1977 based on the full sample will also be published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade report for March (BR-77-3). The complete report will provide sales estimates in greater detail and will present a description of the sample design and the techniques used in developing the estimates. In addition, the complete report will include approximate measures of sampling variability.

MONTHLY SALES OF ALL RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES



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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

Data on retail trade, published in the *Weekly Retail Sales Report*, *Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report*, the *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 \$30.10 per year. Add \$7.55 for each subscription to a foreign address. Single copies of the *Advance Monthly Retail Trade Report* are available from Subscriber Services Section (Publications), Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C., 20233 at 25 cents each.

Table 1. ESTIMATED SALES OF RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES BY KIND OF BUSINESS

(Sales in millions of dollars)

Kind of business	Not adjusted					Adjusted ¹				
	1977			1976		1977			1976	
	Apr. ² advance	Mar. prelim.	Feb. final	Apr.	Mar.	Apr. ² advance	Mar. prelim.	Feb. final	Apr.	Mar.
Retail stores, total.....	60,243	58,196	49,382	54,633	51,752	59,397	59,400	58,175	53,696	53,344
Total (excl. automotive group).....	47,438	45,207	39,039	43,295	40,820	47,396	46,864	46,194	42,992	43,182
Durable goods stores, total.....	20,903	20,690	16,608	18,670	17,758	20,147	20,618	19,764	18,046	17,403
Nondurable goods stores, total.....	39,340	37,506	32,774	35,963	33,994	39,250	38,782	38,411	35,650	35,941
Food stores, total.....	12,654	12,306	11,120	11,535	11,176	12,512	12,479	12,200	11,448	11,567
Grocery stores.....	11,764	11,460	10,378	10,717	10,384	11,625	11,623	11,367	10,643	10,749
Eating and drinking places.....	4,718	4,537	4,069	4,218	4,083	4,761	4,761	4,720	4,304	4,321
General merchandise group with nonstores.....	9,077	8,539	6,594	8,292	7,696	9,410	9,178	8,983	8,337	8,606
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....	8,386	7,841	6,034	7,698	7,074	8,703	8,489	8,347	7,745	7,996
Department stores.....	5,957	5,466	4,194	5,394	4,776	6,160	6,013	5,932	5,416	5,471
Variety stores.....	*	615	483	672	670	*	699	661	663	785
Mail-order houses (department store merchandise).....	*	633	451	521	579	*	581	567	528	568
Apparel and accessory stores, total.....	2,436	2,217	1,851	2,377	2,050	2,388	2,422	2,484	2,229	2,377
Men's, boys' wear stores.....	*	469	409	508	438	*	550	564	506	529
Women's apparel, accessory stores.....	*	849	720	903	810	*	925	941	887	915
Shoe stores.....	*	360	286	412	329	*	373	384	339	375
Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores, total.....	2,490	2,574	2,205	2,311	2,304	2,610	2,629	2,563	2,385	2,388
Furniture, home furnishings stores.....	*	1,596	1,347	1,392	1,366	*	1,614	1,552	1,402	1,392
Household appliance, TV, radio stores.....	*	791	667	706	728	*	831	782	756	792
Household appliance dealers.....	*	488	390	442	442	*	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
Building materials, hardware, farm equipment dealers, total.....	3,917	3,493	2,647	3,393	3,020	3,731	3,659	3,463	3,243	3,208
Lumber and other building materials dealers.....	*	1,977	1,552	1,820	1,668	*	2,130	2,021	1,800	1,815
Hardware stores.....	*	523	400	539	469	*	590	528	540	549
Automotive dealers, total.....	12,805	12,989	10,343	11,339	10,932	12,001	12,536	11,981	10,704	10,162
Passenger car, other automotive dealers.....	*	11,997	9,591	10,468	10,135	*	11,502	10,999	9,875	9,307
Passenger car dealers (franchised).....	*	10,478	8,462	8,931	8,746	*	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
Tire, battery, accessory dealers.....	*	992	752	871	797	*	1,034	982	829	855
Gasoline service stations.....	4,220	4,119	3,706	3,851	3,779	4,297	4,220	4,265	3,886	3,892
Drug and proprietary stores.....	1,757	1,708	1,575	1,591	1,571	1,766	1,761	1,729	1,605	1,643
Liquor stores.....	*	906	853	886	848	*	1,000	1,018	941	939

NOTE: Totals include data for kinds of businesses not shown separately.

^{*}Advance estimates are not available from the subsample panel for these kinds of businesses.¹Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. (See explanatory material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-77-3). ²Advance estimates are based on early reporting by a small subsample of the full survey panel. All other estimates are based on the full sample. NA Not available.

Table 2. PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN SALES OF RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

(Adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading day differences)

Kind of business	Percent change					
	April 1977 advance from--		March 1977 preliminary from--		February 1977 through April 1977 from--	
	Mar. 1977 preliminary	Apr. 1976 final	Feb. 1977 final	Mar. 1976 final	Nov. 1976 through Jan. 1977	Feb. 1976 through Apr. 1976
Total, retail stores.....	0	+11	+2	+11	+4	+11
Total (excluding automotive group).....	+1	+10	+1	+9	+3	+9
Durable goods stores, total.....	-2	+12	+4	+18	+6	+15
Nondurable goods stores, total.....	+1	+10	+1	+8	+3	+9
Food stores, total.....	0	+9	+2	+8	+3	+8
Grocery stores.....	0	+9	+2	+8	+3	+8
Eating and drinking places.....	0	+11	+1	+10	+6	+11
General merchandise group with nonstores.....	+3	+13	+2	+7	+2	+9
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....	+3	+12	+2	+6	+2	+8
Department stores.....	+2	+14	+1	+10	+2	+11
Apparel and accessory stores, total.....	-1	+7	-2	+2	0	+2
Furniture, home furnishings and equipment stores, total.....	-1	+9	+3	+10	+5	+10
Building materials, hardware, farm equipment dealers, total..	+2	+15	+6	+14	+8	+14
Automotive dealers, total.....	-4	+12	+5	+23	+7	+17
Gasoline service stations.....	+2	+11	-1	+8	+1	+10
Drug and proprietary stores.....	0	+10	-2	+7	+2	+9

Table 3. ESTIMATED SALES OF STORES OF FIRMS OPERATING 11 OR MORE RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS: MARCH 1977

(Sales in millions of dollars)

Kind of business	Not adjusted			Adjusted ¹		
	1977		1976	1977		1976
	Mar. prelim.	Feb. final	Mar.	Mar. prelim.	Feb. final	Mar.
Retail stores, total.....	17,145	14,407	15,389	17,755	17,471	16,420
Food stores, total.....	6,518	5,954	5,941	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
Grocery stores	6,432	5,871	5,877	6,400	6,340	6,009
General merchandise group with nonstores...	6,855	5,215	6,122	7,382	7,200	6,844
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....	6,467	4,943	5,796	7,016	6,894	6,534
Department stores.....	4,896	3,751	4,270	5,374	5,306	4,886
Variety stores.....	481	370	549	548	513	647
Apparel and accessory stores, total.....	568	430	498	612	627	581
Shoe stores.....	139	107	133	144	149	158
Drug and proprietary stores.....	723	649	639	757	744	691

¹Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday and trading day differences. (See Explanatory Material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-77-3). NA Not available.

Table 4. ESTIMATED SALES OF RETAIL STORES BY SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS FOR SPECIFIED STANDARD METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREAS AND CITIES

(Sales in millions of dollars)

Area	Not adjusted		
	1977		1976
	Mar. preliminary	Feb. final	Mar.
Standard Consolidated Areas¹			
Chicago, Ill.--Northwestern Ind., total.....	2,297	1,914	2,075
Nondurable goods stores.....	1,509	1,287	1,427
GAF ²	688	544	645
New York-Northeastern N.J., total.....	3,411	3,038	3,253
Nondurable goods stores.....	2,484	2,294	2,350
GAF ²	964	811	905
Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas¹			
Baltimore, Md., GAF ²	118	105	126
Boston, Mass., GAF ²	202	169	184
Chicago, Ill., total.....	2,116	1,759	1,909
Nondurable goods stores.....	1,398	1,191	1,318
GAF ²	642	509	605
Cleveland, Ohio, GAF ²	130	97	123
Dallas, Texas, GAF ²	167	132	148
Detroit, Mich., total.....	1,158	970	992
Nondurable goods stores.....	679	600	619
GAF ²	281	222	252
Houston, Texas, GAF ²	190	152	169



Official Business

Table 4. ESTIMATED SALES OF RETAIL STORES BY SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS FOR SPECIFIED STANDARD METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREAS AND CITIES--Continued

(Sales in millions of dollars)

Area	Not adjusted		
	1977		1976
	Mar. preliminary	Feb. final	Mar.
Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas¹--Con.			
Kansas City, Mo.-Kansas, GAF ²	159	120	144
Los Angeles-Long Beach, Calif., total.....	1,968	1,713	1,757
Nondurable goods stores.....	1,337	1,183	1,206
GAF ²	555	460	502
Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minn., GAF ²	187	158	132
New York, N.Y.--Nassau-Suffolk, N.Y., total ³	2,293	2,069	2,166
Nondurable goods stores.....	1,699	1,582	1,607
GAF ²	660	558	613
Nassau-Suffolk, N.Y., total ⁴	630	574	608
Nondurable goods stores.....	424	401	412
GAF ²	165	150	141
New York, N.Y., total ⁵	1,663	1,495	1,558
Nondurable goods stores.....	1,275	1,181	1,195
GAF ²	495	408	472
Philadelphia, Pa., total.....	1,181	1,017	1,085
Nondurable goods stores.....	822	729	769
GAF ²	303	241	295
Pittsburgh, Pa., total.....	620	508	569
Nondurable goods stores.....	450	389	417
GAF ²	169	128	156
St. Louis, Mo.-Ill., total.....	572	452	522
Nondurable goods stores.....	341	285	331
GAF ²	153	117	139
San Francisco-Oakland, Calif., total.....	857	765	796
Nondurable goods stores.....	603	534	582
GAF ²	237	200	199
Washington, D.C.-Md.-Va., total.....	858	747	738
Nondurable goods stores.....	559	508	510
GAF ²	206	179	177
Cities			
Chicago, Ill., total.....	837	688	768
Nondurable goods stores.....	620	518	583
GAF ²	366	281	339
Detroit, Mich., total.....	240	199	235
Nondurable goods stores.....	138	125	148
GAF ²	49	40	48
Los Angeles, Calif., total.....	685	596	627
Nondurable goods stores.....	494	433	450
GAF ²	230	191	208
New York, N.Y., total.....	1,385	1,251	1,316
Nondurable goods stores.....	1,077	1,004	1,014
GAF ²	423	350	406
Philadelphia, Pa., total.....	403	354	386
Nondurable goods stores.....	309	277	303
GAF ²	133	100	130

¹Definitions of standard consolidated areas and standard metropolitan statistical areas are shown in the Monthly Retail Trade Report BR-77-3. ²Stores in the general merchandise, apparel, and furniture and appliance groups; these stores specialize in department store types of merchandise. ³Formerly New York, N.Y. SMSA. ⁴Includes Nassau and Suffolk Counties formerly included in the New York, N.Y., SMSA. ⁵Includes New York City, Rockland and Westchester Counties, N.Y.

