

Advance Monthly Retail Sales

For Release 10:00 A.M. Tuesday, March 14, 1978

CB-78-58

FEBRUARY 1978

The Bureau of the Census, U. S. Department of Commerce, announced today that total sales of retail stores in February, after adjusting for seasonal variations and trading day differences, but not for price changes, were estimated at \$60.1 billion. This adjusted figure was about 1 percent above January 1978, and 5 percent greater than February a year ago. The adjusted February estimate, excluding the automotive group, was about 2 percent above January and 7 percent above February last year.

Adjusted sales of durable goods stores decreased 3 percent from January, while sales of nondurable goods stores increased about 2 percent. Compared with sales for February 1977, durable goods stores decreased 2 percent, while nondurable stores increased 8 percent.

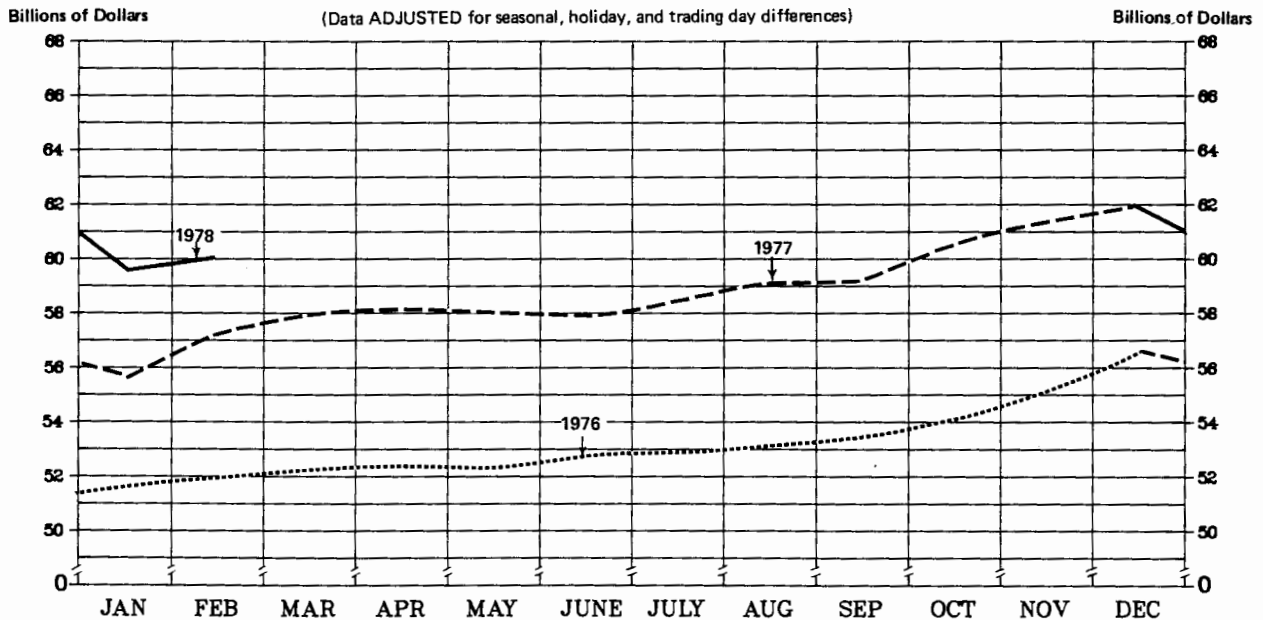
The revised estimate of retail sales for January, based on preliminary results from the full sample of retail stores, was about \$59.7 billion, \$0.4 billion below the advance estimate published earlier. Seasonally adjusted sales for January as revised, were about 4 percent below December but were 7 percent above January 1977. Excluding the automotive group, retail sales were 3 percent below December but were 9 percent over January 1977. Retail sales may have been affected by inclement weather conditions in some parts of the country. For nondurable goods stores, adjusted January sales were 3 percent below the previous month but were 9 percent above the same month a year earlier. For durable goods stores, adjusted sales for January were 6 percent below December but were 4 percent higher than January 1977.

The advance sales estimates are based on early reporting of sales by a small subsample of the Bureau's retail survey panel. Because of the early reporting, the advance estimates 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.

In the past, differences between advance and full-sample estimates of month-to-month percentage change in seasonally adjusted total retail store sales have averaged less than 1 percent. However, most modifications being applied to the current advance monthly estimates are based on the relationship between the advance and the redesigned full-sample data for only the months since May 1977. The differences now, therefore, may vary from the past experience.

Preliminary estimates for January 1978 and final estimates for December 1977 based on the full sample will also be published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade report for January (BR-78-1). 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.

ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES FOR THE UNITED STATES: JANUARY 1976 - FEBRUARY 1978



Inquiries concerning this report should be addressed to Mr. Irving True, Business Division, Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233. Telephone (301) 763-7660.



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 Monthly Retail Sales by Kind of Business for the United States

(Sales in millions of dollars)

1972 SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted					Adjusted ¹				
		1978			1977		1978			1977	
		Feb. ² advance	Jan. prelim.	Dec. final	Feb.	Jan.	Feb. ² advance	Jan. prelim.	Dec. final	Feb.	Jan.
	Retail trade, total.....	51,179	52,001	74,219	48,853	48,826	60,080	59,695	62,054	57,291	55,703
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	41,222	42,129	63,292	38,524	39,270	48,674	47,855	49,420	45,456	44,077
	Durable goods stores, total.....	16,077	16,175	21,228	16,349	15,438	19,079	19,621	20,915	19,382	18,860
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	2,216	2,282	2,963	2,198	2,027	3,007	3,181	3,149	2,991	2,807
521,3	Building materials and supply stores.....	(*)	1,575	1,928	1,595	1,428	(*)	2,075	2,224	2,090	1,911
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	384	648	363	367	(*)	522	513	489	493
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	9,957	9,872	10,927	10,329	9,556	11,406	11,840	12,634	11,835	11,626
551,2,5, 6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous auto- motive dealers.....	(*)	8,961	9,812	9,556	8,771	(*)	10,719	11,584	10,859	10,664
551	Motor vehicle dealers (franchised).....	(*)	8,155	8,839	8,600	8,005	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	911	1,115	773	785	(*)	1,121	1,050	976	962
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	2,440	2,514	3,815	2,406	2,384	2,827	2,795	3,008	2,780	2,667
571	Furniture and home furnishings stores....	(*)	1,510	2,058	1,474	1,434	(*)	1,699	1,807	1,682	1,635
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores	(*)	780	1,328	720	735	(*)	853	941	841	800
5722	Household appliance stores.....	(*)	371	596	333	329	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	35,102	35,826	52,991	32,504	33,388	41,001	40,074	41,139	37,909	36,843
53	General merchandise group stores.....	5,466	5,411	14,572	4,903	4,828	7,731	7,490	8,276	6,930	6,682
531	Department stores.....	4,408	4,358	11,817	3,873	3,840	6,315	6,112	6,646	5,550	5,388
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	449	1,308	459	426	(*)	626	696	628	590
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.	(*)	604	1,447	(NA)	(NA)	(*)	752	934	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	12,462	12,832	14,894	11,461	11,905	13,735	13,585	13,406	12,612	12,217
541	Grocery stores.....	11,666	11,992	13,787	10,729	11,178	12,834	12,650	12,410	11,785	11,416
554	Gasoline service stations.....	4,366	4,562	4,918	4,014	4,326	5,013	4,822	4,898	4,605	4,589
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	2,142	2,224	4,899	2,110	2,224	2,833	2,731	2,875	2,798	2,700
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	463	1,088	419	470	(*)	539	568	561	547
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	(*)	834	1,847	827	823	(*)	1,023	1,123	1,071	1,001
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	412	1,068	435	462	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	410	720	346	377	(*)	498	515	462	451
58	Eating and drinking places.....	4,704	4,839	5,491	4,542	4,466	5,444	5,395	5,469	5,255	4,891
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	1,769	1,798	2,685	1,652	1,647	1,931	1,921	2,008	1,804	1,757
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	938	1,583	950	919	(*)	1,096	1,089	1,125	1,051
5961 (pt.)	Mail-order houses (department store merchandise) ³	(*)	447	702	418	390	(*)	619	580	526	578

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

*Advance estimates are not available from the subsample panel for these kinds of business.

NA Not available.

¹Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. (See Explanatory Material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-78-1).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.³Includes sales made by mail-order catalog desks located within department stores of mail-order firms.

Table 2. Percent Change in Estimated Monthly Retail Sales by Kind of Business for the United States

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

1972 SIC code	Kind of business	Percent change					
		February 1978 advance from--		January 1978 preliminary from--		December 1977 through February 1978 from--	
		Jan. 1978 preliminary	Feb. 1977 final	Dec. 1977 final	Jan. 1977 final	Sept. 1977 through Nov. 1977	Dec. 1976 through Feb. 1977
	Retail trade, total.....	+1.64	+5	-4	+7	0	+7
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	+2.10	+7	-3	+9	+1	+8
	Durable goods stores, total.....	-3.00 1.55	-2	-6	+4	-3	+4
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	-5.50	+1	+1	+13	-6	+7
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	-4.00	-4	-6	+2	-2	+2
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	+1.15	+2	-7	+5	-2	+6
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	+2.20	+8	-3	+9	+2	+9
53	General merchandise group stores.....	+3.30	+12	-9	+12	+2	+14
531	Department stores.....	+3.30	+14	-8	+13	+3	+16
54	Food stores.....	+1.00	+9	+1	+11	+2	+9
541	Grocery stores.....	+1.00	+9	+2	+11	+2	+8
554	Gasoline service stations.....	+4.80	+9	-2	+5	+4	+7
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	+4.00	+1	-5	+1	-2	+2
58	Eating and drinking places.....	+1.00	+4	-1	+10	0	+8
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	+1.50	+7	-4	+9	+3	+9

Table 3. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales of Group II Companies by Kind of Business for the United States: JANUARY 1978

(Sales in millions of dollars)

1972 SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted		Adjusted ¹	
		Jan. 1978 preliminary	Dec. 1977 final	Jan. 1978 preliminary	Dec. 1977 final
	Retail trade, total.....	17,612	30,601	20,783	21,917
53	General merchandise group stores.....	4,810	13,149	6,708	7,475
531	Department stores.....	4,147	11,165	5,776	6,280
533	Variety stores.....	332	1,043	484	555
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	331	941	448	640
54	Food stores.....	7,006	8,161	7,283	7,264
541	Grocery stores.....	6,924	8,046	7,198	7,178
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	695	1,788	922	1,023
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	280	747	379	418
566	Shoe stores.....	179	366	228	243
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	854	1,440	970	952

Note: The Group II component of the sample consists of companies which had 11 or more retail establishments according to the most recent update of multi-establishment files and which were selected with certainty (i.e., their sales size exceeded specified dollar volume cutoffs which vary by kind of business).

¹Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. (See Explanatory Material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-78-1).

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Official Business

Table 4. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales by Selected Kinds of Business for Specified Areas and Cities

(Sales in millions of dollars)

Area	Not adjusted		Area	Not adjusted	
	Jan. 1978 preliminary	Dec. 1977 final		Jan. 1978 preliminary	Dec. 1977 final
Standard Consolidated Areas¹			Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas^{1--Con.}		
Chicago, Ill.--Northwestern			Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minn-Wis., total.....	640	880
Indiana, total.....	1,979	2,941	Nondurable goods stores.....	419	623
Nondurable goods stores.....	1,422	2,203	GAP ²	167	370
GAP ²	465	1,034	Massau-Suffolk, N.Y., total.....	759	1,043
New York, N.Y.--Northeastern N.J., total.....	3,452	4,871	Nondurable goods stores.....	561	756
Nondurable goods stores.....	2,581	3,687	GAP ²	140	387
GAP ²	863	1,985	New York, N.Y.-N.J., total.....	1,857	2,574
			Nondurable goods stores.....	1,400	1,992
			GAP ²	522	1,110
Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas¹			Newark, N.J., total.....	466	679
Anaheim-Santa Ana-Garden Grove, Calif., total.....	659	870	Nondurable goods stores.....	332	476
Nondurable goods stores.....	430	630	GAP ²	102	236
GAP ²	155	334	Philadelphia, Pa.-N.J., total.....	1,230	1,859
Atlanta, Ga., GAP ²	117	314	Nondurable goods stores.....	887	1,392
Baltimore, Md., total.....	527	756	GAP ²	280	740
Nondurable goods stores.....	386	566	Pittsburgh, Pa., total.....	481	791
GAP ²	104	263	Nondurable goods stores.....	367	613
Boston, Mass., total.....	881	1,290	GAP ²	112	340
Nondurable goods stores.....	669	983	St. Louis, Mo.-Ill., total.....	532	770
GAP ²	194	476	Nondurable goods stores.....	421	637
Buffalo, N.Y., total.....	237	374	GAP ²	121	321
Nondurable goods stores.....	194	296	San Diego, Calif., total.....	427	617
Chicago, Ill., total.....	1,829	2,728	Nondurable goods stores.....	275	420
Nondurable goods stores.....	1,317	2,048	GAP ²	123	236
GAP ²	441	975	San Francisco-Oakland, Calif., total.....	928	1,296
Cincinnati, Ohio-Ky.-Ind., total.....	390	615	Nondurable goods stores.....	640	922
Nondurable goods stores.....	292	475	GAP ²	237	504
Cleveland, Ohio, total.....	508	779	Seattle-Everett, Wash., total.....	454	631
Nondurable goods stores.....	364	607	Nondurable goods stores.....	311	464
GAP ²	112	310	Washington, D.C.-Md.-Va., total.....	824	1,147
Detroit, Mich., total.....	1,187	1,808	Nondurable goods stores.....	554	847
Nondurable goods stores.....	796	1,227	GAP ²	214	460
GAP ²	282	682			
Houston, Tex., total.....	823	1,130	Cities		
Nondurable goods stores.....	506	764	Chicago, Ill., total.....	613	893
GAP ²	190	423	Nondurable goods stores.....	456	691
Kansas City, Mo.-Kans., total.....	473	675	GAP ²	148	316
Nondurable goods stores.....	305	494	Detroit, Mich., total.....	155	230
GAP ²	96	245	Nondurable goods stores.....	111	160
Los Angeles-Long Beach, Calif., total.....	1,806	2,521	GAP ²	32	71
Nondurable goods stores.....	1,272	1,839	Los Angeles, Calif., total.....	587	814
GAP ²	496	1,010	Nondurable goods stores.....	452	654
Miami, Fla., total.....	472	645	GAP ²	151	309
Nondurable goods stores.....	304	408	New York, N.Y., total.....	1,216	1,654
GAP ²	111	219	Nondurable goods stores.....	935	1,324
Milwaukee, Wis., total.....	405	589	GAP ²	364	739
Nondurable goods stores.....	275	403	Philadelphia, Pa., total.....	282	405
GAP ²	89	196	Nondurable goods stores.....	232	345
			GAP ²	65	139

¹Definitions of standard consolidated areas and standard metropolitan statistical areas are shown in the Monthly Retail Trade Report BR-78-1. ²Includes the following: General merchandise group stores (SIC 53); apparel and accessory stores (SIC 56); furniture, home furnishings and equipment stores (SIC 57); and miscellaneous shopping goods stores (SIC 594). GAP represents stores which specialize in department store types of merchandise. ³Statistics for the Boston SMSA include retail establishments in all Essex, Middlesex, Norfolk, and Suffolk Counties.

