

# Advance Monthly Retail Sales

June 11, 1979

CB-79-106

## MAY 1979

The Bureau of the Census, U. S. Department of Commerce, announced today that total sales of retail stores in May, after adjusting for seasonal variations and trading day differences, but not for price changes were estimated at \$71.1 billion. This adjusted figure was virtually unchanged from April but 9 percent higher than May a year ago. The adjusted May estimate, excluding the automotive group was little changed from April but 10 percent above May last year.

Adjusted sales of durable goods stores were about 2 percent below April while sales of nondurable goods stores increased about 1 percent. Compared with sales for May 1978, durable goods stores increased 6 percent, and nondurable goods stores increased 10 percent.

The revised estimate of retail sales for April, based on preliminary results from the full sample of retail stores, was about \$71.2 billion, \$1.0 billion below the April Advance estimate published earlier. Seasonally adjusted preliminary sales for April were about 1 percent below March 1979 estimates but were 9 percent above the April 1978 sales. Excluding the automotive group, retail sales were virtually the same as March but were 11 percent over April 1978. For nondurable goods stores, adjusted April sales were little changed from the previous month but were 10 percent above the same month a year earlier. For durable goods stores, adjusted sales for April were 4 percent below March but were 8 percent higher than April 1978.

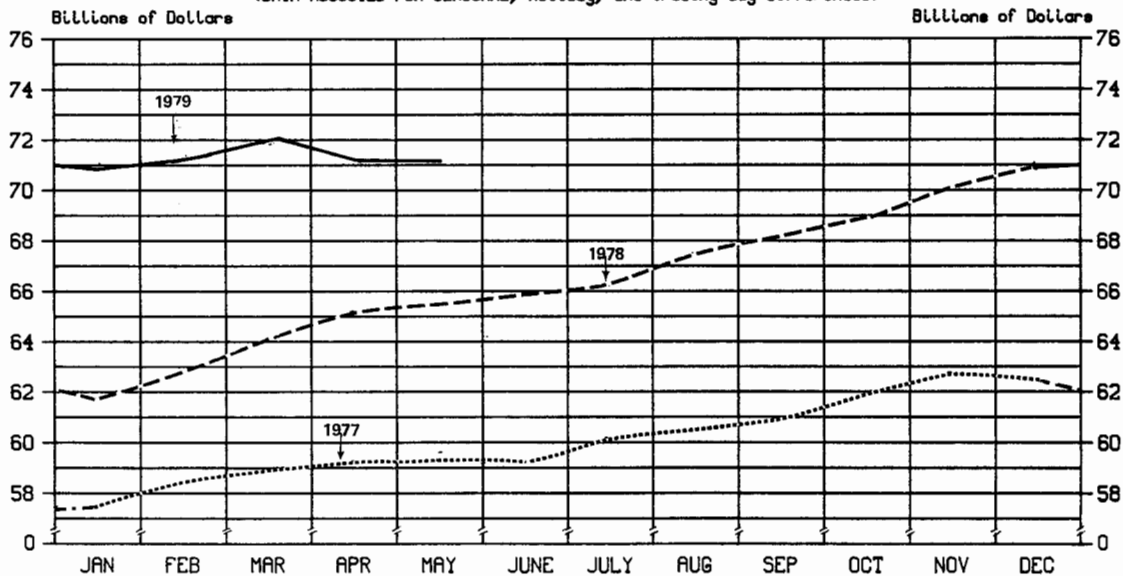
The advance sales estimates are based on early reporting of sales by a small subsample of the Bureau's retail survey panel. Because of the early reporting, the advance estimates can differ from the subsequent estimates which are based on monthly reports obtained from the full sample of retail stores. 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 stores 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 June 1977. The differences now, therefore, may vary from the past experience.

Preliminary estimates for April 1979 and final estimates for March 1979 based on the full sample will also be published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade report for April (BR-79-4). The complete report will provide sales estimates in greater detail and will present a description of the sample design, the basis and methodology used in developing revisions, 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 1977 - MAY 1979

(DATA ADJUSTED FOR SEASONAL, holiday, and trading day differences)



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U.S. Department of Commerce  
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

The 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, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402, at \$25 per year. Add \$6.25 for each subscription to a foreign address. Postage stamps not acceptable; currency submitted at sender's risk. Remittances from foreign countries must be by international money order or by a draft on a U.S. bank. Single copies of the Advance Monthly Retail Sales report are for sale by Subscriber Services (Publications), Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233, at 70 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 <sup>1</sup>				
		1979			1978		1979			1978	
		May <sup>2</sup> advance	Apr. prelim.	Mar. final	May	Apr.	May <sup>2</sup> advance	Apr. prelim.	Mar. final	May	Apr.
	Retail trade, total.....	73,885	70,383	72,198	67,952	63,838	71,108	71,217	72,045	65,522	65,146
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	58,113	54,911	55,991	52,537	49,456	57,212	57,038	57,073	52,002	51,609
	Durable goods stores, total.....	26,576	25,566	26,071	25,085	23,165	24,139	24,536	25,450	22,730	22,617
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	4,398 (*)	4,083 2,569	3,733 2,427	4,115 2,653	3,665 2,382	3,814 (*)	3,946 2,592	4,045 2,599	3,590 2,429	3,609 2,451
521,3 525	Building materials and supply stores..... Hardware stores.....	(*) (*)	719	645	625	571	(*) (*)	690	701	552	547
55 ex. 554 551,2,5, 6,7,9 551 553	Automotive dealers..... Motor vehicle and miscellaneous auto- motive dealers..... Motor vehicle dealers (franchised)..... Auto and home supply stores.....	15,772 (*) (*) (*)	15,472 14,153 12,064 1,319	16,207 14,920 13,039 1,287	15,415 14,250 12,214 1,165	14,382 13,234 11,300 1,148	13,896 (*) (*) (*)	14,179 12,925 (NA) 1,254	14,972 13,688 (NA) 12,84	13,520 12,413 (NA) 1,107	13,537 12,426 (NA) 1,111
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	3,341 (*)	3,149 2,024	3,318 2,105	3,074 1,935	2,901 1,825	3,358 (*)	3,320 2,074	3,359 2,107	3,116 1,918	3,061 1,885
571 5722,32 5722	Furniture and home furnishings stores.... Household appliance, radio, and TV stores Household appliance stores.....	(*) (*) (*)	882 438	941 461	868 444	804 399	(*) (*)	978 (NA)	965 (NA)	902 (NA)	877 (NA)
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	47,309	44,817	46,127	42,867	40,673	46,969	46,681	46,595	42,792	42,529
53 531 533 539	General merchandise group stores..... Department stores..... Variety stores..... Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.	8,593 6,930 (*) (*)	8,151 6,516 653 982	7,881 6,304 614 963	8,017 6,431 629 957	7,472 6,010 582 880	8,822 7,115 (*) (*)	8,642 6,910 695 1,037	8,626 6,943 660 1,023	8,236 6,609 659 968	8,048 6,462 654 932
54 541	Food stores..... Grocery stores.....	16,235 14,922	15,106 13,806	16,238 14,937	14,528 13,455	13,865 12,862	15,855 14,601	15,855 14,548	15,635 14,349	14,375 13,335	14,298 13,273
554	Gasoline service stations.....	6,009	5,574	5,483	5,156	4,889	5,845	5,682	5,561	5,020	4,994
56 561	Apparel and accessory stores..... Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	3,200 (*)	3,259 580	3,154 564	2,906 542	2,816 536	3,383 (*)	3,286 592	3,440 646	3,062 577	3,064 585
562,3,8 565 566	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers..... Family clothing stores..... Shoe stores.....	(*) (*) (*)	1,258 584 636	1,236 560 583	1,122 555 529	1,088 511 528	(*) (*) (*)	1,333 (NA) 566	1,316 (NA) 628	1,176 (NA) 552	1,201 (NA) 548
58	Eating and drinking places.....	6,685	6,221	6,373	6,024	5,719	6,271	6,361	6,563	5,672	5,794
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	2,273	2,206	2,223	2,060	1,940	2,280	2,272	2,234	2,058	2,042
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,108	1,146	1,086	1,010	(*)	1,219	1,197	1,105	1,098
5961 (pt.)	Mail-order houses (department store merchandise) <sup>3</sup> .....	(*)	403	459	534	538	(*)	423	443	586	584

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

<sup>2</sup>Advance estimates are not available from the subsample panel for these kinds of business.

NA Not available.

<sup>1</sup>Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. (See Explanatory Material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-79-4).<sup>2</sup>Advance estimates are based on early reporting by a small subsample of the full survey panel. All other estimates are based on the full sample.<sup>3</sup>Includes sales made by mail-order catalog desks located within department stores of some 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					
		May 1979 advance from--		Apr. 1979 preliminary from--		Mar. 1979 through May 1979 from--	
		Apr. 1979 preliminary	May 1978 final	Mar. 1979 final	Apr. 1978 final	Dec. 1978 through Feb. 1979	Mar. 1978 through May 1978
	Retail trade, total.....	0	+9	-1	+9	+1	+10
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	0	+10	0	+11	+2	+11
	Durable goods stores, total.....	-2	+6	-4	+8	-2	+11
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	-3	+6	-2	+9	+2	+11
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	-2	+3	-5	+5	-3	+7
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	+1	+8	-1	+8	+1	+10
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	+1	+10	0	+10	+2	+10
53	General merchandise group stores.....	+2	+7	0	+7	+2	+8
531	Department stores.....	+3	+8	0	+7	+3	+8
54	Food stores.....	0	+10	+1	+11	+2	+10
541	Grocery stores.....	0	+9	+1	+10	+2	+9
554	Gasoline service stations.....	+3	+16	+2	+14	+6	+14
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	+3	+10	-4	+7	+2	+11
58	Eating and drinking places.....	-1	+11	-3	+10	+4	+11
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	0	+11	+2	+11	0	+10

Table 3. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales of Group II Companies by Kind of Business for the United States: APRIL 1979

(Sales in millions of dollars)

1972 SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted			Adjusted <sup>1</sup>		
		Apr. 1979 preliminary	Mar. 1979 final	Apr. 1978	Apr. 1979 preliminary	Mar. 1979 final	Apr. 1978
	Retail trade, total.....	22,813	23,372	20,944	23,792	23,607	22,006
53	General merchandise group stores.....	7,200	6,955	6,607	7,639	7,614	7,115
531	Department stores.....	6,172	5,971	5,686	6,531	6,576	6,107
533	Variety stores.....	540	510	459	579	540	517
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.	488	474	462	(S)	(S)	(S)
54	Food stores.....	7,934	8,706	7,406	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
541	Grocery stores.....	7,826	8,609	7,325	8,317	8,145	7,630
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	1,165	1,088	968	1,120	1,200	1,049
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	487	463	404	496	516	449
566	Shoe stores.....	315	286	243	263	305	255
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	1,080	1,063	894	1,131	1,077	968

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).

<sup>1</sup>Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. (See Explanatory Material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-79-4).

NA Not available

(S) Suppressed - Estimates do not meet Bureau of the Census standard for publication.

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		
	Apr. 1979 preliminary	Mar. 1979 final	Apr. 1978		Apr. 1979 preliminary	Mar. 1979 final	Apr. 1978
<b>Standard Consolidated Areas<sup>1</sup></b>				<b>Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas<sup>1</sup>--Con.</b>			
Chicago, Ill.--Northwestern				Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minn.-Wis., total			
Indiana, total	2,769	2,780	2,494	Nondurable goods stores	908	871	763
Nondurable goods stores	1,795	1,823	1,694	GAP <sup>2</sup>	229	220	213
GAP <sup>2</sup>	656	637	613	Massau-Suffolk, N.Y., total	933	986	849
New York, N.Y.--Northeastern N.J., total	4,470	4,656	3,970	Nondurable goods stores	631	673	566
Nondurable goods stores	3,121	3,298	2,834	GAP <sup>2</sup>	234	232	204
				New York, N.Y.-N.J., total	2,395	2,468	2,172
				Nondurable goods stores	1,735	1,816	1,588
				GAP <sup>2</sup>	730	724	650
<b>Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas<sup>1</sup></b>				Newark, N.J., total	611	662	518
Anaheim-Santa Ana-Garden Grove, Calif., total	834	887	728	Nondurable goods stores	382	412	365
Nondurable goods stores	526	535	457	GAP <sup>2</sup>	142	148	125
GAP <sup>2</sup>	215	211	191	Philadelphia, Pa.-N.J., total	1,428	1,487	1,370
Atlanta, Ga., GAP <sup>2</sup>	184	189	174	Nondurable goods stores	1,014	1,022	920
Baltimore, Md., total	700	714	643	GAP <sup>2</sup>	374	355	292
Nondurable goods stores	463	480	440	Pittsburgh, Pa., total	696	702	692
GAP <sup>2</sup>	162	157	139	Nondurable goods stores	496	500	468
Boston, Mass., total	1,082	1,124	1,059	GAP <sup>2</sup>	199	196	179
Nondurable goods stores	739	766	736	St. Louis, Mo.-Ill., total	646	669	609
GAP <sup>2</sup>	293	289	251	Nondurable goods stores	477	508	477
Buffalo, N.Y., total	338	361	316	GAP <sup>2</sup>	191	187	172
Nondurable goods stores	270	280	234	San Diego, Calif., total	598	632	502
Chicago, Ill., total	2,549	2,567	2,320	Nondurable goods stores	362	368	313
Nondurable goods stores	1,670	1,697	1,592	GAP <sup>2</sup>	163	163	142
GAP <sup>2</sup>	616	601	578	San Francisco-Oakland, Calif., total	1,221	1,158	971
Cincinnati, Ohio-Ky.-Ind., total	421	440	383	Nondurable goods stores	759	773	664
Nondurable goods stores	315	333	288	GAP <sup>2</sup>	303	302	272
Cleveland, Ohio, total	725	706	653	Seattle-Everett, Wash., total	573	613	568
Nondurable goods stores	497	485	426	Nondurable goods stores	380	388	366
GAP <sup>2</sup>	166	162	161	Washington, D.C.-Md.-Va., total	1,057	1,118	987
Dallas-Fort Worth, Tex., total	1,158	1,194	967	Nondurable goods stores	711	725	634
Nondurable goods stores	702	705	613	GAP <sup>2</sup>	290	284	266
GAP <sup>2</sup>	265	268	221				
Detroit, Mich., total	1,768	1,821	1,551	<b>Cities</b>			
Nondurable goods stores	1,011	1,034	916	Chicago, Ill., total	854	839	819
GAP <sup>2</sup>	420	408	384	Nondurable goods stores	573	578	588
Houston, Tex., total	1,187	1,233	1,003	GAP <sup>2</sup>	212	204	195
Nondurable goods stores	729	760	604	Detroit, Mich., total	301	303	289
GAP <sup>2</sup>	278	280	248	Nondurable goods stores	193	195	191
Kansas City, Mo.-Kans., total	588	612	603	GAP <sup>2</sup>	48	64	48
Nondurable goods stores	368	380	366	Los Angeles, Calif., total	869	880	722
GAP <sup>2</sup>	134	130	130	Nondurable goods stores	616	630	567
Los Angeles-Long Beach, Calif., total	2,605	2,490	2,172	GAP <sup>2</sup>	243	243	195
Nondurable goods stores	1,564	1,591	1,472	New York, N.Y., total	1,619	1,664	1,435
GAP <sup>2</sup>	683	675	596	Nondurable goods stores	1,209	1,258	1,076
Miami, Fla., total	551	585	514	GAP <sup>2</sup>	528	520	482
Nondurable goods stores	335	361	315	Philadelphia, Pa., total	418	427	390
GAP <sup>2</sup>	147	130	125	Nondurable goods stores	343	341	317
Milwaukee, Wis., total	549	526	499	GAP <sup>2</sup>	107	105	81
Nondurable goods stores	306	307	288				
GAP <sup>2</sup>	128	115	122				

<sup>1</sup>Definitions of standard consolidated areas and standard metropolitan statistical areas are shown in the Monthly Retail Trade Report BR-79-4  
<sup>2</sup>Includes 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.  
<sup>3</sup>Statistics for the Boston SMA include retail establishments in all Essex, Middlesex, Norfolk, Plymouth, and Suffolk Counties.