

Advance Monthly Retail Sales

September 1986

FOR WIRE TRANSMISSION 8:30 A.M. EDT, Wednesday, October 15, 1986

CB-86-166

Advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for September adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences but not for price changes, were \$127.2 billion, 4.6 percent above the previous month and 7.5 percent above September 1985. Excluding the automotive group, sales were virtually unchanged from August. Total sales in the third quarter increased 3.7 percent from the second quarter and were 5.5 percent above the same quarter a year ago.

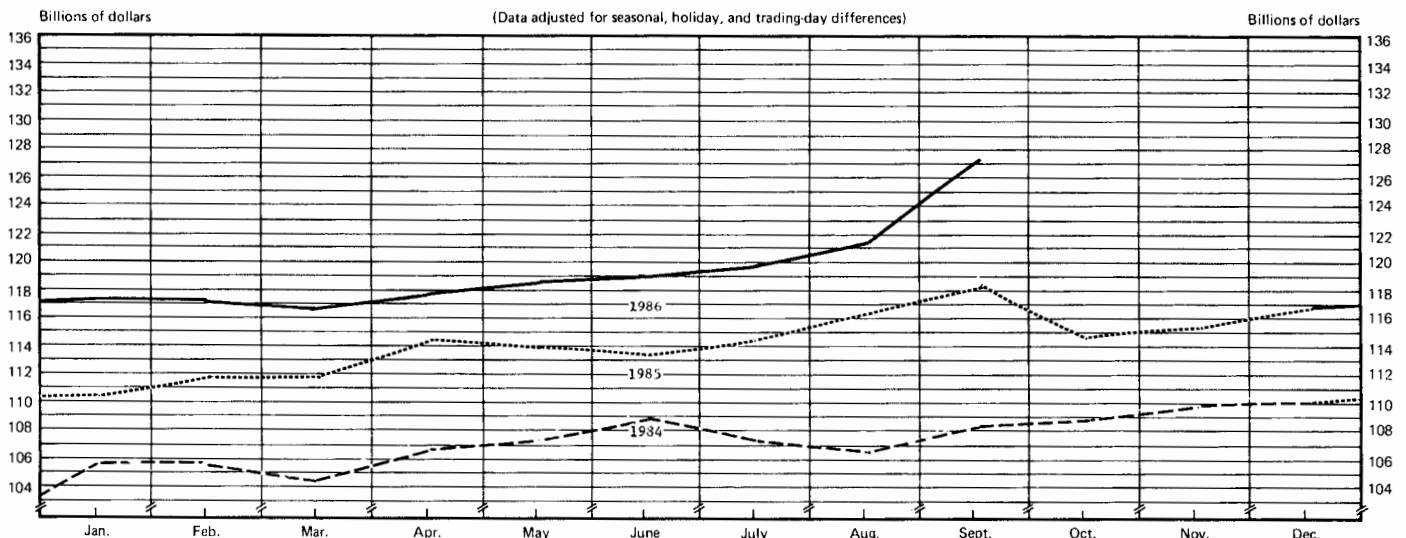
Durable goods increased 11.9 percent from August and were 16.0 percent above the same month a year ago. Automotive dealers were 19.5 percent above the previous month and were 17.6 percent above September 1985. Compared to sales a year ago, building material dealers were up 18.1 percent while furniture stores were up 13.7 percent.

Nondurable goods were virtually unchanged from August but were 2.1 percent above September a year ago. The general merchandise group decreased 1.3 percent from the previous month but were 3.7 percent above sales a year ago. Compared to September 1985 sales, food stores were up 3.8 percent while gasoline service stations were down 18.5 percent.

The Advance Monthly Retail Sales report for October is scheduled to be released November 14, 1986, at 8:30 a.m.

ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES

January 1984-September 1986



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U.S. Department of Commerce
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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 \$37 per year. Add \$9.25 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. This report is available electronically in CENDATA, the Bureau's on-line information service, through a commercial vendor. For further information, contact Customer Services, DUSD, Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233, or call (301) 763-4100 or (301) 763-7561.

Table 1. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales, by Kind of Business

(Sales in millions of dollars)

SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted					Adjusted ¹				
		1986			1985		1986			1985	
		Sept. ² adv.	Aug. prel.	July final	Sept.	Aug.	Sept. ² adv.	Aug. prel.	July final	Sept. ¹	Aug. ¹
	Retail trade, total.....	123,635	123,957	120,736	113,842	120,772	127,180	121,574	119,804	118,295	116,349
	Total (excl. auto group)..	89,614	95,020	91,735	85,298	92,265	93,053	93,006	92,374	89,265	88,886
	Durable goods, total.....	53,104	48,401	48,228	45,165	46,053	53,353	47,696	46,312	46,007	44,318
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers..	7,738	7,872	8,033	6,541	6,899	7,363	7,272	7,080	6,234	6,197
521,3	Building mat. and supply stores.	(*)	5,840	6,013	4,857	5,113	(*)	5,290	5,202	4,506	4,513
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	1,021	1,041	884	969	(*)	993	976	932	929
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	34,021	28,937	29,001	28,544	28,507	34,127	28,568	27,430	29,030	27,463
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	31,977	26,781	26,810	26,519	26,333	32,105	26,542	25,436	26,978	25,443
551	Motor vehicle (franchised)....	(*)	23,980	23,895	24,190	23,829	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores....	(*)	2,156	2,191	2,025	2,174	(*)	2,026	1,994	2,052	2,020
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	6,463	6,457	6,360	5,509	5,816	6,568	6,479	6,507	5,775	5,698
571	Furniture and home furnishings..	(*)	3,588	3,425	3,033	3,277	(*)	3,470	3,470	3,124	3,112
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores.....	(*)	2,410	2,496	2,058	2,138	(*)	2,521	2,557	2,230	2,171
5722	Household appliance stores....	(*)	756	814	696	736	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total.....	70,531	75,556	72,508	68,677	74,719	73,827	73,878	73,492	72,288	72,031
53	General merchandise group stores..	12,606	13,921	12,245	12,027	13,513	13,913	14,097	13,873	13,416	13,391
531	Department stores.....	10,872	12,013	10,519	10,154	11,436	11,947	12,122	11,926	11,270	11,300
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	674	595	670	752	(*)	679	643	779	742
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	1,234	1,131	1,203	1,325	(*)	1,296	1,304	1,367	1,349
54	Food stores.....	23,762	25,358	25,459	22,753	24,837	24,671	24,497	24,486	23,778	23,565
541	Grocery stores.....	22,464	24,000	24,123	21,515	23,473	23,303	23,144	23,151	22,458	22,228
554	Gasoline service stations.....	6,884	7,163	7,390	8,380	9,005	6,829	6,802	6,932	8,380	8,503
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	5,977	6,575	5,533	5,491	6,172	6,332	6,373	6,257	5,890	5,870
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	701	622	600	645	(*)	760	751	685	690
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	(*)	2,616	2,387	2,360	2,509	(*)	2,659	2,632	2,495	2,484
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	1,802	1,405	1,391	1,748	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	1,090	827	892	998	(*)	1,004	954	899	907
58	Eating and drinking places.....	11,910	13,117	12,648	10,987	11,979	11,970	11,935	11,810	10,987	10,890
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	3,973	4,067	4,030	3,595	3,866	4,222	4,180	4,155	3,861	3,901
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,541	1,563	1,491	1,532	(*)	1,487	1,499	1,588	1,462
5961 (pt.)	Mail-order houses (department store merchandise).....	(*)	309	290	336	357	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
53,56,57	GAF ³	(*)	30,950	27,722	26,367	29,166	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
594											

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

NA Not available.

¹Data are concurrently adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. Concurrent seasonal adjustment uses all available unadjusted estimates as input to the X-11 program and the factors derived from the program are used in calculating all seasonally adjusted data shown in this publication. Factors and Explanatory material are contained in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-86-08.

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.

³GAF represents stores which specialize in department store types of merchandise.

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

Table 2. Percent Change in Estimated Monthly Retail Sales, by Kind of Business

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

SIC code	Kind of business	Percent change					
		Sept. 1986 advance from--		Aug. 1986 preliminary from--		July 1986 through Sept. 1986	
		Aug. 1986 prelim.	Sept. 1985 final	July 1986 final	Aug. 1985 final	Apr. 1986 through June 1986	July 1985 through Sept. 1985
	Retail trade, total.....	+4.6	+7.5	+1.5	+4.5	+3.7	+5.5
	Total (excl. automotive group)....	+0.1	+4.2	+0.7	+4.6	+1.3	+4.5
	Durable goods, total.....	+11.9	+16.0	+3.0	+7.6	+8.3	+10.6
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	+1.3	+18.1	+2.7	+17.3	+1.8	+16.9
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	+19.5	+17.6	+4.1	+4.0	+11.8	+8.9
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	+21.0	+19.0	+4.3	+4.3	+12.7	+9.7
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	+1.4	+13.7	-0.4	+13.7	+4.3	+14.5
	Nondurable goods, total.....	-0.1	+2.1	+0.5	+2.6	+0.9	+2.4
53	General merchandise group stores.....	-1.3	+3.7	+1.6	+5.3	+1.3	+4.7
531	Department stores.....	-1.4	+6.0	+1.6	+7.3	+2.0	+6.7
54	Food stores.....	+0.7	+3.8	0.0	+4.0	+1.2	+4.0
541	Grocery stores.....	+0.7	+3.8	0.0	+4.1	+1.2	+4.1
554	Gasoline service stations.....	+0.4	-18.5	-1.9	-20.0	-4.1	-19.1
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	-0.6	+7.5	+1.9	+8.6	+1.4	+8.2
58	Eating and drinking places.....	+0.3	+8.9	+1.1	+9.6	+1.8	+8.8
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	+1.0	+9.3	+0.6	+7.2	+2.7	+8.1

Table 3. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales of Group II Companies, by Kind of Business

(Sales in millions of dollars)

SIC	Kind of business code	Not adjusted			Adjusted ¹		
		Aug. 1986 prelim.	July 1986 final	Aug. 1985	Aug. 1986 prelim.	July 1986 final	Aug. ^F 1985
	Retail trade, total.....	41,638	39,353	40,626	41,204	41,024	39,534
53	General merchandise group stores.....	13,002	11,415	12,553	13,177	13,014	12,466
531	Department stores.....	11,573	10,127	10,987	11,666	11,482	10,846
533	Variety stores.....	538	479	632	547	534	630
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	891	809	934	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	13,925	13,947	13,570	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
541	Grocery stores.....	13,757	13,781	13,413	13,330	13,484	12,738
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	2,848	2,244	2,607	2,633	2,597	2,379
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	1,205	1,062	1,092	1,169	1,161	1,041
566	Shoe stores.....	601	428	519	538	518	465
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	2,218	2,186	2,195	2,294	2,268	2,238

^F Revised

¹ Data are concurrently adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. Concurrent seasonal adjustment uses all available unadjusted estimates as input to the X-11 program and the factors derived from the program are used in calculating all seasonally adjusted data shown in this publication. Factors and Explanatory material are contained in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, RR-86-08.

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).



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Sample Design and Reliability of Data

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 subsample used for the advance estimates and the full sample can cause a difference.

Percentage differences between advance and full sample preliminary estimates of month-to-month percentage change in seasonally adjusted total retail store sales have ranged from approximately -0.9 percent to +0.8 percent with the average of the absolute differences about 0.4 percent for the past 12 months. For individual kind-of-business groups, these differences tend to be higher. Sampling variability of and revisions to advance-to-preliminary estimates are shown in table 4 below.

Preliminary estimates for August 1986 and final estimates for July 1986 based on the full sample will be published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for August (BR-86-08). The complete report will provide sales estimates in greater detail and will present a description of revisions, and the techniques used in developing the estimates. The complete report will include additional measures of sampling variability.

Table 4. Sampling Variability of and Revision to Advance-to-Preliminary Estimate

SIC code	Kind of business	Estimated coefficient of variation in percent of the advance-to-preliminary ratio			Preliminary-to-final percent change minus the advance-to-preliminary percent change			
		Range ¹		Median	Range ²		Mean	Average of absolute difference
		From	To		From	To		
	Retail trade, total.....	0.7	0.9	0.8	-0.9	+0.8	-0.1	0.4
	Total (excl. automotive group)....	0.8	0.9	0.8	-0.7	+0.6	0.0	0.4
	Durable goods stores, total.....	1.3	1.7	1.6	-2.1	+0.8	-0.3	0.7
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	0.9	2.0	1.3	-2.6	+4.2	+0.5	1.7
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	1.5	2.2	1.7	-2.6	+1.7	-0.5	1.1
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	0.9	1.6	1.2	-2.6	+1.7	-0.5	1.2
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	1.8	2.5	2.1	-3.4	+2.7	+0.1	1.5
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	0.5	0.7	0.6	-0.7	+0.8	0.0	0.3
53	General merchandise group stores.....	0.5	1.0	0.6	-0.6	+1.1	+0.1	0.4
531	Department stores.....	0.2	0.5	0.2	-0.7	+0.6	+0.1	0.3
54	Food stores.....	1.0	1.2	1.0	-0.6	+0.5	-0.1	0.3
541	Grocery stores.....	0.3	0.5	0.4	-0.7	+0.5	-0.1	0.3
554	Gasoline service stations.....	0.6	1.3	0.9	-5.2	+3.1	-0.5	1.8
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	1.1	3.1	1.7	-1.3	+2.2	+0.6	0.9
58	Eating and drinking places.....	0.8	1.3	0.9	-2.1	+1.5	0.0	1.0
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	0.3	1.8	0.6	-0.8	+1.2	+0.2	0.6

¹The ranges of sampling variability shown are based on sales estimates unadjusted for seasonal variation, holiday, and trading-day differences for the data months of January-December 1983.

²The ranges shown for the retail trade total are based on sales estimates adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences for the 12-month period, September 1985-August 1986. The ranges for all other totals and kinds of business are based on the 12-month period August 1985-July 1986.

Note: See appendix B, Reliability of Data, in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for a discussion on the measures of sampling variability.

