

Advance Monthly Retail Sales

May 1987

FOR WIRE TRANSMISSION 8:30 A.M. EDT, Thursday, June 11, 1987

CR-87-97

Advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for May adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences but not for price changes, were \$124.0 billion, up 3.7 percent from May 1986. Total sales in the March through May period increased 0.8 percent from the prior three months and were 5.2 percent above sales for the same period a year ago.

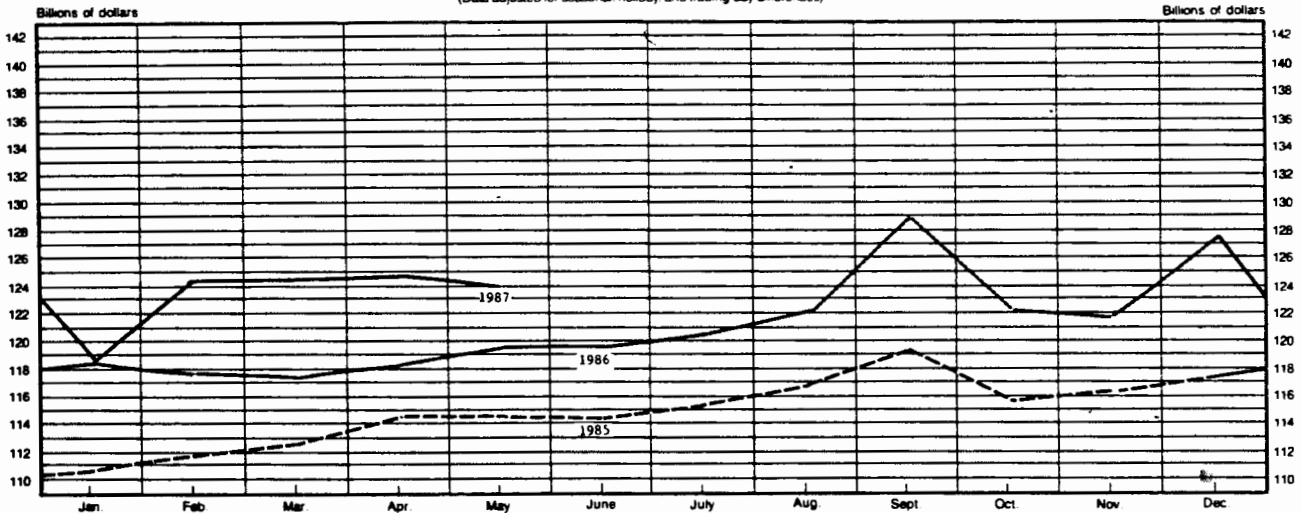
Durable goods sales were 1.4 percent above May 1986. Automotive sales decreased 3.8 percent from the previous month and were 1.1 percent below the previous year. Building material dealers and furniture stores were up 4.7 and 4.2 percent, respectively, from May 1986.

Nondurable goods were 5.1 percent above May of last year. Individual kind-of-business levels showed little change from April; however, compared to sales a year ago, general merchandise sales were up 5.7 percent, food stores up 3.5 percent, apparel up 6.6 percent, and gasoline service stations up 4.7 percent.

The Advance Monthly Retail Sales report for June is scheduled to be released July 14, 1987, at 8:30 a.m.

ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES January 1985-May 1987

(Data adjusted for seasonal, holiday and trading-day differences)



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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 | | | | |
|---------------|---|-----------------------|------------|------------|---------|---------|-----------------------|------------|------------|------------------|-------------------|
| | | 1987 | | | 1986 | | 1987 | | | 1986 | |
| | | May ² adv. | Apr. prel. | Mar. final | May | Apr. | May ² adv. | Apr. prel. | Mar. final | May ² | Apr. ² |
| | Retail trade, total..... | 128,197 | 125,262 | 120,440 | 126,087 | 116,334 | 124,031 | 124,788 | 124,593 | 119,630 | 118,113 |
| | Total (excl. auto group).. | 98,864 | 94,865 | 91,263 | 95,703 | 88,285 | 97,103 | 96,789 | 96,813 | 92,409 | 91,937 |
| | Durable goods, total..... | 49,596 | 49,772 | 47,537 | 50,194 | 46,383 | 46,783 | 47,971 | 47,942 | 46,159 | 45,112 |
| 52 | Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.. | 8,482 | 8,009 | 7,022 | 8,358 | 7,925 | 7,486 | 7,464 | 7,707 | 7,150 | 7,468 |
| 521,3 | Building mat. and supply stores. | (*) | 5,914 | 5,365 | 6,038 | 5,735 | (*) | 5,681 | 5,863 | 5,339 | 5,568 |
| 525 | Hardware stores..... | (*) | 1,092 | 954 | 991 | 908 | (*) | 1,054 | 1,050 | 862 | 876 |
| 55 ex. 554 | Automotive dealers..... | 29,333 | 30,397 | 29,177 | 30,384 | 28,049 | 26,928 | 27,999 | 27,780 | 27,221 | 26,176 |
| 551,2,5,6,7,9 | Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers..... | 27,066 | 28,135 | 27,061 | 28,044 | 25,774 | 24,740 | 25,788 | 25,529 | 24,995 | 23,976 |
| 551 | Motor vehicle (franchised).... | (*) | 25,006 | 24,383 | 25,585 | 23,430 | (*) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) |
| 553 | Auto and home supply stores.... | (*) | 2,262 | 2,116 | 2,340 | 2,275 | (*) | 2,211 | 2,251 | 2,226 | 2,200 |
| 57 | Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores..... | 6,428 | 6,199 | 6,398 | 6,251 | 5,818 | 6,710 | 6,767 | 6,803 | 6,437 | 6,298 |
| 571 | Furniture and home furnishings.. | (*) | 3,424 | 3,541 | 3,490 | 3,254 | (*) | 3,612 | 3,643 | 3,442 | 3,397 |
| 5722,32 | Household appliance, radio, and TV stores..... | (*) | 2,343 | 2,415 | 2,363 | 2,160 | (*) | 2,690 | 2,692 | 2,557 | 2,466 |
| 5722 | Household appliance stores.... | (*) | 731 | 721 | 770 | 685 | (*) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) |
| | Nondurable goods, total..... | 78,601 | 75,490 | 72,903 | 75,893 | 69,951 | 77,248 | 76,817 | 76,651 | 73,471 | 73,001 |
| 53 | General merchandise group stores.. | 13,567 | 12,835 | 11,794 | 13,153 | 11,729 | 13,604 | 13,493 | 13,421 | 12,868 | 12,941 |
| 531 | Dept. stores (ex. leased depts.) | 11,525 | 10,862 | 10,079 | 11,165 | 9,916 | 11,537 | 11,446 | 11,389 | 10,903 | 10,933 |
| 531 | Dept. stores (in. leased depts.) | (*) | 11,725 | 10,884 | 12,062 | 10,713 | (*) | 12,368 | 12,284 | 11,802 | 11,811 |
| 533 | Variety stores..... | (*) | 776 | 653 | 740 | 699 | (*) | 750 | 737 | 727 | 747 |
| 539 | Misc. general mdse. stores..... | (*) | 1,197 | 1,062 | 1,248 | 1,114 | (*) | 1,297 | 1,295 | 1,238 | 1,262 |
| 54 | Food stores..... | 26,264 | 24,955 | 24,449 | 25,822 | 23,523 | 25,368 | 25,297 | 25,244 | 24,499 | 24,309 |
| 541 | Grocery stores..... | 24,808 | 23,537 | 23,092 | 24,324 | 22,129 | 23,969 | 23,920 | 23,855 | 23,078 | 22,908 |
| 554 | Gasoline service stations..... | 7,761 | 7,384 | 7,075 | 7,482 | 6,979 | 7,587 | 7,527 | 7,385 | 7,243 | 7,085 |
| 56 | Apparel and accessory stores..... | 7,134 | 7,155 | 6,524 | 6,794 | 6,169 | 7,113 | 7,025 | 7,222 | 6,675 | 6,641 |
| 561 | Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores..... | (*) | 770 | 656 | 827 | 738 | (*) | 786 | 802 | 804 | 810 |
| 562,3,8 | Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers..... | (*) | 2,915 | 2,733 | 2,800 | 2,577 | (*) | 2,912 | 2,951 | 2,756 | 2,747 |
| 565 | Family clothing stores..... | (*) | 1,676 | 1,498 | 1,521 | 1,387 | (*) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) |
| 566 | Shoe stores..... | (*) | 1,496 | 1,342 | 1,295 | 1,188 | (*) | 1,319 | 1,408 | 1,235 | 1,216 |
| 58 | Eating and drinking places..... | 13,581 | 12,776 | 12,513 | 12,663 | 11,931 | 12,788 | 12,712 | 12,755 | 11,935 | 11,883 |
| 591 | Drug and proprietary stores..... | 4,275 | 4,275 | 4,164 | 4,129 | 3,876 | 4,323 | 4,318 | 4,293 | 4,092 | 4,037 |
| 592 | Liquor stores..... | (*) | 1,482 | 1,440 | 1,671 | 1,526 | (*) | 1,599 | 1,600 | 1,674 | 1,666 |
| 5961 (pt.) | Mail-order houses (department store merchandise)..... | (*) | 259 | 250 | 263 | 279 | (*) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) |
| 53,56,57 | GAF ⁴ | (*) | 30,089 | 28,454 | 29,977 | 26,948 | (*) | 31,778 | 31,939 | 29,933 | 29,738 |

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

NA Not available. Revised

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, RR-87-04.

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 data for leased departments operated within department stores. Data for this line not included in broader kind-of-business totals.

⁴GAF 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 | | | | | |
|---------------|---|-------------------------|----------------|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| | | May 1987 advance from-- | | Apr. 1987 preliminary from-- | | Mar. 1987 through May 1987 | |
| | | Apr. 1987 prelim. | May 1986 final | Mar. 1987 final | Apr. 1986 final | Dec. 1986 through Feb. 1987 | Mar. 1986 through May 1986 |
| | Retail trade, total..... | -0.6 | +3.7 | +0.2 | +5.7 | +0.8 | +5.2 |
| | Total (excl. automotive group).... | +0.3 | +5.1 | 0.0 | +5.3 | +1.2 | +5.1 |
| | Durable goods, total..... | -2.5 | +1.4 | +0.1 | +6.3 | -0.7 | +5.7 |
| 52 | Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers..... | +0.3 | +4.7 | -3.2 | -0.1 | +0.3 | +3.6 |
| 55 ex. 554 | Automotive dealers..... | -3.8 | -1.1 | +0.8 | +7.0 | -0.5 | +5.5 |
| 551,2,5,6,7,9 | Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers..... | -4.1 | -1.0 | +1.0 | +7.6 | -0.6 | +6.0 |
| 57 | Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores..... | -0.8 | +4.2 | -0.5 | +7.4 | -0.7 | +7.1 |
| | Nondurable goods, total..... | +0.6 | +5.1 | +0.2 | +5.2 | +1.7 | +4.9 |
| 53 | General merchandise group stores..... | +0.8 | +5.7 | +0.5 | +4.3 | +1.9 | +4.7 |
| 531 | Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.)..... | +0.8 | +5.8 | +0.5 | +4.7 | +1.7 | +5.2 |
| 531 | Dept. stores (in. leased dept.)..... | (NA) | (NA) | +0.7 | +4.7 | (NA) | (NA) |
| 54 | Food stores..... | +0.3 | +3.5 | +0.2 | +4.1 | +0.4 | +3.6 |
| 541 | Grocery stores..... | +0.2 | +3.9 | +0.3 | +4.4 | +0.8 | +3.9 |
| 554 | Gasoline service stations..... | +0.8 | +4.7 | +1.9 | +6.2 | +7.6 | +2.5 |
| 56 | Apparel and accessory stores..... | +1.3 | +6.6 | -2.7 | +5.8 | +3.1 | +7.3 |
| 58 | Eating and drinking places..... | +0.6 | +7.1 | -0.3 | +7.0 | -1.5 | +7.6 |
| 591 | Drug and proprietary stores..... | +0.1 | +5.6 | +0.6 | +7.0 | +0.9 | +6.3 |

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

(Sales in millions of dollars)

| SIC code | Kind of business | Not adjusted | | | Adjusted ¹ | | |
|----------|---|-------------------|-----------------|-----------|-----------------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| | | Apr. 1987 prelim. | Mar. 1987 final | Apr. 1986 | Apr. 1987 prelim. | Mar. 1987 final | Apr. ² 1986 |
| | Retail trade, total..... | 44,589 | 42,696 | 40,356 | 45,664 | 45,499 | 42,677 |
| 53 | General merchandise group stores..... | 11,895 | 10,972 | 10,936 | 12,549 | 12,426 | 12,055 |
| 531 | Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.)..... | 10,551 | 9,797 | 9,632 | 11,130 | 11,033 | 10,585 |
| 531 | Dept. stores (in. leased dept.)..... | 11,372 | 10,565 | 10,382 | 12,008 | 11,898 | 11,409 |
| 533 | Variety stores..... | 613 | 509 | 573 | 589 | 573 | 608 |
| 539 | Miscellaneous general merchandise stores..... | 731 | 666 | 731 | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) |
| 54 | Food stores..... | 14,140 | 13,881 | 13,011 | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) |
| 541 | Grocery stores..... | 13,924 | 13,677 | 12,809 | 14,065 | 14,028 | 13,219 |
| 56 | Apparel and accessory stores..... | 3,859 | 3,493 | 3,142 | 3,780 | 3,882 | 3,468 |
| 562,3,8 | Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers..... | 1,592 | 1,481 | 1,313 | 1,579 | 1,606 | 1,430 |
| 566 | Shoe stores..... | 914 | 810 | 720 | 803 | 863 | 783 |
| 591 | Drug stores and proprietary stores..... | 2,531 | 2,427 | 2,169 | 2,593 | 2,549 | 2,330 |

NA Not available. ²Revised

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, RR-87-04.

²Includes data for leased departments operated within department stores. Data for this line not included in broader kind-of-business totals.

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 -1.6 percent to +0.8 percent with the average of the absolute differences about 0.6 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 April 1987 and final estimates for March 1987 based on the full sample will be published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for April (RR-87-04). 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 | -1.6 | +0.8 | +0.1 | 0.6 |
| | 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, May 1986-April 1987. 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.

