

Advance Monthly Retail Sales

July 1988

CB 88-132

FOR WIRE TRANSMISSION 8:30 A.M. EDT, August 11, 1988

Advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for July adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences but not for price changes, were \$134.0 billion, an increase of 0.5 percent (+ 1.2%) from the previous month and 5.5 percent (+ 1.6%) above July 1987. Total sales in the May through July period were 1.6 percent (+ 1.7%) above the prior three months and 5.8 percent (+ 1.7%) above the same period a year ago.

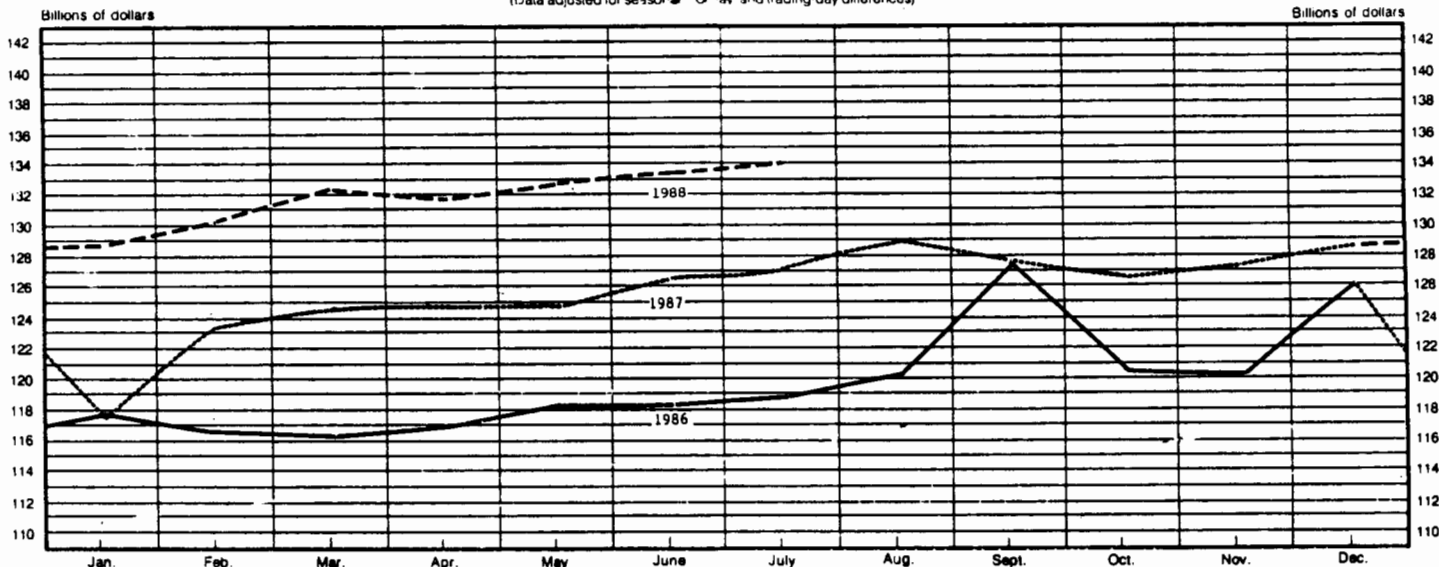
Durable goods increased 0.7 percent (+ 2.6%) from the previous month and were 7.7 percent (+ 3.7%) above the previous year. Automotive sales were up 7.8 percent from July a year ago. Building materials were up 6.8 percent from July 1987 while furniture stores were up 9.5 percent for the same period.

Nondurable goods increased 0.4 percent (+ 1.0%) from the previous month and were up 4.2 percent (+ 1.7%) above the previous year. General merchandise stores were up 4.8 percent from July a year ago and food stores were up 4.9 percent during the same period. Compared to July 1987, apparel sales were up 4.4 percent and eating and drinking sales were up 5.1 percent.

The Advance Monthly Sales Report for August is scheduled to be released September 15, 1988 at 8:30 a.m.

ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES January 1986-July 1988

(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. 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				
		1988			1987		1988			1987	
		July ² adv.	June prel.	May final	July	June	July ² adv.	June prel.	May final	July ² adv.	June ²
	Retail trade, total.....	133,996	137,181	135,959	129,258	128,987	134,019	133,387	132,833	127,037	126,461
	Total (excl. auto group)..	102,725	103,612	103,617	98,781	97,865	103,870	103,795	103,345	99,068	98,708
	Durable goods, total.....	51,867	55,216	53,467	50,037	50,834	51,062	50,727	50,418	47,403	46,976
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers..	7,441	8,018	8,119	7,234	7,372	6,896	7,023	7,087	6,455	6,424
521,3	Building mat. and supply stores.	(*)	6,068	5,953	5,510	5,515	(*)	5,300	5,329	4,825	4,808
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	1,378	1,412	1,233	1,227	(*)	1,268	1,268	1,163	1,125
75 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	31,271	33,569	32,342	30,477	31,122	30,149	29,592	29,488	27,969	27,753
531,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	28,649	30,838	29,805	28,024	28,723	27,680	27,075	27,022	25,710	25,532
551	Motor vehicle (franchised)....	(*)	27,333	26,285	24,707	25,017	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores....	(*)	2,731	2,537	2,453	2,399	(*)	2,517	2,466	2,259	2,221
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	7,619	7,657	7,269	6,997	6,789	7,790	7,865	7,720	7,117	6,962
571	Furniture and home furnishings..	(*)	4,018	3,900	3,736	3,720	(*)	4,010	3,935	3,755	3,701
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores.....	(*)	3,165	2,921	2,848	2,659	(*)	3,339	3,278	2,903	2,808
5722	Household appliance stores....	(*)	1,053	899	973	888	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total.....	82,129	81,965	82,492	79,221	78,153	82,957	82,660	82,415	79,634	79,485
53	General merchandise group stores..	13,352	14,355	14,707	12,883	13,577	15,194	15,164	14,952	14,495	14,566
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts.)	11,301	12,061	12,312	10,763	11,308	12,798	12,709	12,512	12,134	12,081
531	Dept. stores (in. leased depts) ³	(*)	12,466	12,730	11,121	11,718	(*)	13,095	12,924	12,566	12,493
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	643	659	622	632	(*)	680	670	687	688
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	1,651	1,736	1,498	1,637	(*)	1,775	1,770	1,674	1,797
54	Food stores.....	28,882	27,821	27,620	27,658	26,419	27,569	27,404	27,451	26,271	26,391
541	Grocery stores.....	27,257	26,183	25,962	26,095	24,890	25,934	25,771	25,833	24,711	24,865
554	Gasoline service stations.....	9,513	9,372	9,248	9,377	9,015	8,966	8,986	8,979	8,780	8,610
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	6,180	6,371	6,516	5,894	6,115	6,936	6,829	6,737	6,644	6,589
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	731	728	629	741	(*)	747	742	761	761
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	(*)	2,468	2,582	2,349	2,347	(*)	2,712	2,673	2,601	2,608
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	1,542	1,567	1,479	1,487	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	1,212	1,246	1,052	1,173	(*)	1,244	1,226	1,220	1,214
58	Eating and drinking places.....	13,847	13,522	13,279	13,197	12,830	12,869	12,841	12,744	12,242	12,278
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	4,741	4,928	4,960	4,582	4,593	4,933	4,983	5,000	4,690	4,658
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,612	1,598	1,705	1,600	(*)	1,615	1,634	1,621	1,613
5961 (pt.)	Mail-order houses (department store merchandise).....	(*)	273	290	278	276	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
53,56,57	GAF.....	(*)	33,147	33,146	30,058	30,906	(*)	34,964	34,479	33,124	32,906

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

NA Not available. ² 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, BR-88-06.

² 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.

³ Includes data for leased departments operated within department stores. Data for this line not included in broader kind-of-business totals.

⁴ GAF 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					
		July 1988 advance from--		June 1988 preliminary from--		May 1988 through July 1988	
		June 1988 prelim.	July 1987 final	May 1988 final	June 1987 final	Feb. 1988 through Apr. 1988	May 1987 through July 1987
	Retail trade, total.....	+0.5	+5.5	+0.4	+5.5	+1.6	+5.8
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	+0.1	+4.8	+0.4	+5.2	+1.9	+5.1
	Durable goods, total.....	+0.7	+7.7	+0.6	+8.0	+1.1	+8.6
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	-1.8	+6.8	-0.9	+9.3	+0.7	+8.8
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	+1.9	+7.8	+0.4	+6.6	+0.3	+8.3
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	+2.2	+7.7	+0.2	+6.0	+0.3	+8.0
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	-1.0	+9.5	+1.9	+13.0	+3.8	+11.1
	Nondurable goods, total.....	+0.4	+4.2	+0.3	+4.0	+1.9	+4.2
53	General merchandise group stores.....	+0.2	+4.8	+1.4	+4.1	+2.2	+3.7
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	+0.7	+5.5	+1.6	+5.2	+2.4	+4.6
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.).....	(NA)	(NA)	+1.3	+4.8	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	+0.6	+4.9	-0.2	+3.8	+2.4	+4.6
541	Grocery stores.....	+0.6	+4.9	-0.2	+3.6	+2.2	+4.4
554	Gasoline service stations.....	-0.2	+2.1	+0.1	+4.4	+1.3	+3.8
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	+1.6	+4.4	+1.4	+3.6	+3.3	+4.1
58	Eating and drinking places.....	+0.2	+5.1	+0.8	+4.6	+1.3	+4.7
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	-1.0	+5.2	-0.3	+7.0	+0.4	+6.7

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		
		June 1988 prelim.	May 1988 final	June 1987	June 1988 prelim.	May 1988 final	June 1987
	Retail trade, total.....	48,420	48,818	45,665	49,371	49,207	47,212
53	General merchandise group stores.....	13,300	13,610	12,490	13,991	13,809	13,383
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	11,683	11,914	10,967	12,246	12,083	11,692
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.).....	12,065	12,306	11,352	12,660	12,493	12,089
533	Variety stores.....	505	522	507	532	521	551
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	1,112	1,174	1,016	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	15,661	15,518	14,769	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
541	Grocery stores.....	15,448	15,302	14,559	15,371	15,348	14,781
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	3,400	3,487	3,253	3,686	3,668	3,541
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	1,330	1,351	1,294	1,444	1,431	1,430
566	Shoe stores.....	760	796	717	790	790	742
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	2,854	2,907	2,660	2,921	2,951	2,737

NA Not available. ² 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, 8R-88-06.

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 -0.8 percent to +0.9 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 June 1988 and final estimates for May 1988 based on the full sample will be published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for June (BR-88-6). 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.

Whenever a statement such as "up 0.8 percent (+1.0%)" appears in the text, this indicates a range from -0.2 percent to +1.8 percent. All ranges given are 90 percent confidence intervals. If the range contains 0, it is uncertain whether there was an increase or decrease. The Monthly Retail Trade Report includes explanations of confidence intervals and sampling variability along with 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 ¹		Mean	Average of absolute difference
		From	To		From	To		
	Retail trade, total.....	0.7	0.9	0.8	-0.8	+0.9	0.0	0.4
	Total (excl. automotive group)...	0.8	0.9	0.8	-1.0	+1.0	0.0	0.4
	Durable goods stores, total.....	1.3	1.7	1.6	-1.6	+1.8	+0.3	1.0
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	0.9	2.0	1.3	-5.2	+1.5	-0.9	1.6
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	1.5	2.2	1.7	-2.1	+2.7	+0.4	1.2
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	0.9	1.6	1.2	-2.5	+2.8	+0.3	1.2
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	1.8	2.5	2.1	-3.3	+4.4	+0.5	1.5
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	0.5	0.7	0.6	-0.8	+0.7	0.0	0.4
53	General merchandise group stores, total...	0.5	1.0	0.6	-2.6	+1.8	-0.2	0.8
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts.)	0.2	0.5	0.2	-2.1	+2.0	-0.2	0.8
54	Food stores.....	1.0	1.2	1.0	-0.9	+0.8	+0.1	0.3
541	Grocery stores.....	0.3	0.5	0.4	-0.8	+0.9	+0.1	0.3
554	Gasoline service stations.....	0.6	1.3	0.9	-1.4	+2.3	-0.1	1.0
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	1.1	3.1	1.7	-2.8	+2.2	-0.5	1.3
58	Eating and drinking places.....	0.8	1.3	0.9	-1.7	+1.8	+0.3	0.9
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	0.3	1.8	0.6	-1.6	+1.3	-0.1	0.7

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.

The 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, July 1987 - June 1988. The ranges for all other totals and kinds of business are based on the 12-month period May 1987-April 1988.

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

