

# Advance Monthly Retail Sales



U.S. Department of Commerce  
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

July 1989

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The Census Bureau of the Department of Commerce announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for July adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences but not for price changes were \$143.7 billion, 6.0 percent above July 1988. Total sales in the May through July period were 6.0 percent above the same period a year ago.

Durable goods were up 4.5 percent from the previous year. Furniture stores were 10.0 percent above last year.

Nondurable goods were up 7.0 percent from the previous year. General merchandise stores increased 0.5 percent from June and were 6.8 percent above July 1988. Food stores were up 7.4 percent from the previous year while gasoline service stations increased 11.6 percent in the same period.

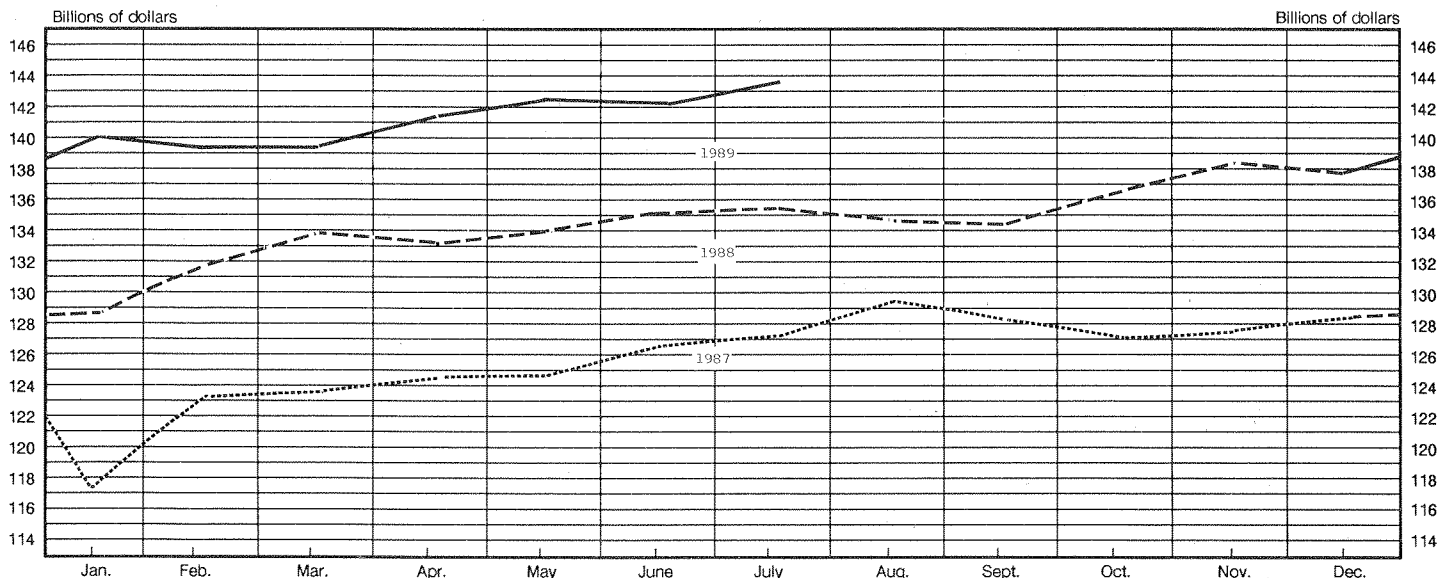
**Note:** Since this survey is based on a sample, the estimates will differ from the universe values due to both sampling and nonsampling error. For the year-to-year, and quarter-to-quarter percent changes shown at the total, durable, and nondurable levels, the margins of sampling error range from 1.6 to 4.0 percentage points above and below the estimate. See page 4 for a more complete description.

The Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report for August is scheduled to be released September 14, 1989 at 8:30 a.m.

There was a large upward revision to the May retail sales estimates due to responses from additional retailers. The U.S. total retail sales preliminary May-to-April monthly change was reported as a decrease of 0.1 percent ( $\pm 0.4\%$ ) and has been revised to an increase of 0.8 percent ( $\pm 0.4\%$ ). The average revision to the preliminary estimate has been 0.2 percentage points for the past 12 months.

## ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES January 1987-July 1989

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



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This report is available the day of issue through the Department of Commerce's online Economic Bulletin Board (N-8-1) (202-377-3870) and through the Census Bureau's online information service-CENDATA. CENDATA is available from Dialog Information Services, INC. (1-800-334-2464) and CompuServe (1-800-848-8199). The CENDATA staff at the Bureau of the Census (301-763-2074) can provide content information and general guidance.

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

(Sales in millions of dollars)

SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted					Adjusted <sup>1</sup>				
		1989			1988		1989			1988	
		July <sup>2</sup> adv.	June prel.	May final	July	June	July <sup>2</sup> adv.	June prel.	May final	July <sup>r</sup>	June <sup>r</sup>
	Retail trade, total.....	143,149	146,939	148,165	135,371	139,051	143,731	142,440	142,543	135,571	135,060
	Total (excl. auto group)..	110,197	112,265	112,923	103,526	104,339	112,048	111,578	111,371	104,836	104,392
	Durable goods, total.....	55,586	58,316	58,971	53,020	57,196	54,571	53,655	54,139	52,227	52,372
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers..	8,267	8,748	9,069	7,814	8,476	7,648	7,599	7,611	7,267	7,362
521,3	Building mat. and supply stores.	(*)	6,120	6,180	5,675	6,071	(*)	5,340	5,402	5,183	5,275
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	1,321	1,354	1,240	1,280	(*)	1,202	1,204	1,176	1,171
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	32,952	34,674	35,242	31,845	34,712	31,683	30,862	31,172	30,735	30,668
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	30,309	31,972	32,516	29,200	31,910	29,171	28,369	28,573	28,240	28,090
551	Motor vehicle (franchised)....	(*)	28,016	28,438	25,878	28,224	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores....	(*)	2,702	2,726	2,645	2,802	(*)	2,493	2,599	2,495	2,578
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	8,221	8,346	8,089	7,490	7,725	8,449	8,471	8,366	7,680	7,845
571	Furniture and home furnishings..	(*)	4,027	3,995	3,742	3,881	(*)	3,967	3,948	3,795	3,846
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores.....	(*)	3,786	3,587	3,251	3,336	(*)	3,927	3,853	3,328	3,450
5722	Household appliance stores....	(*)	862	821	942	946	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total.....	87,563	88,623	89,194	82,351	81,855	89,160	88,785	88,404	83,344	82,688
53	General merchandise group stores..	14,240	15,273	15,489	13,309	14,343	16,167	16,079	15,743	15,141	15,131
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts.)	12,062	12,818	12,970	11,182	12,035	13,614	13,493	13,208	12,678	12,682
531	Dept. stores (in. leased depts)	(*)	13,210	13,392	11,590	12,465	(*)	13,861	13,624	13,170	13,107
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	613	630	624	616	(*)	659	640	701	660
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	1,842	1,889	1,503	1,692	(*)	1,927	1,895	1,762	1,789
54	Food stores.....	30,781	30,364	30,281	29,015	27,941	29,743	29,551	29,606	27,688	27,463
541	Grocery stores.....	28,913	28,514	28,379	27,166	26,125	27,908	27,737	27,768	25,872	25,663
554	Gasoline service stations.....	9,932	9,863	9,859	8,955	8,789	9,450	9,447	9,453	8,464	8,467
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	6,452	6,930	7,056	6,080	6,181	7,307	7,422	7,287	6,824	6,677
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	760	755	655	745	(*)	779	774	779	765
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	(*)	2,604	2,745	2,373	2,372	(*)	2,865	2,815	2,631	2,621
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	1,710	1,688	1,551	1,537	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	1,311	1,341	1,078	1,130	(*)	1,353	1,329	1,235	1,175
58	Eating and drinking places.....	14,833	14,514	14,153	14,128	13,597	13,915	13,744	13,648	13,118	12,987
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	4,917	5,085	5,178	4,659	4,801	5,127	5,121	5,132	4,863	4,864
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,653	1,645	1,684	1,624	(*)	1,624	1,648	1,593	1,614
5961 (pt.)	Mail-order houses (department store merchandise).....	(*)	264	274	249	261	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
53,56,57	GAF.....	(*)	35,390	35,522	31,275	32,863	(*)	37,155	36,646	34,669	34,614

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

NA Not available. <sup>r</sup>Revised

<sup>1</sup> 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-89-06.

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

<sup>4</sup> 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 1989 advance from--		June 1989 preliminary from--		May 1989 through July 1989	
		June 1989 prelim.	July 1988 final	May 1989 final	June 1988 final	Feb. 1989 through Apr. 1989	May 1988 through July 1988
	Retail trade, total.....	+0.9	+6.0	-0.1	+5.5	+2.0	+6.0
	Total (excl. automotive group)....	+0.4	+6.9	+0.2	+6.9	+2.3	+7.1
	Durable goods, total.....	+1.7	+4.5	-0.9	+2.4	+1.6	+3.8
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	+0.6	+5.2	-0.2	+3.2	+3.0	+3.6
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	+2.7	+3.1	-1.0	+0.6	+0.9	+2.1
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	+2.8	+3.3	-0.7	+1.0	+0.9	+2.3
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	-0.3	+10.0	+1.3	+8.0	+1.9	+8.9
	Nondurable goods, total.....	+0.4	+7.0	+0.4	+7.4	+2.2	+7.3
53	General merchandise group stores.....	+0.5	+6.8	+2.1	+6.3	+1.3	+6.1
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	+0.9	+7.4	+2.2	+6.4	+1.1	+6.5
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.).....	(NA)	(NA)	+1.7	+5.8	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	+0.6	+7.4	-0.2	+7.6	+1.8	+7.6
541	Grocery stores.....	+0.6	+7.9	-0.1	+8.1	+2.0	+8.0
554	Gasoline service stations.....	0.0	+11.6	-0.1	+11.6	+6.3	+11.7
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	-1.5	+7.1	+1.9	+11.2	+3.8	+9.4
58	Eating and drinking places.....	+1.2	+6.1	+0.7	+5.8	+1.2	+6.1
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	+0.1	+5.4	-0.2	+5.3	-0.2	+5.4

**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 <sup>1</sup>		
		June 1989 prelim.	May 1989 final	June 1988	June 1989 prelim.	May 1989 final	June <sup>r</sup> 1988
	Retail trade, total.....	52,308	52,791	48,474	53,066	52,764	49,436
53	General merchandise group stores.....	14,165	14,331	13,298	14,886	14,564	13,992
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	12,398	12,522	11,655	12,996	12,726	12,230
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.) <sup>2</sup> .....	12,776	12,930	12,061	13,406	13,140	12,682
533	Variety stores.....	487	499	489	521	503	521
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	1,280	1,310	1,154	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	16,733	16,791	15,689	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
541	Grocery stores.....	16,499	16,556	15,465	16,223	16,263	15,373
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	3,730	3,812	3,309	4,014	3,988	3,604
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	1,481	1,524	1,299	1,601	1,596	1,415
566	Shoe stores.....	808	837	714	833	828	744
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	3,038	3,081	2,793	3,087	3,081	2,856

NA Not available.

<sup>r</sup> Revised

<sup>1</sup> 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-89-06.

<sup>2</sup> Includes 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).



### 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 -0.3 percent to +0.7 percent with the average of the absolute differences about 0.3 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 1989 and final estimates for May 1989 based on the full sample will be published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for June (BR-89-06). 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 margin of sampling error, as used on page 1, indicates a range about the estimate which corresponds to a 90 percent confidence interval. If, for example, the estimate is up .8 percent and the margin of sampling error is 1.2 percentage points above or below the estimate, then the indicated range is -.4 percent to +2.0 percent. 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						Preliminary-to-final percent change minus the Advance-to-preliminary percent change			
		Advance-to-preliminary ratio		Ratio to same month a year ago	Dollar volume sales est.	Ratio of current quarter to prev. quarter	Range		Mean	Aver. of absolute diff.	
		From	To	Median	Median	Median	From	To			
	Retail trade, total.....	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.8	1.0	-0.3	+0.7	+0.1	0.3
	Total (excl. auto).	0.5	0.7	0.6	0.8	0.7	0.9	-1.0	+1.8	0.0	0.4
	Durable goods, total..	1.4	1.7	1.6	2.3	1.7	2.2	-1.6	+1.8	+0.3	1.0
52	Building materials, group stores.....	0.6	3.6	1.6	3.9	3.3	3.1	-5.2	+1.5	-0.9	1.6
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	1.7	2.2	1.9	3.1	2.3	3.0	-2.1	+2.7	+0.4	1.2
551,2,5, 6,7,9	Motor vehicle and misc. automotive dealers.....	1.2	2.2	1.5	3.7	2.4	3.2	-2.5	+2.8	+0.3	1.2
57	Furniture, home furn. and equipment stores.....	1.6	2.3	1.9	3.7	3.3	2.7	-3.3	+4.4	+0.5	1.5
	Nondur. stores, total...	0.5	0.7	0.6	1.0	0.7	0.9	-0.8	+0.7	0.0	0.4
53	General merch. group, total.	0.2	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.5	-2.6	+1.8	-0.2	0.8
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts.).....	0.0	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	-2.1	+2.0	-0.2	0.8
54	Food stores.....	0.8	1.4	1.0	1.6	1.3	1.6	-0.9	+0.8	+0.1	0.3
541	Grocery stores.....	0.3	1.1	0.5	1.8	1.4	1.6	-0.8	+0.9	+0.1	0.3
554	Gasoline service stations...	0.7	1.2	0.8	3.0	2.2	2.8	-1.4	+2.3	-0.1	1.0
56	Apparel and acc. stores.....	1.2	3.4	1.5	2.4	1.8	1.8	-2.8	+2.2	-0.5	1.3
58	Eating and drinking .....	0.8	1.3	1.1	2.7	2.3	2.6	-1.7	+1.8	+0.3	0.9
591	Drug and proprietary .....	0.4	0.7	0.5	2.3	1.7	2.1	-1.6	+1.3	-0.1	0.7

<sup>1</sup> The ranges of sampling variability shown are based on sales estimates unadjusted for seasonal variation, holiday, and trading-day differences for the data months of March - July 1988.  
<sup>2</sup> 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 1988 - June 1989. The ranges for all other totals and kinds of business are based on the 12-month period May 1987-April 1988.

Note: Coefficients of variation for the ratio of current quarter to current quarter a-year-ago estimates are approximately the same as those for the ratio of current quarter to previous quarter. See appendix B, Reliability of Data, in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for a discussion on the measures of sampling variability.