

Advance Monthly Retail Sales



U.S. Department of Commerce
ECONOMICS AND STATISTICS ADMINISTRATION
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

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FOR WIRE TRANSMISSION 8:30 A.M. EST., Thursday, December 12, 1991

The Census Bureau of the Department of Commerce announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for November adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$153.1 billion, an increase of 0.3 percent ($\pm 1.5\%$) from the previous month and 0.4 percent ($\pm 1.5\%$) above November 1990. Total sales in the September through November period were 0.4 percent ($\pm 1.7\%$) above the same period a year ago.

Durable goods were unchanged from the previous month.

Nondurable goods increased 0.4 percent ($\pm 1.2\%$) from the previous month. General merchandise stores were up 2.7 percent from last year. Drug stores were up 5.6 percent from November 1990 while gasoline service stations were down 13.9 percent in the same period.

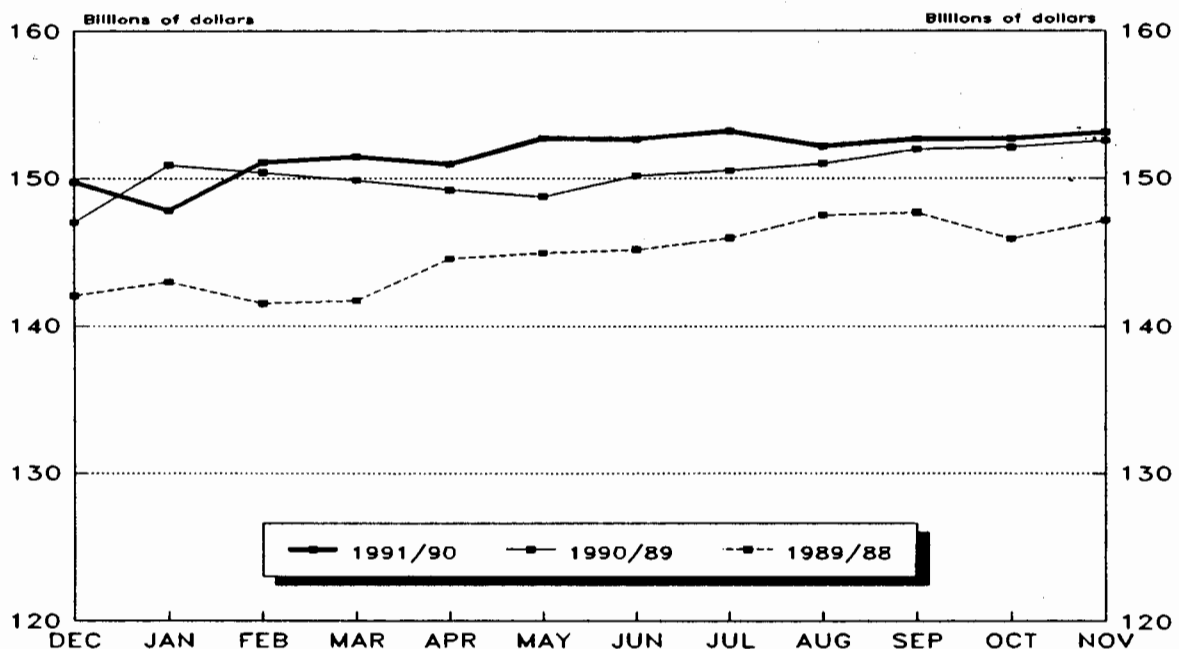
The Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report for December is scheduled to be released January 14, 1992 at 8:30 a.m.

The scheduled release dates for 1992 are as follows: January 14, February 13, March 12, April 14, May 13, June 11, July 14, August 13, September 15, October 14, November 13, and December 11.

ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES

December 1988 - November 1991

(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. For information call (202) 377-1986. The data are also available through the Census Bureau's online information service - CENDATA. CENDATA is available from Dialog Information Services, INC. (1-800-334-2564) 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 ¹				
		1991			1990		1991			1990	
		Nov. ² adv.	Oct. prel.	Sept. final	Nov.	Oct.	Nov. ² adv.	Oct. prel.	Sept. final	Nov. ¹	Oct. ¹
	Retail trade, total.....	156,352	152,267	146,697	156,086	151,469	153,109	152,687	152,658	152,538	152,087
	Total (excl. auto group)...	126,811	120,293	114,904	127,133	119,866	120,489	120,262	120,715	120,721	120,402
	Durable goods, total.....	52,592	54,472	53,567	52,271	54,092	54,986	54,966	54,619	54,200	54,294
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	7,238	8,329	7,994	7,443	8,082	7,595	7,763	7,791	7,661	7,574
521,3	Building mat. and supply stores.....	(*)	6,387	6,052	5,410	5,905	(*)	5,849	5,797	5,470	5,417
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	1,092	1,043	1,112	1,144	(*)	1,049	1,074	1,102	1,116
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	29,541	31,974	31,793	28,953	31,603	32,620	32,425	31,943	31,817	31,685
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	26,989	29,209	29,176	26,388	28,882	30,088	29,836	29,352	29,255	29,144
551	Motor vehicle (franchised).....	(*)	25,206	25,527	23,343	25,681	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	2,765	2,617	2,565	2,721	(*)	2,589	2,591	2,562	2,541
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	8,023	7,408	7,144	8,118	7,710	7,436	7,429	7,536	7,559	7,700
571	Furniture and home furnishings.....	(*)	4,044	3,913	4,528	4,366	(*)	3,969	4,063	4,173	4,264
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores.....	(*)	2,665	2,500	2,859	2,668	(*)	2,736	2,726	2,679	2,739
5722	Household appliance stores.....	(*)	816	721	914	868	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total.....	103,760	97,795	93,130	103,815	97,377	98,123	97,721	98,039	98,338	97,793
53	General merchandise group stores.....	22,241	17,769	16,189	21,783	17,027	18,185	18,135	18,285	17,699	17,631
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts).....	18,199	14,571	13,213	17,533	13,778	14,917	14,808	14,863	14,266	14,204
531	Dept. stores (in. leased depts) ³	(*)	14,992	13,593	18,034	14,199	(*)	15,205	15,290	14,710	14,638
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	570	510	684	593	(*)	575	591	645	601
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	2,628	2,466	3,566	2,656	(*)	2,752	2,831	2,788	2,826
54	Food stores.....	31,106	30,757	29,757	30,472	29,970	30,939	31,027	30,941	30,709	30,462
541	Grocery stores.....	29,134	28,789	27,838	28,526	28,055	28,931	28,992	28,908	28,727	28,482
554	Gasoline service stations.....	10,467	10,824	10,560	12,271	12,562	10,562	10,448	10,476	12,271	12,137
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	9,091	7,790	7,508	8,807	7,728	8,010	7,860	7,982	7,816	7,854
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	735	693	882	779	(*)	745	779	776	788
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	(*)	2,714	2,600	3,042	2,716	(*)	2,695	2,746	2,683	2,711
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	2,470	2,284	2,829	2,284	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	1,381	1,416	1,546	1,405	(*)	1,448	1,454	1,507	1,493
58	Eating and drinking places.....	15,338	15,829	15,476	14,722	15,289	15,764	15,688	15,648	15,288	15,198
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	6,221	6,233	5,882	5,943	5,841	6,303	6,322	6,271	5,967	5,930
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,693	1,653	1,785	1,694	(*)	1,769	1,774	1,778	1,772
5961 (pt)	Mail-order houses (department store merchandise).....	(*)	398	327	538	422	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
53,56,57	GAF ⁴	(*)	38,190	35,931	44,880	37,614	(*)	39,195	39,541	38,575	38,881

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

NA Not available.

¹Revised.

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-91-10.

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					
		Nov. 1991 advance from--		Oct. 1991 preliminary from--		Sept. 1991 through Nov. 1991 from--	
		Oct. 1991 prelim.	Nov. 1990 final	Sept. 1991 final	Oct. 1990 final	June 1991 through Aug. 1991	Sept. 1990 through Nov. 1990
	Retail trade, total.....	+0.3	+0.4	0.0	+0.4	+0.1	+0.4
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	+0.2	-0.2	-0.4	-0.1	-0.8	0.0
	Durable goods, total.....	0.0	+1.5	+0.6	+1.2	+1.8	+1.1
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	-2.2	-0.9	-0.4	+2.5	-0.9	+1.3
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	+0.6	+2.5	+1.5	+2.3	+3.7	+1.9
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	+0.8	+2.8	+1.6	+2.4	+4.3	+2.0
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	+0.1	-1.6	-1.4	-3.5	-1.8	-2.6
	Nondurable goods, total.....	+0.4	-0.2	-0.3	-0.1	-0.8	0.0
53	General merchandise group stores.....	+0.3	+2.7	-0.8	+2.9	-0.5	+3.0
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	+0.7	+4.6	-0.4	+4.3	+0.4	+4.5
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.).....	(NA)	(NA)	-0.6	+3.9	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	-0.3	+0.7	+0.3	+1.9	-0.2	+1.2
541	Grocery stores.....	-0.2	+0.7	+0.3	+1.8	0.0	+1.1
554	Gasoline service stations.....	+1.1	-13.9	-0.3	-13.9	-1.7	-12.8
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	+1.9	+2.5	-1.5	+0.1	-2.3	+1.2
58	Eating and drinking places.....	+0.5	+3.1	+0.3	+3.2	-1.2	+3.0
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	-0.3	+5.6	+0.8	+6.6	+0.5	+6.4

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

(Sales in millions of dollars)

SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted			Adjusted ¹		
		Oct. 1991 prelim.	Sept. 1991 final	Oct. 1990	Oct. 1991 prelim.	Sept. 1991 final	Oct. ² 1990
	Retail trade, total.....	58,515	55,073	57,074	59,064	59,187	58,094
53	General merchandise group stores.....	16,320	14,785	15,572	16,683	16,784	16,187
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	14,172	12,829	13,372	14,373	14,431	13,771
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.).....	14,579	13,195	13,778	14,682	14,826	14,146
533	Variety stores.....	417	373	451	428	437	466
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	1,731	1,583	1,749	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	17,331	16,590	16,893	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
541	Grocery stores.....	17,109	16,382	16,680	17,230	17,299	16,951
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	4,538	4,319	4,290	4,627	4,626	4,427
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	1,599	1,513	1,525	1,612	1,636	1,558
566	Shoe stores.....	868	897	872	912	913	937
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	3,847	3,624	3,539	3,978	3,918	3,664

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, BR-91-10.

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

Note: The large (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).

Official 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 -1.1 percent to +1.2 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 October 1991 and final estimates for September 1991 based on the full sample are published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for October (BR-91-10). 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 0.8 percent and the margin of sampling error is 1.2 percentage points above or below the estimate, then the indicated range is -0.4 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 ²		Mean	Avg. of absolute diff.	
		Range ¹		Median	Median	Median	Median	Range ²		Mean	Avg. of absolute diff.
		From	To					From	To		
	Retail trade, total.....	0.8	1.1	0.9	1.0	0.9	1.0	-1.1	+1.2	+0.1	0.4
	Total (excl. auto).....	0.8	0.9	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.9	-0.7	+1.3	+0.1	0.4
	Durable goods, total.....	1.8	2.8	2.2	2.5	2.2	2.3	-2.5	+2.2	+0.2	0.7
52	Building materials, group stores.....	1.2	2.0	1.7	3.3	2.5	2.5	-3.4	+4.0	+0.4	2.0
55 ex. 554 551,2,5, 6,7,9	Automotive dealers.....	2.2	4.1	3.1	3.4	3.6	3.3	-3.0	+2.6	+0.5	1.0
	Motor vehicle and misc. automotive dealers.....	1.6	4.1	2.9	4.8	3.9	3.5	-3.2	+2.6	+0.5	1.1
57	Furniture, home furn., and equipment stores.....	1.8	4.3	2.4	4.5	4.2	3.1	-2.5	+2.3	-0.2	1.2
	Nondurable goods, total.....	0.7	0.9	0.8	1.0	0.8	0.9	-0.6	+0.9	+0.2	0.4
53	General merch. group, total.....	0.2	0.8	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.5	-1.4	+1.7	+0.1	0.7
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts.).....	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	-1.7	+1.6	+0.1	0.8
54	Food stores.....	0.9	1.5	1.0	1.7	1.4	1.5	-0.5	+0.6	0.0	0.4
541	Grocery stores.....	0.2	0.9	0.3	1.8	1.3	1.5	-0.5	+0.7	0.0	0.3
554	Gasoline service stations.....	1.1	4.7	1.3	3.3	2.6	2.8	-1.4	+1.9	+0.3	0.8
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	1.1	2.9	2.0	3.0	2.6	2.0	-2.7	+4.8	+0.5	1.5
58	Eating and drinking places.....	0.6	1.3	0.9	3.1	2.7	2.7	-0.9	+2.3	+0.3	0.8
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	0.5	3.2	0.8	2.4	1.7	2.0	-3.7	+1.1	+0.1	1.0

¹The ranges of sampling variability shown are based on sales estimates not adjusted for seasonal variation, holiday, and trading-day difference: the data months of November 1990 - March 1991.

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, November 1990 - October 1991. The ranges for all other totals and kinds of business are based on the 12-month period April 1990 - March 1991.

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 of the measures of sampling variability.

