

Advance Monthly Retail Sales



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

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The Census Bureau of the Department of Commerce announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for January adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$153.5 billion, an increase of 0.6 percent ($\pm 1.2\%$) from the previous month and were 3.9 percent ($\pm 1.7\%$) above January a year ago. Total sales in the November through January period were 1.8 percent ($\pm 1.7\%$) above the same period a year ago. The December from November 1991 estimate of monthly change was revised from -0.4 percent ($\pm 1.2\%$) as published in the December advance to +0.1 percent ($\pm 0.4\%$).

Durable goods increased 0.5 percent ($\pm 2.3\%$) from the previous month and were 7.6 percent above the previous year.

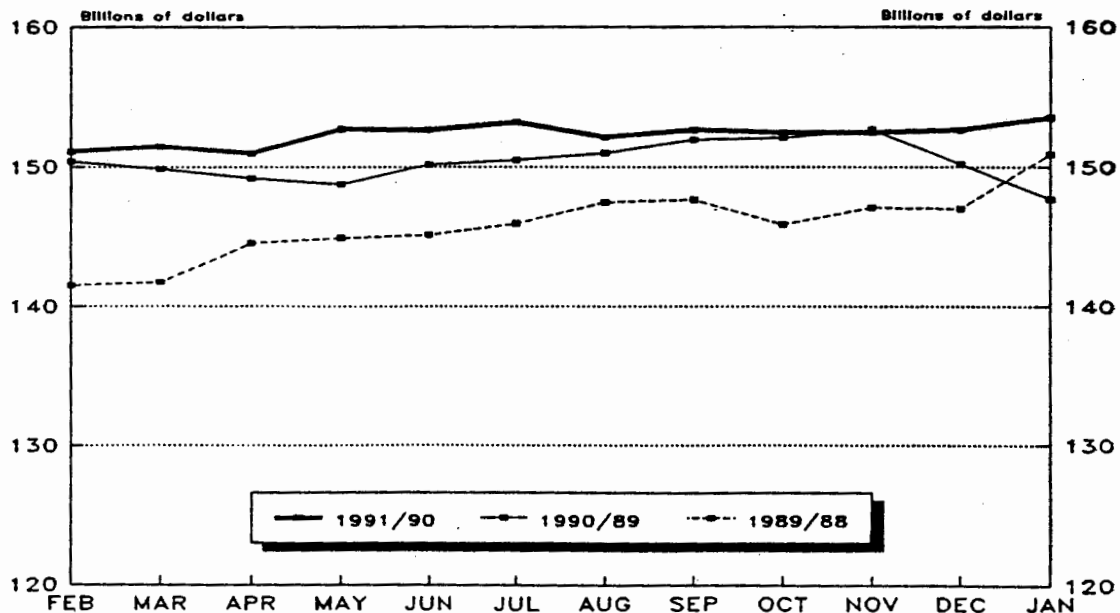
Nondurable goods increased 0.6 percent ($\pm 1.3\%$) from December and were 2.0 percent above January 1991. General merchandise stores increased 2.1 percent from previous month and were 4.4 percent above last year. Gasoline service stations were 5.9 percent below January a year ago.

The Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report for February is scheduled to be released March 12, 1992 at 8:30 a.m.

ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES

February 1989 - January 1992

(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. (1-800-334-2464) 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 ¹				
		1992	1991			1990	1992	1991			1990
		Jan. ² adv.	Dec. prel.	Nov. final	Jan.	Dec.	Jan. ² adv.	Dec. prel.	Nov. final	Jan. ¹	Dec. ¹
	Retail trade, total.....	136,576	181,477	155,639	130,903	179,653	153,538	152,663	152,505	147,717	150,219
	Total (excl. auto group)...	108,110	153,663	126,876	105,247	153,146	121,454	120,693	120,600	118,679	119,541
	Durable goods, total.....	47,534	58,122	51,857	43,954	56,505	54,636	54,340	54,247	50,767	52,661
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	6,426	6,985	7,345	5,626	6,558	8,176	7,755	7,674	7,253	7,376
521.3	Building mat. and supply stores.....	(*)	4,982	5,495	4,097	4,549	(*)	5,793	5,694	5,115	5,390
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	1,146	1,104	891	1,184	(*)	1,063	1,087	1,087	1,093
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	28,466	27,814	28,763	25,656	26,507	32,084	31,970	31,905	29,038	30,678
551, 2.5, 6.7.9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	26,233	25,444	26,267	23,457	24,064	29,508	29,483	29,414	26,505	28,112
551	Motor vehicle (franchised).....	(*)	22,383	22,829	20,760	21,501	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	2,370	2,496	2,199	2,443	(*)	2,487	2,491	2,533	2,566
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	6,675	9,860	7,946	6,705	9,784	7,255	7,469	7,355	7,330	7,393
571	Furniture and home furnishings.....	(*)	4,626	4,373	3,667	4,620	(*)	4,079	4,012	4,021	4,067
5722.32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores.....	(*)	3,899	2,788	2,422	3,919	(*)	2,636	2,593	2,627	2,625
5722	Household appliance stores.....	(*)	1,024	847	706	1,093	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total.....	89,042	123,355	103,782	86,949	123,148	98,902	98,323	98,256	96,950	97,558
53	General merchandise group stores.....	12,918	32,925	22,387	12,335	32,454	18,337	17,962	18,253	17,559	17,567
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts.).....	10,577	26,844	18,378	10,007	26,130	15,067	14,758	15,002	14,275	14,240
531	Dept. stores (in. leased depts.).....	(*)	27,549	18,868	10,310	26,871	(*)	15,137	15,415	14,687	14,652
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	1,085	662	433	1,081	(*)	573	590	588	563
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	4,996	3,347	1,895	5,243	(*)	2,631	2,661	2,696	2,764
54	Food stores.....	30,479	32,541	31,110	29,451	32,809	31,332	31,114	30,970	30,673	30,669
541	Grocery stores.....	28,517	30,113	29,132	27,676	30,448	29,188	29,067	28,958	28,710	28,697
554	Gasoline service stations.....	10,022	10,583	10,524	10,667	11,709	10,639	10,489	10,620	11,312	11,721
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	5,850	12,746	8,946	5,641	12,696	7,800	7,851	7,887	7,463	7,770
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	1,425	865	611	1,490	(*)	751	757	754	774
562.3.8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	(*)	4,238	3,092	1,966	4,239	(*)	2,677	2,715	2,476	2,641
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	4,446	2,992	1,531	4,242	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	1,884	1,474	1,120	2,051	(*)	1,406	1,413	1,395	1,508
58	Eating and drinking places.....	15,337	16,144	15,447	13,927	15,075	16,689	16,575	16,007	15,338	15,305
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	6,081	8,152	6,216	5,771	7,500	6,282	6,369	6,298	5,974	5,892
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	2,334	1,834	1,629	2,501	(*)	1,737	1,781	1,818	1,806
5961 (pt)	Mail-order houses (department store merchandise).....	(*)	492	513	312	547	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
53, 56, 57	GAF ⁴	(*)	67,093	45,560	29,126	66,621	(*)	38,803	39,118	37,813	38,264

* 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-91-12.

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					
		Jan. 1992 advance from--		Dec. 1991 preliminary from--		Nov. 1991 through Jan. 1992 from--	
		Dec. 1991 prelim.	Jan. 1991 final	Nov. 1991 final	Dec. 1990 final	Aug. 1991 through Oct. 1991	Nov. 1990 through Jan. 1991
	Retail trade, total.....	+0.6	+3.9	+0.1	+1.6	+0.3	+1.8
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	+0.6	+2.3	+0.1	+1.0	+0.1	+1.1
	Durable goods, total.....	+0.5	+7.6	+0.2	+3.2	+0.3	+3.5
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	+5.4	+12.7	+1.1	+5.1	+1.6	+5.8
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	+0.4	+10.5	+0.2	+4.2	+1.3	+4.7
551,2,5, 6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	+0.1	+11.3	+0.2	+4.9	+1.5	+5.3
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	-2.9	-1.0	+1.5	+1.0	-2.1	-0.9
	Nondurable goods, total.....	+0.6	+2.0	+0.1	+0.8	+0.3	+0.9
53	General merchandise group stores.....	+2.1	+4.4	-1.6	+2.2	-0.4	+3.4
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	+2.1	+5.5	-1.6	+3.6	+0.6	+4.8
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.).....	(NA)	(NA)	-1.8	+3.3	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	+0.7	+2.1	+0.5	+1.5	+0.8	+1.5
541	Grocery stores.....	+0.4	+1.7	+0.4	+1.3	+0.8	+1.2
554	Gasoline service stations.....	+1.4	-5.9	-1.2	-10.5	+0.2	-10.0
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	-0.6	+4.5	-0.5	+1.0	-2.0	+2.1
58.	Eating and drinking places.....	+0.7	+8.8	+3.5	+8.3	+3.9	+7.2
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	-1.4	+5.2	+1.1	+8.1	+0.4	+6.3

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		
		Dec. 1991 prelim.	Nov. 1991 final	Dec. 1990	Dec. 1991 prelim.	Nov. 1991 final	Dec. ² 1990
	Retail trade, total.....	83,238	64,832	82,401	58,748	59,236	57,873
53	General merchandise group stores.....	30,726	20,732	30,149	16,561	16,824	16,108
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	26,087	17,858	25,335	14,318	14,590	13,799
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.).....	26,765	18,332	26,045	14,722	15,014	14,224
533	Variety stores.....	833	498	858	425	441	431
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	3,806	2,376	3,956	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	18,549	17,786	18,732	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
541	Grocery stores.....	18,128	17,546	18,316	17,281	17,236	16,944
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	7,716	5,414	7,570	4,551	4,640	4,462
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	2,672	1,894	2,659	1,588	1,636	1,564
566	Shoe stores.....	1,187	954	1,280	875	910	936
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	5,445	3,862	4,993	3,957	3,929	3,637

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-91-12.

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 -2.2 percent to +1.1 percent with the average of the absolute differences about 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 December 1991 and final estimates for November 1991 based on the full sample are published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for December (BR-91-12). 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	-0.8	+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 differences for 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, January 1991 - December 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.

