

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 May adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$182.8 billion, a decrease of 0.2 percent ($\pm 1.3\%$) from the previous month but were 6.4 percent ($\pm 1.8\%$) above the same month a year ago. Total sales in the March through May period were 8.2 percent ($\pm 1.8\%$) above the same period a year ago. The March to April 1994 percent change was revised from -0.8 percent ($\pm 1.1\%$) as published in the April advance, to -1.1 percent ($\pm 0.4\%$).

Durable goods were up 11.4 percent from the previous year. Building materials were up 9.9 percent from May 1993 while automotive dealers and furniture were up 12.6 percent and 13.3 percent, respectively, in the same period.

Nondurable goods were up 3.3 percent from May 1993. General merchandise stores were up 6.2 percent from the previous year.

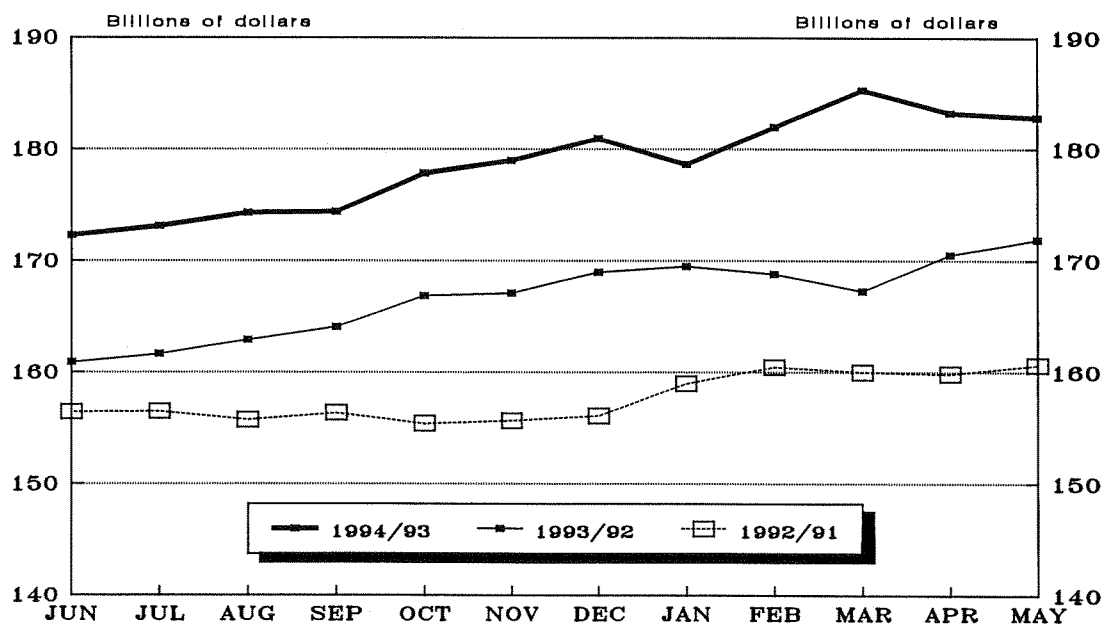
The advance estimates are based on a small subsample of the Bureau's full retail sales sample. Estimates from the advance and the subsequent full survey can differ because of the earlier reporting in the advance and because of sampling variability present in both surveys.

The Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report for June is scheduled to be released July 14, 1994 at 8:30 a.m.

ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES

June 1991 - May 1994

(Data adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes)



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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) 482-1986. 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				
		1994			1993		1994			1993	
		May ² adv.	Apr. prel.	Mar. final	May	Apr.	May ² adv.	Apr. prel.	Mar. final	May ¹	Apr. ¹
	Retail trade, total.....	187,101	181,731	184,828	176,102	170,324	182,809	183,228	185,303	171,884	170,530
	Total (excl. auto group)...	141,966	136,149	137,786	136,468	130,937	140,813	140,419	141,460	134,594	134,026
	Durable goods, total.....	75,936	74,196	74,763	67,333	65,319	71,580	72,163	73,306	64,229	63,003
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	12,619	11,379	10,100	11,179	10,031	10,498	10,508	10,704	9,552	9,193
521,3	Building mat. and supply stores.....	(*)	8,137	7,465	7,791	7,178	(*)	7,817	7,776	7,006	6,791
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	1,230	1,051	1,264	1,075	(*)	1,152	1,131	1,077	1,012
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	45,135	45,582	47,042	39,634	39,387	41,996	42,809	43,843	37,290	36,504
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	41,746	42,210	43,649	36,419	36,193	38,725	39,522	40,416	34,196	33,388
551	Motor vehicle (franchised).....	(*)	37,893	39,416	32,381	32,184	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	3,372	3,393	3,215	3,194	(*)	3,287	3,427	3,094	3,116
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	10,022	9,637	10,031	8,796	8,589	10,396	10,222	10,202	9,179	9,099
571	Furniture and home furnishings.....	(*)	4,907	4,986	4,712	4,533	(*)	5,023	5,016	4,717	4,644
5722,31,4	Household appliance, radio, TV and computer stores.....	(*)	3,790	4,096	3,263	3,216	(*)	4,174	4,205	3,528	3,534
5722	Household appliance stores.....	(*)	796	818	803	774	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total.....	111,165	107,535	110,065	108,769	105,005	111,229	111,065	111,997	107,655	107,527
53	General merchandise group stores.....	22,571	21,410	21,689	21,639	20,272	23,371	23,324	23,281	22,009	21,795
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts).....	17,003	16,302	16,578	16,177	15,208	17,730	17,720	17,768	16,524	16,318
531	Dept. stores (in. leased depts) ³	(*)	16,753	17,025	16,662	15,688	(*)	18,210	18,248	16,967	16,833
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	499	504	609	616	(*)	534	532	627	616
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	4,609	4,607	4,853	4,448	(*)	5,070	4,981	4,858	4,861
54	Food stores.....	34,052	32,948	33,712	33,421	32,283	33,601	33,322	33,579	32,441	32,566
541	Grocery stores.....	32,151	31,124	31,831	31,588	30,487	31,770	31,470	31,704	30,668	30,795
554	Gasoline service stations.....	11,654	10,994	10,934	11,671	11,080	11,260	11,369	11,425	11,287	11,458
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	8,504	8,428	8,648	8,699	8,740	8,767	8,797	8,955	8,808	8,776
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	753	726	671	657	(*)	793	817	667	684
562,3	Women's clothing, specialty stores.....	(*)	3,058	3,091	3,481	3,352	(*)	3,114	3,167	3,350	3,335
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	2,555	2,627	2,458	2,492	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	1,434	1,532	1,509	1,568	(*)	1,434	1,458	1,500	1,448
58	Eating and drinking places.....	18,999	18,590	18,591	18,280	17,460	18,321	18,498	18,628	17,510	17,390
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	6,829	6,735	7,023	6,690	6,749	6,836	6,803	6,879	6,683	6,695
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,691	1,643	1,781	1,706	(*)	1,763	1,752	1,785	1,794
5961	Total mail order.....	(*)	2,499	2,718	2,028	2,185	(*)	2,774	2,743	2,326	2,388
53,56,57 594	GAF ⁴	(*)	45,041	45,925	44,777	42,966	(*)	48,884	48,922	46,204	45,894

*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, but not for price changes. 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-94-04.

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 (general merchandise, apparel, furniture, and miscellaneous shopping goods stores).

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, but not for price changes)

SIC code	Kind of business	Percent change					
		May 1994 advance from—		Apr. 1994 preliminary from—		Mar. 1994 through May 1994 from—	
		Apr. 1994 prelim.	May 1993 final	Mar. 1994 final	Apr. 1993 final	Dec. 1993 through Feb. 1994	Mar. 1993 through May 1993
	Retail trade, total.....	-0.2	+6.4	-1.1	+7.4	+1.8	+8.2
	Total (excl. automotive group)....	+0.3	+4.6	-0.7	+4.8	+1.7	+5.5
	Durable goods, total.....	-0.8	+11.4	-1.6	+14.5	+2.6	+15.3
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	-0.1	+9.9	-1.8	+14.3	+3.9	+14.0
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	-1.9	+12.6	-2.4	+17.3	+2.2	+18.0
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	-2.0	+13.2	-2.2	+18.4	+2.2	+19.0
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	+1.7	+13.3	+0.2	+12.3	+3.0	+13.2
	Nondurable goods, total.....	+0.1	+3.3	-0.8	+3.3	+1.3	+4.0
53	General merchandise group stores.....	+0.2	+6.2	+0.2	+7.0	+1.4	+7.6
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	+0.1	+7.3	-0.3	+8.6	+1.1	+9.6
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.) ¹	(NA)	(NA)	-0.2	+8.2	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	+0.8	+3.6	-0.8	+2.3	+0.2	+3.3
541	Grocery stores.....	+1.0	+3.6	-0.7	+2.2	+0.4	+3.1
554	Gasoline service stations.....	-1.0	-0.2	-0.5	-0.8	+2.9	-0.3
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	-0.3	-0.5	-1.8	+0.2	+0.6	+1.7
58	Eating and drinking places.....	-1.0	+4.6	-0.7	+6.4	+3.6	+6.4
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	+0.5	+2.3	-1.1	+1.6	-0.2	+2.4

NA. Not available.

¹Includes data for leased departments operated within department stores. Data for this line not included in broader kind-of-business totals.

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

To obtain space for additional charts, this table has been discontinued. These data are published in the Monthly Retail Trade, Sales and Inventories Report.

Official Business

Penalty for Private Use, \$300

Sample Design and Reliability of Data

The advance estimates are based on a small subsample of the Bureau's full retail sales sample. Estimates from the advance and the subsequent full survey can differ because of the earlier reporting in the advance and because of sampling variability present in both surveys.

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 -1.0 percent to +1.3 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 April 1994 and final estimates for March 1994 based on the full sample are published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for April (BR-94-04). 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 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.....	0.5	1.3	0.7	1.0	0.8	1.0	-1.0	+1.3	+0.1	0.4
	Total (excl. auto).....	0.5	0.9	0.7	1.1	0.8	1.0	-1.6	+0.7	-0.1	0.4
	Durable goods, total.....	1.2	3.4	1.4	2.2	1.7	2.2	-0.9	+1.1	+0.2	0.5
52	Building materials, group stores.....	0.9	2.6	1.6	4.1	2.9	3.4	-4.2	+2.5	-0.4	1.4
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	1.6	3.2	2.1	3.4	2.6	3.1	-1.3	+2.2	+0.6	1.1
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and misc. automotive dealers.....	1.2	3.0	1.5	4.0	2.8	3.2	-1.5	+2.3	+0.5	1.1
57	Furniture, home furn., and equipment stores.....	1.3	3.6	2.1	4.6	3.4	4.1	-3.4	+2.3	-0.1	1.5
	Nondurable goods, total.....	0.4	0.8	0.6	1.1	0.8	1.1	-1.1	+0.5	0.0	0.3
53	General merch. group, total.....	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.5	-0.3	+0.7	+0.1	0.2
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts.).....	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	-0.4	+0.6	-0.1	0.2
54	Food stores.....	0.6	1.0	0.7	1.7	0.9	1.7	-0.5	+0.8	+0.1	0.3
541	Grocery stores.....	0.1	0.8	0.3	1.8	0.9	1.7	-0.6	+0.5	0.0	0.2
554	Gasoline service stations.....	0.5	1.9	0.9	2.7	1.8	3.0	-1.4	+1.2	-0.4	0.8
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	0.8	3.4	1.4	3.3	2.8	2.6	-2.4	+1.3	-0.4	1.1
58	Eating and drinking places.....	0.8	2.0	1.2	4.6	4.0	3.9	-3.6	+2.4	0.0	1.0
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	0.4	1.8	1.0	2.5	1.5	2.5	-1.0	+1.3	+0.2	0.6

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 April 1993 - March 1994.

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 1993 - April 1994. The ranges for all other totals and kinds of business are based on the period April 1993 - February 1994.

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.

