

Advance Monthly Retail Sales



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ECONOMICS AND STATISTICS ADMINISTRATION
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The Census Bureau of the Department of Commerce announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for September adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$188.4 billion, an increase of 0.6 percent ($\pm 1.3\%$) from the previous month and were 8.1 percent ($\pm 2.0\%$) above the same month a year ago. Total sales in the third quarter were 7.5 percent ($\pm 1.8\%$) above the same quarter a year ago. The July to August 1994 percent change was revised from +0.8 percent ($\pm 1.3\%$) as published in the August advance, to +1.1 percent ($\pm 0.4\%$).

Durable goods were up 14.2 percent from the previous year. Building materials were up 14.2 percent from September 1993 while automotive dealers and furniture were up 14.8 percent and 14.6 percent, respectively, in the same period.

Nondurable goods were up 4.4 percent from September 1993. General merchandise stores were up 6.2 percent from the previous year while food stores and gasoline stations were up 3.9 percent and 8.4 percent, respectively, in the same period.

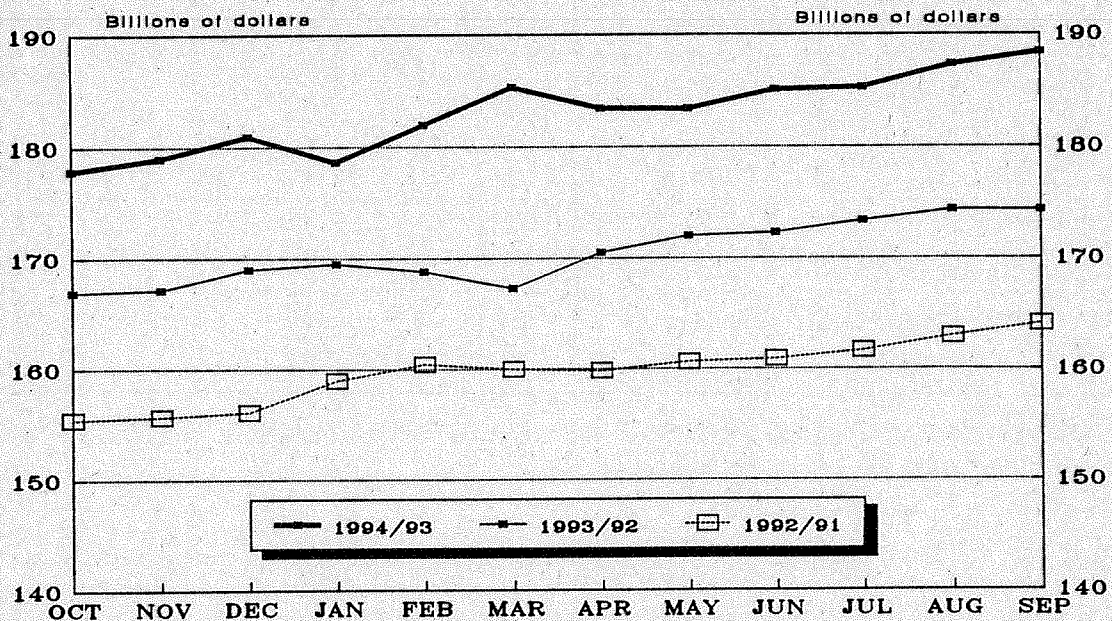
The advance estimates are based on a small subsample of the Bureau's full retail sales sample. Estimates from the advance and the subsequent full survey can differ because of the earlier reporting in the advance and because of sampling variability present in both surveys.

The Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report for October is scheduled to be released November 15, 1994 at 8:30 a.m.

ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES

October 1991 - September 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	
		Sept. ² adv.	Aug. prel.	July final	Sept.	Aug.	Sept. ² adv.	Aug. prel.	July final	Sept. ¹	Aug. ¹
	Retail trade, total.....	185,918	193,634	186,058	171,059	177,104	188,426	187,311	185,287	174,328	174,365
	Total (excl. auto group)...	140,986	147,214	141,971	132,352	137,035	144,904	144,043	143,112	136,407	135,769
	Durable goods, total.....	76,292	78,716	74,247	66,130	68,478	75,037	74,247	72,505	65,726	66,425
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	11,879	12,184	11,512	10,252	10,422	11,196	11,025	10,730	9,801	9,655
521,3	Building mat. and supply stores.....	(*)	9,080	8,520	7,536	7,743	(*)	8,043	7,882	7,076	6,982
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	1,188	1,213	1,065	1,087	(*)	1,166	1,141	1,086	1,081
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	44,932	46,420	44,087	38,707	40,069	43,522	43,268	42,175	37,921	38,596
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	41,547	42,788	40,589	35,462	36,681	40,220	39,951	38,878	34,767	35,406
551	Motor vehicle (franchised).....	(*)	38,133	36,171	32,127	33,119	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	3,632	3,498	3,245	3,388	(*)	3,317	3,297	3,154	3,190
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	10,659	10,910	10,325	9,299	9,380	11,023	10,870	10,543	9,621	9,532
571	Furniture and home furnishings.....	(*)	5,516	5,204	4,798	4,903	(*)	5,309	5,220	4,876	4,831
5722,31,4	Household appliance, radio, TV and computer stores.....	(*)	4,405	4,140	3,682	3,675	(*)	4,468	4,220	3,884	3,812
5722	Household appliance stores.....	(*)	922	944	829	909	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total.....	109,626	114,918	111,811	104,929	108,626	113,389	113,064	112,782	108,602	107,940
53	General merchandise group stores.....	21,842	23,436	21,757	20,651	21,838	23,996	23,884	23,851	22,604	22,456
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts).....	16,773	18,055	16,579	15,578	16,571	18,432	18,330	18,319	17,100	16,926
531	Dept. stores (in. leased depts) ³	(*)	18,504	16,987	16,040	17,045	(*)	18,805	18,791	17,588	17,411
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	473	455	546	581	(*)	494	497	599	613
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	-4,908	4,723	4,527	4,686	(*)	5,060	5,035	4,905	4,917
54	Food stores.....	33,511	34,448	35,032	32,220	32,806	33,922	33,847	33,617	32,636	32,730
541	Grocery stores.....	31,566	32,475	33,063	30,503	30,989	31,917	31,901	31,700	30,842	30,927
554	Gasoline service stations.....	11,800	12,527	12,177	10,915	11,637	11,776	11,653	11,477	10,861	10,896
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	8,599	9,512	8,259	8,667	9,186	8,819	8,952	8,905	8,918	8,746
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	742	713	636	616	(*)	831	831	700	696
562,3	Women's clothing, specialty stores.....	(*)	3,097	2,754	3,197	3,206	(*)	3,088	3,013	3,316	3,271
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	3,067	2,702	2,603	2,825	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	1,751	1,440	1,525	1,753	(*)	1,484	1,521	1,498	1,487
58	Eating and drinking places.....	18,591	19,694	20,166	17,702	18,924	18,722	18,544	18,989	18,008	17,769
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	6,691	6,905	6,653	6,406	6,510	7,043	7,024	6,966	6,765	6,718
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,771	1,893	1,669	1,743	(*)	1,750	1,772	1,737	1,740
5961	Total mail order.....	(*)	2,497	2,161	2,278	2,004	(*)	2,691	2,658	2,341	2,239
53,56,57,594	GAF ⁴	(*)	50,581	46,281	44,382	46,636	(*)	50,470	49,981	47,492	47,179

*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-94-08.

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					
		Sept. 1994 advance from—		Aug. 1994 preliminary from—		July 1994 through Sept. 1994 from—	
		Aug. 1994 prelim.	Sept. 1993 final	July 1994 final	Aug. 1993 final	Apr. 1994 through June 1994	July 1993 through Sept. 1993
	Retail trade, total.....	+0.6	+8.1	+1.1	+7.4	+1.7	+7.5
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	+0.6	+6.2	+0.7	+6.1	+1.9	+6.0
	Durable goods, total.....	+1.1	+14.2	+2.4	+11.8	+2.1	+12.2
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	+1.6	+14.2	+2.7	+14.2	+3.5	+13.8
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	+0.6	+14.8	+2.6	+12.1	+1.0	+12.6
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	+0.7	+15.7	+2.8	+12.8	+1.0	+13.3
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	+1.4	+14.6	+3.1	+14.0	+4.1	+13.6
	Nondurable goods, total.....	+0.3	+4.4	+0.3	+4.7	+1.3	+4.6
53	General merchandise group stores.....	+0.5	+6.2	+0.1	+6.4	+1.7	+6.4
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	+0.6	+7.8	+0.1	+8.3	+2.3	+8.3
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.) ¹	(NA)	(NA)	+0.1	+8.0	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	+0.2	+3.9	+0.7	+3.4	+1.0	+3.5
541	Grocery stores.....	+0.1	+3.5	+0.6	+3.1	+0.8	+3.2
554	Gasoline service stations.....	+1.1	+8.4	+1.5	+6.9	+3.0	+6.2
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	-1.5	-1.1	+0.5	+2.4	+0.6	+0.7
58	Eating and drinking places.....	+1.0	+4.0	-2.3	+4.4	+0.9	+5.4
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	+0.3	+4.1	+0.8	+4.6	+2.5	+3.7

NA Not available.

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

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 August 1994 and final estimates for July 1994 based on the full sample are published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for August (BR-94-08). 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 3. 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. 554 551,2,5, 6,7,9	Automotive dealers.....	1.6	3.2	2.1	3.4	2.6	3.1	-1.3	+2.2	+0.6	1.1
	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, September 1993 - August 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.

