

# Advance Monthly Retail Sales



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The Census Bureau of the Department of Commerce announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for October adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$191.2 billion, an increase of 1.1 percent ( $\pm 1.3\%$ ) from the previous month and were 7.5 percent ( $\pm 2.0\%$ ) above the same month a year ago. Total sales in the August through October period were 7.9 percent ( $\pm 1.8\%$ ) above the same period a year ago. The August to September 1994 percent change was revised from +0.6 percent ( $\pm 1.3\%$ ) as published in the September advance, to +0.5 percent ( $\pm 0.5\%$ ).

Durable goods were up 12.3 percent from the previous year. Building materials were up 11.8 percent from October 1993 while automotive dealers and furniture were up 12.6 percent and 14.9 percent, respectively, in the same period.

Non-durable goods were up 4.6 percent from October 1993. General merchandise stores were up 6.0 percent from the previous year while food stores and gasoline stations were up 3.2 percent and 5.9 percent, respectively, in the same period.

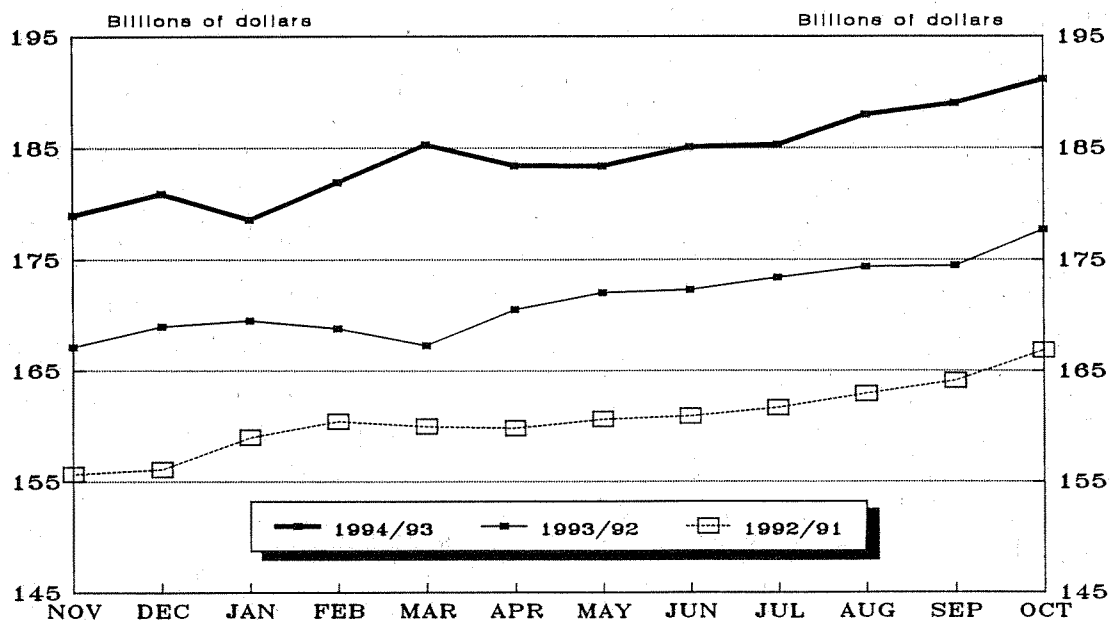
*The advance estimates are based on a small subsample of the Bureau's full retail sales sample. Estimates from the advance and the subsequent full survey can differ because of the earlier reporting in the advance and because of sampling variability present in both surveys.*

The Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report for November is scheduled to be released December 13, 1994 at 8:30 a.m.

## ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES

November 1991 - October 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 <sup>1</sup>				
		1994			1993		1994			1993	
		Oct. <sup>2</sup> adv.	Sept. prel.	Aug. final	Oct.	Sept.	Oct. <sup>2</sup> adv.	Sept. prel.	Aug. final	Oct. <sup>1</sup>	Sept. <sup>1</sup>
	Retail trade, total.....	189,261	186,171	194,280	176,363	171,059	191,157	188,998	187,973	177,740	174,474
	Total (excl. auto group)...	145,688	141,367	147,710	137,571	132,352	146,204	145,296	144,517	137,806	136,423
	Durable goods, total.....	74,669	75,791	78,983	66,439	66,130	76,724	74,987	74,532	68,333	65,896
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	11,726	11,832	12,219	10,401	10,252	11,340	11,148	11,072	10,145	9,772
521,3	Building mat. and supply stores.....	(*)	8,728	9,089	7,552	7,536	(*)	8,119	8,058	7,262	7,063
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	1,121	1,186	1,100	1,065	(*)	1,133	1,162	1,091	1,089
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	43,573	44,804	46,570	38,792	38,707	44,953	43,702	43,456	39,934	38,051
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	40,136	41,377	42,945	35,507	35,462	41,635	40,368	40,136	36,757	34,904
551	Motor vehicle (franchised).....	(*)	36,994	38,317	32,173	32,127	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	3,427	3,625	3,285	3,245	(*)	3,334	3,320	3,177	3,147
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	11,039	10,686	10,935	9,561	9,299	11,276	11,108	10,918	9,818	9,627
571	Furniture and home furnishings.....	(*)	5,288	5,519	4,961	4,798	(*)	5,379	5,322	4,956	4,871
5722,31,4	Household appliance, radio, TV and computer stores.....	(*)	4,360	4,410	3,722	3,682	(*)	4,604	4,491	3,930	3,884
5722	Household appliance stores.....	(*)	854	921	870	829	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total.....	114,592	110,380	115,297	109,924	104,929	114,433	114,011	113,441	109,407	108,578
53	General merchandise group stores.....	23,997	21,975	23,448	22,641	20,651	24,185	24,106	23,926	22,811	22,589
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts).....	18,512	16,844	18,065	17,187	15,578	18,605	18,490	18,359	17,273	17,100
531	Dept. stores (in. leased depts) <sup>3</sup> .....	(*)	17,287	18,517	17,652	16,040	(*)	18,934	18,818	17,776	17,568
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	473	482	558	546	(*)	514	504	567	595
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	4,658	4,901	4,896	4,527	(*)	5,102	5,063	4,971	4,894
54	Food stores.....	33,732	33,585	34,454	32,907	32,220	34,097	34,005	33,878	33,028	32,642
541	Grocery stores.....	31,842	31,652	32,485	31,062	30,503	32,164	32,004	31,942	31,155	30,842
554	Gasoline service stations.....	12,085	11,848	12,624	11,416	10,915	11,688	11,789	11,721	11,041	10,850
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	8,953	8,701	9,511	8,944	8,667	9,007	8,885	8,950	8,969	8,919
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	753	752	716	636	(*)	833	841	719	704
562,3	Women's clothing, specialty stores.....	(*)	2,925	3,106	3,318	3,197	(*)	3,047	3,094	3,308	3,313
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	2,764	3,050	2,851	2,603	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	1,524	1,761	1,395	1,525	(*)	1,471	1,486	1,465	1,498
58	Eating and drinking places.....	19,214	18,949	19,979	18,335	17,702	18,967	19,044	18,813	17,905	17,990
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	6,932	6,691	6,908	6,578	6,406	7,110	7,043	7,020	6,767	6,765
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,748	1,776	1,713	1,669	(*)	1,789	1,757	1,737	1,730
5961	Total mail order.....	(*)	2,650	2,505	2,700	2,278	(*)	2,721	2,702	2,514	2,346
53,56,57,594	GAF <sup>4</sup> .....	(*)	47,436	50,617	46,801	44,382	(*)	50,811	50,551	47,888	47,491

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

NA: Not available.

<sup>1</sup>Revised.

<sup>1</sup>Data 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-94-09.

<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 (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					
		Oct. 1994 advance from—		Sept. 1994 preliminary from—		Aug. 1994 through Oct. 1994 from—	
		Sept. 1994 prelim.	Oct. 1993 final	Aug. 1994 final	Sept. 1993 final	May 1994 through July 1994	Aug. 1993 through Oct. 1993
	Retail trade, total.....	+1.1	+7.5	+0.5	+8.3	+2.6	+7.9
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	+0.6	+6.1	+0.5	+6.5	+2.2	+6.3
	Durable goods, total.....	+2.3	+12.3	+0.6	+13.8	+4.1	+12.8
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	+1.7	+11.8	+0.7	+14.1	+4.9	+13.5
55 ex. 554 551,2,5, 6,7,9 57	Automotive dealers.....	+2.9	+12.6	+0.6	+14.9	+4.1	+13.3
	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	+3.1	+13.3	+0.6	+15.7	+4.3	+14.1
	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	+1.5	+14.9	+1.7	+15.4	+5.8	+14.9
	Nondurable goods, total.....	+0.4	+4.6	+0.5	+5.0	+1.6	+4.9
53	General merchandise group stores.....	+0.3	+6.0	+0.8	+6.7	+1.7	+6.4
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	+0.6	+7.7	+0.7	+8.1	+2.0	+8.1
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.) <sup>1</sup> .....	(NA)	(NA)	+0.6	+7.8	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	+0.3	+3.2	+0.4	+4.2	+1.2	+3.6
541	Grocery stores.....	+0.5	+3.2	+0.2	+3.8	+1.1	+3.4
554	Gasoline service stations.....	-0.9	+5.9	+0.6	+8.7	+3.4	+7.4
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	+1.4	+0.4	-0.7	-0.4	+0.9	+0.8
58	Eating and drinking places.....	-0.4	+5.9	+1.2	+5.9	+1.0	+5.9
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	+1.0	+5.1	+0.3	+4.1	+2.2	+4.6

NA Not available.

<sup>1</sup>Includes 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 September, 1994 and final estimates for August 1994 based on the full sample are published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for September (BR-94-09). 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 <sup>2</sup>		Mean	Avg. of absolute diff.	
		Range <sup>1</sup>		Median	Median	Median	Median	Range <sup>2</sup>		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

<sup>1</sup>The 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.

<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, October 1993 - September 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.

