

Advance Monthly Retail Sales



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

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CB-95-10

INTENTION TO REVISE ESTIMATES. The unadjusted and adjusted monthly retail sales estimates will be revised based on the results of the 1992 Census of Retail Trade and the 1993 Annual Retail Trade Survey. Revised estimates for January 1987 through February 1995 are scheduled for release the week of March 20, 1995. Estimates shown in this report do not reflect this revision.

FOR WIRE TRANSMISSION 8:30 A.M. EST., Friday, January 13, 1995

The Census Bureau of the Department of Commerce announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for December, adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$191.9 billion, a decrease of 0.1 percent ($\pm 1.3\%$) from the previous month but an increase of 6.1 percent ($\pm 1.9\%$) from December 1993. Total sales for the 12 months of 1994 were \$2.2 trillion, up 7.6% ($\pm 0.8\%$) from the 1993 total. The October to November 1994 percent change was revised from +1.2 percent ($\pm 1.3\%$) as published in the November advance, to +0.2 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$).

Durable goods decreased 0.1 percent ($\pm 2.8\%$) from November while nondurable goods decreased 0.1 percent ($\pm 1.2\%$) in the same period.

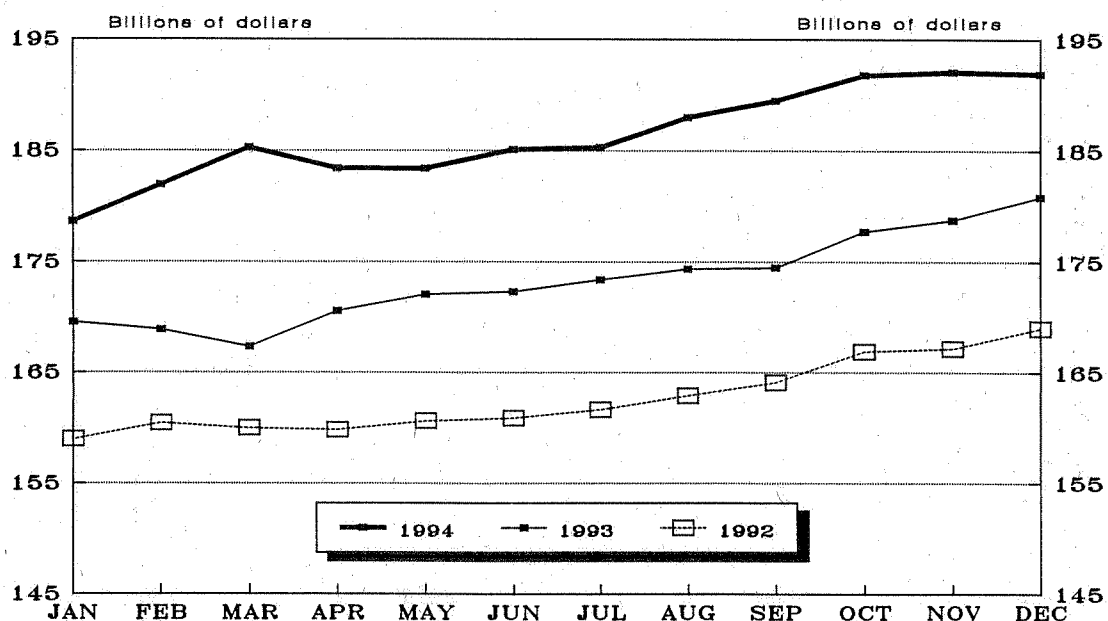
The advance estimates are based on a small subsample of the Bureau's full retail sales sample. Estimates from the advance and the subsequent full survey can differ because of the earlier reporting in the advance and because of sampling variability present in both surveys.

The Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report for January is scheduled to be released February 14, 1995 at 8:30 a.m.

ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES

January 1992 - December 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 (301-457-1214) 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				
		12 month total		1994			1993		1994			1993	
		1994	Percent change from 1993	Dec. ² adv.	Nov. prel.	Oct. final	Dec.	Nov.	Dec. ² adv.	Nov. prel.	Oct. final	Dec. ¹	Nov. ¹
	Retail trade, total.....	2,239,393	+7.6	231,867	194,133	189,844	218,263	180,932	191,923	192,082	191,789	180,871	178,762
	Total (ex. auto group).	1,717,139	+5.5	190,992	151,905	145,185	180,598	143,338	146,079	146,032	145,752	139,099	137,895
	Durable goods, total.....	887,623	+13.1	84,631	74,611	75,374	77,608	66,756	77,754	77,839	77,664	71,095	69,373
52	Bld. mat., hrdware, garden supply, and mobile home dlr..	129,431	+11.7	10,203	10,717	11,440	9,827	9,728	11,237	11,339	11,206	10,674	10,182
521,3	Bld. mat. and supply stores..	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,953	8,616	6,817	7,314	(*)	8,224	8,221	7,827	7,494
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,138	1,185	1,195	1,089	(*)	1,167	1,176	1,112	1,099
55 ex 554	Automotive dealers.....	522,254	+14.9	40,875	42,228	44,659	37,665	37,594	45,844	46,050	46,037	41,772	40,867
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and misc. automotive dealers.....	482,098	+15.7	37,484	38,803	41,206	34,666	34,442	42,355	42,594	42,701	38,690	37,683
551	Motor vehicle (franch.)....	(*)	(*)	(*)	34,927	36,477	31,699	31,346	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply str...	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,425	3,453	2,999	3,152	(*)	3,456	3,336	3,082	3,184
57	Furniture, home furn., and equipment stores.....	128,723	+13.2	15,744	12,377	11,052	13,884	10,662	11,450	11,449	11,355	10,182	9,930
571	Furniture and home furn.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,893	5,448	5,914	5,398	(*)	5,436	5,443	5,129	4,998
5722,31,4	Household appliance, radio, TV and computer stores....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,317	4,592	6,182	4,301	(*)	4,896	4,818	4,091	3,994
5722	Household appliance str...	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,047	883	1,079	911	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total..	1,351,770	+4.2	147,236	119,522	114,470	140,655	114,176	114,169	114,243	114,125	109,776	109,389
53	General mdse. group stores....	284,946	+6.7	42,189	28,645	24,001	39,943	26,863	23,983	24,042	24,083	22,778	22,704
531	Dept stores (ex lsd. depts)...	218,547	+8.6	33,193	22,292	18,439	30,954	20,494	18,471	18,546	18,494	17,312	17,150
531	Dept stores (in lsd. depts) ³ ..	(*)	(*)	(*)	22,836	18,885	31,755	21,061	(*)	19,062	19,018	17,711	17,654
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	552	500	972	617	(*)	508	512	514	570
539	Misc. general mdse. stores...	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,801	5,062	8,017	5,752	(*)	4,988	5,077	4,952	4,984
54	Food stores.....	405,368	+3.3	37,647	33,771	33,750	36,375	32,405	34,200	34,360	34,136	33,351	33,089
541	Grocery stores.....	381,899	+3.0	35,089	31,726	31,730	33,870	30,565	32,103	32,275	32,083	31,303	31,221
554	Gasoline service stations.....	136,866	+2.5	11,487	11,487	11,920	10,959	10,995	11,464	11,498	11,517	10,904	10,984
56	Apparel and accessory stores..	107,991	+1.8	15,406	10,298	9,109	14,568	9,950	9,170	9,200	9,133	8,878	8,907
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	957	845	1,386	790	(*)	867	851	740	714
562,3	Women's clothing, specialty stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,443	3,143	5,130	3,589	(*)	3,099	3,103	3,212	3,236
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,595	3,009	5,149	3,424	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,558	1,410	1,986	1,468	(*)	1,550	1,497	1,479	1,453
58	Eating and drinking places.....	224,395	+6.3	19,608	18,206	19,387	18,021	17,101	19,261	19,044	19,100	17,878	17,888
591	Drug and proprietary stores....	83,039	+2.7	8,884	6,850	6,845	8,785	6,633	6,968	7,055	7,021	6,874	6,789
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,768	1,728	2,369	1,733	(*)	1,772	1,765	1,719	1,731
5961	Total mail order.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,658	3,030	3,930	3,504	(*)	2,740	2,780	2,701	2,631
53,56,57	GAF ⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	58,775	50,207	82,269	54,480	(*)	51,456	51,363	48,273	47,944
594													

*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. The seasonal factors for November and December department stores and general merchandise stores kinds of business have been modified because of observed changes in the seasonal patterns. Factors and additional explanatory material are contained in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-94-11.

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					
		Dec. 1994 advance from—		Nov. 1994 preliminary from—		Oct. 1994 through Dec. 1994 from—	
		Nov. 1994 prelim.	Dec. 1993 final	Oct. 1994 final	Nov. 1993 final	July 1994 through Sept. 1994	Oct. 1993 through Dec. 1993
	Retail trade, total.....	-0.1	+6.1	+0.2	+7.5	+2.3	+7.2
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	0.0	+5.0	+0.2	+5.9	+1.1	+5.6
	Durable goods, total.....	-0.1	+9.4	+0.2	+12.2	+4.8	+11.7
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	-0.9	+5.3	+1.2	+11.4	+2.5	+8.8
55 ex., 554	Automotive dealers.....	-0.4	+9.7	0.0	+12.7	+6.4	+12.5
551, 2, 5, 6, 7, 9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	-0.6	+9.5	-0.3	+13.0	+6.6	+12.8
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	0.0	+12.5	+0.8	+15.3	+5.1	+14.5
	Nondurable goods, total.....	-0.1	+4.0	+0.1	+4.4	+0.7	+4.3
53	General merchandise group stores.....	-0.2	+5.3	-0.2	+5.9	+0.3	+5.6
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	-0.4	+6.7	+0.3	+8.1	+0.6	+7.3
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.) ¹	(NA)	(NA)	+0.2	+8.0	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	-0.5	+2.5	+0.7	+3.8	+1.1	+3.3
541	Grocery stores.....	-0.5	+2.6	+0.6	+3.4	+0.8	+3.0
554	Gasoline service stations.....	-0.3	+5.1	-0.2	+4.7	-1.3	+4.7
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	-0.3	+3.3	+0.7	+3.3	+2.8	+3.0
58	Eating and drinking places.....	+1.1	+7.7	-0.3	+6.5	+1.0	+7.0
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	-1.2	+1.4	+0.5	+3.9	+0.3	+3.0

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 November 1994 and final estimates for October 1994 based on the full sample are published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for November (BR-94-11). 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	0.0	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, December 1993 - November 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.

