

# 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 July adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$196.5 billion, a decrease of 0.1 percent ( $\pm 1.3\%$ ) from the previous month but up 6.2 percent ( $\pm 1.9\%$ ) from July 1994. Total sales in the May through July period were 6.3 percent ( $\pm 1.8\%$ ) above the same period a year ago. The May to June 1995 percent change was revised from +0.7 percent ( $\pm 1.3\%$ ) to +0.8 percent ( $\pm 0.5\%$ ).

Durable goods decreased 0.6 percent ( $\pm 2.3\%$ ) from June but were 8.4 percent above July 1994. Automotive dealers sales were up 10.3 percent from last year while furniture store sales were up 10.2 percent in the same period.

Nondurable goods increased 0.2 percent ( $\pm 1.2\%$ ) from last month and were 4.7 percent above last year. General merchandise sales were up 6.6 percent from July 1994 while gasoline sales were up 6.1 percent during the same period.

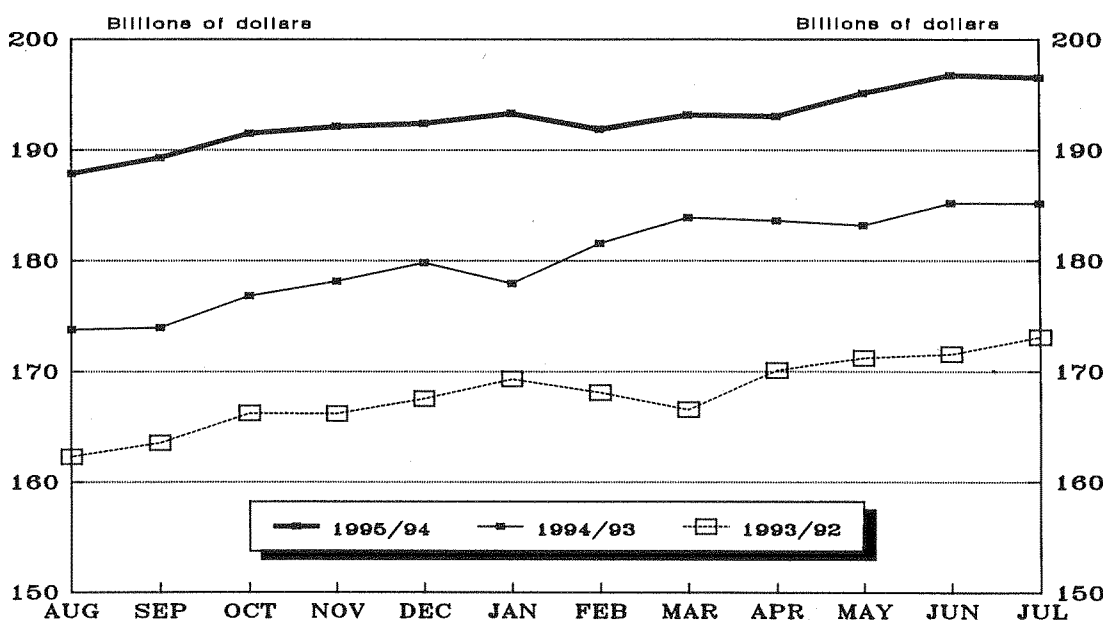
*The advance estimates are based on a small subsample of the Bureau's full retail sales sample. Estimates from the advance and the subsequent full survey can differ because of the earlier reporting in the advance and because of sampling variability present in both surveys.*

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

## ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES

August 1992 - July 1995

(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 <sup>1</sup>				
		1995			1994		1995			1994	
		July <sup>2</sup> adv.	June prel.	May final	July	June	July <sup>2</sup> adv.	June prel.	May final	July <sup>2</sup>	June <sup>2</sup>
	Retail trade, total.....	195,917	203,232	202,151	185,811	190,124	196,517	196,737	195,107	185,124	185,164
	Total (excl. auto group)...	147,133	149,213	150,191	141,321	142,046	149,353	148,781	148,253	142,348	142,165
	Durable goods, total.....	79,407	85,808	83,972	73,712	78,446	78,204	78,675	77,533	72,172	72,421
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	10,944	11,844	12,308	10,868	11,701	10,315	10,228	10,162	10,168	10,200
521,3	Building mat. and supply stores.....	(*)	8,947	9,009	8,303	8,762	(*)	7,814	7,780	7,709	7,720
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	1,330	1,329	1,250	1,308	(*)	1,178	1,138	1,176	1,173
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	48,784	54,019	51,960	44,490	48,078	47,164	47,956	46,854	42,776	42,999
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	45,838	50,988	48,971	41,623	45,128	44,374	45,162	44,039	40,061	40,293
551	Motor vehicle (franchised).....	(*)	43,746	42,280	36,274	39,365	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	3,031	2,989	2,867	2,950	(*)	2,794	2,815	2,715	2,706
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	10,379	10,389	10,160	9,547	9,573	10,778	10,710	10,606	9,778	9,866
571	Furniture and home furnishings.....	(*)	5,198	5,173	4,999	4,966	(*)	5,208	5,142	5,034	4,981
5722,31,4	Household appliance, radio, TV and computer stores.....	(*)	4,343	4,205	3,746	3,814	(*)	4,576	4,576	3,842	4,011
5722	Household appliance stores.....	(*)	879	804	837	879	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total.....	116,510	117,424	118,179	112,099	111,678	118,313	118,062	117,574	112,952	112,743
53	General merchandise group stores.....	22,896	23,865	23,849	21,542	22,373	25,085	25,026	24,722	23,541	23,492
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts).....	17,717	18,379	18,329	16,526	17,111	19,534	19,408	19,153	18,200	18,126
531	Dept. stores (in. leased depts) <sup>3</sup> .....	(*)	18,654	18,618	16,812	17,420	(*)	19,642	19,418	18,498	18,433
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	605	602	581	641	(*)	627	616	638	665
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	4,881	4,918	4,435	4,621	(*)	4,991	4,953	4,703	4,701
54	Food stores.....	35,142	34,462	34,727	34,341	33,626	34,034	33,774	33,960	32,967	33,059
541	Grocery stores.....	33,303	32,650	32,872	32,555	31,877	32,208	31,978	32,164	31,213	31,313
554	Gasoline service stations.....	13,371	13,358	13,126	12,613	12,274	12,638	12,771	12,621	11,910	11,768
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	8,603	8,779	8,851	8,399	8,552	9,371	9,262	9,174	9,097	9,089
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	935	913	875	988	(*)	948	948	1,025	1,006
562,3	Women's clothing, specialty stores.....	(*)	2,744	2,938	2,569	2,748	(*)	2,901	2,855	2,826	2,908
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	2,967	2,854	2,886	2,799	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	1,583	1,587	1,492	1,497	(*)	1,586	1,570	1,574	1,528
58	Eating and drinking places.....	21,333	21,122	20,855	20,504	19,727	20,317	20,174	20,130	19,325	19,023
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	6,685	6,927	7,173	6,538	6,637	6,985	7,011	7,046	6,839	6,759
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,842	1,813	1,952	1,829	(*)	1,813	1,813	1,828	1,829
5961	Total mail order.....	(*)	3,458	3,694	3,012	3,221	(*)	4,117	4,015	3,728	3,798
53,56,57 594	GAF <sup>4</sup> .....	(*)	49,430	49,353	45,420	46,554	(*)	52,020	51,552	49,119	49,102

\*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-95-06.

<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					
		July 1995 advance from—		June 1995 preliminary from—		May 1995 through July 1995 from—	
		June 1995 prelim.	July 1994 final	May 1995 final	June 1994 final	Feb. 1995 through Apr. 1995	May 1994 through July 1994
	Retail trade, total.....	-0.1	+6.2	+0.8	+6.3	+1.8	+6.3
	Total (excl. automotive group)....	+0.4	+4.9	+0.4	+4.7	+1.5	+5.0
	Durable goods, total.....	-0.6	+8.4	+1.5	+8.6 <sup>c</sup>	+2.1	+8.4
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	+0.9	+1.4	+0.6	+0.3	-1.7	+0.9
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	-1.7	+10.3	+2.4	+11.5	+2.8	+10.6
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	-1.7	+10.8	+2.6	+12.1	+3.0	+11.1
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	+0.6	+10.2	+1.0	+8.6	+2.2	+9.5
	Nondurable goods, total.....	+0.2	+4.7	+0.4	+4.7	+1.6	+5.0
53	General merchandise group stores.....	+0.2	+6.6	+1.2	+6.5	+2.5	+6.8
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	+0.6	+7.3	+1.3	+7.1	+2.6	+7.6
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.) <sup>1</sup> .....	(NA)	(NA)	+1.2	+6.6	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	+0.8	+3.2	-0.5	+2.2	+0.4	+2.8
541	Grocery stores.....	+0.7	+3.2	-0.6	+2.1	+0.5	+2.8
554	Gasoline service stations.....	-1.0	+6.1	+1.2	+8.5	+2.4	+7.8
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	+1.2	+3.0	+1.0	+1.9	+2.0	+2.4
58	Eating and drinking places.....	+0.7	+5.1	+0.2	+6.1	+2.2	+5.9
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	-0.4	+2.1	-0.5	+3.7	+0.4	+3.4

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 +0.7 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 June 1995 and final estimates for May 1995 based on the full sample are published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for June (BR-95-06). 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	From	To		
		From	To								
	Retail trade, total.....	0.5	1.3	0.7	1.0	0.8	1.0	-1.0	+0.7	+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, July 1994 - June 1995. 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.

