

Advance Monthly Retail Sales



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

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CB-96-11

INTENTION TO REVISE ESTIMATES. The annual revision of the monthly retail sales estimates will be published in the press release the week of March 25. The estimates will be revised for the months of January 1993 through February 1996.

FOR WIRE TRANSMISSION 8:30 A.M. EST., Tuesday, January 30, 1996

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 \$198.6 billion, an increase of 0.3 percent ($\pm 1.3\%$) from the previous month and up 3.4 percent ($\pm 1.9\%$) from December 1994. Total sales for the 12 months of 1995 were 2.3 trillion, up 4.9 percent ($\pm 0.4\%$) from the 1994 total. The October to November 1995 percent change was revised from +0.8 percent ($\pm 1.3\%$) to +0.7 percent ($\pm 0.6\%$).

Durable goods increased 0.3 percent ($\pm 2.5\%$) from November and were 5.2 percent above the previous year.

Nondurable goods increased 0.3 percent ($\pm 1.2\%$) from November and were 2.2 percent above December 1994.

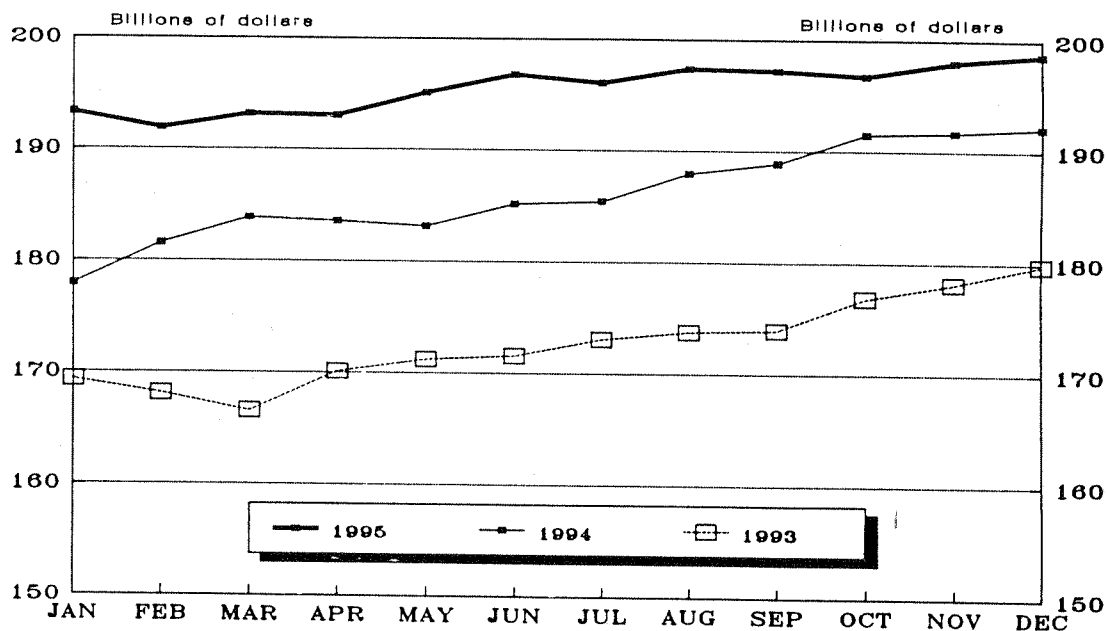
The advance estimates are based on a small subsample of the Bureau's full retail sales sample. Estimates from the advance and the subsequent full survey can differ because of the earlier reporting in the advance and because of sampling variability present in both surveys.

The Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report for January is scheduled to be released the week of February 26, 1996 at 8:30 a.m.

ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES

January 1993 - December 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 on the internet - <http://www.census.gov/ftp/pub/svsd/www/fullpub.html>, or 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		1995			1994		1995			1994	
		1995	Percent change from 1994	Dec. ² adv.	Nov. prel.	Oct. final	Dec.	Nov.	Dec. ² adv.	Nov. prel.	Oct. final	Dec. ¹	Nov. ¹
	Retail trade, total.....	2,346,255	+4.9	236,709	202,473	194,610	233,326	194,741	198,649	198,019	196,735	192,085	191,669
	Total (ex. auto group).	1,777,475	+3.9	194,064	157,457	147,106	191,774	152,147	149,591	149,301	148,559	145,815	145,421
	Durable goods, total.....	940,706	+6.8	86,552	78,156	78,196	84,407	74,231	80,821	80,542	79,458	76,808	76,738
52	Bld. mat., hrdware, garden supply, and mobile home dlr.s.	124,099	+1.3	9,332	10,143	11,024	9,678	10,188	10,427	10,511	10,452	10,508	10,532
521,3	Bld. mat. and supply stores..	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,848	8,667	7,211	7,804	(*)	8,025	8,025	8,176	7,963
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,180	1,133	1,258	1,182	(*)	1,175	1,135	1,139	1,183
55 ex 554	Automotive dealers.....	568,790	+8.1	42,645	45,016	47,504	41,552	42,594	49,058	48,718	48,176	46,270	46,248
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and misc. automotive dealers.....	534,318	+8.3	39,849	42,035	44,456	38,881	39,786	46,068	45,740	45,225	43,491	43,434
551	Motor vehicle (franch.).....	(*)	(*)	(*)	37,220	38,777	34,352	35,112	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply str.s...	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,981	3,048	2,671	2,808	(*)	2,978	2,951	2,779	2,814
57	Furniture, home furn., and equipment stores.....	130,103	+8.8	15,828	12,512	10,867	15,195	11,578	11,306	11,327	11,137	10,615	10,521
571	Furniture and home furn.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,174	5,457	6,338	5,730	(*)	5,562	5,424	5,225	5,186
5722,31,4	Household appliance, radio, TV and computer stores....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,345	4,565	7,090	4,889	(*)	4,824	4,780	4,470	4,420
5722	Household appliance str.s..	(*)	(*)	(*)	848	764	1,047	925	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total..	1,405,559	+3.6	150,157	124,317	116,414	148,919	120,510	117,828	117,477	117,277	115,277	114,931
53	General mdse. group stores....	296,000	+4.8	42,575	29,714	23,906	42,072	28,413	24,667	24,698	24,590	23,978	23,958
531	Dept stores (ex lsd. depts)...	230,212	+5.6	33,934	23,484	18,565	33,299	22,255	19,270	19,281	19,139	18,613	18,577
531	Dept stores (in lsd. depts) ³ ..	(*)	(*)	(*)	23,856	18,841	33,793	22,631	(*)	19,683	19,441	18,912	18,923
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	707	599	1,171	713	(*)	614	617	640	646
539	Misc. general mdse. stores...	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,523	4,742	7,602	5,445	(*)	4,803	4,834	4,725	4,735
54	Food stores.....	408,353	+2.7	37,622	34,066	33,494	37,067	33,137	34,433	34,275	34,345	33,520	33,667
541	Grocery stores.....	385,820	+2.5	35,072	32,147	31,597	34,624	31,281	32,474	32,341	32,440	31,649	31,790
554	Gasoline service stations.....	147,631	+3.8	11,925	11,760	12,364	12,213	12,009	11,997	11,891	12,039	12,201	12,106
56	Apparel and accessory stores..	109,485	-0.1	15,120	10,551	8,847	15,559	10,453	9,164	9,203	9,019	9,164	9,242
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,138	952	1,962	1,167	(*)	1,011	982	1,023	1,049
562,3	Women's clothing, specialty stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,009	2,685	4,808	3,231	(*)	2,682	2,718	2,898	2,900
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,135	3,196	5,821	3,854	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,563	1,393	2,074	1,552	(*)	1,535	1,491	1,512	1,540
58	Eating and drinking places.....	239,903	+5.1	20,490	19,132	20,298	20,048	18,654	20,128	19,971	20,097	19,655	19,513
591	Drug and proprietary stores....	84,444	+3.6	8,816	7,053	6,939	8,654	6,744	7,121	7,197	7,117	6,852	6,924
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,893	1,795	2,550	1,823	(*)	1,885	1,862	1,819	1,819
5961	Total mail order.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,625	4,671	6,058	5,241	(*)	4,179	4,193	4,155	3,879
53,56,57 594	GAF ⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	61,007	49,949	87,695	58,032	(*)	52,570	51,906	50,546	50,496

*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-95-11.

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. 1995 advance from—		Nov. 1995 preliminary from—		Oct. 1995 through Dec. 1995 from—	
		Nov. 1995 prelim.	Dec. 1994 final	Oct. 1995 final	Nov. 1994 final	July 1995 through Sept. 1995	Oct. 1994 through Dec. 1994
	Retail trade, total.....	+0.3	+3.4	+0.7	+3.3	+0.5	+3.2
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	+0.2	+2.6	+0.5	+2.7	+0.2	+2.5
	Durable goods, total.....	+0.3	+5.2	+1.4	+5.0	+1.4	+4.5
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	-0.8	-0.8	+0.6	-0.2	+1.8	-0.6
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	+0.7	+6.0	+1.1	+5.3	+1.1	+5.1
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	+0.7	+5.9	+1.1	+5.3	+1.0	+5.0
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	-0.2	+6.5	+1.7	+7.7	+2.9	+7.0
	Nondurable goods, total.....	+0.3	+2.2	+0.2	+2.2	-0.2	+2.2
53	General merchandise group stores.....	-0.1	+2.9	+0.4	+3.1	-1.1	+2.8
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	-0.1	+3.5	+0.7	+3.8	-0.8	+3.5
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.) ¹	(NA)	(NA)	+1.2	+4.0	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	+0.5	+2.7	-0.2	+1.8	+0.9	+2.4
541	Grocery stores.....	+0.4	+2.6	-0.3	+1.7	+0.8	+2.4
554	Gasoline service stations.....	+0.9	-1.7	-1.2	-1.8	-3.3	-1.1
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	-0.4	0.0	+2.0	-0.4	+0.4	-1.0
58	Eating and drinking places.....	+0.8	+2.4	-0.6	+2.3	-0.6	+2.8
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	-1.1	+3.9	+1.1	+3.9	+1.3	+3.6

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 -0.6 percent to +0.7 percent with the average of the absolute differences about 0.3 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 3 below.

Preliminary estimates for November 1995 and final estimates for October 1995 based on the full sample are published later in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for November (BR-95-11). 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	-0.6	+0.7	+0.1	0.3
	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 1994 - November 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.

