

FOR WIRE TRANSMISSION 8:30 A.M. ET, Tuesday, June 13, 2000.

**ADVANCE MONTHLY RETAIL SALES  
MAY 2000**

The Census Bureau of the Department of Commerce announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for May, adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$266.0 billion, a decrease of 0.3 percent ( $\pm 0.7\%$ ) from the previous month, but up 7.4 percent ( $\pm 0.9\%$ ) from May 1999. Total sales for the March through May period were up 9.1 percent ( $\pm 0.7\%$ ) from the same period a year ago. The March to April 2000 percent change was revised from -0.2 percent ( $\pm 0.7\%$ ) to -0.6 percent ( $\pm 0.3\%$ ).

Durable goods decreased 1.0 percent ( $\pm 1.4\%$ ) from April but were 5.9 percent above last year. Furniture sales were up 9.9 percent from May a year ago, while automotive sales were up 5.0 percent from last year.

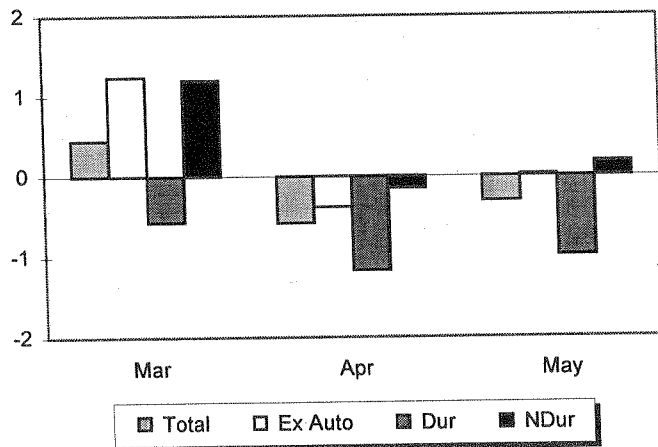
Nondurable goods increased 0.2 percent ( $\pm 0.6\%$ ) from April and were up 8.6 percent from May 1999. Gasoline sales were up 21.3 percent from May a year ago, while general merchandise sales were up 8.5 percent from last year.

*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.*

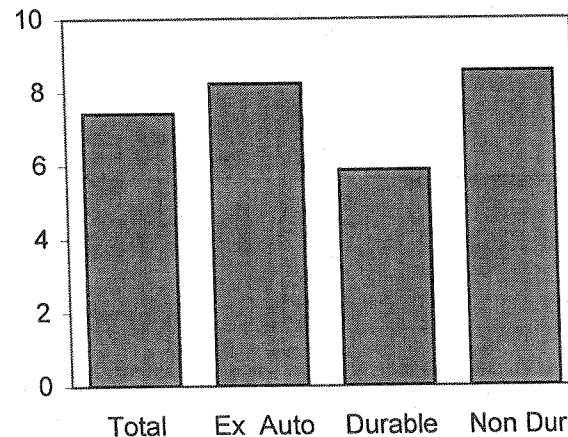
**Percent Change in Retail Sales**

(Data adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes)

**From Previous Month**



**From Previous Year**



The Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report for June is scheduled to be released July 14, 2000 at 8:30 a.m.

Note: On May 26, 2000, monthly retail sales estimates were revised based on corrected results from the 1998 Annual Retail Trade Survey. The revisions affected the monthly levels, but had little or no change in the previously published month-to-month trends. Revised data are available on the Internet at <http://www.census.gov/svsd/www/adv0400.html>.

Address inquiries concerning this report to Scott Scheleur, Service Sector Statistics Division, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC 20233. Telephone: 301-457-2713 or 301-457-2666.

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/svsd/www/advtable.html>.

# Table 1. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales, By Kind of Business

(In Millions of Dollars and Annual Percent Change)

SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted							Adjusted <sup>1</sup>				
		5 month total		2000			1999		2000			1999	
		2000	Change from 1999	May <sup>2</sup> (a)	Apr. (p)	Mar. (r)	May	Apr.	May <sup>2</sup> (a)	Apr. (p)	Mar. (r)	May (r)	Apr. (r)
	<b>Retail trade, total.....</b>	<b>1,284,387</b>	<b>10.3</b>	<b>276,581</b>	<b>259,872</b>	<b>273,112</b>	<b>254,557</b>	<b>242,761</b>	<b>265,977</b>	<b>266,806</b>	<b>268,357</b>	<b>247,572</b>	<b>244,556</b>
	Total (excl. auto dealers).....	946,318	9.9	204,397	193,894	198,200	188,135	179,385	200,459	200,409	201,178	185,203	184,165
	<b>Durable goods, total.....</b>	<b>545,753</b>	<b>10.7</b>	<b>118,839</b>	<b>108,325</b>	<b>118,242</b>	<b>109,323</b>	<b>103,816</b>	<b>110,104</b>	<b>111,210</b>	<b>112,529</b>	<b>104,000</b>	<b>101,905</b>
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.	73,877	4.7	18,471	16,231	15,698	17,613	16,505	15,215	15,460	16,064	14,958	15,014
521,3	Building mat. and supply stores..	(*)	(*)	(*)	12,571	12,481	12,790	12,347	(*)	12,264	12,684	11,420	11,432
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,356	1,270	1,515	1,432	(*)	1,295	1,358	1,317	1,347
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	338,069	11.6	72,184	65,978	74,912	66,422	63,376	65,518	66,397	67,179	62,369	60,391
551,2,5, 6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	321,248	11.9	68,452	62,570	71,322	62,995	59,935	62,004	62,948	63,680	59,039	57,027
551	Motor vehicle (franchised)....	(*)	(*)	(*)	52,736	60,418	53,146	50,557	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,408	3,590	3,427	3,441	(*)	3,449	3,499	3,330	3,364
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	67,970	11.7	13,809	13,202	14,285	12,460	12,029	14,582	14,628	14,522	13,269	13,137
571	Furniture and home furnishings.	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,513	6,952	6,141	5,945	(*)	6,988	6,959	6,324	6,298
5722,31,4	Household appliance, radio, TV and computer stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,700	6,279	5,383	5,171	(*)	6,522	6,467	5,902	5,810
5722	Household appliance stores.	(*)	(*)	(*)	928	975	897	875	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	<b>Nondurable goods, total.....</b>	<b>738,634</b>	<b>10.1</b>	<b>157,742</b>	<b>151,547</b>	<b>154,870</b>	<b>145,234</b>	<b>138,945</b>	<b>155,873</b>	<b>155,596</b>	<b>155,828</b>	<b>143,572</b>	<b>142,651</b>
53	General merchandise group stores.	148,801	8.0	33,315	31,484	31,200	31,044	28,861	33,708	33,323	33,210	31,072	31,114
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts)..	115,381	7.2	25,826	24,620	24,124	24,322	22,666	26,219	25,943	25,856	24,322	24,451
531	Dept. stores (in. leased depts) <sup>3</sup> ..	(*)	(*)	(*)	25,099	24,576	24,807	23,105	(*)	26,337	26,299	24,938	24,879
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,250	1,268	1,142	1,073	(*)	1,317	1,317	1,164	1,155
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,614	5,808	5,580	5,122	(*)	6,063	6,037	5,586	5,508
54	Food stores.....	194,158	5.9	40,945	39,780	39,770	38,971	36,905	40,001	40,187	39,597	38,016	37,560
541	Grocery stores.....	184,117	5.8	38,810	37,643	37,747	36,966	34,971	37,900	38,100	37,522	36,029	35,612
554	Gasoline service stations.....	85,428	25.5	18,626	17,246	18,313	15,185	14,633	17,722	17,670	18,479	14,615	14,604
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	51,766	5.2	11,623	11,542	11,291	11,231	10,871	11,860	11,728	11,840	11,405	11,303
561	Men's and boy's clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	885	833	912	915	(*)	918	927	942	970
562,3	Women's clothing, accessory stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,298	3,223	3,291	3,154	(*)	3,202	3,306	3,125	3,117
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,360	4,299	4,268	4,055	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,912	1,812	1,910	1,823	(*)	1,819	1,819	1,823	1,816
58	Eating and drinking places.....	124,131	8.7	26,122	25,510	25,962	24,789	23,747	25,190	25,308	25,403	23,654	23,442
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	52,516	8.3	10,949	10,488	10,851	9,995	9,824	10,713	10,637	10,597	9,955	9,913
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,263	2,327	2,334	2,208	(*)	2,418	2,437	2,322	2,319
5961	Total mail order.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	8,032	8,953	6,575	6,789	(*)	8,730	8,625	7,241	7,109
53,56,57, 594	GAF <sup>4</sup> .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	64,080	64,722	62,664	59,102	(*)	68,960	68,866	64,498	64,231

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

NA Not available. (a) Advance estimates. (p) Preliminary. (r) Revised.

- (1) 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-12 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-00-04.
- (2) 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.
- (3) Includes data for leased departments operated within department stores. Data for this line not included in broader kind-of-business totals.
- (4) 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 <sup>1</sup>					
		May 2000 Advance from --		Apr. 2000 Preliminary from --		Mar. 2000 through May 2000 from --	
		Apr. 2000 (p)	May 1999 (r)	Mar. 2000 (r)	Apr. 1999 (r)	Dec. 1999 through Feb. 2000	Mar. 1999 through May 1999
	<b>Retail trade, total .....</b>	<b>-0.3</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>-0.6</b>	<b>9.1</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>9.1</b>
	Total (excl. automotive dealers) .....	0.0	8.2	-0.4	8.8	1.9	9.2
	<b>Durable goods, total .....</b>	<b>-1.0</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>-1.2</b>	<b>9.1</b>	<b>-0.2</b>	<b>8.6</b>
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers .....	-1.6	1.7	-3.8	3.0	0.9	4.7
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	-1.3	5.0	-1.2	9.9	-1.1	8.8
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	-1.5	5.0	-1.1	10.4	-1.2	9.1
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	-0.3	9.9	0.7	11.3	2.4	10.6
	<b>Nondurable goods, total.....</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>8.6</b>	<b>-0.1</b>	<b>9.1</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>9.4</b>
53	General merchandise group stores.....	1.2	8.5	0.3	7.1	1.9	7.4
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	1.1	7.8	0.3	6.1	1.6	6.5
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.) <sup>2</sup> .....	(NA)	(NA)	0.1	5.9	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	-0.5	5.2	1.5	7.0	1.2	6.1
541	Grocery stores.....	-0.5	5.2	1.5	7.0	1.2	6.0
554	Gasoline service stations.....	0.3	21.3	-4.4	21.0	5.5	24.9
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	1.1	4.0	-0.9	3.8	2.7	4.8
58	Eating and drinking places.....	-0.5	6.5	-0.4	8.0	1.5	8.0
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	0.7	7.6	0.4	7.3	2.1	7.8

NA Not available. (p) Preliminary. (r) Revised.

(1) Percent change rounded to nearest tenth.

(2) 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

### 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 each survey. The margin of sampling error, as used on page 1, gives a range about the estimate which is a 90% confidence interval. If, for example, the trend estimate is +1.2% and the standard error is 0.9%, then the margin of sampling error is  $\pm 1.65 \times 0.9\%$  or  $\pm 1.5\%$ , and the 90% confidence interval is -0.3% to +2.7%. If the interval contains 0, it is uncertain whether there was an increase or decrease. For monthly level, the coefficient of variation (CV) is given. The resulting confidence interval is the estimated value  $\pm 1.65 \times CV \times$  (the estimated value).

Estimates of sampling variability are given in Table 3. They are based on two components. The first component is a measure of the average

difference between the Advance and the Preliminary estimates. The second reflects the variability of the Preliminary estimate. Additionally, both the Advance and the full survey are subject to nonsampling errors. Such errors can occur because of nonresponse, insufficient coverage of the universe of retail businesses, and response errors, among others. Precautionary steps are taken to minimize these errors, but their magnitude is not directly measured.

Preliminary estimates for the current month and final estimates for the previous month based on the full sample are published next month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report. This report will provide sales estimates in greater detail and additional measures of sampling variability. It will also present a description of revisions and the techniques used in developing the estimates, and an explanation of confidence intervals and sampling variability (Appendix B, Reliability of Data).

**Table 3. Measures of Variability of and Revision to Advance Estimates for Level and Trend**

SIC code	Kind of Business	Level of sales: Estimated CV <sup>1</sup> for Current Mo. (x 100)	Trend (percent change): Estimated standard error <sup>1</sup> for			Revision for month- to-month change <sup>2</sup>	
			Current Mo. to Previous Mo.	Current Qtr. to Previous Qtr.	Current Mo. to Current Mo. Last Yr.	Average revision	Median absolute revision
	<b>Retail trade, total.....</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>0.3</b>
	Total (excl. auto dealers) .....	1.0	0.6	0.3	0.7	0.1	0.3
	<b>Durable goods, total .....</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>0.5</b>
52	Building materials group stores .....	3.5	1.9	1.1	2.7	-0.3	1.3
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	1.6	1.2	0.8	1.5	0.3	0.5
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and misc. automotive dealers.....	1.8	1.3	0.9	1.6	0.4	0.7
57	Furniture, home furn, and equipment stores .....	2.0	1.4	0.7	1.8	0.5	0.8
	<b>Nondurable goods, total.....</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>0.3</b>
53	General merch. group, total.....	0.6	0.6	0.2	0.6	0.0	0.2
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts.)...	0.4	0.5	0.1	0.4	0.0	0.2
54	Food stores.....	1.2	0.2	0.3	0.6	0.1	0.6
541	Grocery stores .....	1.2	0.2	0.3	0.6	0.1	0.6
554	Gasoline service stations .....	2.2	1.2	1.4	1.4	0.4	1.1
56	Apparel and accessory stores .....	1.9	1.5	0.6	1.6	-0.2	0.6
58	Eating and drinking places .....	5.1	1.0	0.9	2.2	0.4	0.4
591	Drug and proprietary stores .....	1.7	0.8	0.4	1.2	-0.2	0.4



- (1) The coefficients of variation (CVs) for level of sales and the standard errors for trends are medians based on estimates for the preceding 12 months.
- (2) These columns measure the difference between the Advance/Preliminary ratio and the Preliminary/Final ratio estimates -- i.e., the difference between estimates of trend for the same pair of data months. The revisions are based on the latest 12 months of data.