

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF
COMMERCE**

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ADVANCE REPORT ON RETAIL TRADE, JANUARY 1955

Total sales of retail stores in January were \$13.3 billion, the U. S. Department of Commerce announced today. This advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal factors and trading day differences, was 1 percent below December 1954 and about 10 percent above January a year ago.

The January sales figures are based on the Advance Report on Retail Trade, a monthly survey of the Bureau of the Census conducted in cooperation with a representative cross-section of about 1,800 retail firms which, in total, operate some 37,000 stores in the United States. The firms which are cooperating in the early reporting of sales are part of a larger group which furnishes figures at a later date. Therefore, the advance estimates are preliminary and subject to revision. It should also be noted that for kinds of business which experience large seasonal changes in sales from December to January, the January estimates are subject to larger error than most other months.

The preliminary Census figures are shown in table 1 on the reverse side. The Office of Business Economics finds that, after allowance for seasonal variations, the most significant change from December to January was the reduction in sales of motor-vehicle dealers from their high December rate.

(more)

ADVANCE RETAIL SALES REPORT--PRELIMINARY ESTIMATES FOR JANUARY 1955

Table 1.--SALES OF RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES, BY KIND-OF-BUSINESS GROUP
(NOT ADJUSTED for seasonal factors and trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	Sales (millions of dollars)		
	January 1955 (advance estimate)	1954	
		December	January
Retail stores, total ¹	13,313	17,871	12,339
Food group.....	3,412	3,920	3,357
Grocery stores.....	2,845	3,304	2,837
Eating and drinking places.....	992	1,113	988
General merchandise group.....	1,218	2,851	1,167
Department stores ²	669	1,555	624
Apparel group.....	370	1,448	678
Furniture and appliance group.....	690	1,025	671
Lumber, building, hardware group ³	838	1,085	786
Automotive group.....	2,744	2,823	2,124
Gasoline service stations.....	931	1,008	855
Drug and proprietary stores.....	391	530	407

See footnotes below table 2.

Source: Bureau of the Census

Table 2.--SALES OF RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES, BY KIND-OF-BUSINESS GROUP
(ADJUSTED for seasonal factors and trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	Sales (millions of dollars)			Percent change, December 1954 from--	
	1954		December 1953	November 1954	December 1953
	December	November			
Retail stores, total ¹	15,123	14,361	13,932	+5	+9
Durable goods stores, total ¹	5,320	4,948	4,626	+8	+15
Nondurable goods stores, total ¹ ..	9,803	9,412	9,306	+4	+5
Food group.....	3,657	3,494	3,432	+5	+7
Eating and drinking places.....	1,070	1,070	1,064	0	+1
General merchandise group.....	1,669	1,570	1,629	+6	+2
Apparel group.....	912	823	868	+11	+5
Furniture and appliance group.....	766	744	738	+3	+4
Lumber, building, hardware group ³ ..	1,124	1,150	1,045	-2	+8
Automotive group.....	3,054	2,685	2,509	+14	+22
Gasoline service stations.....	974	985	933	-1	+4
Drug and proprietary stores.....	413	411	408	0	+1

Source: Office of Business Economics

¹ Totals include data for kinds of business not shown separately.

² Based on preliminary estimates supplied by Federal Reserve Board.

³ Includes farm equipment dealers.