

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF
COMMERCE**

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ADVANCE REPORT ON RETAIL TRADE, OCTOBER 1955

Total sales of retail stores in October were \$15.8 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 September of this year and about 12 percent above October a year ago.

The October 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.

The preliminary Census figures are shown in table 1 on the reverse side. The Office of Business Economics noted that, after allowance for seasonal variations, sales continued strong in most trades except for a decline among motor-vehicle dealers as the production year for 1955 model automobiles drew to a close.

(more)

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)		
	1955		October 1954
	October	September	
Retail stores, total ¹	15,793	15,905	14,667
Food group.....	3,731	3,766	3,661
Grocery stores.....	3,176	3,205	3,100
Eating and drinking places.....	1,204	1,220	1,140
General merchandise group.....	1,826	1,674	1,686
Department stores ²	1,012	920	923
Apparel group.....	959	910	911
Furniture and appliance group.....	885	822	813
Lumber, building, hardware group ³	1,226	1,297	1,178
Automotive group.....	3,040	3,367	2,491
Gasoline service stations.....	1,088	1,049	1,017
Drug and proprietary stores.....	447	425	406

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, September 1955 from--	
	1955		September 1954	August 1955	September 1954
	September	August			
Retail stores, total ¹	15,840	15,662	14,214	+1	+11
Durable goods stores, total ¹	5,840	5,763	4,798	+1	+22
Nondurable goods stores, total ¹ ..	10,000	9,900	9,417	+1	+6
Food group.....	3,696	3,683	3,570	0	+4
Eating and drinking places.....	1,167	1,165	1,106	0	+6
General merchandise group.....	1,711	1,671	1,566	+2	+9
Apparel group.....	895	892	820	0	+9
Furniture and appliance group.....	826	827	728	0	+13
Lumber, building, hardware group ³ ..	1,204	1,169	1,117	+3	+8
Automotive group.....	3,384	3,363	2,564	+1	+32
Gasoline service stations.....	1,033	1,026	950	+1	+9
Drug and proprietary stores.....	449	442	410	+2	+10

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.