

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF
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ADVANCE REPORT ON RETAIL TRADE, JULY 1956

Total sales of retail stores in July were \$15.5 billion, the U.S. Department of Commerce announced today. This advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal factors and trading day differences, showed no change from June, but was about 3 percent above July a year ago.

The July 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 1,700 retail firms which, in total, operate some 35,000 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 adjustment for seasonal factors and trading day differences, July sales continued at the record rates reached in May and June. The movements among the major groups were small and offsetting.

(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)		
	1956		July 1955
	July	June	
Retail stores, total ¹	15,467	16,724	15,398
Food group.....	3,662	3,980	3,761
Grocery stores.....	3,137	3,413	3,198
Eating and drinking places.....	1,329	1,270	1,274
General merchandise group.....	1,396	1,700	1,413
Department stores ²	746	933	745
Apparel group.....	785	989	756
Furniture and appliance group.....	857	920	825
Lumber, building, hardware group ³	1,266	1,337	1,250
Automotive group.....	3,064	3,363	3,271
Gasoline service stations.....	1,249	1,201	1,117
Drug and proprietary stores.....	467	477	434

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, July 1956 from--	
	1956		June 1955	May 1956	June 1955
	June	May			
Retail stores, total ¹	15,998	15,892	15,345	+1	+4
Durable goods stores, total ¹	5,500	5,396	5,570	+2	-1
Nondurable goods stores, total ¹	10,498	10,496	9,775	0	+7
Food group.....	3,769	3,818	3,635	-1	+4
Eating and drinking places.....	1,241	1,202	1,141	+3	+9
General merchandise group.....	1,730	1,752	1,630	-1	+6
Apparel group.....	957	965	878	-1	+9
Furniture and appliance group.....	899	863	823	+4	+9
Lumber, building, hardware group ³	1,172	1,146	1,174	+2	0
Automotive group.....	2,997	2,961	3,171	+1	-5
Gasoline service stations.....	1,163	1,135	1,030	+2	+13
Drug and proprietary stores.....	480	483	431	-1	+11

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.