

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF
COMMERCE**

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ADVANCE REPORT ON RETAIL TRADE, APRIL 1957

Total sales of retail stores in April were \$16.3 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 March of this year but was about 6 percent above April a year ago.

The April 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. The advance estimates are preliminary and subject to revision, but the revision of the total seldom exceeds $1\frac{1}{2}$ percent.

The Office of Business Economics noted that total sales in April after adjustment for seasonal factors and trading day differences, showed little change from the high rates in the earlier months of the year. Nondurable goods store sales were about unchanged while durable sales were off with small declines reported by most trades.

NOTE: Sales estimates provided in this publication have been revised to reflect a change in classification of milk dealers. Milk dealer establishments with processing on the premises, such as bottling, homogenizing, and pasteurizing, are now classified as manufacturing plants. Therefore, figures shown for the U. S. totals and Food Group (Tables 1 and 2) and Nondurable Goods Stores Total (Table 2) have been revised to exclude the sales of those establishments now classified in manufacturing.

(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)		
	1957		April 1956
	April	March	
Retail stores, total ¹	16,260	15,788	14,889
Food group.....	3,670	3,914	3,392
Grocery stores.....	3,268	3,499	3,006
Eating and drinking places.....	1,123	1,140	1,134
General merchandise group.....	1,703	1,492	1,515
Department stores ²	923	810	853
Apparel group.....	1,117	832	833
Furniture and appliance group.....	817	806	787
Lumber, building, hardware group ³	1,153	1,030	1,156
Automotive group.....	3,347	3,317	3,058
Gasoline service stations.....	1,192	1,181	1,090
Drug and proprietary stores.....	492	500	446

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	Percentage change April 1957 from--		Sales (millions of dollars)				Percentage change March 1957 from--	
	Mar. 1957	Apr. 1956	1957			1956	Feb. 1957	Mar. 1956
			Apr.	Mar.	Feb.	Mar.		
Retail stores, total ¹	0	+6	16,254	16,294	16,351	15,598	0	+4
Durable goods stores, total ¹	-1	+6	5,606	5,685	5,747	5,466	-1	+4
Nondurable goods stores, total ¹ ..	0	+5	10,648	10,609	10,604	10,132	0	+5
Food group.....				3,812	3,816	3,614	0	+5
Eating and drinking places.....				1,216	1,219	1,192	0	+2
General merchandise group.....				1,741	1,718	1,702	+1	+2
Apparel group.....				956	992	916	-4	+4
Furniture and appliance group.....				905	899	877	+1	+3
Lumber, building, hardware group ³				1,136	1,120	1,119	+1	+2
Automotive group.....				3,165	3,264	3,049	-3	+4
Gasoline service stations.....				1,246	1,220	1,154	+2	+8
Drug and proprietary stores.....				511	492	485	+4	+5

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.