



For release  
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MARCH 1963

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Total sales of retail stores in March were \$20.0 billion, the U. S. Department of Commerce announced today. After adjustment for seasonal variations and trading day differences, but not for price changes, total retail sales amounted to \$20.7 billion, about 1 percent above February 1963 and 7 percent above March 1962.

The Office of Business Economics noted that, after adjustment for seasonal variations and trading day differences, March sales for both durable and nondurable goods stores rose 1 percent from February. Larger than average sales gains were reported by department and furniture stores and the lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group. Based on the full sample, seasonally adjusted sales of all retail stores in February 1963 were about one percent above January.

The March sales figures are based on a monthly survey of the Bureau of the Census conducted in cooperation with a representative cross-section of about 2,000 retail firms which, in total, operate some 40,000 stores in the United States. The firms which are cooperating in the early reporting of sales are part of a larger sample group which furnishes figures at a later date. The advance estimates are subject to revision in the estimates subsequently derived from the full sample, but the revision of the total seldom exceeds  $1\frac{1}{2}$  percent.

(more)

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C. Annual subscription to Current Retail Trade Reports (Weekly Retail Sales Report, Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report, Monthly Retail Trade Report, and Annual Retail Trade Report sold as a single subscription) \$5.00. Single copies, available only from the Bureau of the Census, 10¢ each.

ADVANCE RETAIL SALES FOR MARCH 1963

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

Kind-of-business group	Sales (millions of dollars)		
	1963		1962
	March <sup>1</sup>	February <sup>2</sup>	March
Retail stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	19,958	17,169	19,036
Durable-goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	6,418	5,448	6,139
Nondurable-goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	13,540	11,721	12,897
Food group.....	5,135	4,479	4,971
Grocery stores.....	4,650	4,058	4,522
Eating and drinking places.....	1,467	1,270	1,336
General merchandise group <sup>4</sup> .....	2,082	1,633	1,966
Apparel group.....	1,096	837	1,063
Furniture and appliance group.....	877	779	814
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equip. group	1,161	891	1,105
Automotive group.....	3,882	3,318	3,780
Gasoline service stations.....	1,552	1,402	1,487
Drug and proprietary stores.....	684	639	657

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 variations and trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	Percentage change, March 1963 from--		Sales (millions of dollars)				Percentage change, Feb. 1963 from--	
	Feb. 1963	Mar. 1962	1963		1962		Jan. 1963	Feb. 1962
			March <sup>1</sup>	Feb. <sup>2</sup>	Jan.	Feb.		
Retail stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	+1.2 +1	+7	20,695	20,452	20,247	19,027	+1	+7
Durable-goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> ...	+0.9 +1	+8	6,663	6,602	6,477	5,977	+2	+10
Nondurable-goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	+1.3 +1	+7	14,032	13,850	13,770	13,050	+1	+6
Food group.....				4,911	4,943	4,732	-1	+4
Eating and drinking places.....				1,520	1,463	1,414	+4	+7
General merchandise group.....				2,329	2,320	2,138	0	+9
Apparel group.....				1,231	1,220	1,170	+1	+5
Furniture and appliance group.....				949	941	879	+1	+8
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.....				1,267	1,266	1,251	0	+1
Automotive group.....				3,803	3,726	3,361	+2	+13
Gasoline service stations.....				1,616	1,639	1,539	-1	+5
Drug and proprietary stores.....				686	663	665	+3	+3

<sup>1</sup> Advance sample estimates.

Source: Office of Business Economics

<sup>2</sup> Preliminary estimates of full sample.

<sup>3</sup> Totals include data for kinds of business not shown separately.

<sup>4</sup> Separate department store figures have been discontinued until arrangements are made to obtain these data on a comparable basis with that used for the other kinds of retail trade. However, department store figures are included in the general merchandise group based on data supplied by the Federal Reserve Board.