



The U.S. Department of Commerce announced today that total sales of retail stores in April were estimated at \$24.9 billion; this advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal and holiday variations and trading day differences but not price changes, was \$25.7 billion. The advance estimate, after adjustment was virtually unchanged from March but 3 percent above April sales last year. Adjusted February-through-April sales averaged about the same as the prior three months but 2 percent above the comparable period in 1966.

The Office of Business Economics noted that after adjustment, sales by durable goods retailers were unchanged in April while sales of nondurable goods retailers edged down about 1 percent. Increases for general merchandise and apparel stores were more than offset by declines for most other nondurable kinds of business. Average monthly sales for durable goods stores during the February-April period were about 1 percent below the average for the prior 3 months, while the average for nondurable goods stores for the comparable period increased 1 percent. The year-to-year gain in the three month average for nondurable goods stores was about 4 percent, while durable goods stores declined 2 percent.

Based on the full sample the total U.S. unadjusted sales estimate for March was \$25.7 billion, about \$0.5 billion less than the \$26.2 billion published earlier in the March Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report released on April 10, 1967. The seasonally adjusted sales for March as revised were 1 percent above February.

The April sales figures are based on advance reporting of a small subsample of the Census Bureau's panel of retail firms. The advance estimates are subject to revision by estimates subsequently derived from the full sample.

The revision of the total seldom exceeds 1.5 percent and for the past year has averaged 1.1 percent. For individual kind-of-business groups revisions have been greater, ranging on the average from 0.9 percent for food stores to 3.6 percent for the apparel group.

It should be noted that even for figures derived from the full sample, sales movements between individual pairs of months tend to be relatively irregular. Data for several months are generally required to indicate the underlying trend.

(more)

ADVANCE RETAIL SALES FOR APRIL 1967

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)		
	1967		1966
	April ¹	March ²	April
Retail stores, total ³	24,924	25,713	25,477
Durable-goods stores, total ³	8,288	8,258	8,372
Nondurable-goods stores, total ³	16,636	17,455	17,105
Food group.....	5,756	6,081	6,075
Grocery stores.....	5,290	5,580	5,559
Eating and drinking places.....	1,933	1,931	1,901
General merchandise group.....	3,120	3,227	3,080
Department stores.....	2,076	2,093	2,007
Apparel group.....	1,333	1,516	1,456
Furniture and appliance group.....	1,142	1,191	1,097
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equip. group	1,498	1,404	1,500
Automotive group.....	4,998	5,003	5,138
Gasoline service stations.....	1,836	1,872	1,898
Drug and proprietary stores.....	842	896	824

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, Apr. 1967 from		Sales (millions of dollars)				Percentage change, Mar. 1967 from	
	Mar. 1967	Apr. 1966	1967			1966	Feb. 1967	Mar. 1966
			Apr. ¹	Mar. ²	Feb.	Mar.		
Retail stores, total ³	0	+3	25,667	25,771	25,470	25,536	+1	+1
Durable-goods stores, total ³ ..	0	+3	8,164	8,170	7,955	8,649	+3	-6
Nondurable-goods stores, total ³	-1	+3	17,503	17,601	17,515	16,887	0	+4
Food group.....				6,026	5,942	5,917	+1	+2
Eating and drinking places.....				2,037	2,026	1,935	+1	+5
General merchandise group.....				3,358	3,361	3,255	0	+4
Apparel group.....				1,448	1,476	1,377	-2	+5
Furniture and appliance group.....				1,277	1,308	1,249	-2	+2
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group....				1,540	1,541	1,544	0	0
Automotive group.....				4,614	4,394	5,121	+5	-10
Gasoline service stations.....				1,934	1,968	1,907	-2	1
Drug and proprietary stores.....				892	883	816	+1	.9

¹Advance sample estimates.

²Preliminary estimates of full sample.

³Totals include data for kinds of business not shown separately.