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The Bureau of the Census, U. S. Department of Commerce, announced today that total sales of retail stores in September were estimated at \$28.8 billion. This advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal and holiday variations and trading day differences but not for price changes, was \$29.7 billion. The advance estimate, after adjustment, was about 1 percent above August sales and about 3% above September sales last year. Adjusted total July-through-September sales averaged about the same as the prior three months but 2% above the comparable period a year ago. It should be noted that changes in automobile model year dates affect the seasonally adjusted trends for total retail sales and sales of the durable goods category. It is anticipated that the use of new seasonal factors scheduled to be derived next month from the full sample will have the effect of increasing the year-to-year change trends shown in this report. The total adjusted September sales, less the automotive group, were virtually the same as the comparable August sales and exceeded September 1968 sales by over 4%. Revised year-to-year trends will be available when new automobile seasonal factors are derived from the full sample for September.

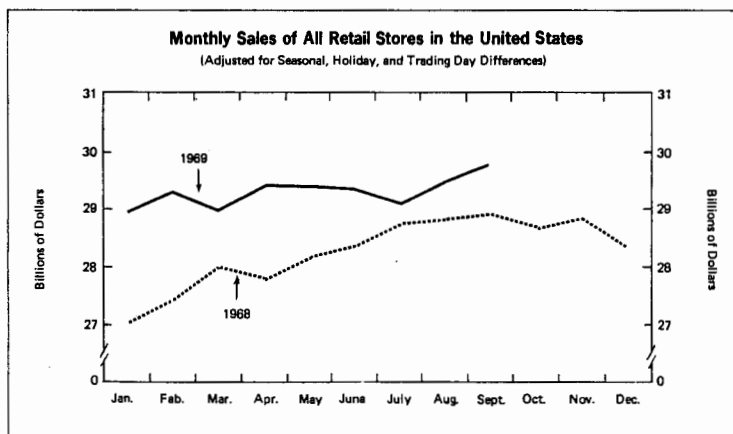
Based on the full sample, the total U. S. unadjusted sales estimate for August was about \$0.1 billion above the \$29.4 billion published earlier

in the August Advance Monthly Retail Sales report released September 10, 1969. The seasonally adjusted sales for August as revised were about 1 percent above July.

The September sales figures are based on advance reporting of a small subsample of the Census Bureau's panel of retail firms. Beginning with the October 1967 report, the advance figures have been modified on the basis of the relationship between the advance estimates and full sample estimates. 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 1.0 percent. For individual kind-of-business groups revisions have been greater, ranging on the average from 1.1 percent for general merchandise stores to 5.0 percent for the lumber group.

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



For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. 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) \$6.00. Single copies, available only from the Bureau of the Census, 10c.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE Maurice H. Stans, Secretary
Rocco C. Siciliano, Under Secretary
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS George Hay Brown, Director

Table 1. Sales of Retail Stores in the United States, by Kind-of-Business Group

Part A. NOT ADJUSTED for seasonal variations or trading day differences

Kind-of-business group	Sales (millions of dollars)		
	1969		1968
	September ¹	August ²	September
Retail stores, total ³	28,819	29,488	27,015
Durable goods stores, total ³	9,257	8,970	8,703
Nondurable goods stores, total ³	19,562	20,518	18,312
Food group.....	6,223	6,694	5,860
Grocery stores.....	5,796	6,262	5,448
Eating and drinking places.....	2,202	2,423	2,175
General merchandise group with nonstores.....	4,778	4,910	4,266
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....	4,239	4,440	3,831
Department stores.....	2,897	3,000	2,602
Apparel group.....	1,709	1,702	1,557
Furniture and appliance group.....	1,393	1,347	1,412
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.....	1,718	1,704	1,728
Automotive group.....	5,319	5,119	4,814
Gasoline service stations.....	2,093	2,232	2,017
Drug and proprietary stores.....	959	995	912

Part B. ADJUSTED for seasonal variations and trading day differences

Kind-of-business group	Sales (millions of dollars)					Percentage change, August 1969 from--	
	1969		1968		July 1969	Aug. 1968	
	Sept. ¹	Aug. ²	July	Sept.			Aug.
Retail stores, total ³	29,697	29,411	29,090	28,902	28,760	+1	+2
Durable goods stores, total ³	9,453	9,184	9,141	9,687	9,377	0	-2
Nondurable goods stores, total ³ ..	20,244	20,227	19,949	19,215	19,383	+1	+4
Food group.....		6,456	6,275	6,155	6,188	+3	+4
Eating and drinking places.....		2,144	2,110	2,149	2,139	+2	0
General merchandise group with nonstores.....		4,973	5,019	4,520	4,626	-1	+8
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....		4,486	4,556	4,061	4,191	-2	+7
Apparel group.....		1,761	1,700	1,619	1,659	+4	+6
Furniture and appliance group.....		1,339	1,380	1,395	1,433	-3	-7
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group..		1,588	1,536	1,638	1,602	+3	-1
Automotive group ⁴		5,434	5,419	5,899	5,561	0	-2
Gasoline service stations.....		2,096	2,080	2,049	2,063	+1	+2
Drug and proprietary stores.....		1,016	994	971	973	+2	+5

¹Advance sample estimates.

²Preliminary estimates of full sample.

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

⁴During months of model change over, seasonal adjustment factors are less reliable than in other months.

Table 2. Percentage Changes for Retail Sales

(ADJUSTED for seasonal variations and trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	September 1969 from--		July through September 1969 from--	
	Aug. 1969	Sept. 1968	April through June 1969	July through September 1968
Retail stores, total.....	+1	+3	0	+2
Durable goods stores, total.....	+3	-2	-3	-2
Nondurable goods stores, total.....	0	+5	+1	+4

Source: Bureau of the Census