

advance monthly RETAIL SALES

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE • Social and Economic Statistics Administration • BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
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(301) 763-7040

JULY 1972

The Bureau of the Census, U. S. Department of Commerce, announced today that total sales of retail stores in July were estimated at \$37.0 billion. The Bureau, part of the Department's Social and Economic Statistics Administration (SESA), said this advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal and holiday variations and trading day differences but not for price changes, was \$37.4 billion, about 2 percent above June and about 11 percent above July sales last year. Adjusted total May-through-July sales averaged about 3 percent above the prior 3 months and 10 percent above the comparable period a year ago.

Based on the full sample, the total U. S. adjusted sales estimate for June was about \$0.3 billion more than the \$36.4 billion published earlier in the June Advance Monthly Retail Sales report released July 10, 1972. The seasonally adjusted sales for June as revised were about 1 percent below May.

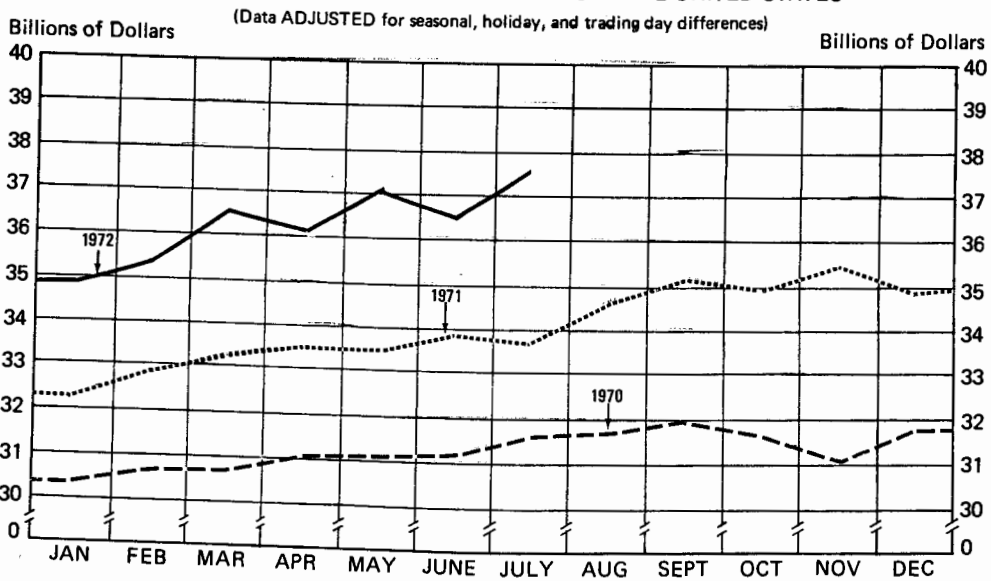
The advance sales estimates are based on early reporting, by a small subsample of the Census Bureau's retail survey panel, of sales figures for the weeks and part-weeks comprising the month. Because retailers' weekly records often differ

from their monthly records (in reflecting such elements as carrying charges, sales taxes, merchandise returns), the sales figures estimated for the advance report can differ from the subsequently issued report based on the monthly records of the full sample of retailers. Additionally, sampling variability between sub-sample and later full sample results can be a cause of difference. For most months, such differences have been reduced by modifying the advance estimate, prior to publication, on the basis of the relationship between the advance and full-sample data for previous months.

The differences between the month-to-month change in advance and full-sample estimates for total retail sales seldom exceed 1.0 percent and for the past year has averaged 0.4 percent. For individual kind of business groups, differences have been greater, ranging on the average from 0.7 percent for the general merchandise group to 2.2 percent for the Lumber group.

Even for figures derived from the full sample, sales movements from one month to the next can be relatively irregular. Data for 3 months are generally required to indicate the underlying trend.

MONTHLY SALES OF ALL RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES



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 of the Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report are available from the Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233, at 10 cents each.

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)		
	1972		1971
	July ¹	June ²	July
Total, retail stores ³	36,958	38,561	34,560
Total (excluding automotive group).....	29,363	30,289	27,761
Durable goods stores, total ³	12,582	13,564	11,299
Nondurable goods stores, total ³	24,376	24,997	23,261
Food group.....	8,112	8,178	7,970
Grocery stores.....	7,544	7,608	7,408
Eating and drinking places.....	3,060	3,016	2,829
General merchandise group with nonstores.....	5,753	6,012	5,271
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....	5,250	5,520	4,778
Department stores.....	3,530	3,745	3,205
Apparel group.....	1,587	1,737	1,570
Furniture and appliance group.....	1,744	1,765	1,521
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.....	2,247	2,448	2,082
Automotive group.....	7,595	8,272	6,799
Gasoline service stations.....	2,657	2,614	2,633
Drug and proprietary stores.....	1,214	1,206	1,106

Part B. ADJUSTED for seasonal variations and trading day differences

Kind-of-business group	Sales ¹ (millions of dollars)					Percentage change June 1972 from--	
	1972		1971			May 1972	June 1971
	July ¹	June ¹	May	July	June		
Total, retail stores ³	37,356	36,674	37,120	33,688	33,827	-1	+8
Total (excluding automotive group).....	29,851	29,495	29,818	27,257	27,418	-1	+8
Durable goods stores, total ³	12,431	12,100	12,272	10,747	10,782	-1	+12
Nondurable goods stores, total ³	24,925	24,572	24,848	22,941	23,045	-1	+7
Food group.....		7,837	7,974	7,411	7,418	-2	+6
Eating and drinking places.....		2,795	2,778	2,567	2,574	+1	+9
General merchandise group with nonstores.....		6,180	6,246	5,653	5,654	-1	+9
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....		5,660	5,731	5,150	5,194	-1	+9
Apparel group.....		1,785	1,843	1,729	1,755	-3	+2
Furniture and appliance group.....		1,730	1,748	1,518	1,541	-1	+12
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.....		2,114	2,159	1,862	1,892	-2	+12
Automotive group.....		7,179	7,302	6,431	6,409	-2	+12
Gasoline service stations.....		2,471	2,529	2,433	2,390	-2	+3
Drug and proprietary stores.....		1,229	1,221	1,124	1,133	+1	+8

¹Advance sample estimates. ²Preliminary estimates of full sample. ³Totals include data for kinds of business not shown separately.

Table 2. Percentage Changes for Retail Sales

(ADJUSTED for seasonal variations and trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	July 1972 from--		May 1972 through July 1972 from--	
	June 1972	July 1971	February 1972 through April 1972	May 1971 through July 1971
Total, retail stores.....	+2	+11	+3	+10
Total (excluding automotive group).....	+1	+9 ¹ / ₂	+2	+9
Durable goods stores, total.....	+2 ¹ / ₂	+15 ¹ / ₂	+4	+15
Nondurable goods stores, total.....	+1 ¹ / ₂	+8 ¹ / ₂	+2	+8

Source: Bureau of the Census