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advance monthly RETAIL SALES

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE • Social and Economic Statistics Administration • BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

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The Bureau of the Census, U. S. Department of Commerce, announced today that total sales of retail stores in July were estimated at \$41.5 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 \$42.6 billion, about 3 percent above June, and about 14 percent above July sales last year. Adjusted total May-through-July sales were about 1 percent above the prior 3 months but 13 percent above the comparable period a year ago.

Based on the full sample, the total U. S. adjusted sales estimate for June was about \$0.1 billion less than the \$41.3 billion published earlier in the June Advance Monthly Retail Sales report released July 10, 1973. 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

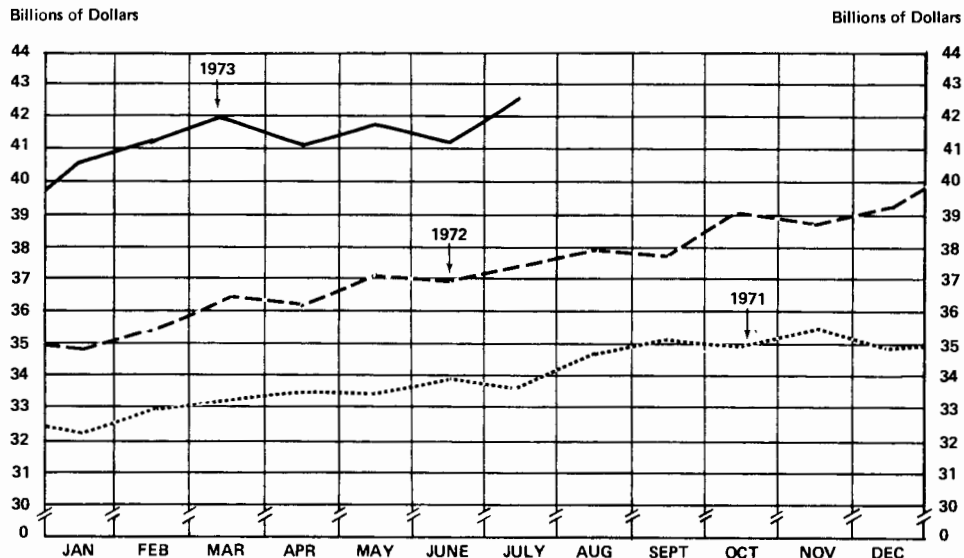
from their monthly records (in reflecting such elements as carrying charges, sales taxes, merchandise returns), the sales figures estimated for the advance report can differ from the subsequently issued report based on the monthly records of the full sample of retailers. Additionally, sampling variability 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 0.8 percent. For individual kind of business groups, differences have been greater, ranging on the average from 0.7 percent for the Food group to 3.0 percent for the Building materials 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

(Data ADJUSTED for seasonal, holiday, and trading day differences)



Annual subscription to current retail trade reports are for sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. (Weekly Retail Sales Report, Advance Monthly Retail Trade Report, Monthly Retail Trade Report, and Annual Retail Trade Report sold as a single subscription.) Price: \$13.00. Single copies of the Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report are available only from the Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233, at 15 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)		
	1973		1972
	July ¹	June	July
Total, retail stores ³	41,539	43,641	36,961
Total (excluding automotive group).....	32,925	34,405	29,475
Durable goods stores, total ³	14,452	15,372	12,624
Nondurable goods stores, total ³	27,087	28,269	24,337
Food group.....	8,864	9,222	8,092
Grocery stores.....	8,230	8,593	7,492
Eating and drinking places.....	3,361	3,361	3,063
General merchandise group with nonstores.....	6,322	6,778	5,660
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....	5,840	6,298	5,208
Department stores.....	3,905	4,290	3,486
Apparel group.....	1,743	1,989	1,580
Furniture and appliance group.....	1,943	2,024	1,749
Bldg. materials, hardware, farm equipment group.....	2,764	2,901	2,375
Automotive group.....	8,614	9,236	7,486
Gasoline service stations.....	3,055	3,002	2,752
Drug and proprietary stores.....	1,252	1,299	1,163

Part B. ADJUSTED for seasonal variations and trading day differences

Kind-of-business group	Sales (millions of dollars)					Percentage change June 1973 from--	
	1973		1972			May 1973	June 1972
	July ¹	June ²	May	July	June		
Total, retail stores ³	42,618	41,218	41,735	37,342	36,822	-1	+12
Total (excluding automotive group).....	34,055	33,281	33,232	29,943	29,556	0	+13
Durable goods stores, total ³	14,341	13,696	14,299	12,468	12,253	-4	+12
Nondurable goods stores, total ³	28,277	27,522	27,436	24,874	24,569	0	+12
Food group.....		8,680	8,665	7,956	7,832	0	+11
Eating and drinking places.....		3,092	3,096	2,818	2,801	0	+10
General merchandise group with nonstores.....		6,945	6,917	6,267	6,143	0	+13
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....		6,443	6,386	5,801	5,632	+1	+14
Apparel group.....		2,011	1,974	1,801	1,788	+2	+12
Furniture and appliance group.....		1,998	1,995	1,781	1,735	0	+15
Bldg. materials, hardware, farm equipment group.....		2,557	2,560	2,206	2,142	0	+19
Automotive group.....		7,937	8,503	7,399	7,266	-7	+9
Gasoline service stations.....		2,837	2,884	2,577	2,500	-2	+13
Drug and proprietary stores.....		1,313	1,291	1,204	1,218	-2	+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 1973 from--		May 1973 through July 1973 from--	
	June 1973	July 1972	February 1973 through April 1973	May 1972 through July 1972
Total, retail stores.....	+3	+14	+1	+13
Total (excluding automotive group).....	+2	+14	+2	+13
Durable goods stores, total.....	+5	+15	-2	+14
Nondurable goods stores, total.....	+3	+14	+3	+12

Source: Bureau of the Census