

advance monthly RETAIL SALES

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The Bureau of the Census, U. S. Department of Commerce, announced today that total sales of retail stores in October were estimated at \$44.1 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 \$43.4 billion, about 2 percent above September and about 11 percent above October sales last year. Adjusted total August-through-October sales were about 2 percent above the prior 3 months and 12 percent above the comparable period a year ago.

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.

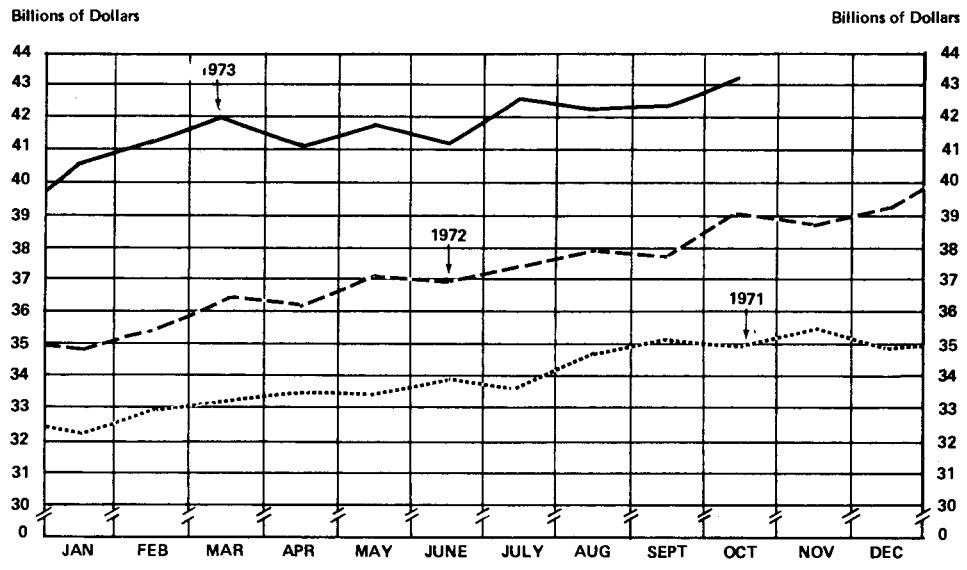
Based on the full sample, the total U. S. adjusted sales estimate for September was about \$0.6 billion more than the \$41.8 billion published earlier in the September Advance Monthly Retail Sales report released October 10, 1973. The seasonally adjusted sales for September as revised were virtually unchanged from August.

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 0.9 percent. For individual kind of business groups, differences have been greater, ranging on the average from 0.8 percent for the Food group to 3.0 percent for the Apparel group.

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

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
	October	September	October
Total, retail stores ³	44,102	40,851	39,014
Total (excluding automotive group).....	34,999	33,013	30,971
Durable goods stores, total ³	15,353	13,649	13,569
Nondurable goods stores, total ³	28,749	27,202	25,445
Food group.....	9,007	8,870	7,862
Grocery stores.....	8,367	8,255	7,293
Eating and drinking places.....	3,295	3,291	2,902
General merchandise group with nonstores.....	7,246	6,596	6,540
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....	6,650	6,078	5,985
Department stores.....	4,510	4,145	4,025
Apparel group.....	2,116	2,010	1,923
Furniture and appliance group.....	2,098	1,955	1,863
Bldg. materials, hardware, farm equipment group.....	2,922	2,688	2,580
Automotive group.....	9,103	7,838	8,043
Gasoline service stations.....	3,003	2,839	2,686
Drug and proprietary stores.....	1,281	1,235	1,189

Part B. ADJUSTED for seasonal variations and trading day differences

Kind-of-business group	Sales (millions of dollars)					Percentage change September 1973 from--	
	1973		1972		August 1973	September 1972	
	October	September	August	October			
Total, retail stores ³	43,351	42,474	42,363	39,106	37,746	0	+13
Total (excluding automotive group).....	34,755	34,023	33,718	31,253	30,243	+1	+12
Durable goods stores, total ³	14,504	14,200	14,481	13,168	12,614	-2	+13
Nondurable goods stores, total ³	28,847	28,274	27,882	25,938	25,132	+1	+13
Food group.....	9,003	8,964	8,964	8,209	8,005	0	+12
Eating and drinking places.....	3,214	3,158	3,158	2,873	2,830	+2	+14
General merchandise group with nonstores.....	6,992	6,923	6,923	6,548	6,333	+1	+10
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....	6,493	6,402	6,402	6,065	5,858	+1	+11
Apparel group.....	2,078	1,975	1,975	1,947	1,836	+5	+13
Furniture and appliance group.....	2,045	2,025	2,025	1,846	1,750	+1	+17
Bldg. materials, hardware, farm equipment group.....	2,481	2,582	2,582	2,340	2,254	-4	+10
Automotive group ⁴	8,451	8,645	8,645	7,853	7,503	-2	+13
Gasoline service stations.....	2,888	2,836	2,836	2,686	2,611	+2	+11
Drug and proprietary stores.....	1,288	1,298	1,298	1,226	1,204	-1	+7

¹Advance sample estimates. ²Preliminary estimates of full sample. ³Totals include data for kinds of business not shown separately. ⁴During months of model changeover, 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	October 1973 from--		August 1973 through October 1973 from--	
	September 1973	October 1972	May 1973 through July 1973	August 1972 through October 1972
Total, retail stores.....	+2	+11	+2	+12
Total (excluding automotive group).....	+2	+11	+2	+12
Durable goods stores, total.....	+2	+10	+2	+12
Nondurable goods stores, total.....	+2	+11	+2	+12

Source: Bureau of the Census