

Advance Monthly Retail Sales

OCTOBER 1981

FOR WIRE TRANSMISSION 2:30 P.M. EDT, Thursday, November 12, 1981

CB-81-197

The Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce, announced today that total sales of retail stores in October after adjusting for seasonal variations and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were estimated at \$97.2 billion. This adjusted figure was 2 percent below September but 7 percent higher than October a year ago. The adjusted October estimate excluding the automotive group was little changed from September but 7 percent above October of last year.

The advance sales estimates are based on early reporting of sales by a small subsample of the Bureau's retail survey panel. Because of the early reporting, the advance estimates can differ from the subsequent estimates which are based on monthly reports obtained from the full sample of retail stores. In addition, sampling variability between the subsample used for the advance estimates and the full sample can cause a difference. For most months, such differences have been reduced by modifying the advance estimates prior to publication on the basis of the relationship between the advance and full-sample data for previous months.

Adjusted sales of durable goods stores were about 5 percent below September while sales of nondurable goods stores were little changed. Compared with sales for October 1980, durable goods stores sales increased 6 percent while nondurable goods stores increased 7 percent.

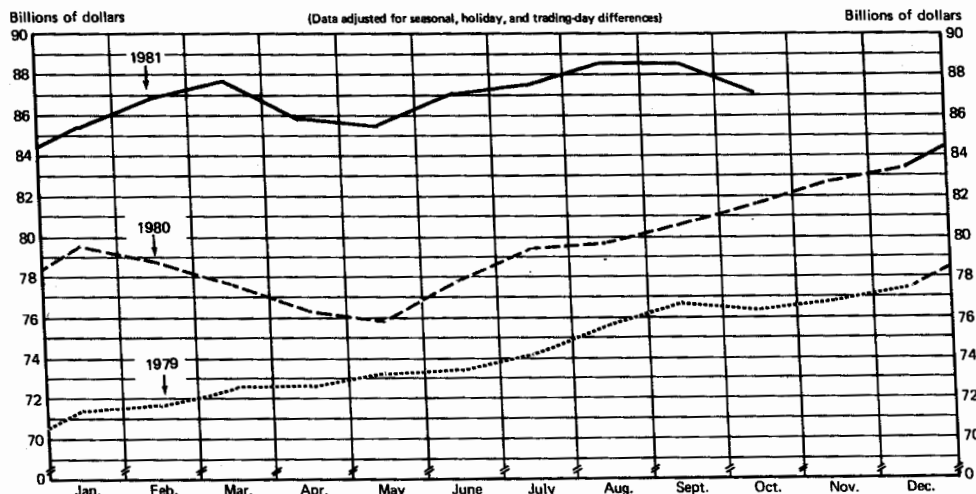
Percentage differences between advance and full-sample preliminary estimates of month-to-month percentage change in seasonally adjusted total retail store sales have ranged from approximately -1.5 percent to +1.6 percent with the average of the absolute differences about 0.8 percent for the past 12 months. For individual kind-of-business groups, these differences tend to be higher. Sampling variability of and revisions to advance-to-preliminary estimates are shown in table 4 on the last page of this report.

The revised estimate of retail sales for September based on preliminary results from a full sample of retail stores was about \$98.5 billion, about \$0.3 billion below the September advance estimate published earlier. Seasonally adjusted preliminary sales for September were virtually unchanged from August but were 10 percent above September 1980. Excluding the automotive group, retail sales were little changed from August but 8 percent above September 1980. For nondurable goods stores, adjusted September sales were also little changed from August but were 8 percent above the same month a year ago. For durable goods stores, September adjusted sales were virtually unchanged from August but were 13 percent above September 1980.

Preliminary estimates for September 1981 and final estimates for August 1981 based on the full sample will be published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for September BR-81-9). The complete report will provide sales estimates in greater detail and will present a description of revisions, and the techniques used in developing the estimates. In addition, the completed report will include approximate measures of sampling variability.

The Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report for November is scheduled to be released December 11, 1981 at 2:30 p.m.

ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES FOR THE UNITED STATES JANUARY 1979-OCTOBER 1981



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The Advance Monthly Retail Sales report, the Monthly Retail Trade report, and the Annual Retail Trade report are available on a single subscription from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402, at \$25 per year. Add \$6.25 for each subscription to a foreign address. Postage stamps not acceptable; currency submitted at sender's risk. Remittances from foreign countries must be by international money order or by a draft on a U.S. bank. Single copies of the Advance Monthly Retail Sales report are for sale by Subscriber Services (Publications), Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233, at 70 cents each.

Table 1. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales by Kind of Business for the United States

(Sales in millions of dollars)

1972 SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted					Adjusted ¹				
		1981			1980		1981			1980	
		Oct. ² advance	Sept. prelim.	Aug. final	Oct.	Sept.	Oct. ² advance	Sept. prelim.	Aug. final	Oct.	Sept.
	Retail trade, total.....	89,963	85,885	89,555	84,000	77,579	87,179	88,536	88,591	81,552	80,620
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	74,296	69,870	72,203	68,973	64,090	71,962	71,877	71,865	67,294	66,447
	Durable goods stores, total.....	27,871	27,822	29,438	26,698	24,506	26,846	28,399	28,439	25,293	25,094
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	4,668	4,559	4,646	4,672	4,434	4,116	4,165	4,158	4,084	4,039
521,3	Building materials and supply stores.....	(*)	3,259	3,298	3,398	3,215	(*)	2,864	2,850	2,863	2,820
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	729	748	692	642	(*)	721	751	646	639
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	15,667	16,015	17,352	15,027	13,489	15,217	16,659	16,726	14,258	14,173
551,2,5, 6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous auto- motive dealers.....	(*)	14,214	15,501	13,330	11,965	(*)	14,853	14,948	12,695	12,661
551	Motor vehicle dealers (franchised).....	(*)	12,518	13,478	11,926	10,450	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	1,801	1,851	1,697	1,524	(*)	1,806	1,778	1,563	1,512
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	4,018	3,881	3,915	3,822	3,626	3,890	3,915	3,883	3,682	3,702
571	Furniture and home furnishings stores....	(*)	2,328	2,378	2,309	2,170	(*)	2,368	2,336	2,210	2,233
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores	(*)	1,209	1,211	1,126	1,083	(*)	1,202	1,212	1,093	1,097
5722	Household appliance stores.....	(*)	530	527	553	516	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	62,092	58,063	60,117	57,302	53,073	60,333	60,137	60,152	56,259	55,526
53	General merchandise group stores.....	10,914	9,813	10,355	10,105	8,923	10,578	10,492	10,713	9,940	9,649
531	Department stores.....	9,010	8,088	8,467	8,198	7,299	8,722	8,595	8,756	8,045	7,840
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	668	757	735	635	(*)	738	781	739	722
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.	(*)	1,057	1,131	1,172	989	(*)	1,159	1,176	1,156	1,087
54	Food stores.....	20,904	19,643	20,234	18,853	17,712	20,329	20,096	20,328	18,592	18,577
541	Grocery stores.....	19,523	18,317	18,840	17,561	16,474	18,918	18,672	18,897	17,267	17,250
554	Gasoline service stations.....	8,871	8,614	8,955	8,244	7,982	8,663	8,649	8,480	8,090	7,990
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	4,349	3,948	4,126	3,931	3,586	4,091	4,080	4,052	3,771	3,724
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	616	649	702	608	(*)	698	708	702	699
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	(*)	1,582	1,592	1,546	1,409	(*)	1,580	1,595	1,431	1,416
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	774	882	785	685	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	757	774	724	693	(*)	723	746	672	670
58	Eating and drinking places.....	8,095	8,012	8,588	7,518	7,276	7,905	8,020	7,793	7,371	7,276
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	2,839	2,669	2,756	2,693	2,507	2,882	2,861	2,844	2,742	2,667
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,338	1,422	1,347	1,277	(*)	1,408	1,404	1,369	1,348
53,56,57, 594,5961 (pt.)	GAF ³ plus mail-order houses (department stores mdse.).....	(*)	20,628	21,467	20,846	18,777	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
53,56,57, 594	GAF ³	(*)	20,126	21,002	20,215	18,319	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)

NOTE: Totals include data for kinds of business not shown separately.

*Advance estimates are not available from the subsample panel for these kinds of business.

NA Not available.

¹Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. (See Explanatory Material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-81-09.²Advance estimates are based on early reporting by a small subsample of the full survey panel. All other estimates are based on the full sample.³GAF represents stores which specialize in department store types of merchandise. Data for mail-order catalog desks located within department stores of some mail-order firms are included in the department store estimates.

Table 2. Percent Change in Estimated Monthly Retail Sales by Kind of Business for the United States

(Adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences)

1972 SIC code	Kind of business	Percent change					
		Oct. 1981 advance from--		Sept. 1981 preliminary from--		Aug. 1981 through Oct. 1981	
		Sept. 1981 preliminary	Oct. 1980 final	Aug. 1981 final	Sept. 1980 final	May 1981 through July 1981	Aug. 1980 through Oct. 1980
	Retail trade, total.....	-2	+7	0	+10	+2	+9
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	0	+7	0	+8	+1	+8
	Durable goods stores, total.....	-5	+6	0	+13	+2	+12
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	-1	+1	0	+3	-5	+4
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	-9	+7	0	+18	+5	+15
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	-1	+6	+1	+6	+3	+6
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	0	+7	0	+8	+1	+8
53	General merchandise group stores.....	+1	+6	-2	+9	+1	+8
531	Department stores.....	+1	+8	-2	+10	+1	+10
54	Food stores.....	+1	+9	-1	+8	+2	+9
541	Grocery stores.....	+1	+10	-1	+8	+3	+9
554	Gasoline service stations.....	0	+7	+2	+8	0	+7
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	0	+8	+1	+10	+2	+8
58	Eating and drinking places.....	-1	+7	+3	+10	+1	+9
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	+1	+5	+1	+7	+1	+7

Table 3. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales of Group II Companies by Kind of Business for the United States

(Sales in millions of dollars)

1972 SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted			Adjusted ¹		
		Sept. 1981 preliminary	Aug. 1981 final	Sept. 1980	Sept. 1981 preliminary	Aug. 1981 final	Sept. 1980
	Retail trade, total.....	28,821	29,772	25,927	30,209	30,222	27,368
53	General merchandise group stores.....	8,688	9,162	7,842	9,291	9,508	8,475
531	Department stores.....	7,675	8,057	6,914	8,165	8,332	7,418
533	Variety stores.....	508	572	482	560	602	550
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.	505	533	446	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	10,383	10,604	9,209	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
541	Grocery stores.....	10,236	10,448	9,105	10,498	10,705	9,604
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	1,396	1,491	1,227	1,409	1,390	1,257
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	561	584	496	567	560	513
566	Shoe stores.....	354	370	325	330	343	307
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	1,287	1,342	1,233	1,407	1,414	1,340

Note: The Group II component of the sample consists of companies which had 11 or more retail establishments according to the most recent update of multi-establishment files and which were selected with certainty (i.e., their sales size exceeded specified dollar volume cutoffs which vary by kind of business).

¹Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. (See Explanatory Material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-81-09.)

Table 4. Sampling Variability of and Revision to Advance-to-Preliminary Estimate

SIC code	Kind of business	Estimated coefficient of variation in percent of the advance-to-preliminary ratio			Preliminary-to-final percent change minus the advance-to-preliminary percent change			
		Range ¹		Median	Range ²		Mean	Average of absolute difference
		From	To		From	To		
	Retail trade, total.....	0.7	0.9	0.85	-1.54	+1.64	0.03	0.76
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	0.7	0.9	0.8	-1.07	+1.19	-0.09	0.63
	Durable goods stores, total.....	0.7	2.2	1.8	-3.59	+4.63	0.73	1.85
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	1.7	2.5	1.95	-4.10	+7.02	1.01	1.87
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	1.8	2.8	2.2	-4.62	+7.79	0.56	2.87
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	1.3	4.8	2.25	-4.37	+4.53	0.11	2.22
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	0.5	0.7	0.7	-1.24	+1.33	-0.14	0.71
53	General merchandise group stores.....	0.3	1.0	0.5	-3.03	+3.45	0.43	1.70
531	Department stores.....	0.2	0.4	0.25	-1.81	+3.04	0.69	1.74
54	Food stores.....	1.2	1.4	1.3	-1.65	-0.71	-0.29	0.61
541	Grocery stores.....	0.3	0.6	0.5	-1.81	+0.54	-0.60	0.79
554	Gasoline service stations.....	0.8	1.2	0.95	-2.32	+4.16	-0.51	1.50
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	1.3	3.2	2.35	-3.60	-2.44	-0.23	1.39
58	Eating and drinking places.....	0.7	1.2	1.0	-2.35	+1.55	-0.25	1.42
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	0.4	0.9	0.5	-1.39	+3.63	0.43	1.20

Note: See Appendix B, Reliability of Data, in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for a discussion on the measures of sampling variability.

¹The ranges of sampling variability shown are based on sales estimates unadjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences for the data months of February-June 1981.

²The ranges shown are based on sales estimates adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences for the 12-month period, August 1980-July 1981.

