

# Advance Monthly Retail Sales

JANUARY 1984

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CB-84-24

Advance U.S. retail sales for January, adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences but not for price changes, were \$104.4 billion, up 2.2 percent from the revised December level of \$102.2 billion and 13.1 percent above year-ago sales. This strong month-to-month increase follows the slight 0.1 percent increase in December; however, the combined December and January monthly change averages 1.2 percent and is a continuation of the 1 percent or greater monthly increases which began in September 1983. Excluding the automotive group, sales rose 2.5 percent from December and were 8.9 percent above January 1983 sales.

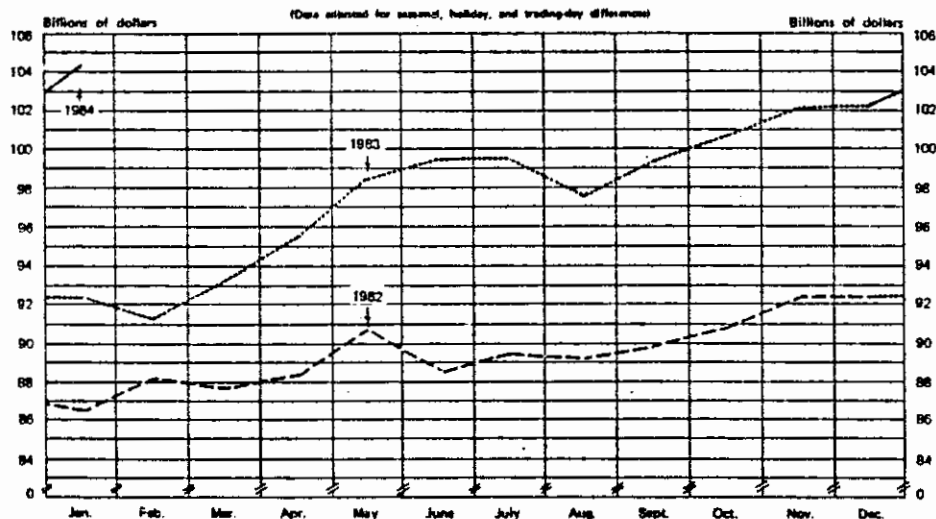
Sales of durable goods showed little movement from December, up 0.1 percent, but rose 23.6 percent over the year-ago level. Automotive group sales continued to set records, up 1.2 percent from December and 33.3 percent above January 1983. Sales for the furniture group and building materials dealers also were substantially above previous year levels, up 14.7 percent and 15.2 percent, respectively.

Nondurable goods sales were up 3.3 percent from December and were 8.5 percent above the previous year level. This monthly increase is the largest since May 1975 and follows a decrease of 1.0 percent in December when unusually bad weather had a negative influence on sales. All kinds of business in the nondurable goods group showed increases from their previous month sales. General merchandise group sales were 4.0 percent above December for the sixth consecutive monthly increase and were 13.6 percent above January 1983. Following a month-to-month decline of 1.9 percent in December, food group sales rose 2.7 percent in January and were 6.6 percent above sales a year ago. Drug store sales were up a record 6.8 percent from December after a decline of 3.4 percent in the previous month and were 9.3 percent above previous year sales.

For a description of the sample design and reliability of the data, see back page.

Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report for February is scheduled to be released March 13, 1984, at 8:30 a.m.

## ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES January 1982-January 1984



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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 \$39 per year. Add \$9.75 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 \$1.75 each.

Table 1. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales, by Kind of Business

(Sales in millions of dollars)

SIC code	Kind of business	Not Adjusted					Adjusted <sup>1</sup>				
		1984		1983		1982	1984		1983		1982
		Jan. <sup>2</sup> adv.	Dec. prel.	Nov. final	Jan.	Dec.	Jan. <sup>2</sup> adv.	Dec. prel.	Nov. final	Jan.	Dec.
	Retail trade, total.....	91,391	124,994	103,865	81,342	113,189	104,414	102,151	102,024	92,308	92,459
	Total (excl. auto group)..	73,150	106,281	84,828	67,566	98,229	83,112	81,110	81,684	76,329	75,732
	Durable goods stores, total.	29,514	37,278	33,484	23,808	31,142	34,980	34,936	34,141	28,307	28,723
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers..	3,796	4,551	4,820	3,261	3,864	5,028	4,971	4,899	4,366	4,143
521.3	Building mat. and supply stores.	(*)	3,112	3,553	2,391	2,650	(*)	3,619	3,553	3,214	3,018
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	900	746	564	808	(*)	751	745	710	674
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	18,241	18,713	19,037	13,776	14,960	21,302	21,041	20,340	15,979	16,727
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	16,528	16,611	16,911	12,292	13,154	19,263	18,984	18,262	14,227	14,965
551	Motor vehicle (franchised)....	(*)	15,276	15,427	11,122	12,009	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores....	(*)	2,102	2,126	1,484	1,806	(*)	2,057	2,078	1,752	1,762
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	4,256	6,115	4,919	3,639	5,318	4,703	4,695	4,518	4,100	4,100
571	Furniture and home furnishings..	(*)	3,136	2,391	2,117	2,684	(*)	2,706	2,650	2,384	2,324
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores.....	(*)	2,409	1,693	1,236	2,081	(*)	1,659	1,543	1,414	1,455
5722	Household appliance stores....	(*)	935	762	558	821	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods total.....	61,877	87,716	70,381	57,534	82,047	69,434	67,215	67,883	64,001	63,736
53	General merchandise group stores..	8,894	23,259	14,603	7,896	21,238	12,852	12,355	12,208	11,313	11,410
531	Department stores.....	7,341	18,872	11,909	6,470	17,149	10,624	10,070	9,957	9,309	9,265
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	1,515	845	541	1,429	(*)	778	802	747	744
539	Misc. general mds. stores.....	(*)	2,872	1,849	885	2,660	(*)	1,507	1,449	1,257	1,401
54	Food stores.....	21,165	24,577	21,861	20,354	23,608	22,517	21,935	22,358	21,115	21,423
541	Grocery stores.....	20,023	22,936	20,552	19,173	22,052	21,301	20,589	20,971	19,868	20,139
554	Gasoline service stations.....	8,715	8,985	8,670	8,072	8,706	9,116	8,878	8,784	8,596	8,628
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	3,756	7,974	5,245	3,496	7,232	4,701	4,698	4,797	4,263	4,341
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	1,358	818	562	1,316	(*)	690	709	682	682
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	(*)	3,076	2,074	1,330	2,649	(*)	1,859	1,908	1,656	1,638
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	1,833	1,077	644	1,645	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	1,262	947	696	1,133	(*)	902	895	822	813
58	Eating and drinking places.....	9,175	10,039	9,799	8,673	9,382	10,263	9,949	10,326	9,626	9,345
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	3,254	4,427	3,272	2,975	4,171	3,440	3,222	3,335	3,148	3,016
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	2,367	1,650	1,386	2,197	(*)	1,627	1,650	1,542	1,548
5961 (pt.)	Mail-order houses (department store merchandise).....	(*)	570	625	318	540	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
53,56,57	GAP <sup>3</sup> .....	(*)	44,275	28,445	17,562	40,087	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)

<sup>1</sup>Advance estimates are not available from the subsample panel for these kinds of business.

NA Not available.

<sup>2</sup>Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. (See Explanatory Material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-83-12).

<sup>3</sup>Advance estimates are based on early reporting by a small subsample of the full survey panel. All other estimates are based on the full sample.

<sup>4</sup>GAP represents stores which specialize in department store types of merchandise.

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

Table 2. Percent Change in Estimated Monthly Retail Sales, by Kind of Business

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

SIC code	Kind of business	Percent change					
		Jan. 1984 advance from--		Dec. 1983 preliminary from--		Nov. 1983 through Jan. 1984	
		Dec. 1983 prelim.	Jan. 1983 final	Nov. 1983 final	Dec. 1982 final	Aug. 1983 through Oct. 1983	Nov. 1982 through Jan. 1983
	Retail trade, total.....	+2.2	+13.1	+0.1	+10.5	+3.6	+11.3
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	+2.5	+8.9	-0.7	+7.1	+1.5	+6.1
	Durable goods stores, total.....	+0.1	+23.6	+2.3	+21.6	+8.3	+21.3
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	+1.1	+15.2	+1.5	+20.0	+4.1	+16.6
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	+1.2	+33.3	+3.4	+25.8	+12.8	+25.6
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	+1.5	+35.4	+4.0	+26.9	+13.7	+27.0
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	+0.2	+14.7	+3.9	+14.5	+4.4	+15.3
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	+3.3	+8.5	-1.0	+5.5	+1.4	+6.8
53	General merchandise group stores.....	+4.0	+13.6	+1.2	+8.3	+5.5	+10.8
531	Department stores.....	+5.5	+14.1	+1.1	+8.7	+5.6	+11.5
54	Food stores.....	+2.7	+6.6	-1.9	+2.4	-0.2	+4.6
541	Grocery stores.....	+3.5	+7.2	-1.8	+2.2	+0.1	+4.8
554	Gasoline service stations.....	+2.7	+6.0	+1.1	+2.9	0.0	+3.2
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	+0.1	+10.3	-2.1	+8.2	+4.3	+9.6
58	Eating and drinking places.....	+3.2	+6.6	-3.7	+6.5	+0.4	+7.6
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	+6.8	+9.3	-3.4	+6.8	+0.6	+8.3

Table 3. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales of Group II Companies, by Kind of Business

(Sales in millions of dollars)

SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted			Adjusted <sup>1</sup>		
		Dec. 1983 prelim.	Nov. 1983 final	Dec. 1982	Dec. 1983 prelim.	Nov. 1983 final	Dec. 1982
	Retail trade, total.....	51,783	38,338	47,915	35,515	35,605	33,540
53	General merchandise group stores.....	21,328	13,336	19,437	11,268	11,063	10,407
531	Department stores.....	18,150	11,448	16,479	9,716	9,564	8,937
533	Variety stores.....	1,231	671	1,182	613	627	600
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	1,947	1,217	1,776	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	13,556	11,803	13,050	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
541	Grocery stores.....	13,261	11,648	12,786	11,521	11,898	11,416
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	3,540	2,193	3,055	1,982	1,941	1,728
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	1,549	939	1,277	888	841	736
566	Shoe stores.....	610	442	545	416	412	371
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	2,721	1,844	2,442	1,803	1,895	1,616

<sup>1</sup> Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. (See Explanatory Material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-83-12).

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).

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### Sample Design and Reliability of Data

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.

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 -0.3 percent to +1.4 percent with the average of the absolute differences about 0.5 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 below.

Preliminary estimates for December 1983 and final estimates for November 1983 based on the full sample will be published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for December (BR-83-12). 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. The complete report will include additional measures of sampling variability.

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 <sup>1</sup>		Median	Range <sup>2</sup>		Mean	Average of absolute difference
		From	To		From	To		
	Retail trade, total.....	0.6	0.8	0.8	-0.8	+1.4	-0.1	0.5
	Total (excl. automotive group)....	0.7	0.9	0.8	-1.1	+0.9	-0.1	0.5
	Durable goods stores, total.....	1.2	2.1	1.5	-3.7	+2.3	-0.2	1.2
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	1.6	4.2	2.4	-4.7	+4.9	+0.4	2.5
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	1.5	2.7	2.0	-4.5	+2.7	-0.2	1.6
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	1.1	2.3	1.6	-4.6	+3.0	-0.2	1.8
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	1.6	6.7	2.7	-2.7	+3.9	+0.2	1.9
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	0.6	0.8	0.7	-0.8	+0.9	-0.1	0.6
53	General merchandise group stores.....	0.4	0.7	0.5	-1.8	+2.2	-0.1	1.1
531	Department stores.....	0.2	0.5	0.3	-1.3	+2.6	+0.1	0.9
54	Food stores.....	0.7	1.6	1.0	-1.6	+1.4	-0.1	0.7
541	Grocery stores.....	0.3	0.7	0.4	-1.6	+1.4	-0.2	0.7
554	Gasoline service stations.....	0.7	1.2	1.0	-3.6	+3.2	-0.1	1.4
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	1.2	3.0	1.9	-3.6	+8.7	+0.4	2.1
58	Eating and drinking places.....	0.8	1.5	1.0	-3.0	+4.0	+0.5	1.5
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	0.3	2.5	1.1	-1.9	+2.4	-0.2	0.9

<sup>1</sup>The ranges of sampling variability shown are based on sales estimates unadjusted for seasonal variation, holiday, and trading-day differences for the data months of January-December 1982.  
<sup>2</sup>The ranges shown for the retail trade total are based on sales estimates adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences for the 12-month period, (January 1983-December 1983). The ranges for all other totals and kinds of business are based on the 12-month period January-December 1982.

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

