

Advance Monthly Retail Sales

May 1986

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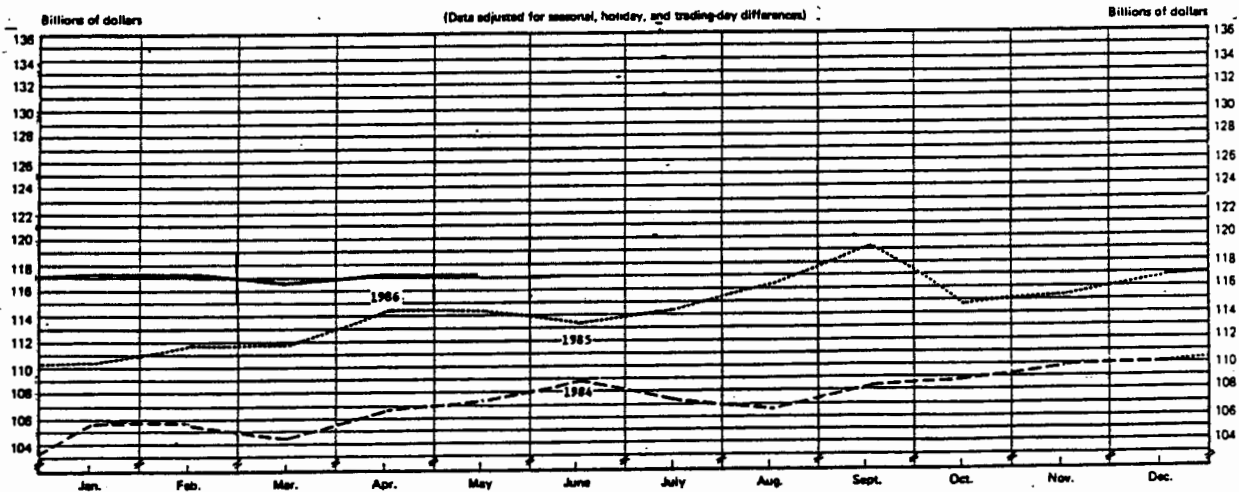
Advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for May adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences but not for price changes, were \$117.1 billion, 2.7 percent above May 1985. Total sales in the March through May period were 0.2 percent below the prior three months but 3.1 percent above the same months a year ago.

Durable goods were 5.0 percent above May 1985. For the March through May period, durable goods sales were 0.4 percent above the prior three months and 4.5 percent above the same months a year ago. Following a 4.3 percent increase in April, automotive dealers sales were virtually unchanged in May. Building materials declined 4.2 percent in May after an increase of 4.6 percent in April.

Nondurable goods were 1.3 percent above May a year ago. Compared to May 1985 sales, the general merchandise group was up 4.3 percent while food stores increased 3.4 percent. Gasoline service stations decreased 2.0 percent from April and were 18.4 percent below May 1985.

The Advance Monthly Retail Sales report for June is scheduled to be released July 15, 1986, at 8:30 a.m.

ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES
January 1984-May 1986



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U.S. Department of Commerce
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

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 \$37 per year. Add \$9.25 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. This report is available electronically in CENDATA, the Bureau's on-line information service, through a commercial vendor. For further information, contact Customer Services, DUSD, Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233, or call (301) 763-4100 or (301) 763-7561.

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

(Sales in millions of dollars)

SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted					Adjusted ¹				
		1986			1985		1986			1985	
		May ² adv.	Apr. prel.	Mar. final	May	Apr.	May ² adv.	Apr. prel.	Mar. final	May ²	Apr. ²
	Retail trade, total.....	123,623	115,131	114,236	120,188	112,945	117,053	117,139	116,684	114,026	114,256
	Total (excl. auto group)..	94,204	87,074	87,995	90,353	85,109	90,802	91,038	91,658	88,028	88,142
	Durable goods, total.....	48,913	45,882	42,843	47,158	43,816	44,709	44,604	43,279	42,592	42,764
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers..	8,448	7,772	6,401	7,112	6,463	7,159	7,473	7,143	6,017	6,251
521,3	Building mat. and supply stores.	(*)	5,509	4,609	5,051	4,595	(*)	5,460	5,121	4,408	4,554
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	995	870	1,049	957	(*)	959	974	903	928
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	29,419	28,057	26,241	29,835	27,836	26,251	26,101	25,026	25,998	26,114
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	27,349	26,022	24,388	27,670	25,732	24,289	24,139	23,029	23,957	24,049
551	Motor vehicle (franchised)....	(*)	23,241	21,699	24,526	22,623	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores....	(*)	2,035	1,853	2,165	2,104	(*)	1,962	1,997	2,041	2,065
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	6,093	5,605	5,717	5,465	5,095	6,198	6,027	6,049	5,664	5,475
571	Furniture and home furnishings..	(*)	3,172	3,209	3,115	2,873	(*)	3,315	3,329	3,075	2,986
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores.....	(*)	1,995	2,080	1,981	1,871	(*)	2,239	2,268	2,187	2,105
5722	Household appliance stores....	(*)	609	638	692	608	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total.....	74,710	69,249	71,393	73,030	69,129	72,344	72,535	73,405	71,434	71,492
53	General merchandise group stores..	14,058	12,499	12,661	13,236	12,331	13,768	13,872	13,801	13,203	13,288
531	Department stores.....	12,046	10,670	10,769	11,171	10,408	11,764	11,803	11,705	11,126	11,191
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	701	790	752	736	(*)	777	803	751	760
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	1,128	1,102	1,313	1,187	(*)	1,292	1,293	1,326	1,337
54	Food stores.....	25,547	23,327	24,213	24,368	22,731	24,144	24,111	24,463	23,343	23,445
541	Grocery stores.....	24,148	22,013	22,853	22,952	21,342	22,824	22,811	23,131	21,985	22,093
554	Gasoline service stations.....	7,179	6,903	7,173	8,794	8,348	6,910	7,051	7,615	8,464	8,571
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	6,184	5,737	6,128	5,707	5,603	6,099	6,214	6,189	5,772	5,680
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	693	660	696	660	(*)	769	752	699	693
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	(*)	2,388	2,572	2,388	2,323	(*)	2,538	2,562	2,386	2,356
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	1,464	1,556	1,445	1,390	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	924	1,026	956	996	(*)	950	937	947	927
58	Eating and drinking places.....	11,938	11,337	11,309	11,560	10,843	11,337	11,394	11,400	10,989	10,897
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	4,062	3,861	3,997	3,803	3,703	4,042	4,009	4,017	3,788	3,763
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,387	1,395	1,447	1,375	(*)	1,509	1,520	1,472	1,490
5961 (pt.)	Mail-order houses (department store merchandise).....	(*)	308	286	384	397	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
53,56,57	GAF ³	(*)	27,069	27,856	27,953	26,249	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
594											

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

NA Not available. ²Revised

¹Data are concurrently adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. Concurrent seasonal adjustment uses all available unadjusted estimates as input to the X-11 program and the factors derived from the program are used in calculating all seasonally adjusted data shown in this publication. Factors and explanatory material are contained in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-86-04.

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.

³GAF 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					
		May 1986 advance from--		Apr. 1986 preliminary from--		Mar. 1986 through May 1986	
		Apr. 1986 prelim.	May 1985 final	Mar. 1986 final	Apr. 1985 final	Dec. 1985 through Feb. 1986	Mar. 1985 through May 1985
	Retail trade, total.....	-0.1	+2.7	+0.4	+2.5	-0.2	+3.1
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	-0.3	+3.2	-0.7	+3.3	+0.2	+4.0
	Durable goods, total.....	+0.2	+5.0	+3.1	+4.3	+0.4	+4.5
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	-4.2	+19.0	+4.6	+19.5	+6.4	+19.5
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	+0.6	+1.0	+4.3	0.0	-1.5	+0.1
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	+0.6	+1.4	+4.8	+0.4	-1.3	+0.4
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	+2.8	+9.4	-0.4	+10.1	+1.8	+9.9
	Nondurable goods, total.....	-0.3	+1.3	-1.2	+1.5	-0.5	+2.3
53	General merchandise group stores.....	-0.7	+4.3	+0.5	+4.4	+2.6	+4.5
531	Department stores.....	-0.3	+5.7	+0.8	+5.5	+2.9	+5.6
54	Food stores.....	+0.1	+3.4	-1.4	+2.8	-0.2	+4.1
541	Grocery stores.....	+0.1	+3.8	-1.4	+3.2	-0.1	+4.5
554	Gasoline service stations.....	-2.0	-18.4	-7.4	-17.7	-14.1	-14.7
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	-1.9	+5.7	+0.4	+9.4	+3.6	+7.9
58	Eating and drinking places.....	-0.5	+3.2	-0.1	+4.6	+1.8	+4.4
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	+0.8	+6.7	-0.2	+6.5	+2.5	+6.7

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 ¹		
		Apr. 1986 prelim.	Mar. 1986 final	Apr. 1985	Apr. 1986 prelim.	Mar. 1986 final	Apr. ^F 1985
	Retail trade, total.....	38,024	39,075	37,451	40,299	40,533	39,086
53	General merchandise group stores.....	11,714	11,863	11,432	12,982	12,962	12,322
531	Department stores.....	10,264	10,353	9,983	11,316	11,266	10,723
533	Variety stores.....	590	670	628	643	695	645
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	860	840	821	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	12,830	13,419	12,592	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
541	Grocery stores.....	12,674	13,225	12,423	13,107	13,225	12,820
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	2,336	2,561	2,239	2,566	2,543	2,284
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	1,028	1,126	982	1,105	1,113	1,001
566	Shoe stores.....	480	550	482	515	482	440
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	2,076	2,213	2,042	2,218	2,220	2,094

^F Revised

¹ Data are concurrently adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. Concurrent seasonal adjustment uses all available unadjusted estimates as input to the X-11 program and the factors derived from the program are used in calculating all seasonally adjusted data shown in this publication. Factors and explanatory material are contained in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-86-04.

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.

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 -0.9 percent to +0.4 percent with the average of the absolute differences about 0.4 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 April 1986 and final estimates for March 1986 based on the full sample will be published late this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for April (BR-86-04). 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 ¹		Median	Range ²		Mean	Average of absolute difference
		From	To		From	To		
	Retail trade, total.....	0.7	0.9	0.8	-0.9	+0.4	-0.3	0.4
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	0.8	0.9	0.8	-0.7	+1.1	-0.1	0.4
	Durable goods stores, total.....	1.3	1.7	1.6	-1.1	+3.8	+0.4	0.9
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	0.9	2.0	1.3	-3.7	+5.8	-0.1	1.8
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	1.5	2.2	1.7	-1.8	+4.9	+1.0	1.4
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	0.9	1.6	1.2	-1.8	+5.3	+1.1	1.5
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	1.8	2.5	2.1	-3.8	+3.4	-0.1	1.5
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	0.5	0.7	0.6	-0.8	+1.2	0.0	0.4
53	General merchandise group stores.....	0.5	1.0	0.6	-1.7	+1.6	+0.1	0.6
531	Department stores.....	0.2	0.5	0.2	-1.1	+1.9	+0.2	0.8
54	Food stores.....	1.0	1.2	1.0	-1.0	+1.0	-0.2	0.6
541	Grocery stores.....	0.3	0.5	0.4	-1.3	+0.9	-0.2	0.5
554	Gasoline service stations.....	0.6	1.3	0.9	-2.4	+4.2	+0.2	1.2
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	1.1	3.1	1.7	-1.6	+2.8	-0.1	1.2
58	Eating and drinking places.....	0.8	1.3	0.9	-2.5	+2.8	0.0	1.1
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	0.3	1.8	0.6	-1.1	+2.2	+0.4	1.1

¹The ranges of sampling variability shown are based on sales estimates unadjusted for seasonal variation, holiday, and trading-day differences for the data months of November 1984-July 1985.

²The 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, May 1985-April 1986. The ranges for all other totals and kinds of business are based on the 12-month period March 1983-February 1984.

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

