

Advance Monthly Retail Sales

February 1987

FOR WIRE TRANSMISSION 8:30 A.M. EST, Thursday, March 12, 1987

CR-87-49

INTENTION TO REVISE: The retail sales estimates will be revised utilizing the results from the 1985 Annual Retail Trade Survey and the 1982 Census of Retail Trade. Revised estimates for the period December 1980 through February 1987 are scheduled for release in early April 1987.

Beginning with the March 1987 Advance Monthly Retail Sales publication, the preliminary and final estimates will be based on a new sample of retail firms. Also beginning with the March publication, sales of leased departments and concessions will be tabulated in the kind of business of the leased department and concession, and not as currently tabulated in the kind of business of the stores in which they are located.

For a further description of the changes, please see the December 1986 Monthly Retail Trade Report, page 17.

Advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for February adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences but not for price changes, were \$122.3 billion, 4.1 percent above January and 4.4 percent above February 1986. The revised January showed a decrease of 7.4 percent from December. Total sales in the December through February period decreased 1.2 percent from the prior three months but were 4.4 percent above this same period a year ago.

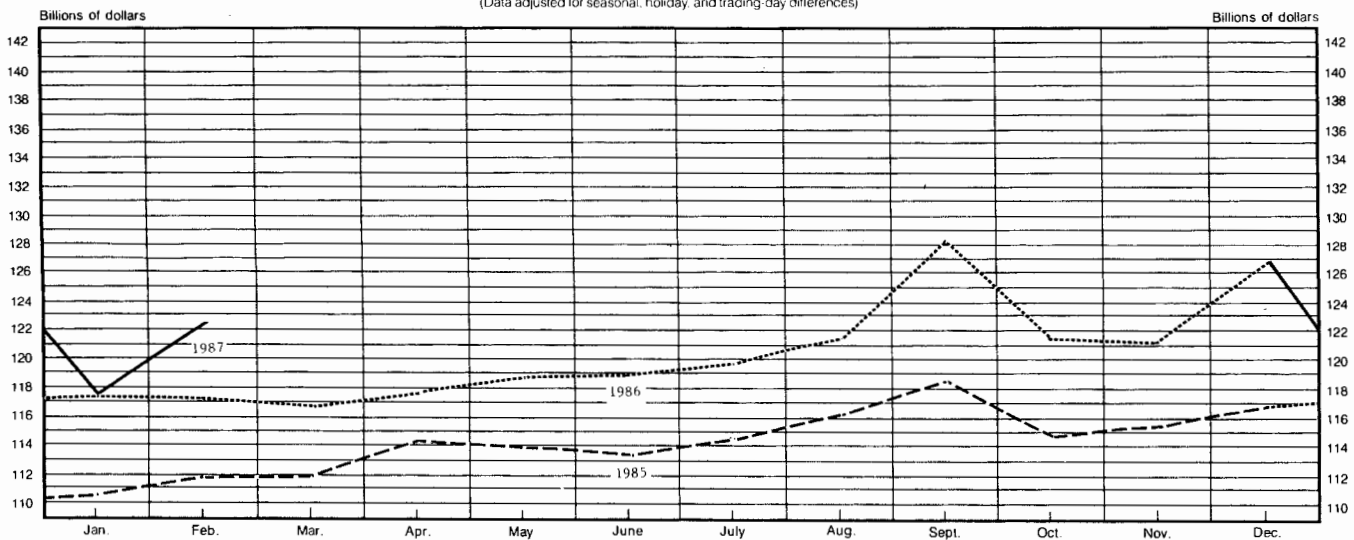
Durable goods increased 8.8 percent from January. After a decrease of 27.7 percent in January, the automotive group increased 14.4 percent in February and was 3.1 percent above February 1986.

Nondurable goods increased 1.3 percent from January and were 3.5 percent above February last year. The general merchandise group increased 1.4 percent in February and was 5.9 percent above February 1986. Gasoline service stations increased 2.0 percent from last month but were 12.0 percent below February last year.

Note: The release date for the Advance Monthly Retail Sales report for March has been changed to April 15. Also, the September report has been changed to October 15.

ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES January 1985-February 1987

(Data adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences)



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U.S. Department of Commerce
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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 \$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				
		1987			1986		1987			1986	
		Feb. ² adv.	Jan. prel.	Dec. final	Feb.	Jan.	Feb. ² adv.	Jan. prel.	Dec. final	Feb. [†]	Jan. [†]
	Retail trade, total.....	104,035	105,361	151,493	99,661	105,642	122,291	117,519	126,938	117,090	117,438
	Total (excl. auto group)..	79,991	84,653	121,872	76,333	81,831	95,379	93,996	94,417	90,975	91,037
	Durable goods, total.....	39,729	37,141	56,113	37,469	38,985	46,716	42,930	52,186	44,059	44,335
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers..	5,317	5,527	6,780	4,996	5,393	7,304	7,178	7,305	6,914	6,931
521,3	Building mat. and supply stores..	(*)	4,221	4,932	3,694	4,035	(*)	5,425	5,504	5,060	5,134
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	852	1,118	712	779	(*)	1,002	964	953	924
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	24,044	20,708	29,621	23,328	23,811	26,912	23,523	32,521	26,115	26,401
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	22,436	18,981	27,655	21,722	22,052	24,874	21,520	30,592	24,082	24,367
551	Motor vehicle (franchised)....	(*)	17,023	25,227	19,807	20,370	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores....	(*)	1,727	1,966	1,606	1,759	(*)	2,003	1,929	2,033	2,034
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	5,726	6,072	9,229	5,101	5,565	6,705	6,529	6,663	5,981	6,020
571	Furniture and home furnishings..	(*)	3,186	4,156	2,828	3,035	(*)	3,459	3,552	3,292	3,292
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores.....	(*)	2,409	4,182	1,896	2,105	(*)	2,557	2,583	2,257	2,273
5722	Household appliance stores....	(*)	688	1,064	570	676	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total.....	64,306	68,220	95,380	62,192	66,657	75,575	74,589	74,752	73,031	73,103
53	General merchandise group stores..	10,152	10,090	25,616	9,550	9,383	14,340	14,136	13,919	13,537	13,358
531	Department stores.....	8,690	8,595	21,761	8,049	7,954	12,326	12,089	11,911	11,450	11,379
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	561	1,273	556	568	(*)	737	684	743	751
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	934	2,582	945	861	(*)	1,310	1,324	1,344	1,228
54	Food stores.....	22,504	24,864	26,686	21,813	23,948	24,981	24,872	25,121	24,211	24,243
541	Grocery stores.....	21,251	23,639	24,914	20,630	22,749	23,586	23,521	23,660	22,897	22,909
554	Gasoline service stations.....	6,271	6,685	6,885	7,122	8,067	7,038	6,899	6,770	8,002	8,316
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	4,617	5,035	10,719	4,401	4,694	6,325	6,276	6,471	6,010	5,977
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	610	1,457	511	563	(*)	748	759	732	703
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	(*)	2,176	4,464	1,879	2,003	(*)	2,696	2,780	2,499	2,523
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	1,169	3,045	1,089	1,161	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	848	1,360	703	740	(*)	1,008	1,012	926	898
58	Eating and drinking places.....	11,076	11,490	12,195	9,826	10,338	12,760	12,571	12,508	11,307	11,311
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	3,969	4,178	5,632	3,619	3,828	4,333	4,294	4,212	3,947	3,942
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,289	1,991	1,242	1,363	(*)	1,394	1,415	1,489	1,499
5961 (pt.)	Mail-order houses (department store merchandise).....	(*)	213	407	238	260	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
53,56,57	GAF.....	(*)	24,742	54,780	22,046	22,743	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)

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

NA Not available. †Revised

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. Explanatory material are contained in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, RR-87-01.

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.

GAF 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					
		Feb. 1987 advance from--		Jan. 1987 preliminary from--		Dec. 1986 through Feb. 1987	
		Jan. 1987 prelim.	Feb. 1986 final	Dec. 1986 final	Jan. 1986 final	Sep. 1986 through Nov. 1986	Dec. 1985 through Feb. 1986
	Retail trade, total.....	+4.1	+4.4	-7.4	+0.1	-1.2	+4.4
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	+1.5	+4.8	-0.4	+3.3	+1.5	+4.1
	Durable goods, total.....	+8.8	+6.0	-17.7	-3.2	-5.0	+7.4
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	+1.8	+5.6	-1.7	+3.6	-0.2	+6.4
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	+14.4	+3.1	-27.7	-10.9	-9.3	+5.5
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	+15.6	+3.3	-29.7	-11.7	-9.8	+6.2
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	+2.7	+12.1	-2.0	+8.5	+1.0	+10.6
	Nondurable goods, total.....	+1.3	+3.5	-0.2	+2.0	+1.4	+2.7
53	General merchandise group stores.....	+1.4	+5.9	+1.6	+5.8	+2.1	+5.2
531	Department stores.....	+2.0	+7.7	+1.5	+6.2	+1.7	+6.1
54	Food stores.....	+0.4	+3.2	-1.0	+2.6	+0.8	+3.1
541	Grocery stores.....	+0.3	+3.0	-0.6	+2.7	+0.9	+3.0
554	Gasoline service stations.....	+2.0	-12.0	+1.9	-17.0	+0.9	-16.5
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	+0.8	+5.2	-3.0	+5.0	+0.2	+6.3
58	Eating and drinking places.....	+1.5	+12.9	+0.5	+11.1	+4.6	+12.4
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	+0.9	+9.8	+1.9	+8.9	+2.6	+8.9

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		
		Jan. 1987 prelim.	Dec. 1986 final	Jan. 1986	Jan. 1987 prelim.	Dec. 1986 final	Jan. ^r 1986
	Retail trade, total.....	36,082	59,787	34,526	41,551	41,694	39,989
53	General merchandise group stores.....	9,334	24,115	8,708	13,134	12,967	12,470
531	Department stores.....	8,253	20,870	7,628	11,559	11,392	10,882
533	Variety stores.....	404	1,081	461	549	554	630
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	677	2,164	619	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	14,058	15,015	13,401	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
541	Grocery stores.....	13,895	14,642	13,235	13,583	13,671	13,117
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	1,931	4,719	1,743	2,660	2,682	2,446
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	901	2,107	785	1,238	1,226	1,096
566	Shoe stores.....	410	760	356	521	521	459
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	2,306	3,444	2,083	2,415	2,354	2,197

^rRevised

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. Explanatory material are contained in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, RR-87-01.

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 -1.6 percent to +0.8 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 January 1987 and final estimates for December 1986 based on the full sample will be published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for January (BR-87-01). 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	-1.6	+0.8	-0.1	0.5
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	0.8	0.9	0.8	-0.7	+0.6	0.0	0.4
	Durable goods stores, total.....	1.3	1.7	1.6	-2.1	+0.8	-0.3	0.7
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	0.9	2.0	1.3	-2.6	+4.2	+0.5	1.7
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	1.5	2.2	1.7	-2.6	+1.7	-0.5	1.1
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	0.9	1.6	1.2	-2.6	+1.7	-0.5	1.2
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	1.8	2.5	2.1	-3.4	+2.7	+0.1	1.5
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	0.5	0.7	0.6	-0.7	+0.8	0.0	0.3
53	General merchandise group stores.....	0.5	1.0	0.6	-0.6	+1.1	+0.1	0.4
531	Department stores.....	0.2	0.5	0.2	-0.7	+0.6	+0.1	0.3
54	Food stores.....	1.0	1.2	1.0	-0.6	+0.5	-0.1	0.3
541	Grocery stores.....	0.3	0.5	0.4	-0.7	+0.5	-0.1	0.3
554	Gasoline service stations.....	0.6	1.3	0.9	-5.2	+3.1	-0.5	1.8
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	1.1	3.1	1.7	-1.3	+2.2	+0.6	0.9
58	Eating and drinking places.....	0.8	1.3	0.9	-2.1	+1.5	0.0	1.0
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	0.3	1.8	0.6	-0.8	+1.2	+0.2	0.6

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 January-December 1983.

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, February 1986-January 1987. The ranges for all other totals and kinds of business are based on the 12-month period August 1985-July 1986.

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