

# Advance Monthly Retail Sales

CURRENT BUSINESS REPORTS

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**INTENTION TO REVISE SALES ESTIMATES.** The unadjusted and adjusted monthly retail sales benchmark revisions through February 1988 are scheduled for release the week of March 14, 1988

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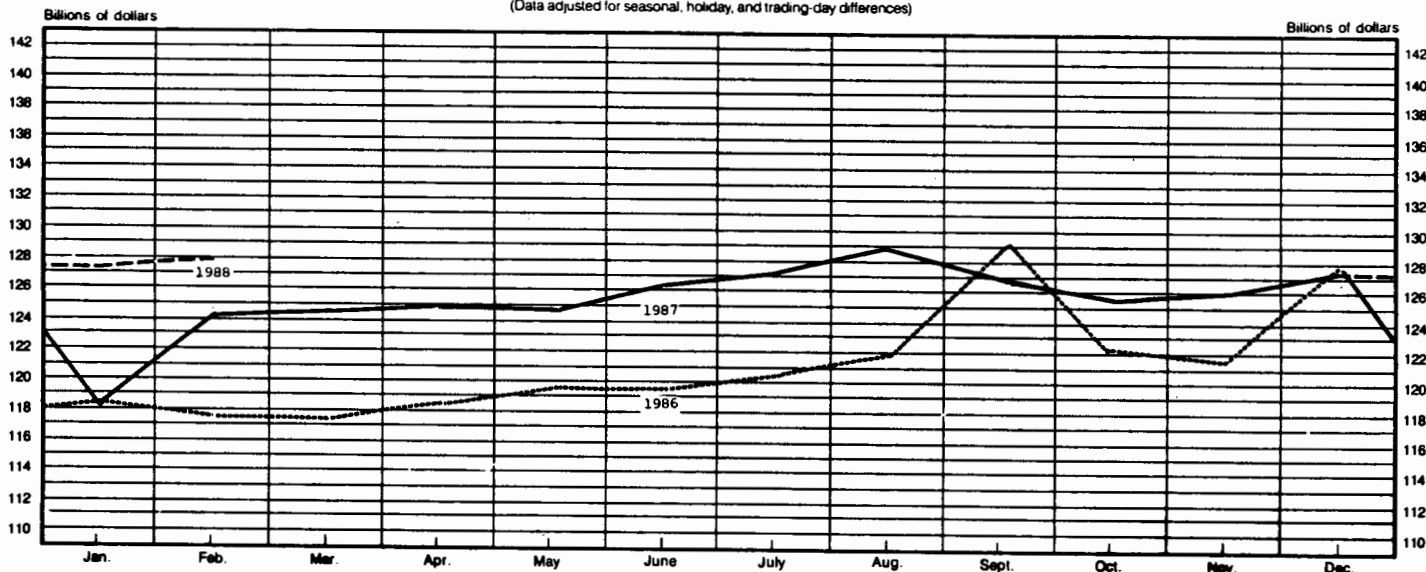
Advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for February adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences but not for price changes, were \$128.0 billion, an increase of 0.6 percent (+1.3%) from the previous month and 3.1 percent above February 1987. Total sales in the December through February period were 1.1 percent above the prior three months and were 3.4 percent above the same period a year ago.

Durable goods increased 1.6 percent (+2.7%) from the previous month and were 8.0 percent above the previous year. Automotive sales were up 12.4 percent from February a year ago while building materials were down 0.7 percent and furniture stores were up 0.3 percent in the same period.

Nondurable goods decreased 0.1 percent (+1.0%) from January. General merchandise stores decreased 1.6 percent from January but were up 0.9 percent from the previous year. Gasoline service stations decreased 1.6 percent from the previous month but were up 2.6 percent from the previous year. Drug stores were up 6.6 percent from February 1987.

## ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES January 1986-February 1988

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



Inquiries concerning this report should be addressed to Ronald Plencykowski, Business Division, Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233. Telephone (301) 763-5294/7561.



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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. 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 <sup>1</sup>				
		1988		1987			1988		1987		
		Feb. adv.	Jan. prel.	Dec. final	Feb.	Jan.	Feb. <sup>2</sup> adv.	Jan. prel.	Dec. final	Feb.	Jan.
	Retail trade, total.....	113,174	112,179	154,739	105,802	106,393	127,992	127,278	127,472	124,170	118,332
	Total (excl. auto group)..	84,938	86,346	128,101	81,754	85,496	97,657	97,410	98,182	97,182	94,694
	Durable goods, total.....	45,410	42,665	54,844	40,164	37,769	51,058	50,243	49,847	47,288	43,556
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers..	5,770	5,454	7,099	5,519	5,641	7,562	7,395	7,572	7,612	7,413
521,3	Building mat. and supply stores.	(*)	4,237	5,318	4,289	4,378	(*)	5,710	5,876	5,820	5,701
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	834	1,179	746	822	(*)	1,012	1,016	995	979
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	28,236	25,833	26,638	24,048	20,897	30,335	29,868	29,290	26,988	23,638
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	26,234	23,741	24,249	22,263	18,996	27,879	27,415	26,913	24,737	21,440
551	Motor vehicle (franchised)....	(*)	22,048	22,418	20,226	17,230	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	2,092	2,389	1,785	1,901	(*)	2,453	2,377	2,251	2,198
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	6,001	6,271	9,229	5,797	6,288	6,827	6,805	6,623	6,806	6,703
571	Furniture and home furnishings..	(*)	3,306	4,120	3,143	3,274	(*)	3,625	3,530	3,646	3,535
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores.....	(*)	2,520	4,227	2,241	2,582	(*)	2,687	2,585	2,684	2,698
5722	Household appliance stores....	(*)	702	1,159	662	734	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total.....	67,764	69,514	99,895	65,638	68,624	76,934	77,035	77,625	76,882	74,776
53	General merchandise group stores..	10,005	9,672	26,298	9,648	9,276	13,816	14,036	14,044	13,698	13,125
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts.)	8,606	8,323	22,344	8,125	7,877	11,936	12,080	12,032	11,624	11,157
531	Dept. stores (in. leased depts.)	(*)	8,984	23,944	8,778	8,537	(*)	13,020	12,908	12,522	12,056
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	531	1,375	574	552	(*)	707	731	758	722
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	818	2,579	949	847	(*)	1,249	1,281	1,316	1,246
54	Food stores.....	23,431	24,578	27,098	22,746	24,961	25,198	25,015	25,175	25,223	24,931
541	Grocery stores.....	22,096	23,283	25,364	21,449	23,659	23,759	23,566	23,771	23,779	23,495
554	Gasoline service stations.....	6,799	7,149	7,583	6,392	6,641	7,358	7,478	7,464	7,174	6,912
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	5,312	5,448	11,900	5,233	5,377	7,008	6,963	7,201	7,089	6,715
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	663	1,577	562	648	(*)	830	821	802	790
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	(*)	2,327	4,819	2,266	2,312	(*)	2,931	2,960	2,993	2,851
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	1,185	3,179	1,130	1,090	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	1,041	1,891	1,032	1,081	(*)	1,271	1,395	1,349	1,295
58	Eating and drinking places.....	11,555	11,791	12,767	11,412	11,843	12,867	12,858	12,975	13,102	12,887
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	4,366	4,357	5,988	3,940	4,182	4,586	4,558	4,482	4,301	4,285
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,411	2,267	1,363	1,474	(*)	1,556	1,608	1,630	1,602
5961 (pt.)	Mail-order houses (department store merchandise).....	(*)	191	367	198	193	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
53,56,57	GAF.....	(*)	25,438	57,812	24,315	24,505	(*)	32,869	32,811	32,268	30,931

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

NA Not available. † Revised

<sup>1</sup> 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, BSR-88-01.

<sup>2</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>3</sup> Includes data for leased departments operated within department stores. Data for this line not included in broader kind-of-business totals.

<sup>4</sup> 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. 1988 advance from--		Jan. 1988 preliminary from--		Dec. 1987 through Feb. 1988	
		Jan. 1988 prelim.	Feb. 1987 final	Dec. 1987 final	Jan. 1987 final	Sept. 1987 through Nov. 1987	Dec. 1986 through Feb. 1987
	Retail trade, total.....	+0.6	+3.1	-0.2	+7.6	+1.1	+3.4
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	+0.3	+0.5	-0.8	+2.9	+0.6	+2.1
	Durable goods, total.....	+1.6	+8.0	+0.8	+15.4	+2.7	+5.4
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	+2.3	-0.7	-2.3	-0.2	-0.9	+0.1
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	+1.6	+12.4	+2.0	+26.4	+3.1	+7.8
551,2,5, 6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	+1.7	+12.7	+1.9	+27.9	+3.1	+7.6
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	+0.3	+0.3	+2.7	+1.5	+1.4	-0.4
	Nondurable goods, total.....	-0.1	+0.1	-0.8	+3.0	+0.1	+2.1
53	General merchandise group stores.....	-1.6	+0.9	-0.1	+6.9	+1.3	+5.1
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	-1.2	+2.7	+0.4	+8.3	+1.9	+6.4
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.).....	(NA)	(NA)	+0.9	+8.0	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	+0.7	-0.1	-0.6	+0.3	-0.2	-0.1
541	Grocery stores.....	+0.8	-0.1	-0.9	+0.3	-0.3	+0.1
554	Gasoline service stations.....	-1.6	+2.6	+0.2	+8.2	-2.0	+6.6
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	+0.6	-1.1	-3.3	+3.6	-1.0	+2.0
58	Eating and drinking places.....	+0.1	-1.8	-0.9	-0.2	+2.4	-0.2
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	+0.6	+6.6	+1.7	+6.3	+0.5	+6.2

**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>		
		Jan. 1988 prelim.	Dec. 1987 final	Jan. 1987	Jan. 1988 prelim.	Dec. 1987 final	Jan. <sup>F</sup> 1987
	Retail trade, total.....	40,006	67,845	38,384	47,249	47,004	44,304
53	General merchandise group stores.....	8,978	24,686	8,540	13,126	13,116	12,166
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	8,047	21,633	7,626	11,713	11,675	10,817
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.) <sup>2</sup> .....	8,679	23,160	8,249	12,597	12,512	11,684
533	Variety stores.....	403	1,141	405	563	586	554
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	528	1,912	509	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	14,437	15,933	14,251	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
541	Grocery stores.....	14,243	15,569	14,051	14,286	14,310	13,762
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	2,742	6,774	2,633	3,827	3,845	3,602
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	1,193	2,797	1,170	1,630	1,607	1,579
566	Shoe stores.....	600	1,200	623	780	817	795
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	2,561	3,812	2,416	2,713	2,622	2,514

NA Not available. <sup>F</sup> Revised

<sup>1</sup>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.

<sup>2</sup>Includes data for leased departments operated within department stores. Data for this line not included in broader kind-of-business totals.

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 -0.8 percent to +1.0 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 1988 and final estimates for December 1987 based on the full sample will be published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for January (BR-88-1). 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.

Whenever a statement such as "up 0.8 percent (+1.3%)" appears in the text, this indicates a range from -0.5 percent to +2.1 percent. All ranges given are 90 percent confidence intervals. If the range contains 0, it is uncertain whether there was an increase or decrease. The Monthly Retail Trade Report includes explanations of confidence intervals and sampling variability along with 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.....	0.7	0.9	0.8	-0.8	+1.0	+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, total...	0.5	1.0	0.6	-0.6	+1.1	+0.1	0.4
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts.)	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

<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 1983.

<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, February 1987- January 1988. The ranges for all other totals and kinds of business are based on the 12-month period August 1985 - July 1986.

Note: See appendix 8, Reliability of Data, in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for a discussion on the measures of sampling variability.

