

Advance Monthly Retail Sales

August 1988

CB 88-145

FOR WIRE TRANSMISSION 8:30 A.M. EDT, September 15, 1988

Advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for August adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences but not for price changes, were \$133.5 billion, a decrease of 0.2 percent (+ 1.0%) from the previous month but 2.7 percent (+ 1.6%) above August 1987. Excluding automotive sales, August sales increased 0.2 percent (+ 1.0 percent) from July and were 4.6 percent (+ 1.6%) above the previous year. Total sales in the June through August period were 1.0 percent (+ 1.7%) above the previous three months and 4.5 percent (+ 1.7%) above the same period a year ago.

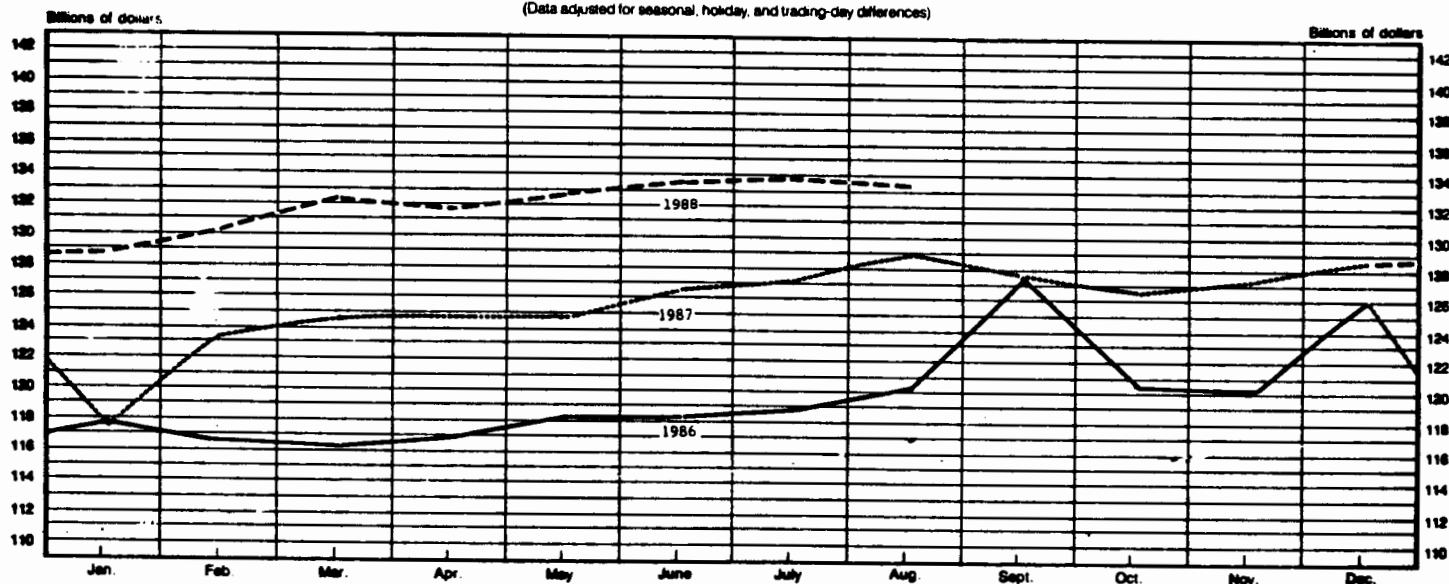
Durable goods decreased 1.0 percent (+ 2.3%) from the previous month but were 0.7 percent (+ 3.7%) above the previous year. Automotive sales were 3.4 percent (+ 4.8%) below August a year ago. Building materials and furniture both were up about 6.5 percent from August 1987.

Nondurable goods increased 0.2 percent (+ 1.0%) from the previous month and were 4.0 percent (+ 1.7%) above the previous year. General merchandise stores were up 1.8 percent from August a year ago and food stores were up 4.8 percent during the same period.

The Advance Monthly Sales Report for September is scheduled to be released October 14, 1988 at 8:30 a.m.

ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES January 1986-August 1988

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



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



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. 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				
		1988			1987		1988			1987	
		Aug. ² adv.	July prel.	June final	Aug.	July	Aug. ² adv.	July prel.	June final	Aug. ²	July ²
	Retail trade, total.....	137,083	133,495	137,472	131,536	129,258	133,470	133,800	133,617	129,930	127,122
	Total (excl. auto group)..	105,866	102,824	103,787	100,618	98,781	104,334	104,130	103,994	99,757	99,110
	Durable goods, total.....	52,657	51,060	55,343	50,627	50,037	49,920	50,448	50,709	49,593	47,509
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers..	7,706	7,410	8,013	7,080	7,234	6,905	6,866	6,988	6,496	6,500
521,3	Building mat. and supply stores.	(*)	5,631	6,059	5,489	5,510	(*)	5,157	5,264	4,914	4,859
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	1,356	1,395	1,174	1,233	(*)	1,288	1,280	1,152	1,163
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	31,217	30,671	33,685	30,918	30,477	29,136	29,670	29,623	30,173	28,012
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	28,584	28,051	30,933	28,462	28,024	26,714	27,208	27,087	27,849	25,757
551	Motor vehicle (franchised)....	(*)	24,790	27,285	25,510	24,707	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores....	(*)	2,620	2,752	2,456	2,453	(*)	2,462	2,536	2,324	2,255
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	7,704	7,451	7,681	7,116	6,997	7,598	7,687	7,853	7,133	7,135
571	Furniture and home furnishings..	(*)	3,853	4,012	3,793	3,736	(*)	3,936	3,992	3,708	3,759
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores.....	(*)	3,133	3,187	2,869	2,848	(*)	3,223	3,337	2,946	2,918
5722	Household appliance stores....	(*)	1,033	1,040	943	973	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total.....	84,426	82,435	82,129	80,909	79,221	83,550	83,352	82,908	80,337	79,613
53	General merchandise group stores..	14,754	13,280	14,339	14,555	12,883	15,051	15,113	15,129	14,779	14,580
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts.)	12,471	11,195	12,051	12,198	10,763	12,635	12,693	12,685	12,296	12,148
531	Dept. stores (in. leased depts) ³	(*)	11,575	12,456	12,591	11,121	(*)	13,124	13,112	12,731	12,552
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	629	642	678	622	(*)	703	684	703	684
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	1,456	1,646	1,679	1,498	(*)	1,717	1,760	1,780	1,748
54	Food stores.....	28,044	28,867	27,866	26,707	27,658	27,781	27,572	27,423	26,496	26,289
541	Grocery stores.....	26,354	27,197	26,218	25,146	26,095	26,119	25,902	25,780	24,946	24,735
554	Gasoline service stations.....	9,553	9,449	9,294	9,348	9,377	9,038	8,923	8,962	8,928	8,796
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	7,102	6,138	6,298	6,823	5,894	6,902	6,877	6,782	6,657	6,627
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	641	738	687	629	(*)	763	755	760	757
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	(*)	2,411	2,431	2,620	2,349	(*)	2,673	2,680	2,638	2,604
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	1,542	1,540	1,716	1,479	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	1,106	1,177	1,325	1,052	(*)	1,265	1,223	1,236	1,213
58	Eating and drinking places.....	13,885	14,039	13,570	13,290	13,197	12,928	13,011	12,899	12,340	12,219
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	4,975	4,784	4,904	4,582	4,582	5,035	4,978	4,974	4,699	4,690
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,701	1,629	1,635	1,705	(*)	1,617	1,626	1,627	1,622
5961 (pt.)	Mail-order houses (department store merchandise).....	(*)	261	273	294	278	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
53,56,57	GAF ⁴	(*)	31,399	33,079	33,067	30,058	(*)	34,890	34,878	33,413	33,199

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

NA Not available ² 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. Factors and explanatory material are contained in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-88-07.

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.

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

⁴GAF 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					
		Aug. 1988 advance from--		July 1988 preliminary from--		June 1988 through Aug. 1988	
		July 1988 prelin.	Aug. 1987 final	June 1988 final	July 1987 final	Mar. 1988 through May 1988	June 1987 through Aug. 1987
	Retail trade, total.....	-0.2	+2.7	+0.1	+5.3	+1.0	+4.5
	Total (excl. automotive group)....	+0.2	+4.6	+0.1	+5.1	+1.5	+5.0
	Durable goods, total.....	-1.0	+0.7	-0.5	+6.2	-0.2	+4.9
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	+0.6	+6.3	-1.7	+5.6	-1.8	+6.9
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	-1.8	-3.4	+0.2	+5.9	-0.6	+2.9
551,2,3,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	-1.8	-4.1	+0.4	+5.6	-0.6	+2.4
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	-1.2	+6.5	-2.1	+7.7	+1.1	+9.0
	Nondurable goods, total.....	+0.2	+4.0	+0.5	+4.7	+1.8	+4.3
53	General merchandise group stores.....	-0.4	+1.8	-0.1	+3.7	+1.4	+3.1
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	-0.5	+2.8	+0.1	+4.5	+1.7	+4.1
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.).....	(NA)	(NA)	+0.1	+4.6	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	+0.8	+4.8	+0.5	+4.9	+1.7	+4.5
541	Grocery stores.....	+0.8	+4.7	+0.5	+4.7	+1.5	+4.4
554	Gasoline service stations.....	+1.3	+1.2	-0.4	+1.4	+0.3	+2.2
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	+0.4	+3.7	+1.4	+3.8	+2.6	+3.5
58	Eating and drinking places.....	-0.6	+4.8	+0.9	+6.5	+2.0	+5.4
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	+1.1	+7.2	+0.1	+6.1	+0.2	+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		
		July 1988 prelin.	June 1988 final	July 1987	July 1988 prelin.	June 1988 final	July 1987 ²
	Retail trade, total.....	47,862	48,629	45,913	49,836	48,626	47,337
53	General merchandise group stores.....	12,286	13,303	11,792	14,054	14,022	13,411
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	10,843	11,671	10,435	12,280	12,259	11,764
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.).....	11,202	12,053	10,772	12,701	12,674	12,158
533	Variety stores.....	495	510	487	568	541	551
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	948	1,122	870	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	16,220	16,735	15,663	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
541	Grocery stores.....	16,005	16,621	15,451	15,449	15,428	14,772
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	3,249	3,365	3,093	3,722	3,669	3,572
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	1,318	1,327	1,294	1,442	1,447	1,427
666	Shoe stores.....	683	744	625	880	779	740
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	2,796	2,853	2,644	2,934	2,920	2,734

NA Not available. ² 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 I-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-88-07.

² 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).

Official Business
Penalty for Private Use, \$300

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 +0.9 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 July 1988 and final estimates for June 1988 based on the full sample will be published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for June (BR-88-6). 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 (+1.0%)" appears in the text, this indicates a range from -0.2 percent to 1.8 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 Estimates

SIC code	Kind of Business	Estimated coefficient of Variation in percent of the					Preliminary-to-final percent change minus the Advance-to-preliminary percent change				
		Advance-to-preliminary ratio		Ratio to same month a year ago	Seller volume sales est.	Ratio of current quarter to prev. quarter	Range ^a		Mean	Aver. of absolute diff.	
		Range ¹		Median	Median	Median	Median	From	To		
		From	To								
	Retail trade, total.....	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.8	1.0	-0.8	+0.9	0.0	0.4
	Total (excl. auto).	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.8	0.7	0.9	-1.0	+1.0	0.0	0.4
	Durable goods, total..	1.4	1.7	1.6	2.3	1.7	2.2	-1.6	+1.8	+0.3	1.0
52	Building materials, group stores.....	0.6	3.6	1.6	3.0	3.3	3.1	-6.2	+1.5	-0.9	1.6
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	1.7	2.2	1.9	3.1	2.3	3.0	-2.1	+2.7	+0.4	1.2
551, 2, 5, 6, 7, 9	Motor vehicle and misc. automotive dealers.....	1.2	2.2	1.6	3.7	2.4	3.2	-2.6	+2.0	+0.3	1.2
57	Furniture, home furn. and equipment stores.....	1.6	2.3	1.9	3.7	3.3	2.7	-3.3	+4.4	+0.6	1.5
	Hondar. stores, total...	0.6	0.7	0.6	1.0	0.7	0.9	-0.0	+0.7	0.0	0.4
53	General merch. group, total.	0.2	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.5	-2.6	+1.0	-0.2	0.0
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts.).....	0.0	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	-2.1	+2.0	-0.2	0.0
54	Food stores.....	0.0	1.4	1.0	1.6	1.3	1.6	-0.9	+0.0	+0.1	0.3
541	Grocery stores.....	0.3	1.1	0.5	1.0	1.4	1.6	-0.0	+0.9	+0.1	0.3
554	Gasoline service stations...	0.7	1.2	0.8	3.0	2.2	2.0	-1.4	+2.3	-0.1	1.0
56	Apparel and acc. stores.....	1.2	3.4	1.5	2.4	1.0	1.0	-2.0	+2.2	-0.5	1.3
58	Eating and drinking	0.0	1.3	1.1	2.7	2.3	2.6	-1.7	+1.0	+0.3	0.9
591	Drug and proprietary	0.4	0.7	0.5	2.3	1.7	2.1	-1.6	+1.3	-0.1	0.7

¹ 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 March - July 1988.

² 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, August 1987- July 1988. The ranges for all other totals and kinds of business are based on the 12-month period May 1987-April 1988.

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

