

# Advance Monthly Retail Sales



U.S. Department of Commerce  
ECONOMICS AND STATISTICS ADMINISTRATION  
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

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FOR WIRE TRANSMISSION 8:30 A.M. EST., Wednesday, December 13, 1995

The Census Bureau of the Department of Commerce announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for November adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$197.9 billion, an increase of 0.8 percent ( $\pm 1.3\%$ ) from the previous month and up 3.2 percent ( $\pm 1.9\%$ ) from November 1994. Total sales in the September through November period were 3.4 percent ( $\pm 1.7\%$ ) above the same period a year ago. The September to October 1995 percent change was revised from -0.2 percent ( $\pm 1.5\%$ ) to -0.4 percent ( $\pm 0.5\%$ ).

Durable goods increased 1.0 percent ( $\pm 2.3\%$ ) from October and were 3.9 percent above last year.

Nondurable goods increased 0.6 percent ( $\pm 1.2\%$ ) from last month and were 2.7 percent ( $\pm 2.0\%$ ) above last year.

*The advance estimates are based on a small subsample of the Bureau's full retail sales sample. Estimates from the advance and the subsequent full survey can differ because of the earlier reporting in the advance and because of sampling variability present in both surveys.*

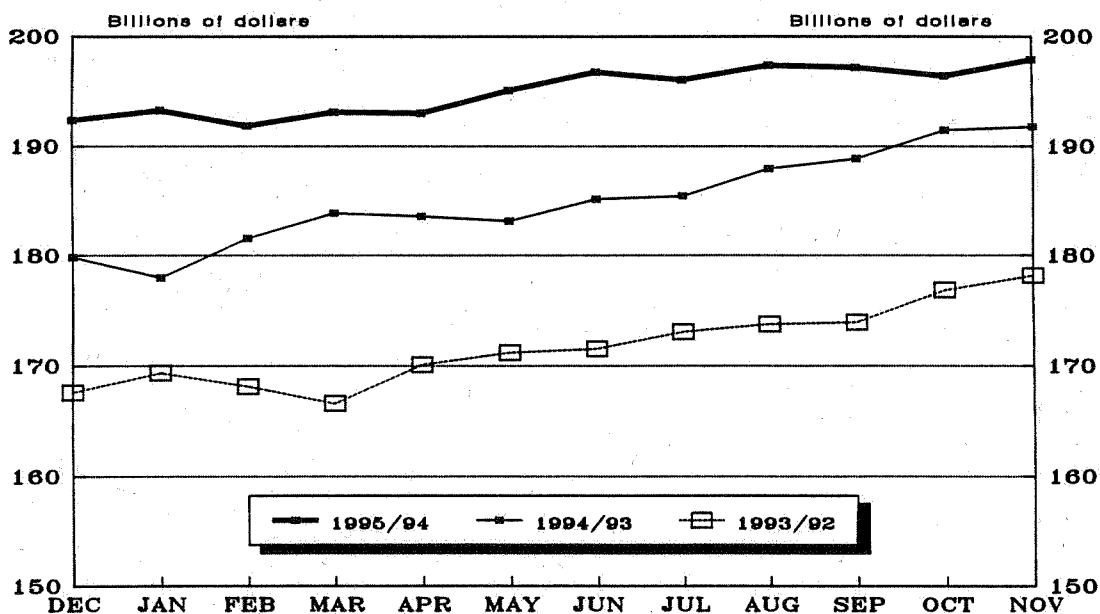
The Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report for December is scheduled to be released January 12, 1996 at 8:30 a.m.

The scheduled release dates for 1996 are as follows: January 12, February 13, March 13, April 11, May 14, June 13, July 12, August 13, September 13, October 11, November 14, and December 12.

## ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES

December 1992 - November 1995

(Data adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes)



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This report is available the day of issue through the Department of Commerce's online Economic Bulletin Board. For information call (202) 482-1986. The data are also available on the internet - <http://www.census.gov/ftp/pub/svcsd/www/fullpub.html>, or through the Census Bureau's online information service - CENDATA. CENDATA is available from Dialog Information Services, INC. (1-800-334-2564) and CompuServe (1-800-848-8199). The CENDATA staff at the Bureau of the Census (301-457-1214) can provide content information and general guidance.

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>				
		1995			1994		1995			1994	
		Nov. <sup>2</sup> adv.	Oct. prel.	Sept. final	Nov.	Oct.	Nov. <sup>2</sup> adv.	Oct. prel.	Sept. final	Nov. <sup>1</sup>	Oct. <sup>1</sup>
	Retail trade, total.....	202,274	194,327	193,481	194,741	189,706	197,911	196,424	197,221	191,784	191,511
	Total (excl. auto group)...	157,897	147,137	145,415	152,147	144,630	149,887	148,570	149,317	145,536	145,174
	Durable goods, total.....	77,519	77,852	78,746	74,231	74,797	79,891	79,063	79,103	76,891	76,828
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	10,207	10,999	10,801	10,188	10,839	10,610	10,407	10,304	10,651	10,524
521.3	Building mat. and supply stores.....	(*)	8,667	8,340	7,804	8,406	(*)	8,010	7,898	8,037	7,983
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	1,124	1,141	1,182	1,221	(*)	1,123	1,133	1,194	1,203
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	44,377	47,190	48,066	42,594	45,076	48,024	47,854	47,904	46,248	46,337
551.2,5, 6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	41,414	44,151	45,095	39,786	42,245	45,064	44,915	45,005	43,434	43,596
551	Motor vehicle (franchised).....	(*)	38,571	38,932	35,112	36,580	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	3,039	2,971	2,808	2,831	(*)	2,939	2,899	2,814	2,741
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	12,404	10,852	10,767	11,578	10,217	11,266	11,098	11,097	10,573	10,435
571	Furniture and home furnishings.....	(*)	5,478	5,422	5,730	5,249	(*)	5,418	5,417	5,223	5,192
5722,31,4	Household appliance, radio, TV and computer stores.....	(*)	4,514	4,455	4,889	4,142	(*)	4,732	4,714	4,436	4,342
5722	Household appliance stores.....	(*)	751	767	925	783	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total.....	124,755	116,475	114,735	120,510	114,909	118,020	117,361	118,118	114,893	114,683
53	General merchandise group stores.....	29,506	23,900	23,001	28,413	23,770	24,638	24,629	24,965	23,974	24,021
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts).....	23,439	18,573	17,901	22,255	18,379	19,307	19,167	19,436	18,623	18,565
531	Dept. stores (in. leased depts).....	(*)	18,848	18,181	22,631	18,688	(*)	19,395	19,731	18,911	18,884
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	570	569	713	638	(*)	593	620	649	650
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	4,757	4,531	5,445	4,753	(*)	4,869	4,909	4,702	4,806
54	Food stores.....	34,246	33,514	33,728	33,137	33,098	34,400	34,358	34,165	33,615	33,429
541	Grocery stores.....	32,291	31,627	31,903	31,281	31,255	32,453	32,471	32,258	31,757	31,571
554	Gasoline service stations.....	12,015	12,412	12,395	12,009	12,347	12,075	12,086	12,297	12,069	12,011
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	10,582	8,870	9,125	10,453	9,268	9,266	9,011	9,225	9,300	9,268
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	960	912	1,167	1,038	(*)	988	989	1,054	1,043
562.3	Women's clothing, specialty stores.....	(*)	2,708	2,740	3,231	2,932	(*)	2,741	2,782	2,900	2,897
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	3,213	3,219	3,854	3,214	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	1,373	1,553	1,552	1,461	(*)	1,464	1,498	1,552	1,544
58	Eating and drinking places.....	19,406	20,215	20,186	18,654	19,707	20,152	20,055	20,206	19,452	19,416
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	7,047	6,957	6,728	6,744	6,727	7,220	7,135	7,120	6,938	6,914
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,802	1,853	1,823	1,781	(*)	1,865	1,868	1,823	1,821
5961	Total mail order.....	(*)	4,735	4,027	5,241	4,226	(*)	4,231	4,266	3,908	3,874
53,56,57 594	GAF <sup>4</sup> .....	(*)	49,940	49,376	58,032	49,381	(*)	51,861	52,435	50,652	50,607

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

NA Not available.

<sup>1</sup>Revised.

<sup>1</sup>Data are concurrently adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes. 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-95-10.

<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 (general merchandise, apparel, furniture, and miscellaneous shopping goods stores).

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, but not for price changes)

SIC code	Kind of business	Percent change					
		Nov. 1995 advance from—		Oct. 1995 preliminary from—		Sept. 1995 through Nov. 1995 from—	
		Oct. 1995 prelim.	Nov. 1994 final	Sept. 1995 final	Oct. 1994 final	June 1995 through Aug. 1995	Sept. 1994 through Nov. 1994
	Retail trade, total.....	+0.8	+3.2	-0.4	+2.6	+0.2	+3.4
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	+0.9	+3.0	-0.5	+2.3	+0.5	+2.9
	Durable goods, total.....	+1.0	+3.9	-0.1	+2.9	+0.4	+4.2
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	+2.0	-0.4	+1.0	-1.1	+1.8	-1.0
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	+0.4	+3.8	-0.1	+3.3	-0.5	+4.9
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	+0.3	+3.8	-0.2	+3.0	-0.7	+4.9
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	+1.5	+6.6	0.0	+6.4	+3.3	+7.0
	Nondurable goods, total.....	+0.6	+2.7	-0.6	+2.3	+0.1	+2.8
53	General merchandise group stores.....	0.0	+2.8	-1.3	+2.5	-0.8	+3.4
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	+0.7	+3.7	-1.4	+3.2	-0.3	+4.2
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.) <sup>1</sup> .....	(NA)	(NA)	-1.7	+2.7	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	+0.1	+2.3	+0.6	+2.8	+1.0	+2.4
541	Grocery stores.....	-0.1	+2.2	+0.7	+2.9	+0.9	+2.3
554	Gasoline service stations.....	-0.1	0.0	-1.7	+0.6	-3.0	+0.7
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	+2.8	-0.4	-2.3	-2.8	+0.9	-0.3
58	Eating and drinking places.....	+0.5	+3.6	-0.7	+3.3	+0.2	+3.9
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	+1.2	+4.1	+0.2	+3.2	+2.0	+3.7

NA Not available.

<sup>1</sup>Includes data for leased departments operated within department stores. Data for this line not included in broader kind-of-business totals.

Official Business

Penalty for Private Use, \$300

## Sample Design and Reliability of Data

The advance estimates are based on a small subsample of the Bureau's full retail sales sample. Estimates from the advance and the subsequent full survey can differ because of the earlier reporting in the advance and because of sampling variability present in both surveys.

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 -1.0 percent to +0.7 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 3 below.

Preliminary estimates for October 1995 and final estimates for September 1995 based on the full sample are published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for October (BR-95-10). 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 margin of sampling error, as used on page 1, indicates a range about the estimate which corresponds to a 90 percent confidence interval. If, for example, the estimate is up 0.8 percent and the margin of sampling error is 1.2 percentage points above or below the estimate, then the indicated range is -0.4 percent to +2.0 percent. 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 3. Sampling Variability of and Revision to Advance-to-Preliminary Estimate

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	Dollar volume sales est.	Ratio of current quarter to prev. quarter	Range <sup>2</sup>		Mean	Avg. of absolute diff.	
		Range <sup>1</sup>		Median	Median	Median	Median	From	To		
		From	To								
	Retail trade, total.....	0.5	1.3	0.7	1.0	0.8	1.0	-1.0	+0.7	0.0	0.4
	Total (excl. auto).....	0.5	0.9	0.7	1.1	0.8	1.0	-1.6	+0.7	-0.1	0.4
	Durable goods, total.....	1.2	3.4	1.4	2.2	1.7	2.2	-0.9	+1.1	+0.2	0.5
52	Building materials, group stores.....	0.9	2.6	1.6	4.1	2.9	3.4	-4.2	+2.5	-0.4	1.4
55 ex. 554 551,2,5, 6,7,9	Automotive dealers.....	1.6	3.2	2.1	3.4	2.6	3.1	-1.3	+2.2	+0.6	1.1
	Motor vehicle and misc. automotive dealers.....	1.2	3.0	1.5	4.0	2.8	3.2	-1.5	+2.3	+0.5	1.1
57	Furniture, home furn., and equipment stores.....	1.3	3.6	2.1	4.6	3.4	4.1	-3.4	+2.3	-0.1	1.5
	Nondurable goods, total.....	0.4	0.8	0.6	1.1	0.8	1.1	-1.1	+0.5	0.0	0.3
53	General merch. group, total.....	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.5	-0.3	+0.7	+0.1	0.2
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts.).....	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	-0.4	+0.6	-0.1	0.2
54	Food stores.....	0.6	1.0	0.7	1.7	0.9	1.7	-0.5	+0.8	+0.1	0.3
541	Grocery stores.....	0.1	0.8	0.3	1.8	0.9	1.7	-0.6	+0.5	0.0	0.2
554	Gasoline service stations.....	0.5	1.9	0.9	2.7	1.8	3.0	-1.4	+1.2	-0.4	0.8
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	0.8	3.4	1.4	3.3	2.8	2.6	-2.4	+1.3	-0.4	1.1
58	Eating and drinking places.....	0.8	2.0	1.2	4.6	4.0	3.9	-3.6	+2.4	0.0	1.0
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	0.4	1.8	1.0	2.5	1.5	2.5	-1.0	+1.3	+0.2	0.6

<sup>1</sup>The ranges of sampling variability shown are based on sales estimates not adjusted for seasonal variation, holiday, and trading-day differences for the data months of April 1993 - March 1994.

<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, November 1994 - October 1995. The ranges for all other totals and kinds of business are based on the period April 1993 - February 1994.

Note: Coefficients of variation for the ratio of current quarter to current quarter a-year-ago estimates are approximately the same as those for the ratio of current quarter to previous quarter. See appendix B, Reliability of Data in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for a discussion of the measures of sampling variability.

