

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. EDT., Tuesday, August 13, 1996

The Census Bureau of the Department of Commerce announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for July adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$204.7 billion, an increase of 0.1 percent ($\pm 1.4\%$) from the previous month and up 4.7 percent ($\pm 2.0\%$) from July 1995. Total sales for the May through July period were 4.9 percent ($\pm 1.8\%$) above the same period a year ago. The May to June 1996 percent change was revised from -0.2 percent ($\pm 1.4\%$) to -0.5 percent ($\pm 0.3\%$).

Durable goods decreased 0.4 percent ($\pm 2.5\%$) from June but were 6.4 percent above last year. Building materials were up 9.2 percent from last year.

Nondurable goods increased 0.4 percent ($\pm 1.3\%$) from last month and were up 3.6 percent from last year. General merchandise sales were up 2.6 percent from July 1995.

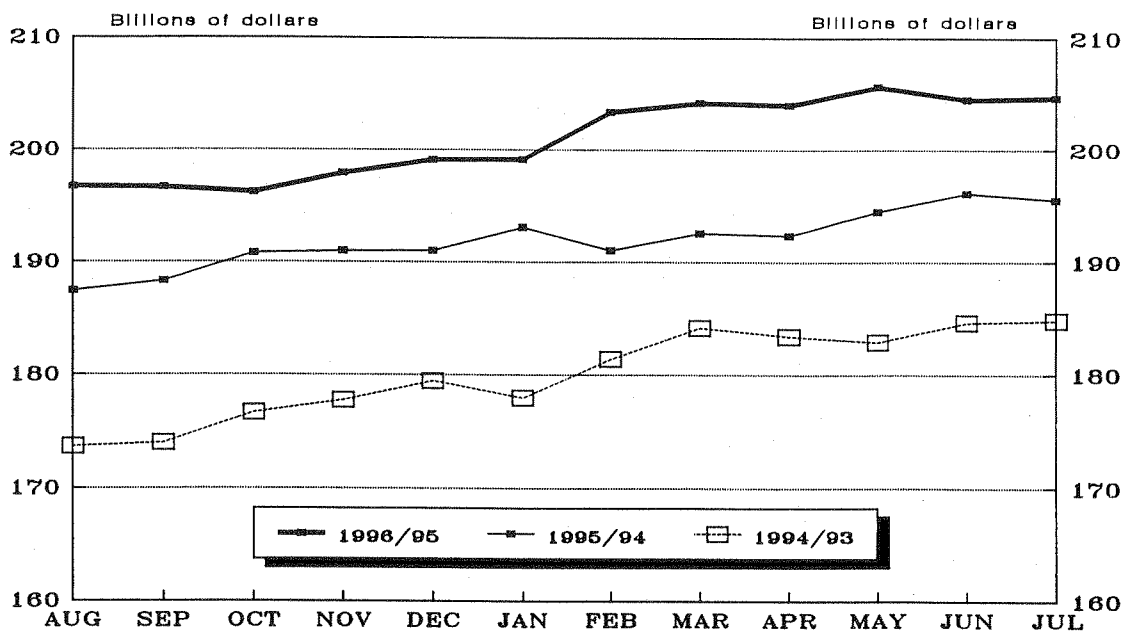
The advance estimates are based on a small subsample of the Bureau's full retail sales sample. Estimates from the advance and the subsequent full survey can differ because of the earlier reporting in the advance and because of sampling variability present in both surveys.

The Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report for August is scheduled to be released September 13, 1996 at 8:30 a.m.

ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES

August 1993 - July 1996

(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/svsd/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 (301-457-1242) 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 ¹				
		1996			1995		1996			1995	
		July ² adv.	June prel.	May final	July	June	July ² adv.	June prel.	May final	July ¹	June ¹
	Retail trade, total.....	206,361	206,313	215,410	194,879	202,575	204,689	204,546	205,669	195,513	196,107
	Total (excl. auto group)...	153,816	153,373	159,154	146,401	149,301	155,499	155,082	155,351	148,514	148,835
	Durable goods, total.....	86,619	86,981	91,386	79,182	85,403	83,094	83,399	84,053	78,125	78,361
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	12,358	12,727	13,143	10,976	11,878	11,296	11,475	11,025	10,349	10,260
521,3	Building mat. and supply stores.....	(*)	9,524	9,850	8,507	9,009	(*)	8,714	8,580	7,943	7,861
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	1,355	1,404	1,219	1,328	(*)	1,213	1,208	1,144	1,177
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	52,545	52,940	56,256	48,478	53,274	49,190	49,464	50,318	46,999	47,272
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	49,143	49,740	52,991	45,451	50,182	46,057	46,399	47,229	44,127	44,409
551	Motor vehicle (franchised).....	(*)	43,003	45,844	39,069	43,438	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	3,200	3,265	3,027	3,092	(*)	3,065	3,089	2,872	2,863
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	10,992	10,766	10,886	10,240	10,328	11,414	11,415	11,428	10,673	10,734
571	Furniture and home furnishings.....	(*)	5,442	5,562	5,317	5,291	(*)	5,599	5,590	5,382	5,350
5722,31,4	Household appliance, radio, TV and computer stores.....	(*)	4,466	4,491	4,143	4,250	(*)	4,865	4,903	4,412	4,516
5722	Household appliance stores.....	(*)	720	721	813	782	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total.....	119,742	119,332	124,024	115,697	117,172	121,595	121,147	121,616	117,388	117,746
53	General merchandise group stores.....	23,407	24,546	25,608	23,054	23,934	25,693	25,660	25,929	25,038	24,980
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts).....	18,043	18,953	19,844	17,831	18,439	19,981	19,972	20,228	19,487	19,389
531	Dept. stores (in. leased depts) ³	(*)	19,298	20,224	18,128	18,762	(*)	20,285	20,485	19,747	19,699
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	641	698	574	619	(*)	681	680	631	636
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	4,952	5,066	4,649	4,876	(*)	5,007	5,021	4,920	4,955
54	Food stores.....	36,322	35,329	36,427	35,219	34,722	35,362	35,072	35,014	34,175	34,105
541	Grocery stores.....	34,447	33,476	34,512	33,468	32,976	33,476	33,177	33,153	32,399	32,361
554	Gasoline service stations.....	14,277	13,888	14,272	13,195	13,395	13,331	13,405	13,567	12,436	12,806
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	8,515	8,916	9,386	8,362	8,761	9,378	9,527	9,573	9,117	9,219
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	785	812	698	804	(*)	808	840	822	828
562,3	Women's clothing, specialty stores.....	(*)	2,741	2,924	2,615	2,813	(*)	2,870	2,820	2,886	2,930
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	3,214	3,319	2,916	2,965	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	1,592	1,702	1,526	1,617	(*)	1,610	1,640	1,596	1,611
58	Eating and drinking places.....	20,672	20,569	20,880	20,666	20,328	19,763	19,759	19,848	19,589	19,453
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	7,250	7,053	7,517	6,664	6,910	7,428	7,347	7,341	6,956	7,015
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,957	1,979	1,929	1,904	(*)	1,945	1,950	1,837	1,865
5961	Total mail order.....	(*)	3,286	3,567	3,094	3,227	(*)	4,077	3,985	3,946	3,842
53,56,57 594	GAF ⁴	(*)	51,337	53,229	48,092	49,671	(*)	54,527	54,841	52,133	52,214

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

NA Not available.

¹Revised.

¹Data 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-96-06.

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 (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					
		July 1996 advance from—		June 1996 preliminary from—		May 1996 through July 1996 from—	
		June 1996 prelim.	July 1995 final	May 1996 final	June 1995 final	Feb. 1996 through Apr. 1996	May 1995 through July 1995
	Retail trade, total.....	+0.1	+4.7	-0.5	+4.3	+0.5	+4.9
	Total (excl. automotive group)....	+0.3	+4.7	-0.2	+4.2	+1.4	+4.6
	Durable goods, total.....	-0.4	+6.4	-0.8	+6.4	+0.1	+7.2
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	-1.6	+9.2	+4.1	+11.8	+6.3	+9.7
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	-0.6	+4.7	-1.7	+4.6	-2.0	+5.9
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	-0.7	+4.4	-1.8	+4.5	-2.2	+5.8
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	0.0	+6.9	-0.1	+6.3	+0.9	+6.9
	Nondurable goods, total.....	+0.4	+3.6	-0.4	+2.9	+0.8	+3.4
53	General merchandise group stores.....	+0.1	+2.6	-1.0	+2.7	+0.9	+3.4
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	0.0	+2.5	-1.3	+3.0	+0.9	+3.8
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.) ¹	(NA)	(NA)	-1.0	+3.0	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	+0.8	+3.5	+0.2	+2.8	+0.5	+3.0
541	Grocery stores.....	+0.9	+3.3	+0.1	+2.5	+0.4	+2.7
554	Gasoline service stations.....	-0.6	+7.2	-1.2	+4.7	+3.5	+6.7
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	-1.6	+2.9	-0.5	+3.3	+0.2	+3.5
58	Eating and drinking places.....	0.0	+0.9	-0.4	+1.6	-0.1	+1.3
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	+1.1	+6.8	+0.1	+4.7	+1.6	+5.3

NA Not available.

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

FIRST-CLASS MAIL
 POSTAGE & FEES PAID
 CENSUS
 PERMIT No. G-58

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 -0.3 percent to +1.1 percent with the average of the absolute differences about 0.3 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 June 1996 and final estimates for May 1996 based on the full sample are published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for June (BR-96-06). 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 ²		Mean	Avg. of absolute diff.	
		Range ¹		Median	Median	Median	Median	From			To
		From	To								
	Retail trade, total.....	0.5	1.3	0.7	1.0	0.8	1.0	-0.3	+1.1	+0.1	0.3
	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

¹The 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.

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, July 1995 - June 1996. 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.

