

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF
COMMERCE**

Office of the Secretary

SINCLAIR WEEKS, SECRETARY WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

For immediate release
May 10, 1955

G-587

ADVANCE REPORT ON RETAIL TRADE, APRIL 1955

Total sales of retail stores in April were \$15.5 billion, the U. S. Department of Commerce announced today. This advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal factors and trading day differences, was 1 percent above March of this year and 7 percent over April a year ago.

The April sales figures are based on the Advance Report on Retail Trade, a monthly survey of the Bureau of the Census conducted in cooperation with a representative cross-section of about 1,800 retail firms which, in total, operate some 37,000 stores in the United States. The firms which are cooperating in the early reporting of sales are part of a larger group which furnishes figures at a later date. Therefore, the advance estimates are preliminary and subject to revision.

The preliminary Census figures are shown in table 1 on the reverse side. The Office of Business Economics indicated that, after allowance for seasonal variations, general merchandise stores showed an appreciable gain in sales from March to April. Changes for other major kinds of business were generally small.

(more)

ADVANCE RETAIL SALES REPORT--PRELIMINARY ESTIMATES FOR APRIL 1955

Table 1.--SALES OF RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES, BY KIND-OF-BUSINESS GROUP
(NOT ADJUSTED for seasonal factors and trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	Sales (millions of dollars)		
	1955		April 1954
	April	March	
Retail stores, total ¹	15,530	14,704	14,324
Food group.....	3,731	3,527	3,422
Grocery stores.....	3,180	2,983	2,866
Eating and drinking places.....	1,047	1,027	1,035
General merchandise group.....	1,657	1,464	1,567
Department stores ²	892	796	863
Apparel group.....	977	796	949
Furniture and appliance group.....	741	761	695
Lumber, building, hardware group ³	1,163	1,048	1,091
Automotive group.....	3,398	3,305	2,841
Gasoline service stations.....	947	944	903
Drug and proprietary stores.....	412	409	398

See footnotes below table 2.

Source: Bureau of the Census

Table 2.--SALES OF RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES, BY KIND-OF-BUSINESS GROUP
(ADJUSTED for seasonal factors and trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	Sales (millions of dollars)			Percent change, March 1955 from--	
	1955		March 1954	February 1955	March 1954
	March	February			
Retail stores, total ¹	15,075	14,765	13,900	+2	+8
Durable goods stores, total ¹	5,458	5,209	4,858	+5	+12
Nondurable goods stores, total ¹ ..	9,617	9,556	9,042	+1	+6
Food group.....	3,618	3,577	3,362	+1	+8
Eating and drinking places.....	1,083	1,085	1,049	0	+3
General merchandise group.....	1,615	1,584	1,490	+2	+8
Apparel group.....	867	870	807	0	+8
Furniture and appliance group.....	836	810	758	+3	+10
Lumber, building, hardware group ³ ..	1,093	1,043	1,035	+5	+6
Automotive group.....	3,169	2,990	2,738	+6	+16
Gasoline service stations.....	1,007	998	915	+1	+10
Drug and proprietary stores.....	418	412	410	+1	+2

Source: Office of Business Economics

¹ Totals include data for kinds of business not shown separately.

² Based on preliminary estimates supplied by Federal Reserve Board.

³ Includes farm equipment dealers.