

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF

COMMERCE

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ADVANCE REPORT ON RETAIL SALES, APRIL 1960

Total sales of retail stores in April were \$19.2 billion, the U. S. Department of Commerce announced today. This advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal variations and trading day differences, was about 3 percent above March and 5 percent above April 1959.

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 2,000 retail firms which, in total, operate some 39,000 stores in the United States. The firms which are cooperating in the early reporting of sales are part of a larger sample group which furnishes figures at a later date. The advance estimates are subject to revision, on the basis of estimates subsequently derived from the full sample, but the revision of the total seldom exceeds $1\frac{1}{2}$ percent.

The advance Census figures for April are shown in table 1 of this release. The Office of Business Economics indicated that, after adjustment for seasonal variations and trading day differences, most major groups showed a marked improvement in sales in April. The advance reflected in part improved weather conditions throughout the Nation and the maintenance of a strong flow of income. Estimates for March for the full sample indicate that seasonally adjusted retail sales were 1 percent above February.

(more)

ADVANCE RETAIL SALES FOR APRIL 1960

Table 1. SALES OF RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES, BY KIND-OF-BUSINESS GROUP

(NOT ADJUSTED for seasonal variations and trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	Sales (millions of dollars)		
	1960		1959
	April ¹	March ²	April
Retail stores, total ³	19,231	17,463	17,589
Durable-goods stores, total ³	6,363	5,845	6,208
Nondurable-goods stores, total ³	12,868	11,618	11,381
Food group.....	4,662	4,398	4,157
Grocery stores.....	4,173	3,926	3,714
Eating and drinking places.....	1,271	1,215	1,215
General merchandise group.....	2,075	1,679	1,774
Department stores.....	⁴ 1,213	974	1,044
Apparel group.....	1,374	944	996
Furniture and appliance group.....	841	815	839
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equip. group.....	1,331	1,028	1,365
Automotive group.....	3,705	3,594	3,566
Gasoline service stations.....	1,472	1,382	1,348
Drug and proprietary stores.....	602	606	599

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 variations and trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	Percentage change, Apr. 1960 from--		Sales (millions of dollars)				Percentage change Mar. 1960 from--	
	Mar. 1960	Apr. 1959	1960		1959		Feb. 1960	Mar. 1959
			Apr. ¹	Mar. ²	Feb.	Mar.		
Retail stores, total ³ ...	+3	+5	18,892	18,274	18,100	17,914	+1	+2
Durable-goods stores, total ³	+6	+3	6,300	5,951	6,040	6,045	-2	-2
Nondurable-goods stores, total ³	+2	+7	12,592	12,323	12,060	11,869	+2	+4
Food group.....			4,529	4,412	4,320	4,320	+3	+5
Eating and drinking places.....			1,314	1,297	1,240	1,240	+1	+6
General merchandise group.....			1,943	1,901	1,883	1,883	+2	+3
Apparel group.....			1,134	1,119	1,106	1,106	+1	+3
Furniture and appliance group.....			876	917	902	902	-4	-3
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.....			1,136	1,250	1,290	1,290	-9	-12
Automotive group.....			3,466	3,398	3,340	3,340	+2	+4
Gasoline service stations.....			1,447	1,423	1,376	1,376	+2	+5
Drug and proprietary stores.....			614	627	592	592	-2	+4

Source: Office of Business Economics

¹ Advance sample estimates. ² Preliminary estimates of full sample.

³ Totals include data for kinds of business not shown separately.

⁴ Based on preliminary estimates supplied by Federal Reserve Board.

Note: Effective with January 1960, the statistics include retail sales in Alaska and Hawaii which in 1958, according to preliminary results of the Retail Census, accounted for approximately 0.1 and 0.3 percent, respectively of the United States total.