

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF

COMMERCE

Luther H. Hodges, Secretary

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ADVANCE REPORT ON RETAIL SALES, FEBRUARY 1961

Total sales of retail stores in February were \$15.1 billion, the U. S. Department of Commerce announced today. After adjustment for seasonal variations and trading day differences, but not for price changes, total retail sales amounted to \$17.8 billion, about one percent above January and one and one-half percent below February 1960.

The February 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 1/2 percent.

The advance Census figures for February are shown in table 1 of this release. The Office of Business Economics noted that, after adjustment for seasonal variations and trading day differences, the durable and nondurable-goods groups each showed a little rise in sales from January to February. Except for an appreciable increase at general merchandise stores, sales changes among the major lines of trade were small and mixed.

(more)

ADVANCE RETAIL SALES FOR FEBRUARY 1961

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

(NOT ADJUSTED for seasonal variations or trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	Sales (millions of dollars)		
	1961		1960
	February ¹	January ²	February
Retail stores, total ³	15,097	15,691	15,829
Durable-goods stores, total ³	4,569	4,697	5,232
Nondurable-goods stores, total ³	10,528	10,994	10,597
Food group.....	4,083	4,227	4,079
Grocery stores.....	3,684	3,786	3,634
Eating and drinking places.....	1,212	1,270	1,141
General merchandise group.....	1,418	1,422	1,433
Department stores.....	811	821	809
Apparel group.....	749	869	792
Furniture and appliance group.....	667	685	797
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equip. group.	873	884	908
Automotive group.....	2,656	2,719	3,129
Gasoline service stations.....	1,255	1,367	1,286
Drug and proprietary stores.....	579	595	604

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, Feb. 1961 from--		Sales (millions of dollars)				Percentage change, Jan. 1961 from--	
	Jan. 1961	Feb. 1960	1961		1960		Dec. 1960	Jan. 1960
			Feb. ¹	Jan. ²	Dec. ⁵	Jan.		
Retail stores, total ³	+1	-2	17,821	17,675	17,977	18,090	-2	-2
Durable-goods stores, total ³ ..	0	-10	5,457	5,430	5,561	5,891	-2	-8
Nondurable-goods stores, total ³	+1	+3	12,364	12,245	12,416	12,199	-1	0
Food group.....			4,524	4,536	4,395		0	+3
Eating and drinking places.....			1,385	1,363	1,332		+2	+4
General merchandise group.....			1,904	1,981	1,967		-4	-3
Apparel group.....			1,123	1,086	1,164		+3	-4
Furniture and appliance group.....			797	849	916		-6	-13
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.			1,246	1,251	1,242		0	0
Automotive group.....			2,889	3,000	3,230		-4	-11
Gasoline service stations.....			1,450	1,497	1,449		-3	0
Drug and proprietary stores.....			604	624	627		-3	-4

Source: Office of Business Economics

¹ Advance sample estimates.

² Based on advance sample estimates for January. Full sample estimates not available for this Report. ³ Totals include data for kinds of business not shown separately.

⁴ Based on preliminary estimates supplied by Federal Reserve Board.

⁵ Preliminary estimates of full sample.