

ADVANCE RETAIL SALES REPORT

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Luther H. Hodges, Secretary

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
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ADVANCE REPORT ON RETAIL SALES, AUGUST 1961

Total sales of retail stores in August were \$18.3 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 \$18.1 billion, virtually unchanged from July 1961 and August 1960.

The August 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 August are shown in table 1 of this release. The Office of Business Economics indicated that, after adjustment for seasonal variations and trading day differences, August sales in most lines of trade were maintained close to July rates. Average monthly sales in the July-August period were about the same as in the Spring quarter, with slightly higher sales of nondurable-goods offsetting a small reduction in durables. Estimates for July for the full sample indicate that seasonally adjusted retail sales were about 1 percent below June.

(more)

ADVANCE RETAIL SALES FOR AUGUST 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
	August ¹	July ²	August ^r
Retail stores, total ³	18,267	17,965	18,153
Durable-goods stores, total ³	5,754	5,677	5,952
Nondurable-goods stores, total ³	12,513	12,288	12,201
Food group.....	4,564	4,682	4,405
Grocery stores.....	4,100	4,209	3,948
Eating and drinking places.....	1,493	1,492	1,480
General merchandise group.....	2,029	1,772	1,925
Department stores.....	⁴ 1,194	1,016	1,102
Apparel group.....	1,013	947	1,016
Furniture and appliance group.....	885	840	898
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equip. group.	1,382	1,300	1,380
Automotive group.....	2,987	3,076	3,221
Gasoline service stations.....	1,614	1,622	1,568
Drug and proprietary stores.....	616	627	613

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, Aug. 1961 from--		Sales (millions of dollars)				Percentage change, July 1961 from--	
	July 1961	Aug. 1960	1961		1960	June 1961	July 1960	
			Aug. ¹	July ²	June			July ^r
Retail stores, total ³	0	0	18,116	18,069	18,199	18,118	-1	0
Durable-goods stores, total ³ .	0	-4	5,517	5,541	5,586	5,662	-1	-2
Nondurable-goods stores, total ³ .	+1	+1	12,599	12,528	12,613	12,456	-1	+1
Food group.....				4,610	4,622	4,482	0	+3
Eating and drinking places.....				1,337	1,370	1,351	-2	-1
General merchandise group.....				2,070	2,067	2,016	0	+3
Apparel group.....				1,113	1,136	1,134	-2	-2
Furniture and appliance group.....				877	857	902	+2	-3
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group..				1,185	1,175	1,259	+1	-6
Automotive group.....				2,975	3,068	3,006	-3	-1
Gasoline service stations.....				1,502	1,500	1,474	0	+2
Drug and proprietary stores.....				647	642	629	+1	+3

Source: Office of Business Economics

^r Monthly sales by kind-of-business revised for 1960. See Monthly Retail Trade Report for January 1961.

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.