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Total sales of retail stores in February were \$17.0 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 \$20.3 billion, almost no change from January 1963 and 7 percent above February 1962.

The Office of Business Economics noted that, after adjustment for seasonal variations and trading day differences, February sales of both durable and nondurable goods stores showed virtually no change from January 1963. Based on the full sample, seasonally adjusted sales of all retail stores in January 1963 were practically unchanged from December 1962.

The February sales figures are based on 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 40,000 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 in the estimates subsequently derived from the full sample, but the revision of the total seldom exceeds $1\frac{1}{2}$ percent.

(more)

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C. Annual subscription to Current Retail Trade Reports (Weekly Retail Sales Report, Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report, Monthly Retail Trade Report, and Annual Retail Trade Report sold as a single subscription) \$5.00. Single copies, available only from the Bureau of the Census, 10¢ each.

ADVANCE RETAIL SALES FOR FEBRUARY 1963

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)		
	1963		1962
	February ¹	January ²	February
Retail stores, total ³	17,050	18,255	16,042
Durable-goods stores, total ³	5,324	5,650	4,980
Nondurable-goods stores, total ³	11,726	12,605	11,062
Food group.....	4,491	4,752	4,314
Grocery stores.....	4,097	4,308	3,902
Eating and drinking places.....	1,250	1,345	1,185
General merchandise group ⁴	1,627	1,758	1,513
Apparel group.....	831	988	795
Furniture and appliance group.....	774	823	725
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equip. group	893	923	873
Automotive group.....	3,235	3,458	2,994
Gasoline service stations.....	1,391	1,530	1,333
Drug and proprietary stores.....	645	658	622

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. 1963 from--		Sales (millions of dollars)				Percentage change, Jan. 1963 from--	
	Jan. 1963	Feb. 1962	1963		1962		Dec. 1962	Jan. 1962
			Feb. ¹	Jan. ²	Dec.	Jan.		
Retail stores, total ³	+0.2	+7	20,291	20,241	20,203	18,898	0	+7
Durable-goods stores, total ³ ...	+0.5	+8	6,459	6,429	6,453	5,920	0	+9
Nondurable-goods stores, total ³	+0.0	+6	13,832	13,812	13,750	12,978	0	+6
Food group.....				4,958	4,928	4,684	+1	+6
Eating and drinking places.....				1,475	1,465	1,387	+1	+6
General merchandise group.....				2,322	2,340	2,133	-1	+9
Apparel group.....				1,224	1,219	1,185	0	+3
Furniture and appliance group.....				934	949	885	-2	+6
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.....				1,269	1,308	1,214	-3	+5
Automotive group.....				3,696	3,662	3,348	+1	+10
Gasoline service stations.....				1,628	1,605	1,543	+1	+6
Drug and proprietary stores.....				672	686	655	-2	+3

¹ Advance sample estimates.

Source: Office of Business Economics

² Preliminary estimates of full sample.

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

⁴ Separate department store figures have been discontinued until arrangements are made to obtain these data on a comparable basis with that used for the other kinds of retail trade. However, department store figures are included in the general merchandise group based on data supplied by the Federal Reserve Board.