



The U. S. Department of Commerce announced today that total sales of retail stores in September were estimated at \$21.1 billion. Statistics prepared by the Department's Bureau of the Census show that this advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal variations and trading day differences, but not for price changes, was about 8 percent above September 1963 but 1 percent below the August 1964 level.

The Office of Business Economics noted that after adjustment, sales of durable goods stores rose 2 percent from August to September, with automotive and lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment dealer sales accounting for the increase. Nondurable goods sales were down two and one-half percent as a slight increase in food store sales was offset by declines in most of the other lines of trade. Based on the full sample, seasonally adjusted sales of all retail stores in August were 1 percent above July 1964.

The September sales figures are based on a monthly survey of the Bureau of the Census conducted in cooperation with a representative cross-section of about 2,500 retail firms which, in total, operate some 48,000 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 by the estimates subsequently derived from the full sample.

The revision of the total seldom exceeds 1.5 percent and for the past year has averaged 0.7 percent. For individual kind-of-business groups, revisions have been greater, ranging on the average from 0.9 percent for the food group to 3.6 percent for the lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.

(more)

ADVANCE RETAIL SALES FOR SEPTEMBER 1964

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)		
	1964		1963
	September ¹	August ²	September
Retail stores, total ³	21,102	21,786	19,267
Durable-goods stores, total ³	6,848	7,002	5,999
Nondurable-goods stores, total ³	14,254	14,784	13,268
Food group.....	5,093	5,280	4,684
Grocery stores.....	4,628	4,771	4,238
Eating and drinking places.....	1,615	1,810	1,526
General merchandise group.....	2,544	2,606	2,275
Department stores.....	1,506	1,517	1,340
Apparel group.....	1,273	1,214	1,161
Furniture and appliance group.....	1,056	1,112	980
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equip. group.....	1,426	1,393	1,431
Automotive group.....	3,686	3,828	2,990
Gasoline service stations.....	1,629	1,806	1,599
Drug and proprietary stores.....	687	705	647

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 differences⁴)

Kind-of-business group	Percentage change, Sept. 1964 from--		Sales (millions of dollars)				Percentage change, Aug. 1964 from--	
	Aug. 1964	Sept. 1963	1964			1963	July 1964	Aug. 1963
			Sept. ¹	Aug. ²	July	Aug.		
Retail stores, total ³	-1	+8	22,027	22,268	21,946	20,666	+1	+8
Durable-goods stores, total ³ ...	+2	+13	7,449	7,311	7,060	6,562	+4	+11
Nondurable-goods stores, total ³	-3	+5	14,578	14,957	14,886	14,104	0	+6
Food group.....				5,230	5,272	4,996	-1	+5
Eating and drinking places.....				1,638	1,642	1,519	0	+8
General merchandise group.....				2,749	2,686	2,475	+2	+11
Apparel group.....				1,369	1,316	1,259	+4	+9
Furniture and appliance group.....				1,095	1,107	939	-1	+17
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.....				1,277	1,294	1,299	-1	-2
Automotive group.....				4,230	3,989	3,733	+6	+13
Gasoline service stations.....				1,694	1,701	1,612	0	+5
Drug and proprietary stores.....				719	726	685	-1	+5

¹ Advance sample estimates.

² Preliminary estimates of full sample.

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

⁴ Data adjusted for seasonal variations and trading day differences.