



DECEMBER 1964

The Department of Commerce announced today that December 1964 retail store sales totaled \$27.7 billion, bringing sales for the full year 1964 to \$261.6 billion, a record annual total and about 6 percent above the 1963 level. After adjustment for seasonal variations and trading day differences, but not for price changes, total retail sales for December amounted to \$22.8 billion, about 5 percent above the previous month and 9 percent above December 1963.

The Office of Business Economics noted that the increase from the previous month was due primarily to the substantial rise in seasonally adjusted durable goods stores sales. Automotive dealer sales advanced one-fourth over the November seasonally adjusted rate following the settlement of work stoppages. Nondurable goods sales were up one percent, with small increases for all lines of trade except general merchandise stores where there was a slight decline. Based on the full sample, seasonally adjusted sales of all retail stores in November were about one percent above the October 1964 level.

The December 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 0.8 percent. For individual kind-of-business groups, revisions have been greater, ranging on the average from 1.0 percent for the food group to 3.8 percent for the lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.

(more)

ADVANCE RETAIL SALES FOR DECEMBER 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)					
	12 months			Dec. <sup>1</sup> 1964	Nov. <sup>2</sup> 1964	Dec. 1963
	1964	1963	Percent increase			
Retail stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	261,606	246,435	+6	27,724	21,691	25,104
Durable-goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	85,272	80,098	+6	8,347	6,823	7,208
Nondurable-goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	176,334	166,337	+6	19,377	14,868	17,896
Food group.....	62,106	59,143	+5	5,677	5,017	5,194
Grocery stores.....	56,202	53,551	+5	5,139	4,544	4,679
Eating and drinking places.....	19,343	18,071	+7	1,639	1,565	1,533
General merchandise group.....	31,552	28,660	+10	4,899	3,001	4,399
Department stores.....	18,528	16,683	+11	2,874	1,761	2,625
Apparel group.....	15,512	14,460	+7	2,295	1,329	2,172
Furniture and appliance group.....	13,084	11,612	+13	1,468	1,180	1,333
Lumber, bldg., hdwe., farm equip. group.	15,627	15,528	+1	1,236	1,240	1,185
Automotive group.....	48,569	45,959	+6	4,448	3,713	3,690
Gasoline service stations.....	20,324	19,365	+5	1,806	1,725	1,713
Drug and proprietary stores.....	8,592	8,175	+5	966	696	906

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)<sup>4</sup>

Kind-of-business group	Percentage change, Dec. 1964 from--		Sales (millions of dollars)				Percentage change, Nov. 1964 from--	
	Nov. 1964	Dec. 1963	1964			1963	Oct. 1964	Nov. 1963
			Dec. <sup>1</sup>	Nov. <sup>2</sup>	Oct.	Nov.		
Retail stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	+5	+9	22,808	21,631	21,383	20,558	+1	+5
Durable-goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> ..	+16	+14	7,767	6,704	6,496	6,734	+3	0
Nondurable-goods stores, total <sup>3</sup>	+1	+6	15,041	14,927	14,887	13,824	0	+8
Food group.....				5,258	5,229	4,973	+1	+6
Eating and drinking places.....				1,606	1,637	1,506	-2	+7
General merchandise group.....				2,718	2,664	2,355	+2	+15
Apparel group.....				1,284	1,301	1,186	-1	+8
Furniture and appliance group.....				1,108	1,088	986	+2	+12
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group....				1,255	1,273	1,381	-1	-9
Automotive group.....				3,685	3,495	3,791	+5	-3
Gasoline service stations.....				1,752	1,722	1,638	+2	+7
Drug and proprietary stores.....				731	739	677	-1	+8

<sup>1</sup> Advance sample estimates.

<sup>2</sup> Preliminary estimates of full sample.

<sup>3</sup> Totals include data for kinds of business not shown separately.

<sup>4</sup> Data adjusted for seasonal variations and trading day differences.