



For release  
March 10, 1967

FEBRUARY 1967

CB-67-319

The U.S. Department of Commerce announced today that total sales of retail stores in February were estimated at \$21.5 billion; this advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal and holiday variations and trading day differences but not price changes, was \$25.3 billion. The advance estimate, after adjustment was about 2 percent below January but 1 percent above February sales last year. Adjusted December-through-February sales were 1 percent below the average for the prior three months but were 2 percent above the comparable period of last year.

The Office of Business Economics noted that after adjustment, sales of durable goods stores in February fell 5 percent from January, with declines for all major kinds of business. Sales of nondurable goods stores were unchanged from the January peak. Average monthly sales for durable goods stores during the December-February period were about 3 percent less than the average for the prior 3 months, while the average for nondurable goods stores for the comparable period was unchanged. The year-to-year gain in the three month average for nondurable goods stores was about 4 percent, while durable goods stores declined 3 percent.

Based on the full sample the total U.S. unadjusted sales estimate for January was \$22.6 billion, slightly higher than the \$22.3 billion published earlier in the January Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report released on February 10, 1967. The seasonally adjusted sales for January as revised were up one percent from December.

The February sales figures are based on advance reporting of a small subsample of the Census Bureau's panel of retail firms. The advance estimates are subject to revision by estimates subsequently derived from the full sample.

The revision of the total seldom exceeds 1.5 percent and for the past year has averaged 1.1 percent. For individual kind-of-business groups revisions have been greater, ranging on the average from 1.0 percent for food stores to 3.8 percent for the apparel group.

It should be noted that even for figures derived from the full sample, sales movements between individual pairs of months tend to be relatively irregular. Data for several months are generally required to indicate the underlying trend.

(more)

ADVANCE RETAIL SALES FOR FEBRUARY 1967

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)		
	1967		1966
	February <sup>1</sup>	January <sup>2</sup>	February
Retail stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	21,459	22,589	21,260
Durable-goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	6,590	7,002	6,998
Nondurable-goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	14,869	15,587	14,262
Food group.....	5,397	5,549	5,348
Grocery stores.....	4,961	5,087	4,874
Eating and drinking places.....	1,754	1,858	1,618
General merchandise group.....	2,419	2,502	2,285
Department stores.....	1,544	1,651	1,474
Apparel group.....	999	1,218	1,009
Furniture and appliance group.....	1,046	1,125	1,015
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equip. group	1,043	1,058	1,010
Automotive group.....	3,905	4,194	4,366
Gasoline service stations.....	1,695	1,825	1,667
Drug and proprietary stores.....	837	846	752

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. 1967 from--		Sales (millions of dollars)				Percentage change, Jan. 1967 from--	
	Jan. 1967	Feb. 1966	1967		1966		Dec. 1966	Jan. 1966
			Feb. 1	Jan. 2	Dec.	Jan.		
Retail stores, total <sup>3</sup> .....	-2	+1	25,277	25,703	25,368	25,081	+1	+2
Durable-goods stores, total <sup>3</sup> ..	-5	-6	7,733	8,178	8,156	8,324	0	-2
Nondurable-goods stores, total <sup>3</sup>	0	+4	17,544	17,525	17,212	16,757	+2	+5
Food group.....				5,913	5,861	5,841	+1	+1
Eating and drinking places.....				2,051	2,019	1,879	+2	+9
General merchandise group.....				3,406	3,311	3,230	+3	+5
Apparel group.....				1,508	1,386	1,417	+9	+6
Furniture and appliance group.....				1,299	1,270	1,208	+2	+8
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group....				1,503	1,405	1,489	+7	+1
Automotive group.....				4,601	4,745	4,884	-3	-6
Gasoline service stations.....				1,929	1,915	1,907	+1	+1
Drug and proprietary stores.....				887	892	806	-1	+1

<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.