



For release September 10, 1968

CB-68-368

AUGUST 1968

The U. S. Department of Commerce announced today that total sales of retail stores in August were estimated at \$29.6 billion; this advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal and holiday variations and trading day differences but not for price changes, was \$29.2 billion. The advance estimate, after adjustment, was virtually unchanged from July sales and about 10 percent above August sales last year. Adjusted June-through-August sales averaged about 3 percent above the prior 3 months and 9 percent above the comparable period a year ago.

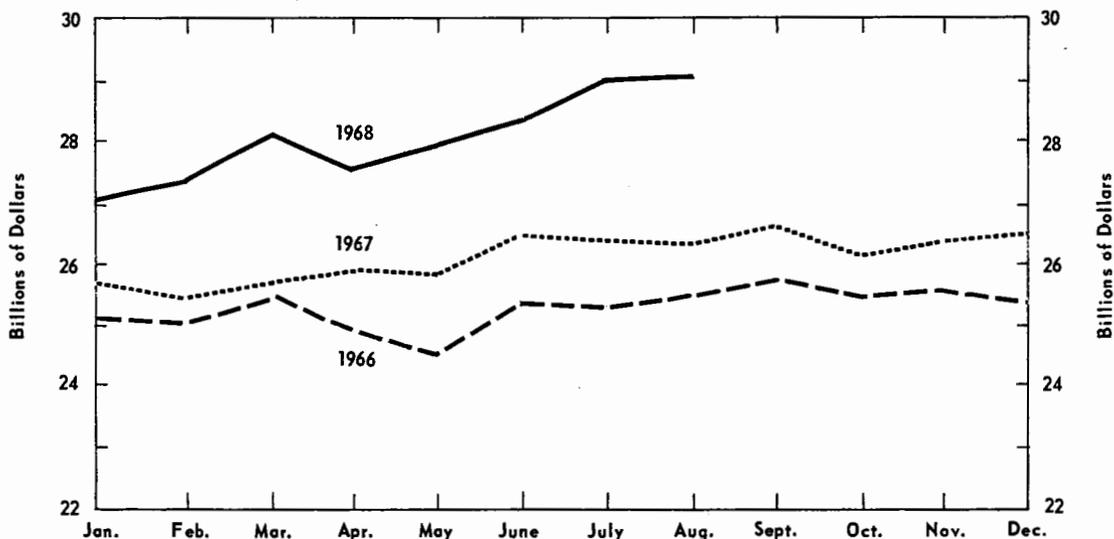
The Office of Business Economics noted that after adjustment, sales of both durable goods stores and nondurable goods stores held at their July peaks in August. Small and offsetting changes

were reported for all major lines of trade. Average monthly sales for durable goods stores during the June-through-August period were about 5 percent above the average for the prior 3 months, and the average for nondurable goods stores for the comparable period increased 2 percent. The year-to-year gain in the 3 month average for nondurable goods stores was about 8 percent and about 11 percent for durable goods stores.

Based on the full sample, the total U.S. unadjusted sales estimate for July was \$0.1 billion above the \$28.8 billion published earlier in the July Advance Monthly Retail Sales report released on August 9, 1968. The seasonally adjusted sales for July as revised were about 3 percent above June.

Monthly Sales of All Retail Stores in the United States

(Adjusted for Seasonal, Holiday, and Trading Day Differences)



For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. 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) \$6.00. Single copies, available only from the Bureau of the Census, 10¢.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE C. R. Smith, Secretary
William H. Chartener, Assistant Secretary for Economic Affairs
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS A. Ross Eckler, Director

The August sales figures are based on advance reporting of a small subsample of the Census Bureau's panel of retail firms. Beginning with the October 1967 report, the advance figures have been modified on the basis of the relationship between the advance estimates and full sample estimates. 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

0.6 percent. For individual kind-of-business groups revisions have been greater, ranging on the average from 0.7 percent for food stores to 3.7 percent for the lumber group.

It should be noted that even for figures derived from the full-sample, sales movements from one month to the next tend to be relatively irregular. Data for several months are generally required to indicate the underlying trend.

SALES OF RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES, BY KIND-OF-BUSINESS GROUP

Part A. NOT ADJUSTED for seasonal variations or trading day differences

Kind-of-business group	Sales (millions of dollars)		
	1968		1967
	August ¹	July ²	August
Retail stores, total ³	29,587	28,884	26,201
Durable goods stores, total ³	9,384	9,863	8,298
Nondurable goods stores, total ³	20,203	19,021	17,903
Food group.....	6,939	6,561	6,059
Grocery stores.....	6,383	6,019	5,544
Eating and drinking places.....	2,653	2,508	2,316
General merchandise group.....	4,016	3,555	3,502
Department stores.....	2,610	2,326	2,280
Apparel group.....	1,602	1,410	1,451
Furniture and appliance group.....	1,462	1,397	1,325
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.....	1,671	1,704	1,550
Automotive group.....	5,418	5,941	4,669
Gasoline service stations.....	2,334	2,334	2,113
Drug and proprietary stores.....	978	956	888

Part B. ADJUSTED for seasonal variations and trading day differences

Kind-of-business group	Percentage change, August 1968 from--		Sales (millions of dollars)				Percentage change, July 1968 from--	
	July 1968	Aug. 1967	1968		1967		June 1968	July 1967
			Aug. ¹	July ²	June	July		
Retail stores, total ³	0	+10	29,163	29,075	28,296	26,444	+3	+10
Durable goods stores, total ³	0	+13	9,583	9,582	9,211	8,592	+4	+12
Nondurable goods stores, total ³ ...	0	+9	19,580	19,493	19,085	17,852	+2	+9
Food group.....				6,508	6,418	6,002	+1	+8
Eating and drinking places.....				2,268	2,228	2,071	+2	+10
General merchandise group.....				4,035	3,900	3,529	+3	+14
Apparel group.....				1,662	1,570	1,538	+6	+8
Furniture and appliance group.....				1,424	1,405	1,267	+1	+12
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.....				1,533	1,445	1,437	+6	+7
Automotive group.....				5,765	5,529	5,130	+4	+12
Gasoline service stations.....				2,181	2,150	2,020	+1	+8
Drug and proprietary stores.....				986	971	903	+2	+9

Source: Bureau of the Census

¹Advance sample estimates.

²Preliminary estimates of full sample

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