

advance monthly
RETAIL SALES



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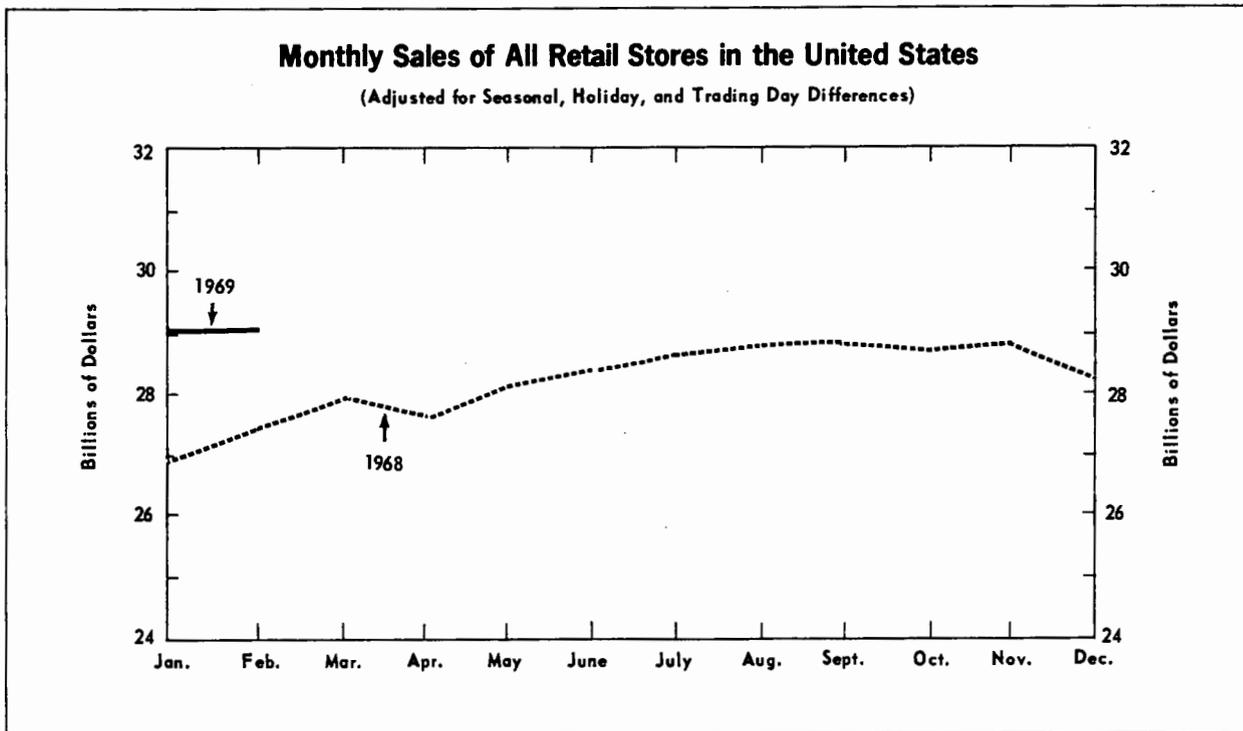
FEBRUARY 1969

The Bureau of the Census, U. S. Department of Commerce, announced today that total sales of retail stores in February were estimated at \$24.6 billion; this advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal and holiday variations and trading day differences but not for price changes, was \$29.0 billion. The advance estimate, after adjustment, was virtually unchanged from the January sales but about 6 percent above February sales last year. Adjusted December-through-February sales averaged about the same as the prior 3 months but 4 percent above the comparable period a year ago.

Trends were mixed for individual kinds of business, with a decline for most durable goods store categories offset by an increase in the

nondurable goods store total. Average monthly sales for durable goods stores during the December-through-February period were about 1 percent below the average for the prior 3 months, while the average for nondurable goods stores for the comparable period was virtually unchanged. The year-to-year gain in the 3-month average for nondurable goods stores was about 4 percent and about 5 percent for durable goods stores.

Based on the full sample, the total U. S. unadjusted sales estimate for January was about \$0.3 billion above the \$25.9 billion published earlier in the January Advance Monthly Retail Sales report released February 10, 1969. The seasonally adjusted sales for January as revised were 2 percent above December.



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 Maurice H. Stans, Secretary
William H. Chartener, Assistant Secretary for Economic Affairs
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS A. Ross Eckler, Director

The February 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 0.8 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)		
	1969		1968
	February ¹	January ²	February
Retail stores, total ³	24,639	26,283	24,210
Durable goods stores, total ³	8,047	8,370	7,883
Nondurable goods stores, total ³	16,592	17,913	16,327
Food group.....	5,688	6,270	5,598
Grocery stores.....	5,335	5,883	5,227
Eating and drinking places.....	1,796	1,905	1,837
General merchandise group with nonstores.....	3,408	3,559	3,296
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....	3,012	3,167	2,912
Department stores.....	2,021	2,183	1,912
Apparel group.....	1,190	1,420	1,155
Furniture and appliance group.....	1,210	1,265	1,205
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.....	1,141	1,197	1,245
Automotive group.....	4,952	5,152	4,842
Gasoline service stations.....	1,870	1,998	1,809
Drug and proprietary stores.....	899	949	887

Part B. ADJUSTED for seasonal variations and trading day differences

Kind-of-business group	Percentage change, Feb. 1969 from--		Sales (millions of dollars)					Percentage change, Jan. 1969 from--	
	Jan. 1969	Feb. 1968	1969		1968 ^r			Dec. 1968	Jan. 1968
			Feb. ¹	Jan. ²	Dec.	Feb.	Jan.		
Retail stores, total ³	0	+6	29,021	29,031	28,347	27,449	27,043	+2	+7
Durable goods stores, total ³ ...	-1	+6	9,355	9,483	9,238	8,828	8,580	+3	+11
Nondurable goods stores, total ³ ...	+1	+6	19,666	19,548	19,109	18,621	18,463	+2	+6
Food group.....			6,340	6,139	6,139	5,929	5,911	+3	+7
Eating and drinking places.....			2,080	2,062	2,062	2,081	2,025	+1	+3
General merchandise group with nonstores.....			4,564	4,577	4,577	4,349	4,281	0	+7
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....			4,136	4,168	4,168	3,928	3,868	-1	+7
Apparel group.....			1,660	1,571	1,571	1,558	1,520	+6	+9
Furniture and appliance group.....			1,399	1,357	1,357	1,357	1,349	+3	+4
Lumber, building, hardware, farm equipment group.....			1,591	1,616	1,616	1,602	1,490	-2	+7
Automotive group.....			5,590	5,445	5,445	5,189	5,051	+3	+11
Gasoline service stations.....			2,103	2,052	2,052	1,994	1,981	+2	+6
Drug and proprietary stores.....			986	969	969	932	941	+2	+5

Source: Bureau of the Census

¹Advance sample estimates.

²Preliminary estimates of full sample

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

^rRevised.