



Advance Monthly Retail Sales

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The Bureau of the Census, U. S. Department of Commerce, announced today that total sales of retail stores in January were estimated at \$37.9 billion. The Bureau, part of the Department's Social and Economic Statistics Administration (SESA), said this advance figure, after adjustment for seasonal and holiday variations and trading day differences but not for price changes was \$43.0 billion, about 2 percent above December and about 6 percent above January sales last year. Adjusted total November-through-January sales were little changed from the prior 3 months but 8 percent above the comparable period a year ago.

from their monthly records (in reflecting such elements as carrying charges, sales taxes, merchandise returns), the sales figures estimated for the advance report can differ from the subsequently issued report based on the monthly records of the full sample of retailers. Additionally, sampling variability between sub-sample and later full sample results can be a cause of difference. For most months, such differences have been reduced by modifying the advance estimate, prior to publication, on the basis of the relationship between the advance and full-sample data for previous months.

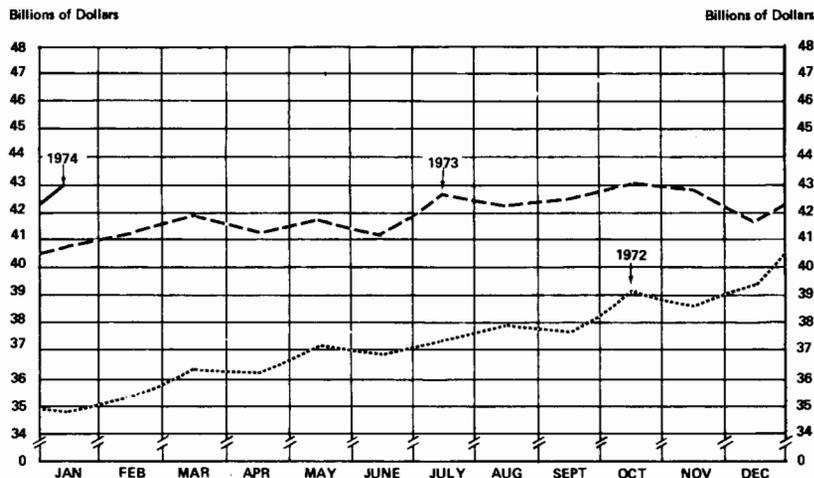
Based on the full sample, the total U. S. adjusted sales estimate for December was about \$1.5 billion less than the \$43.5 billion published earlier in the December Advance Monthly Retail Sales report released January 10, 1974. The seasonally adjusted sales for December as revised were about 2 percent below November.

The differences between the month-to-month change in advance and full-sample estimates for total retail sales seldom exceed 1.0 percent and for the past year has averaged 0.9 percent. For individual kind of business groups, differences have been greater, ranging on the average from 0.7 percent for the Food group to 2.8 percent for the Apparel group.

The advance sales estimates are based on early reporting, by a small subsample of the Census Bureau's retail survey panel, of sales figures for the weeks and part-weeks comprising the month. Because retailers' weekly records often differ

Even for figures derived from the full sample, sales movements from one month to the next can be relatively irregular. Data for 3 months are generally required to indicate the underlying trend.

MONTHLY SALES OF ALL RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES
(Data ADJUSTED for seasonal, holiday, and trading day differences)



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE | Social and Economic Statistics Administration | BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

Data on the retail trade, published in the Weekly Retail Sales Report, Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report, the Monthly Retail Trade Report, and the Annual Retail Trade Report are available on a single subscription from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 20402, at \$30.10 per year. Add \$7.55 for each subscription to a foreign address. Single copies of the Monthly Retail Trade Report are available from Publications Distribution Section, Social and Economic Statistics Administration, Washington, D.C., 20233 at 40 cents each.

Table 1. 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)		
	1974	1973	
	January ¹	December ²	January
Total, retail stores ³	37,942	49,637	35,768
Total (excluding automotive group).....	31,152	43,240	28,264
Durable goods stores, total ³	11,756	13,341	12,154
Nondurable goods stores, total ³	26,186	36,296	23,614
Food group.....	9,031	9,828	7,995
Grocery stores.....	8,415	9,116	7,468
Eating and drinking places.....	3,117	3,291	2,715
General merchandise group with nonstores.....	5,427	11,639	4,999
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....	4,965	11,085	4,572
Department stores.....	3,351	7,718	3,091
Apparel group.....	1,724	3,367	1,608
Furniture and appliance group.....	1,926	2,543	1,789
Bldg. materials, hardware, farm equipment group.....	2,030	2,453	1,876
Automotive group.....	6,790	6,397	7,504
Gasoline service stations.....	2,793	2,933	2,589
Drug and proprietary stores.....	1,184	1,708	1,205

Part B. ADJUSTED for seasonal variations and trading day differences

Kind-of-business group	Sales (millions of dollars)					Percentage change December 1973 from--	
	1974	1973		1972	November 1973	December 1972	
	January ¹	December ²	November	January	December		
Total, retail stores ³	43,013	41,968	42,976	40,707	39,417	-2	+6
Total (excluding automotive group).....	35,181	34,548	34,793	32,200	31,117	-1	+11
Durable goods stores, total ³	13,848	13,217	14,090	14,234	13,640	-6	-3
Nondurable goods stores, total ³	29,165	28,751	28,886	26,473	25,777	0	+12
Food group.....		9,168	9,135	8,476	8,071	0	+14
Eating and drinking places.....		3,407	3,331	3,057	2,957	+2	+15
General merchandise group with nonstores.....		7,016	7,213	6,590	6,362	-3	+10
General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order).....		6,479	6,661	6,095	5,884	-3	+10
Apparel group.....		2,042	2,006	1,949	1,899	+2	+8
Furniture and appliance group.....		1,968	2,046	1,962	1,808	-4	+9
Bldg. materials, hardware, farm equipment group.....		2,623	2,617	2,585	2,390	0	+10
Automotive group.....		7,420	8,183	8,507	8,300	-9	-11
Gasoline service stations.....		2,927	2,966	2,714	2,713	-1	+8
Drug and proprietary stores.....		1,273	1,322	1,246	1,236	-4	+3

¹Advance sample estimates.

²Preliminary estimates of full sample.

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

Table 2. Percentage Changes for Retail Sales

(ADJUSTED for seasonal variations and trading day differences)

Kind-of-business group	January 1974 from		November 1973 through January 1974 from--	
	December 1973	January 1973	August 1973 through October 1973	November 1972 through January 1973
Total, retail stores.....	+2	+6	0	+8
Total (excluding automotive group).....	+2	+9	+2	+11
Durable goods stores, total.....	+5	-3	-4	0
Nondurable goods stores, total.....	+1	+10	+2	+12

Source: Bureau of the Census