

# Advance Monthly Retail Sales

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## MAY 1977

The Bureau of the Census, U. S. Department of Commerce, announced today that total sales of retail stores in May, after adjusting for seasonal variations and trading day differences, but not for price changes, were estimated at \$60.0 billion. This adjusted figure was about 1 percent above April 1977, and 13 percent greater than May a year ago. The adjusted May estimate, excluding the automotive group, was also 1 percent above April and was 12 percent above May of last year.

Adjusted sales of both durable and nondurable stores increased about 1 percent over April. Compared with sales for May 1976, durable goods stores increased 17 percent, while nondurable goods stores increased 12 percent.

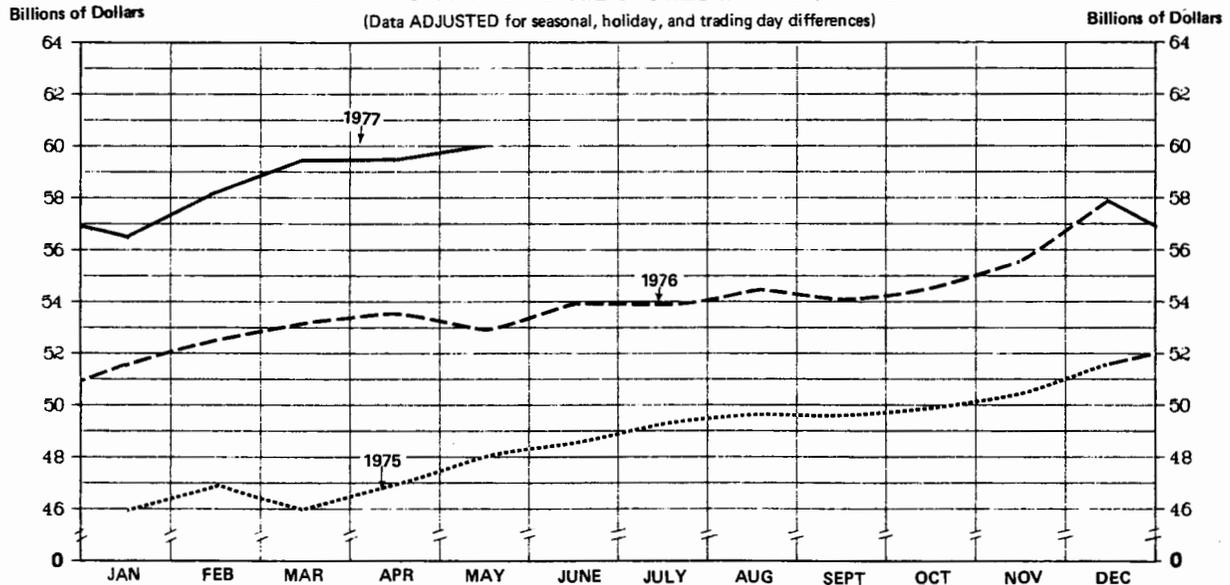
The revised estimate of retail sales for April, based on preliminary results from the full sample of retail stores and modified on the basis of past relationships between preliminary and final estimates, was about \$59.6 billion, \$0.2 billion above the advance estimate published earlier. Seasonally adjusted sales for April as revised, were virtually unchanged from March but were 11 percent above April 1976. Excluding the automotive group, these estimates were about 1 percent above March and 10 percent over April of last year. For nondurable goods stores, adjusted April sales were about 1 percent above the previous month and 10 percent above the same month a year earlier. For durable goods stores, adjusted sales for April were 2 percent below March but were 13 percent higher than April 1976.

The advance sales estimates are based on early reporting of sales for the weeks and part-weeks of the month by a small subsample of the Bureau's retail survey panel. Because retailers' weekly records often differ from their monthly records (in reflecting such items as carrying charges, sales taxes, merchandise returns), the advance estimate can differ from the subsequent estimates which are based on monthly reports obtained from the full sample of retail stores. In addition, sampling variability between the sub-sample used for the advance estimates and the full sample can cause a difference. For most months, such differences have been reduced by modifying the advance estimates prior to publication on the basis of the relationship between the advance and full-sample data for previous months.

The differences between advance and full-sample estimates of month-to-month percentage change in seasonally adjusted total retail store sales have ranged from 0 to 2 percent during the last 12 months, with a median of 1 percent. For individual kind-of-business groups, these differences tend to be higher.

Preliminary estimates for April 1977 and final estimates for March 1977 based on the full sample will also be published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade report for April (BR-77-4). The complete report will provide sales estimates in greater detail and will present a description of the sample design and the techniques used in developing the estimates. In addition, the complete report will include approximate measures of sampling variability.

### MONTHLY SALES OF ALL RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES



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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

Data on 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 Advance Monthly Retail Trade Report are available from Subscriber Services Section (Publications), Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C., 20233 at 25 cents each.

Table 1. ESTIMATED SALES OF RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES BY KIND OF BUSINESS

(Sales in millions of dollars)

| Kind of business   | Not adjusted                |                              |               |        |        | Adjusted <sup>1</sup>       |                              |               |        |        |
|--|-----------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|--------|--------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|--------|--------|
|  | 1977                        |                              |               | 1976   |        | 1977                        |                              |               | 1976   |        |
|  | May <sup>2</sup><br>advance | Apr. <sup>3</sup><br>prelim. | Mar.<br>final | May    | Apr.   | May <sup>2</sup><br>advance | Apr. <sup>3</sup><br>prelim. | Mar.<br>final | May    | Apr.   |
| Retail stores, total.....  | 61,160                      | 60,397                       | 58,326        | 54,460 | 54,633 | 59,998                      | 59,572                       | 59,522        | 52,868 | 53,696 |
| Total (excl. automotive group).....  | 47,811                      | 47,412                       | 45,240        | 43,320 | 43,294 | 47,740                      | 47,396                       | 46,893        | 42,619 | 42,992 |
| Durable goods stores, total.....   | 21,733                      | 21,082                       | 20,766        | 18,511 | 18,670 | 20,440                      | 20,333                       | 20,687        | 17,419 | 18,046 |
| Nondurable goods stores, total.....  | 39,427                      | 39,315                       | 37,560        | 35,949 | 35,963 | 39,558                      | 39,239                       | 38,835        | 35,449 | 35,650 |
| Food stores, total.....  | 12,541                      | 12,699                       | 12,231        | 11,770 | 11,535 | 12,761                      | 12,556                       | 12,403        | 11,629 | 11,448 |
| Grocery stores.....  | 11,717                      | 11,820                       | 11,378        | 10,930 | 10,717 | 11,944                      | 11,680                       | 11,540        | 10,790 | 10,643 |
| Eating and drinking places.....  | 4,915                       | 4,707                        | 4,570         | 4,564  | 4,218  | 4,721                       | 4,750                        | 4,795         | 4,355  | 4,304  |
| General merchandise group with nonstores.....  | 9,153                       | 9,099                        | 8,580         | 7,949  | 8,292  | 9,514                       | 9,437                        | 9,218         | 8,187  | 8,337  |
| General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order)..... | 8,488                       | 8,453                        | 7,870         | 7,386  | 7,698  | 8,824                       | 8,776                        | 8,517         | 7,604  | 7,745  |
| Department stores.....   | 6,022                       | 5,947                        | 5,452         | 5,196  | 5,394  | 6,234                       | 6,150                        | 6,009         | 5,324  | 5,416  |
| Variety stores.....  | *                           | 714                          | 618           | 639    | 672    | *                           | 715                          | 702           | 663    | 663    |
| Mail-order houses (department store merchandise).....                                  | *                           | 556                          | 648           | 444    | 521    | *                           | 621                          | 594           | 508    | 528    |
| Apparel and accessory stores, total.....   | 2,316                       | 2,459                        | 2,219         | 2,194  | 2,377  | 2,448                       | 2,411                        | 2,424         | 2,265  | 2,229  |
| Men's, boys' wear stores.....  | *                           | 537                          | 463           | 484    | 508    | *                           | 540                          | 543           | 496    | 506    |
| Women's apparel, accessory stores.....   | *                           | 902                          | 850           | 874    | 903    | *                           | 912                          | 926           | 895    | 887    |
| Shoe stores.....   | *                           | 415                          | 356           | 335    | 412    | *                           | 369                          | 369           | 348    | 339    |
| Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores, total.....                          | 2,548                       | 2,497                        | 2,552         | 2,306  | 2,311  | 2,621                       | 2,614                        | 2,606         | 2,380  | 2,385  |
| Furniture, home furnishings stores.....  | *                           | 1,551                        | 1,574         | 1,370  | 1,392  | *                           | 1,589                        | 1,592         | 1,359  | 1,402  |
| Household appliance, TV, radio stores.....   | *                           | 767                          | 781           | 723    | 706    | *                           | 832                          | 820           | 782    | 756    |
| Household appliance dealers.....   | *                           | 476                          | 475           | 457    | 442    | *                           | (NA)                         | (NA)          | (NA)   | (NA)   |
| Building materials, hardware, farm equipment dealers, total.....                       | 3,980                       | 3,847                        | 3,499         | 3,382  | 3,393  | 3,699                       | 3,672                        | 3,664         | 3,109  | 3,243  |
| Lumber and other building materials dealers.....                                       | *                           | 2,100                        | 1,977         | 1,891  | 1,820  | *                           | 2,102                        | 2,130         | 1,792  | 1,800  |
| Hardware stores.....   | *                           | 623                          | 516           | 569    | 539    | *                           | 608                          | 582           | 500    | 540    |
| Automotive dealers, total.....   | 13,349                      | 12,985                       | 13,086        | 11,140 | 11,339 | 12,258                      | 12,176                       | 12,629        | 10,249 | 10,704 |
| Passenger car, other automotive dealers.....   | *                           | 11,972                       | 12,113        | 10,298 | 10,468 | *                           | 11,210                       | 11,614        | 9,456  | 9,875  |
| Passenger car dealers (franchised).....  | *                           | 10,277                       | 10,535        | 8,791  | 8,931  | *                           | (NA)                         | (NA)          | (NA)   | (NA)   |
| Tire, battery, accessory dealers.....  | *                           | 1,013                        | 973           | 842    | 871    | *                           | 966                          | 1,015         | 793    | 829    |
| Gasoline service stations.....   | 4,474                       | 4,291                        | 4,162         | 3,935  | 3,851  | 4,408                       | 4,370                        | 4,264         | 3,809  | 3,886  |
| Drug and proprietary stores.....   | 1,735                       | 1,744                        | 1,704         | 1,598  | 1,591  | 1,760                       | 1,753                        | 1,757         | 1,609  | 1,605  |
| Liquor stores.....   | *                           | 942                          | 902           | 931    | 886    | *                           | 984                          | 996           | 938    | 941    |

NOTE: Totals include data for kinds of businesses not shown separately.

<sup>1</sup>Advance estimates are not available from the subsample panel for these kinds of businesses.<sup>2</sup>Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. (See explanatory material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-77-4). <sup>3</sup>Advance estimates are based on early reporting by a small subsample of the full survey panel. All other estimates are based on the full sample.<sup>3</sup>Modified on the basis of past relationships between preliminary and final composite estimates. NA Not available.

Table 2. PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN SALES OF RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS

(Adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading day differences)

| Kind of business   | Percent change             |                   |                                  |                    |   |                                  |
|--|----------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|---|----------------------------------|
|  | May 1977<br>advance from-- |                   | April 1977<br>preliminary from-- |                    | March 1977<br>through<br>May 1977<br>from-- |                                  |
|  | Apr. 1977<br>preliminary   | May 1976<br>final | Mar. 1977<br>final               | Apr. 1976<br>final | Dec. 1976<br>through<br>Feb. 1977           | Mar. 1976<br>through<br>May 1976 |
| Total, retail stores.....  | +1                         | +13               | 0                                | +11                | +4  | +12                              |
| Total (excluding automotive group).....  | +1                         | +12               | +1                               | +10                | +4  | +10                              |
| Durable goods stores, total.....   | +1                         | +17               | -2                               | +13                | +5  | +16                              |
| Nondurable goods stores, total.....  | +1                         | +12               | +1                               | +10                | +3  | +10                              |
| Food stores, total.....  | +2                         | +10               | +1                               | +10                | +4  | +9                               |
| Grocery stores.....  | +2                         | +11               | +1                               | +10                | +4  | +9                               |
| Eating and drinking places.....  | -1                         | +8                | -1                               | +10                | +4  | +10                              |
| General merchandise group with nonstores.....  | +1                         | +16               | +2                               | +13                | +4  | +12                              |
| General merchandise group without nonstores (except department stores mail order)..... | +1                         | +16               | +3                               | +13                | +4  | +12                              |
| Department stores.....   | +1                         | +17               | +2                               | +14                | +3  | +13                              |
| Apparel and accessory stores, total.....   | +2                         | +8                | -1                               | +8                 | -1  | +6                               |
| Furniture, home furnishings and equipment stores, total.....                           | +1                         | +10               | 0                                | +10                | +5  | +10                              |
| Building materials, hardware, farm equipment dealers, total..                          | +1                         | +19               | 0                                | +13                | +9  | +15                              |
| Automotive dealers, total.....   | +1                         | +20               | -4                               | +14                | +4  | +19                              |
| Gasoline service stations.....   | +1                         | +16               | +2                               | +12                | +2  | +13                              |
| Drug and proprietary stores.....   | 0                          | +9                | 0                                | +9                 | +2  | +9                               |

Table 3. ESTIMATED SALES OF STORES OF FIRMS OPERATING 11 OR MORE RETAIL STORES IN THE UNITED STATES, BY KIND OF BUSINESS: APRIL 1977

(Sales in millions of dollars)

| Kind of business  | Not adjusted                 |               |        | Adjusted <sup>1</sup>        |               |        |
|---|------------------------------|---------------|--------|------------------------------|---------------|--------|
|   | 1977                         |               | 1976   | 1977                         |               | 1976   |
|   | Apr. <sup>2</sup><br>prelim. | Mar.<br>final | Apr.   | Apr. <sup>2</sup><br>prelim. | Mar.<br>final | Apr.   |
| Retail stores, total.....   | 17,990                       | 17,097        | 16,242 | 17,983                       | 17,704        | 15,999 |
| Food stores, total.....   | 6,758                        | 6,467         | 6,117  | (NA)                         | (NA)          | (NA)   |
| Grocery stores .....  | 6,667                        | 6,385         | 6,034  | 6,536                        | 6,353         | 5,921  |
| General merchandise group with nonstores...   | 7,292                        | 6,885         | 6,595  | 7,536                        | 7,413         | 6,625  |
| General merchandise group without non-stores (except department stores mail order)..... | 6,965                        | 6,500         | 6,315  | 7,199                        | 7,050         | 6,352  |
| Department stores.....  | 5,335                        | 4,901         | 4,821  | 5,511                        | 5,380         | 4,831  |
| Variety stores.....   | 565                          | 483           | 535    | 563                          | 550           | 527    |
| Apparel and accessory stores, total.....  | 646                          | 566           | 618    | 603                          | 609           | 541    |
| Shoe stores.....  | 170                          | 139           | 172    | 147                          | 144           | 136    |
| Drug and proprietary stores.....  | 739                          | 722           | 647    | 748                          | 756           | 656    |

<sup>1</sup>Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday and trading day differences. (See Explanatory Material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-77-4).

<sup>2</sup>Modified on the basis of past relationships between preliminary and final composite estimates.  
NA Not available

Table 4. ESTIMATED SALES OF RETAIL STORES BY SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS FOR SPECIFIED STANDARD METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREAS AND CITIES

(Sales in millions of dollars)

| Area   | Not adjusted        |               |       |
|--|---------------------|---------------|-------|
|  | 1977                |               | 1976  |
|  | Apr.<br>preliminary | Mar.<br>final | Apr.  |
| Standard Consolidated Areas <sup>1</sup>             |                     |               |       |
| Chicago, Ill.--Northwestern Ind., total.....         | 2,387               | 2,331         | 2,192 |
| Nondurable goods stores.....                         | 1,553               | 1,510         | 1,489 |
| GAF <sup>2</sup> .....                               | 691                 | 692           | 670   |
| New York-Northeastern N.J., total.....               | 3,406               | 3,352         | 3,356 |
| Nondurable goods stores.....                         | 2,470               | 2,423         | 2,446 |
| GAF <sup>2</sup> .....                               | 1,006               | 943           | 1,013 |
| Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas <sup>1</sup> |                     |               |       |
| Baltimore, Md., GAF <sup>2</sup> .....               | 141                 | 135           | 138   |
| Boston, Mass., GAF <sup>2</sup> .....                | 220                 | 203           | 211   |
| Chicago, Ill., total.....                            | 2,188               | 2,147         | 2,006 |
| Nondurable goods stores.....                         | 1,430               | 1,394         | 1,367 |
| GAF <sup>2</sup> .....                               | 642                 | 646           | 628   |
| Cleveland, Ohio, GAF <sup>2</sup> .....              | 143                 | 133           | 139   |
| Dallas, Texas, GAF <sup>2</sup> .....                | 168                 | 168           | 153   |
| Detroit, Mich., total.....                           | 1,176               | 1,150         | 1,051 |
| Nondurable goods stores.....                         | 710                 | 677           | 663   |
| GAF <sup>2</sup> .....                               | 294                 | 280           | 278   |
| Houston, Texas, GAF <sup>2</sup> .....               | 200                 | 191           | 180   |



Official Business

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Table 4. ESTIMATED SALES OF RETAIL STORES BY SELECTED KINDS OF BUSINESS FOR SPECIFIED STANDARD METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREAS AND CITIES--Continued

(Sales in millions of dollars)

| Area   | Not adjusted        |               |       |
|--|---------------------|---------------|-------|
|  | 1977                |               | 1976  |
|  | Apr.<br>preliminary | Mar.<br>final | Apr.  |
| Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas <sup>1</sup> --Con.    |                     |               |       |
| Kansas City, Mo.-Kansas, GAF <sup>2</sup> .....                | 159                 | 162           | 150   |
| Los Angeles-Long Beach, Calif., total.....                     | 1,990               | 1,978         | 1,820 |
| Nondurable goods stores.....                                   | 1,352               | 1,339         | 1,265 |
| GAF <sup>2</sup> .....   | 576                 | 563           | 532   |
| Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minn., GAF <sup>2</sup> .....            | 191                 | 187           | 151   |
| New York, N.Y.--Nassau-Suffolk, N.Y., total <sup>3</sup> ..... | 2,303               | 2,258         | 2,242 |
| Nondurable goods stores.....                                   | 1,692               | 1,665         | 1,675 |
| GAF <sup>2</sup> .....   | 690                 | 647           | 694   |
| Nassau-Suffolk, N.Y., total <sup>4</sup> .....                 | 647                 | 627           | 642   |
| Nondurable goods stores.....                                   | 436                 | 413           | 442   |
| GAF <sup>2</sup> .....   | 169                 | 155           | 167   |
| New York, N.Y., total <sup>5</sup> .....                       | 1,656               | 1,631         | 1,600 |
| Nondurable goods stores.....                                   | 1,256               | 1,252         | 1,233 |
| GAF <sup>2</sup> .....   | 521                 | 492           | 527   |
| Philadelphia, Pa., total.....                                  | 1,263               | 1,194         | 1,140 |
| Nondurable goods stores.....                                   | 913                 | 837           | 814   |
| GAF <sup>2</sup> .....   | 314                 | 309           | 317   |
| Pittsburgh, Pa., total.....                                    | 631                 | 626           | 603   |
| Nondurable goods stores.....                                   | 469                 | 452           | 441   |
| GAF <sup>2</sup> .....   | 172                 | 167           | 173   |
| St. Louis, Mo.-Ill., total.....                                | 582                 | 575           | 567   |
| Nondurable goods stores.....                                   | 348                 | 343           | 354   |
| GAF <sup>2</sup> .....   | 159                 | 152           | 164   |
| San Francisco-Oakland, Calif., total.....                      | 892                 | 872           | 820   |
| Nondurable goods stores.....                                   | 633                 | 614           | 597   |
| GAF <sup>2</sup> .....   | 239                 | 235           | 207   |
| Washington, D.C.-Md.-Va., total.....                           | 893                 | 870           | 806   |
| Nondurable goods stores.....                                   | 602                 | 575           | 553   |
| GAF <sup>2</sup> .....   | 234                 | 214           | 201   |
| Cities   |                     |               |       |
| Chicago, Ill., total.....                                      | 799                 | 823           | 788   |
| Nondurable goods stores.....                                   | 590                 | 606           | 590   |
| GAF <sup>2</sup> .....   | 349                 | 365           | 337   |
| Detroit, Mich., total.....                                     | 246                 | 244           | 245   |
| Nondurable goods stores.....                                   | 152                 | 143           | 159   |
| GAF <sup>2</sup> .....   | 52                  | 51            | 57    |
| Los Angeles, Calif., total.....                                | 690                 | 689           | 643   |
| Nondurable goods stores.....                                   | 501                 | 499           | 463   |
| GAF <sup>2</sup> .....   | 239                 | 238           | 213   |
| New York, N.Y., total.....                                     | 1,381               | 1,360         | 1,336 |
| Nondurable goods stores.....                                   | 1,062               | 1,057         | 1,036 |
| GAF <sup>2</sup> .....   | 448                 | 423           | 452   |
| Philadelphia, Pa., total.....                                  | 454                 | 408           | 400   |
| Nondurable goods stores.....                                   | 362                 | 316           | 312   |
| GAF <sup>2</sup> .....   | 130                 | 136           | 139   |

<sup>1</sup>Definitions of standard consolidated areas and standard metropolitan statistical areas are shown in the Monthly Retail Trade Report BR-77-4. <sup>2</sup>Stores in the general merchandise, apparel, and furniture and appliance groups; these stores specialize in department store types of merchandise. <sup>3</sup>Formerly New York, N.Y. SMSA. <sup>4</sup>Includes Nassau and Suffolk Counties formerly included in the New York, N.Y., SMSA. <sup>5</sup>Includes New York City, Rockland and Westchester Counties, N.Y.

