

# Advance Monthly Retail Sales

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## DECEMBER 1978

The Bureau of the Census, U. S. Department of Commerce, announced today that total sales of retail stores in December, after adjusting for seasonal variations and trading day differences, but not for price changes were estimated at \$68.9 billion. This adjusted figure was about 1 percent above November 1978 and 11 percent greater than December a year ago. The adjusted December estimate, excluding the automotive group was virtually unchanged from November and 10 percent above December last year. Sales for the full year 1978 amounted to \$779.7 billion, about 10 percent above 1977.

Adjusted sales of durable goods stores increased 3 percent over November, while sales of nondurable goods stores were unchanged. Compared with sales for December 1977, durable goods stores increased 18 percent, and nondurable goods stores increased 8 percent.

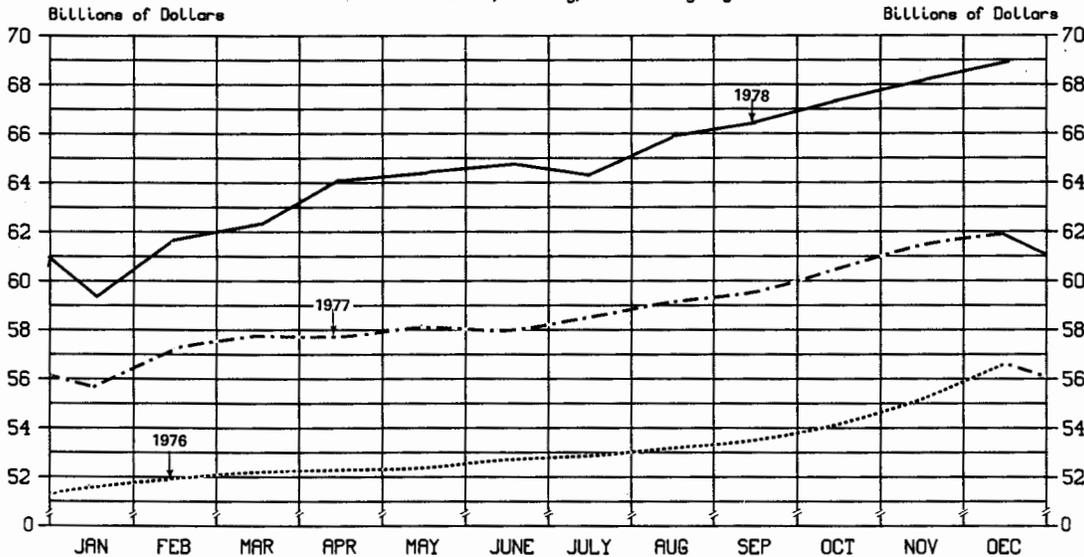
The revised estimate of retail sales for November, based on preliminary results from the full sample of retail stores, was about \$68.2 billion, \$0.4 billion below the advance estimate published earlier. Seasonally adjusted sales for November as revised, were about 1 percent above October and 11 percent above November 1977. Excluding the automotive group, retail sales were about 2 percent above October and 10 percent over November 1977. For nondurable goods stores, adjusted November sales increased about 2 percent from the previous month and 9 percent above the same month a year earlier. For durable goods stores, adjusted sales for November were 1 percent above October and 14 percent higher than November 1977.

The advance sales estimates are based on early reporting of sales by a small subsample of the Bureau's retail survey panel. Because of the early reporting, the advance estimates 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.

In the past, differences between advance and full-sample estimates of month-to-month percentage change in seasonally adjusted total retail store sales have averaged less than 1 percent. However, most modifications being applied to the current advance monthly estimates are based on the relationship between the advance and the redesigned full-sample data for only the months since June 1977. The differences now, therefore, may vary from the past experience.

Preliminary estimates for November 1978 and final estimates for October 1978 based on the full sample will also be published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade report for November (BR-78-11). 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.

ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES FOR THE UNITED STATES  
JANUARY 1976 - DECEMBER 1978  
(DATA ADJUSTED FOR SEASONAL, holiday, and trading day differences)



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U.S. Department of Commerce  
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The 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, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402, at \$25 per year. Add \$6.25 for each subscription to a foreign address. Postage stamps not acceptable; currency submitted at sender's risk. Remittances from foreign countries must be by international money order or by a draft on a U.S. bank. Single copies of the Advance Monthly Retail Sales report are for sale by Subscriber Services (Publications), Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233, at 70 cents each.

Table 1. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales by Kind of Business for the United States

(Sales in millions of dollars)

1972 SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted						Adjusted <sup>1</sup>					
		12 month total		1978			1977		1978			1977	
		1978	Percent change from 1977	Dec. <sup>2</sup> advance	Nov. prelim.	Oct. final	Dec.	Nov.	Dec. <sup>2</sup> advance	Nov. prelim.	Oct. final	Dec.	Nov.
	Retail trade, total.....	779,658	+10	81,809	69,243	67,063	74,219	61,975	68,889	68,181	67,389	61,813	61,650
	Total (excl. automotive group)....	621,875	+10	69,576	56,183	53,181	63,292	50,424	54,581	54,350	53,435	49,420	49,190
	Durable goods stores, total.....	266,813	+12	25,064	23,266	23,621	21,228	20,049	24,402	23,723	23,599	20,674	20,795
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	43,381	+14	3,488	3,845	4,163	2,963	3,229	3,691	3,873	3,923	3,149	3,260
521,3	Building materials and supply stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,720	3,015	1,928	2,307	(*)	2,675	2,738	2,224	2,300
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	630	623	648	555	(*)	610	625	513	536
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	157,783	+10	12,233	13,060	13,882	10,927	11,551	14,308	13,831	13,954	12,393	12,460
551,2,5, 6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous auto- motive dealers.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	11,800	12,634	9,812	10,448	(*)	12,607	12,710	11,343	11,357
551	Motor vehicle dealers (franchised).....	(*)	(*)	(*)	10,690	11,398	8,839	9,378	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,260	1,248	1,115	1,103	(*)	1,224	1,244	1,050	1,103
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	37,104	+8	4,151	3,466	3,212	3,815	3,179	3,266	3,222	3,215	3,008	3,030
571	Furniture and home furnishings stores....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,121	1,975	2,058	1,937	(*)	1,942	1,950	1,807	1,833
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,024	939	1,328	966	(*)	977	962	941	934
5722	Household appliance stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	530	495	596	482	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	512,845	+9	56,745	45,977	43,442	52,991	41,926	44,487	44,458	43,790	41,139	40,855
53	General merchandise group stores.....	98,518	+10	15,394	9,805	8,200	14,572	8,986	8,642	8,507	8,251	8,276	7,822
531	Department stores.....	79,013	+10	12,252	7,846	6,579	11,817	7,290	6,856	6,746	6,592	6,646	6,306
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	755	664	1,308	706	(*)	704	687	696	641
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,204	957	1,447	990	(*)	1,057	972	934	875
54	Food stores.....	171,667	+10	16,068	14,627	14,211	14,894	13,135	14,803	14,866	14,743	13,406	13,569
541	Grocery stores.....	159,919	+10	14,814	13,582	13,188	13,787	12,265	13,666	13,789	13,737	12,410	12,644
554	Gasoline service stations.....	59,637	+5	5,262	5,052	5,155	4,918	4,721	5,210	5,155	5,064	4,898	4,798
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	36,483	+9	5,429	3,484	3,168	4,899	3,166	3,205	3,270	3,139	2,875	3,027
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	693	581	1,088	675	(*)	650	596	568	640
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,349	1,285	1,847	1,206	(*)	1,258	1,215	1,123	1,140
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	685	595	1,068	609	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	587	563	720	543	(*)	568	562	515	541
58	Eating and drinking places.....	70,286	+10	6,070	5,743	6,039	5,491	5,261	6,107	5,933	6,051	5,469	5,486
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	24,575	+10	2,920	2,108	2,045	2,685	1,849	2,181	2,169	2,110	2,008	1,894
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,197	1,130	1,583	1,106	(*)	1,182	1,170	1,089	1,106
5961 (pt.)	Mail-order houses (department store merchandise) <sup>3</sup> .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	908	781	702	878	(*)	602	591	580	576

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

<sup>\*</sup>Advance estimates are not available from the subsample panel for these kinds of business.

NA Not available.

<sup>1</sup>Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. (See Explanatory Material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-78-11).<sup>2</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>Includes sales made by mail-order catalog desks located within department stores of mail-order firms.

Table 2. Percent Change in Estimated Monthly Retail Sales by Kind of Business for the United States

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

1972 SIC code	Kind of business	Percent change					
		Dec. 1978 advance from--		Nov. 1978 preliminary from--		Oct. 1978 through Dec. 1978 from--	
		Nov. 1978 preliminary	Dec. 1977 final	Oct. 1978 final	Nov. 1977 final	July 1978 through Sept. 1978	Oct. 1977 through Dec. 1977
	Retail trade, total.....	+11.02	+11	+1	+11	+4	+11
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	0.42	+10	+2	+10	+4	+11
	Durable goods stores, total.....	+32.75 10.83	+18	+1	+14	+6	+15
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	-5-4.92	+17	-1	+19	+2	+17
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	+33.33	+15	-1	+11	+6	+13
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	+11.35	+9	0	+6	+3	+8
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	00 -5.03	+8	+2	+9	+3	+9
53	General merchandise group stores.....	+21.56	+4	+3	+9	+3	+7
531	Department stores.....	+21.66	+3	+2	+7	+2	+5
54	Food stores.....	0-4.3	+10	+1	+10	+3	+11
541	Grocery stores.....	-1-9.0	+10	0	+9	+2	+10
554	Gasoline service stations.....	+11.06	+6	+2	+7	+5	+7
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	-2-2.03	+11	+4	+8	+3	+10
58	Eating and drinking places.....	+32.35	+12	-2	+8	+1	+11
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	+1.35	+9	+3	+15	+4	+12

Table 3. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales of Group II Companies by Kind of Business for the United States: NOVEMBER 1978

(Sales in millions of dollars)

1972 SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted			Adjusted <sup>1</sup>		
		Nov. 1978 preliminary	Oct. 1978 final	Nov. 1977	Nov. 1978 preliminary	Oct. 1978 final	Nov. 1977
	Retail trade, total.....	25,195	22,848	22,783	23,611	22,842	21,525
53	General merchandise group stores.....	8,796	7,307	8,092	7,622	7,341	6,952
531	Department stores.....	7,428	6,232	6,898	6,387	6,226	5,967
533	Variety stores.....	597	513	553	550	534	502
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.	771	562	641	(S)	(S)	(S)
54	Food stores.....	7,910	7,574	7,153	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
541	Grocery stores.....	7,827	7,494	7,073	7,827	7,663	7,152
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	1,282	1,149	1,145	1,195	1,131	1,089
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	539	493	463	503	472	443
566	Shoe stores.....	296	278	262	288	278	260
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	1,035	974	870	1,099	1,016	919

Note: The Group II component of the sample consists of companies which had 11 or more retail establishments according to the most recent update of multi-establishment files and which were selected with certainty (i.e., their sales size exceeded specified dollar volume cutoffs which vary by kind of business).

<sup>1</sup>Data adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. (See Explanatory Material in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-78-11).

NA Not available.

(S) Suppressed - Estimates do not meet Bureau of the Census standard for publication.

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Official Business

Table 4. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales by Selected Kinds of Business for Specified Areas and Cities

(Sales in millions of dollars)

Area	Not adjusted			Area	Not adjusted		
	Nov. 1978 preliminary	Oct. 1978 final	Nov. 1977		Nov. 1978 preliminary	Oct. 1978 final	Nov. 1977
<b>Standard Consolidated Areas<sup>1</sup></b>				<b>Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas<sup>1</sup>--Con.</b>			
Chicago, Ill.--Northwestern							
Indiana, total.....	2,754	2,654	2,550	Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minn.-Wis., total.....	813	792	750
Nondurable goods stores.....	1,900	1,781	1,850	Nondurable goods stores.....	557	536	494
GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	773	685	698	GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	266	244	257
New York, N.Y.--Northeastern N.J., total.....	4,122	3,993	3,908	Nassau-Suffolk, N.Y., total.....	828	813	814
Nondurable goods stores.....	2,944	2,842	2,854	Nondurable goods stores.....	558	538	547
GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	1,325	1,192	1,305	GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	241	213	237
<b>Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas<sup>1</sup></b>				New York, N.Y.-N.J., total.....	2,280	2,161	2,067
Anaheim-Santa Ana-Garden Grove, Calif., total.....	800	745	714	Nondurable goods stores.....	1,699	1,619	1,581
Nondurable goods stores.....	510	474	475	GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	781	710	767
GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	244	199	217	Newark, N.J., total.....	617	604	572
Atlanta, Ga., GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	220	191	183	Nondurable goods stores.....	391	381	376
Baltimore, Md., total.....	675	654	611	GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	165	149	154
Nondurable goods stores.....	501	481	451	Philadelphia, Pa.-N.J., total.....	1,578	1,575	1,531
GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	199	169	175	Nondurable goods stores.....	1,093	1,062	1,070
Boston, Mass., total <sup>3</sup> .....	1,241	1,167	1,056	GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	480	414	456
Nondurable goods stores.....	851	787	756	Pittsburgh, Pa., total.....	751	696	659
GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	392	337	297	Nondurable goods stores.....	533	488	482
Buffalo, N.Y., total.....	351	337	317	GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	269	213	241
Nondurable goods stores.....	275	261	240	St. Louis, Mo.-Ill., total.....	672	643	614
Chicago, Ill., total.....	2,552	2,461	2,368	Nondurable goods stores.....	515	486	486
Nondurable goods stores.....	1,779	1,667	1,727	GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	209	186	205
GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	726	646	660	San Diego, Calif., total.....	576	552	471
Cincinnati, Ohio-Ky.-Ind., total.....	589	557	537	Nondurable goods stores.....	375	342	319
Nondurable goods stores.....	410	376	391	GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	180	151	143
GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	692	682	605	San Francisco-Oakland, Calif., total.....	1,052	983	1,048
Cleveland, Ohio, total.....	494	479	447	Nondurable goods stores.....	732	681	726
Nondurable goods stores.....	202	180	199	GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	339	293	315
GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	1,061	1,034	918	Seattle-Everett, Wash., total.....	603	567	523
Dallas-Fort Worth, Tex., total.....	705	677	584	Nondurable goods stores.....	422	386	374
Nondurable goods stores.....	286	253	255	Washington, D.C.-Md.-Va., total.....	1,038	1,049	930
GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	1,732	1,727	1,473	Nondurable goods stores.....	703	694	649
Nondurable goods stores.....	1,019	989	943	GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	310	292	295
GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	496	446	456	<b>Cities</b>			
Houston, Tex., total.....	1,096	1,063	899	Chicago, Ill., total.....	887	851	845
Nondurable goods stores.....	701	648	560	Nondurable goods stores.....	652	602	633
GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	311	264	265	GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	236	213	230
Kansas City, Mo.-Kans., total.....	667	628	578	Detroit, Mich., total.....	220	229	202
Nondurable goods stores.....	471	427	404	Nondurable goods stores.....	126	129	135
GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	165	135	147	GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	47	47	47
Los Angeles-Long Beach, Calif., total.....	2,384	2,248	2,029	Los Angeles, Calif., total.....	762	709	683
Nondurable goods stores.....	1,619	1,503	1,437	Nondurable goods stores.....	583	539	542
GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	727	590	613	GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	222	185	198
Miami, Fla., total.....	569	550	553	New York, N.Y., total.....	1,390	1,334	1,293
Nondurable goods stores.....	344	330	328	Nondurable goods stores.....	1,043	1,008	1,027
GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	166	146	147	GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	530	495	522
Milwaukee, Wis., total.....	539	526	513	Philadelphia, Pa., total.....	369	358	345
Nondurable goods stores.....	324	303	327	Nondurable goods stores.....	313	300	296
GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	142	126	141	GAP <sup>2</sup> .....	93	86	91

<sup>1</sup>Definitions of standard consolidated areas and standard metropolitan statistical areas are shown in the Monthly Retail Trade Report BR-78-11.  
<sup>2</sup>Includes the following: General merchandise group stores (SIC 53); apparel and accessory stores (SIC 56); furniture, home furnishings and equipment stores (SIC 57); and miscellaneous shopping goods stores (SIC 594). GAP represents stores which specialize in department store types of merchandise.  
<sup>3</sup>Statistics for the Boston SMSA include retail establishments in all Essex, Middlesex, Norfolk, and Suffolk Counties.