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# CURRENT BUSINESS REPORTS

## Advance Monthly Retail Sales

JAN 12 1984

### OCTOBER 1983

FOR WIRE TRANSMISSION 2:30 P.M. EST, Thursday, November 10, 1983

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Advance U.S. retail sales for October, adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences but not for price changes, were \$100,175 million, up 1.1 percent from the revised September level of \$99,111 million and 10.2 percent above year-ago sales. This is the first time adjusted sales have reached the \$100 billion level. (The revised September estimate represented an increase of 1.3 percent from August.) Excluding the automotive group, total sales were 0.5 percent above September and 7.7 percent above October 1982 sales.

Sales of durable goods, led by automotive group sales of \$19,202 million, rose 2.9 percent above September and 21.1 percent over the year-ago level. Automotive group sales in October were 3.5 percent above September and 22.2 percent above previous year sales. Although this group has recorded relatively strong gains for 2 consecutive months, sales are still below the record of \$19,509 million set in June of this year. Sales of building materials dealers declined 0.5 percent from the previous month, but were 15.7 percent above October 1982 sales. After reaching a peak in June 1983, sales have declined for 4 consecutive months. Furniture group sales increased 2.3 percent from the previous month and 18.5 percent above October 1982. This year-to-year gain is the largest since August 1979.

Nondurable goods stores showed a slight sales increase from September, up 0.2 percent. General merchandise group sales were up 0.5 percent from September and 9.4 percent above previous year sales. Food stores and eating and drinking places both recorded month-to-month gains of less than one-half percent. Gasoline service stations sales declined 0.6 percent from the previous month but were up almost 1 percent from October 1982 sales. This is the second consecutive monthly sales decline in this group which could reflect the recent decrease in pump prices.

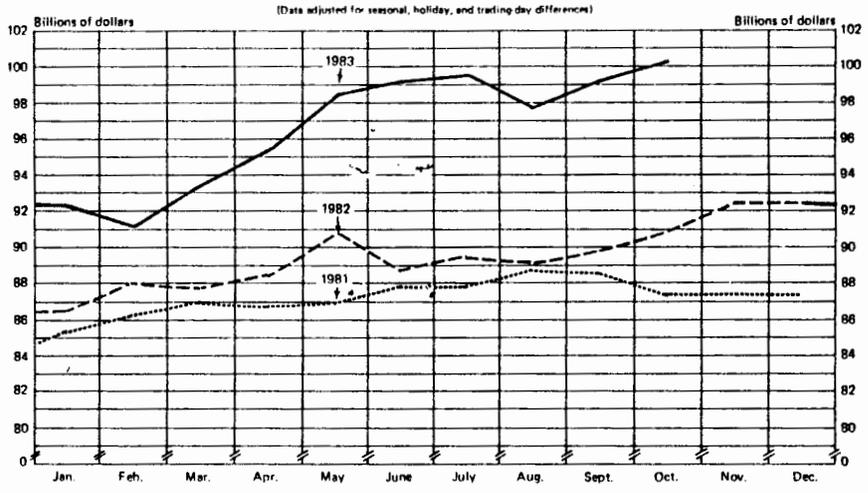
For a description of the sample design and reliability of the data, see back page.

The Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report for November is scheduled to be released December 12, 1983, at 2:30 p.m.

### ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES

January 1981—October 1983

(Data adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading day differences)



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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 \$39 per year. Add \$9.75 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 \$1.75 each.

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Table 1. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales, by Kind of Business

(Sales in millions of dollars)

SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted					Adjusted <sup>1</sup>				
		1983			1982		1983			1982	
		Oct. <sup>2</sup> adv.	Sep. prel.	Aug. final	Oct.	Sep.	Oct. <sup>2</sup> adv.	Sep. prel.	Aug. final	Oct.	Sep.
	Retail trade, total.....	100,006	97,873	100,228	91,416	88,159	100,175	99,111	97,801	90,905	89,897
	Total (excl. auto group)..	80,963	79,328	81,036	76,198	72,898	80,973	80,563	80,238	75,192	74,697
	Durable goods stores, total.	32,824	32,043	33,039	26,824	26,776	32,891	31,972	30,893	27,154	26,619
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers..	5,101	5,096	5,356	4,404	4,395	4,654	4,679	4,784	4,024	4,004
521,3	Building mat. and supply stores.	(*)	3,806	3,990	3,213	3,208	(*)	3,383	3,464	2,848	2,809
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	704	733	700	655	(*)	718	721	682	663
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	19,043	18,545	19,192	15,218	15,261	19,202	18,548	17,563	15,713	15,200
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	17,016	16,536	17,076	13,328	13,451	17,275	16,586	15,595	13,927	13,424
551	Motor vehicle (franchised)....	(*)	14,789	15,072	12,052	12,117	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores....	(*)	2,009	2,116	1,890	1,810	(*)	1,962	1,968	1,786	1,776
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	4,515	4,394	4,579	3,859	3,765	4,542	4,440	4,419	3,834	3,807
571	Furniture and home furnishings..	(*)	2,610	2,723	2,272	2,172	(*)	2,631	2,593	2,245	2,198
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores.....	(*)	1,442	1,529	1,275	1,230	(*)	1,474	1,487	1,264	1,256
5722	Household appliance stores....	(*)	687	734	603	586	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods total.....	67,182	65,830	67,189	64,592	61,383	67,284	67,139	66,908	63,751	63,278
53	General merchandise group stores..	11,904	11,090	11,410	11,036	10,066	11,878	11,818	11,729	10,858	10,847
531	Department stores.....	9,784	9,127	9,379	9,016	8,239	9,745	9,668	9,619	8,865	8,821
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	675	764	707	647	(*)	762	766	726	724
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	1,288	1,267	1,313	1,180	(*)	1,388	1,344	1,267	1,302
54	Food stores.....	21,963	22,179	22,294	21,572	20,957	22,262	22,198	22,211	21,370	21,253
541	Grocery stores.....	20,655	20,864	20,937	20,283	19,651	20,885	20,802	20,833	20,003	19,870
554	Gasoline service stations.....	8,862	8,933	9,467	8,869	8,706	8,827	8,880	8,991	8,747	8,750
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	4,623	4,407	4,627	4,395	4,151	4,564	4,502	4,491	4,279	4,267
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	617	621	684	634	(*)	662	657	671	677
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	(*)	1,694	1,697	1,680	1,535	(*)	1,701	1,677	1,592	1,555
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	869	1,018	890	827	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	919	916	848	849	(*)	896	865	805	827
58	Eating and drinking places.....	10,430	10,347	10,755	9,548	9,145	10,246	10,224	10,023	9,324	9,090
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	3,178	3,140	3,222	2,953	2,859	3,304	3,309	3,294	3,041	3,041
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,586	1,618	1,553	1,505	(*)	1,659	1,612	1,577	1,578
5961 (pt.)	Mail-order houses (department store merchandise).....	(*)	443	444	479	407	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
53,56,57											
594	GAF.....	(*)	22,905	23,702	22,057	20,671	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)

\*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-83-09).

<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.

GAF represents stores which specialize in department store types of merchandise.

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

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### Sample Design and Reliability of Data

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 subsample 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.

Percentage differences between advance and full sample preliminary estimates of month-to-month percentage change in seasonally adjusted total retail store sales have ranged from approximately -0.8 percent to +1.4 percent with the average of the absolute differences about 0.5 percent for the past 12 months. For individual kind-of-business groups, these differences tend to be higher. Sampling variability of and revisions to advance-to-preliminary estimates are shown in table 4 below.

Preliminary estimates for September 1983 and final estimates for August 1983 based on the full sample will be published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for September (BR-83-09). The complete report will provide sales estimates in greater detail and will present a description of revisions, and the techniques used in developing the estimates. The complete report will include additional measures of sampling variability.

Table 4. Sampling Variability of and Revision to Advance-to-Preliminary Estimate

SIC code	Kind of business	Estimated coefficient of variation in percent of the advance-to-preliminary ratio			Preliminary-to-final percent change minus the advance-to-preliminary percent change			
		Range <sup>1</sup>		Median	Range <sup>2</sup>		Mean	Average of absolute difference
		From	To		From	To		
	Retail trade, total.....	0.6	0.8	0.8	-0.8	+1.4	0.0	0.5
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	0.7	0.9	0.8	-1.1	+0.9	-0.1	0.5
	Durable goods stores, total.....	1.2	2.1	1.5	-3.7	-2.3	-0.2	1.2
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	1.6	2.2	2.4	-4.7	+4.9	+0.4	2.5
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	1.5	2.7	2.0	-4.5	+2.7	-0.2	1.6
551, 2, 5, 6, 7, 9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	1.1	2.3	1.6	-4.6	+3.0	-0.2	1.8
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	1.6	6.7	2.7	-2.7	+3.9	+0.2	1.9
	Nondurable goods stores, total.....	0.6	0.8	0.7	-0.8	+0.9	-0.1	0.6
53	General merchandise group stores.....	0.4	0.7	0.5	-1.8	+2.2	-0.1	1.1
531	Department stores.....	0.2	0.5	0.3	-1.3	+2.6	+0.1	0.9
54	Food stores.....	0.7	1.6	1.0	-1.6	+1.4	-0.1	0.7
541	Grocery stores.....	0.3	0.7	0.4	-1.6	+1.4	-0.2	0.7
554	Gasoline service stations.....	0.7	1.2	1.0	-3.6	+3.2	-0.1	1.4
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	1.2	3.0	1.9	-3.6	+8.7	+0.4	2.1
58	Eating and drinking places.....	0.8	1.5	1.0	-3.0	+4.0	+0.5	1.5
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	0.3	2.5	1.1	-1.9	+2.4	-0.2	0.9

<sup>1</sup>The ranges of sampling variability shown are based on sales estimates unadjusted for seasonal variation, holiday, and trading-day differences for the data months of January-December 1982.

<sup>2</sup>The ranges shown for the retail trade total are based on sales estimates adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences for the 12-month period, October 1982-September 1983. The ranges for all other totals and kinds of business are based on the 12-month period January-December 1982.

Note: See appendix B, Reliability of Data, in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for a discussion on the measures of sampling variability.

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