

Advance Monthly Retail Sales

October 1988

CR 88-178

FOR WIRE TRANSMISSION 8:30 A.M. EST, November 15, 1988

Advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for October adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences but not for price changes, were \$135.6 billion, an increase of 0.9 percent (+ 1.2%) from the previous month and 6.8 percent (+ 1.5%) above October 1987. Total sales in the August through October period were 1.0 percent (+ 1.7%) above the prior three months and were 5.2 percent (+ 1.7%) above the same period a year ago.

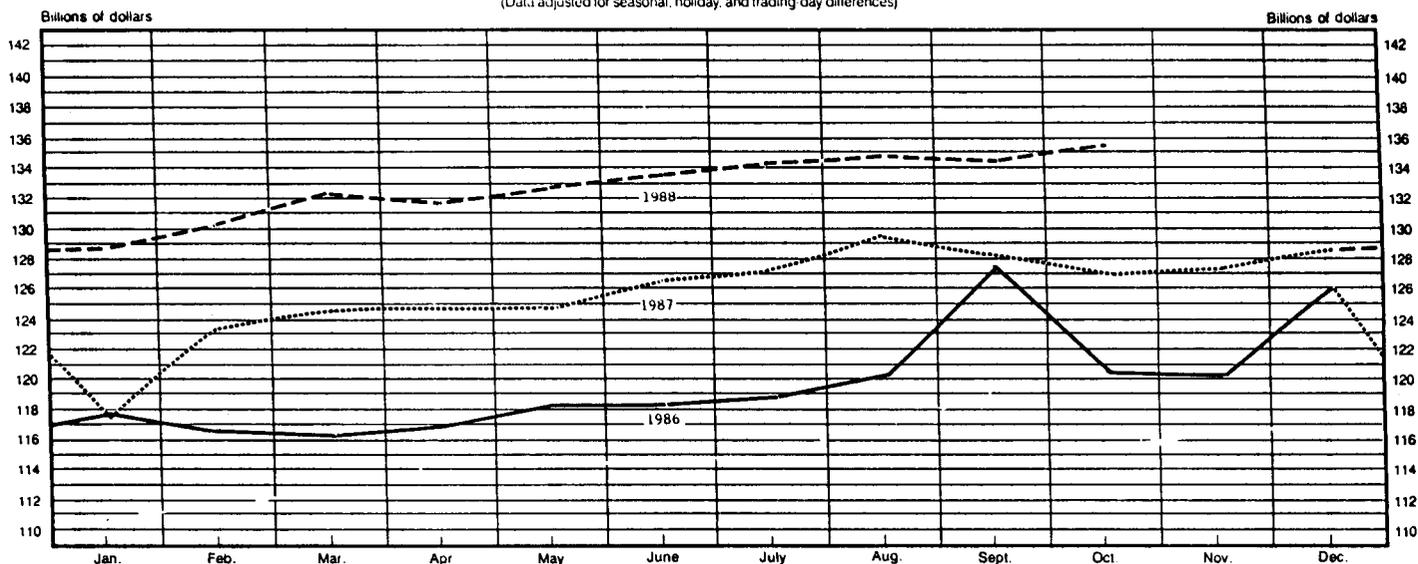
Durable goods increased 0.9 percent (+ 2.6%) from the previous month and were 6.3 percent (+ 3.6%) above the previous year. Automotive sales were up 5.3 percent from October a year ago, while furniture stores were up 10.6 percent for the same period.

Nondurable goods increased 0.9 percent (+ 1.0%) from the previous month and were 7.1 percent (+ 1.5%) above the previous year. General merchandise stores increased 2.4 percent from September and were up 6.1 percent from October a year ago. Food, apparel and eating and drinking establishments were each up about 8.0 percent from October 1987.

The Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report for November is scheduled to be released December 13, 1988 at 8:30 a.m.

ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES January 1986-October 1988

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



Inquiries concerning this report should be addressed to **Ronald Piencykoski**, Business Division, Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233. Telephone (301) 763-5294/7561.



U.S. Department of Commerce
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

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. This report is available electronically in CENDATA, the Bureau's on-line information service, through a commercial vendor. For further information, contact Customer Services, DUSD, Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233, or call (301) 763-4100 or (301) 763-7561.

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

(Sales in millions of dollars)

SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted					Adjusted ¹				
		1988			1987		1988			1987	
		Oct. ² adv.	Sep. prel.	Aug. final	Oct.	Sep.	Oct. ² adv.	Sep. prel.	Aug. final	Oct. ²	Sep. ²
	Retail trade, total.....	133,759	131,949	138,863	128,298	124,515	135,622	134,380	134,759	126,973	128,211
	Total (excl. auto group)...	106,057	103,165	106,872	101,270	96,003	106,383	105,631	105,371	99,215	99,452
	Durable goods, total.....	48,507	49,442	53,505	46,755	47,675	50,026	49,578	50,257	47,053	48,249
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers..	7,516	7,442	7,731	7,172	6,890	7,011	7,011	6,952	6,632	6,553
521,3	Building mat. and supply stores.	(*)	5,702	5,958	5,446	5,347	(*)	5,236	5,203	4,937	4,960
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	1,281	1,293	1,276	1,136	(*)	1,313	1,271	1,238	1,174
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	27,702	28,784	31,991	27,028	28,512	29,239	28,749	29,388	27,758	28,759
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	25,113	26,241	29,266	24,508	26,107	26,773	26,294	26,899	25,423	26,451
551	Motor vehicle (franchised)....	(*)	23,424	26,104	22,158	23,802	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	2,543	2,725	2,520	2,405	(*)	2,455	2,484	2,335	2,308
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	7,590	7,493	7,781	7,075	6,929	7,674	7,658	7,684	6,937	7,077
571	Furniture and home furnishings..	(*)	3,910	4,040	3,834	3,727	(*)	3,894	3,885	3,704	3,727
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores.....	(*)	3,060	3,215	2,789	2,748	(*)	3,231	3,261	2,770	2,893
5722	Household appliance stores....	(*)	893	1,012	882	880	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total.....	85,252	82,507	85,358	81,543	76,840	85,596	84,802	84,502	79,920	79,962
53	General merchandise group stores..	15,371	14,002	14,786	14,826	13,268	15,599	15,234	15,118	14,702	14,648
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts.)	12,971	11,846	12,464	12,433	11,132	13,102	12,806	12,667	12,273	12,206
531	Dept. stores (in. leased depts.)	(*)	12,272	12,868	12,867	11,521	(*)	13,196	13,077	12,752	12,605
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	612	686	673	612	(*)	701	711	702	704
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	1,544	1,636	1,720	1,524	(*)	1,727	1,740	1,727	1,738
54	Food stores.....	28,166	27,970	28,409	26,895	25,867	28,406	28,088	28,094	26,302	26,388
541	Grocery stores.....	26,575	26,390	26,764	25,369	24,370	26,789	26,469	26,473	24,774	24,842
554	Gasoline service stations.....	9,217	9,045	9,751	9,012	8,845	9,126	9,018	9,173	8,801	8,854
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	7,104	6,877	7,149	6,748	6,403	7,183	7,088	6,952	6,646	6,655
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	691	678	781	678	(*)	774	758	774	761
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	(*)	2,673	2,649	2,710	2,544	(*)	2,722	2,681	2,606	2,615
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	1,669	1,846	1,645	1,519	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	1,307	1,398	1,193	1,228	(*)	1,292	1,283	1,192	1,204
58	Eating and drinking places.....	13,533	13,466	14,268	12,699	12,223	13,386	13,412	13,236	12,389	12,309
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	4,957	4,841	4,934	4,733	4,468	5,121	5,090	5,019	4,790	4,758
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,515	1,587	1,653	1,562	(*)	1,565	1,585	1,630	1,629
5961-(pt.)	Mail-order houses (department store merchandise).....	(*)	276	310	357	281	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
53,56,57,594	GAF*.....	(*)	33,001	34,646	33,171	31,024	(*)	35,078	34,922	33,132	33,290

*Advance estimates are not available from the subsample panel for these kinds of business.

NA Not available. ² Revised

¹ Data are concurrently adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. Concurrent seasonal adjustment uses all available unadjusted estimates as input to the X-11 program and the factors derived from the program are used in calculating all seasonally adjusted data shown in this publication. Factors and explanatory material are contained in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, RR-88-09.

² 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.

³ Includes data for leased departments operated within department stores. Data for this line not included in broader kind-of-business totals.

⁴ GAF represents stores which specialize in department store types of merchandise.

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

Table 2. Percent Change in Estimated Monthly Retail Sales, by Kind of Business
(Adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences)

SIC code	Kind of business	Percent change					
		Oct. 1988 advance from--		Sep. 1988 preliminary from--		Aug. 1988 through Oct. 1988	
		Sep. 1988 prelim.	Oct. 1987 final	Aug. 1988 final	Sep. 1987 final	May 1988 through July 1988	Aug. 1987 through Oct. 1987
	Retail trade, total.....	+0.9	+6.8	-0.3	+4.8	+1.0	+5.2
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	+0.7	+7.2	+0.2	+6.2	+1.8	+6.4
	Durable goods, total.....	+0.9	+6.3	-1.4	+2.8	-1.3	+3.7
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	0.0	+5.7	+0.8	+7.0	0.0	+6.6
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	+1.7	+5.3	-2.2	0.0	-1.8	+1.2
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	+1.8	+5.3	-2.2	-0.6	-1.9	+0.7
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	+0.2	+10.6	-0.3	+8.2	-1.0	+8.8
	Nondurable goods, total.....	+0.9	+7.1	+0.4	+6.1	+2.4	+6.2
53	General merchandise group stores.....	+2.4	+6.1	+0.8	+4.0	+1.6	+4.1
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	+2.3	+6.8	+1.1	+4.9	+1.8	+4.9
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.).....	(NA)	(NA)	+0.9	+4.7	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	+1.1	+8.0	0.0	+6.4	+2.5	+6.9
541	Grocery stores.....	+1.2	+8.1	0.0	+6.5	+2.7	+7.0
554	Gasoline service stations.....	+1.2	+3.7	-1.7	+1.9	+1.6	+2.8
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	+1.3	+8.1	+2.0	+6.5	+3.8	+6.5
58	Eating and drinking places.....	-0.2	+8.0	+1.3	+9.0	+3.4	+8.2
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	+0.6	+6.9	+1.4	+7.0	+2.0	+6.9

Table 3. Estimated Monthly Retail Sales of Group II Companies, by Kind of Business
(Sales in millions of dollars)

SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted			Adjusted ¹		
		Sep. 1988 prelim.	Aug. 1988 final	Sep. 1987	Sep. 1988 prelim.	Aug. 1988 final	Sep. ² 1987
	Retail trade, total.....	48,192	49,907	45,201	50,167	50,020	47,686
53	General merchandise group stores.....	13,005	13,746	12,222	14,137	14,033	13,503
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	11,463	12,086	10,785	12,339	12,233	11,813
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.).....	11,867	12,471	11,151	12,774	12,648	12,200
533	Variety stores.....	489	559	486	571	582	569
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	1,053	1,101	951	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	15,628	15,789	14,614	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
541	Grocery stores.....	15,427	15,575	14,416	15,536	15,669	14,755
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	3,602	3,874	3,425	3,730	3,681	3,567
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	1,382	1,421	1,367	1,431	1,425	1,420
566	Shoe stores.....	810	891	748	817	803	747
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	2,780	2,858	2,566	2,957	2,943	2,774

NA Not available. ² Revised

¹ Data are concurrently adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences. Concurrent seasonal adjustment uses all available unadjusted estimates as input to the X-11 program and the factors derived from the program are used in calculating all seasonally adjusted data shown in this publication. Factors and explanatory material are contained in the Monthly Retail Trade Report, BR-88-09.

² Includes data for leased departments operated within department stores. Data for this line not included in broader kind-of-business totals.

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).



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.

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 +0.9 percent with the average of the absolute differences about 0.3 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 1988 and final estimates for August 1988 based on the full sample will be published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for September (BR-88-9). 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.

Whenever a statement such as "up 0.8 percent (+1.0%)" appears in the text, this indicates a range from -0.2 percent to +1.8 percent. All ranges given are 90 percent confidence intervals. If the range contains 0, it is uncertain whether there was an increase or decrease. The Monthly Retail Trade Report includes explanations of confidence intervals and sampling variability along with 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						Preliminary-to-final percent change minus the Advance-to-preliminary percent change			
		Advance-to- preliminary ratio		Ratio to same month a year ago	Dollar volume sales est.	Ratio of current quarter to prev. quarter	Range ²		Mean	Aver. of absolute diff.	
		From	To	Median	Median	Median	From	To			
	Retail trade, total.....	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.8	1.0	-0.8	+0.9	0.0	0.3
	Total (excl. auto).	0.5	0.7	0.6	0.8	0.7	0.9	-1.0	+1.8	0.0	0.4
	Durable goods, total..	1.4	1.7	1.6	-2.3	1.7	-2.2	-1.6	+1.8	+0.3	1.0
52	Building materials, group stores.....	0.6	3.6	1.6	3.9	3.3	3.1	-5.2	+1.5	-0.9	1.6
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	1.7	2.2	1.9	3.1	2.3	3.0	-2.1	+2.7	+0.4	1.2
551,2,5, 6,7,9	Motor vehicle and misc. automotive dealers.....	1.2	2.2	1.5	3.7	2.4	3.2	-2.5	+2.8	+0.3	1.2
57	Furniture, home furn. and equipment stores.....	1.6	2.3	1.9	3.7	3.3	2.7	-3.3	+4.4	+0.5	1.5
	Nondur. stores, total...	0.5	0.7	0.6	1.0	0.7	0.9	-0.8	+0.7	0.0	0.4
53	General merch. group, total.	0.2	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.5	-2.6	+1.8	-0.2	0.8
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts.).....	0.0	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	-2.1	+2.0	-0.2	0.8
54	Food stores.....	0.8	1.4	1.0	1.6	1.3	1.6	-0.9	+0.8	+0.1	0.3
541	Grocery stores.....	0.3	1.1	0.5	1.8	1.4	1.6	-0.8	+0.9	+0.1	0.3
554	Gasoline service stations...	0.7	1.2	0.8	3.0	2.2	2.8	-1.4	+2.3	-0.1	1.0
56	Apparel and acc. stores.....	1.2	3.4	1.5	2.4	1.8	1.8	-2.8	+2.2	-0.5	1.3
58	Eating and drinking	0.8	1.3	1.1	2.7	2.3	2.6	-1.7	+1.8	+0.3	0.9
591	Drug and proprietary	0.4	0.7	0.5	2.3	1.7	2.1	-1.6	+1.3	-0.1	0.7

¹The ranges of sampling variability shown are based on sales estimates unadjusted for seasonal variation, holiday, and trading-day differences for the data months of March - July 1988.

²The 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 1987- September 1988. The ranges for all other totals and kinds of business are based on the 12-month period May 1987-April 1988.

Note: Coefficients of variation for the ratio of current quarter to current quarter a-year-ago estimates are approximately the same as those for the ratio of current quarter to previous quarter. See appendix B, Reliability of Data, in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for a discussion on the measures of sampling variability.