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The Census Bureau of the Department of Commerce announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for November adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$151.6 billion, a decrease of 0.1 percent ($\pm 1.3\%$) from the previous month but 3.4 percent above November 1989. Total sales in the September through November period were 3.6 percent above the same period a year ago.

Durable goods decreased 1.4 percent ($\pm 3.9\%$) from the previous month.

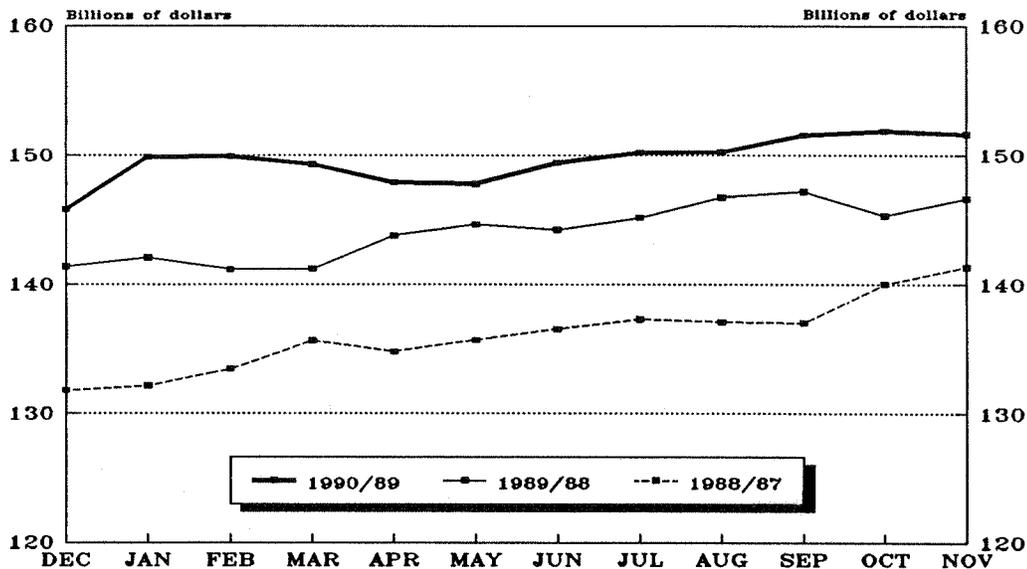
Nondurable goods increased 0.5 percent ($\pm 1.5\%$) from October and were 6.1 percent above last year. Food stores were up 5.4 percent from November 1989 while gasoline service stations were up 21.6 percent in the same period.

The Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report for December is scheduled to be released January 15, 1991 at 8:30 a.m.

The scheduled release dates for 1991 are as follows: January ¹⁵, February 13, March ¹³, April ¹¹, May ¹⁴, June ¹³, July ¹², August 13, September ¹³, October ¹¹, November ¹⁴, December ¹².

ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES
December 1987 - November 1990

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



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This report is available the day of issue through the Department of Commerce's online Economic Bulletin Board (N-8-1) (202-377-3870) and through the Census Bureau's online information service - CENDATA. CENDATA is available from Dialog Information Services, INC. (1-800-334-2464) and CompuServe (1-800-848-8199). The CENDATA staff at the Bureau of the Census (301-763-2074) can provide content information and general guidance.

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

(Sales in millions of dollars)

SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted					Adjusted ¹				
		1990			1989		1990			1989	
		Nov. ² adv.	Oct. prel.	Sept. final	Nov.	Oct.	Nov. ² adv.	Oct. prel.	Sept. final	Nov. ²	Oct. ²
	Retail trade, total.....	154,461	150,730	145,568	148,834	142,342	151,620	151,837	151,559	146,618	145,296
	Total (excl. auto group)...	126,272	119,562	115,152	120,490	112,664	120,389	120,197	120,345	115,411	114,176
	Durable goods, total.....	51,178	53,422	51,899	51,951	51,707	53,346	54,077	53,774	53,961	53,621
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers....	7,096	8,091	7,734	7,517	8,153	7,384	7,583	7,684	7,789	7,753
521,3	Building mat. and supply stores....	(*)	6,017	5,692	5,544	6,055	(*)	5,520	5,510	5,628	5,643
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	1,095	1,040	1,017	1,036	(*)	1,060	1,056	1,024	1,010
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	28,189	31,168	30,416	28,344	29,678	31,231	31,640	31,214	31,207	31,120
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	25,478	28,278	27,729	25,612	26,905	28,531	28,944	28,587	28,489	28,471
551	Motor vehicle (franchised).....	(*)	25,170	24,462	22,610	23,551	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	2,890	2,687	2,732	2,773	(*)	2,696	2,627	2,718	2,649
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	8,128	7,505	7,219	8,234	7,421	7,554	7,529	7,572	7,684	7,600
571	Furniture and home furnishings....	(*)	4,147	3,940	4,552	4,118	(*)	4,050	4,063	4,242	4,098
5722,32	Household appliance, radio, and TV stores.....	(*)	2,675	2,599	2,924	2,616	(*)	2,784	2,795	2,712	2,786
5722	Household appliance stores.....	(*)	742	698	795	686	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total.....	103,283	97,308	93,669	96,883	90,635	98,274	97,760	97,785	92,657	91,675
53	General merchandise group stores....	21,309	16,868	15,810	21,098	16,532	17,345	17,416	17,513	17,273	17,093
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts)...	17,244	13,729	12,849	16,942	13,426	14,054	14,081	14,120	13,898	13,784
531	Dept. stores (in. leased depts)...	(*)	14,126	13,232	17,425	13,834	(*)	14,503	14,525	14,330	14,203
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	588	516	697	601	(*)	598	599	664	618
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	2,551	2,445	3,459	2,505	(*)	2,737	2,794	2,711	2,691
54	Food stores.....	31,076	30,705	30,456	29,248	28,718	31,346	31,195	31,241	29,744	29,498
541	Grocery stores.....	29,295	28,919	28,716	27,571	27,097	29,531	29,359	29,392	28,019	27,820
554	Gasoline service stations.....	11,624	12,146	11,497	9,529	9,865	11,947	11,861	11,555	9,824	9,672
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	8,908	7,739	7,577	8,708	7,546	7,897	7,838	7,860	7,850	7,674
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	767	709	904	775	(*)	772	781	796	784
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	(*)	2,712	2,596	3,092	2,705	(*)	2,701	2,693	2,744	2,710
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	2,294	2,190	2,653	2,189	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	1,358	1,460	1,455	1,338	(*)	1,440	1,451	1,443	1,408
58	Eating and drinking places.....	14,642	15,205	15,181	13,999	14,728	15,157	15,099	15,242	14,613	14,626
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	5,682	5,609	5,301	5,217	5,051	5,734	5,723	5,694	5,291	5,213
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,677	1,664	1,658	1,591	(*)	1,752	1,755	1,663	1,673
5961 (pt)	Mail-order houses (department store merchandise).....	(*)	426	352	519	425	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
53,56,57	GAF ⁴	(*)	37,243	35,626	44,194	36,293	(*)	38,516	38,663	38,297	37,784

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

NA Not available.

²Revised.

¹Data 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, ER-90-10.

²Advance estimates are based on early reporting by a small subsample of the full survey panel. All other estimates are based on the full sample.

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

⁴GAF 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					
		Nov. 1990 advance from--		Oct. 1990 preliminary from--		Sept. 1990 through Nov. 1990	
		Oct. 1990 prelim.	Nov. 1989 final	Sept. 1990 final	Oct. 1989 final	June 1990 through Aug. 1990	Sept. 1989 through Nov. 1989
	Retail trade, total.....	-0.1	+3.4	+0.2	+4.5	+1.1	+3.6
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	+0.2	+4.3	-0.1	+5.3	+1.1	+4.9
	Durable goods, total.....	-1.4	-1.1	+0.6	+0.9	+0.1	-1.1
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	-2.6	-5.2	-1.3	-2.2	-4.6	-3.1
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	-1.3	+0.1	+1.4	+1.7	+1.2	-1.1
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	-1.4	+0.1	+1.2	+1.7	+1.5	-1.2
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	+0.3	-1.7	-0.6	-0.9	-0.2	-0.7
	Nondurable goods, total.....	+0.5	+6.1	0.0	+6.6	+1.7	+6.4
53	General merchandise group stores.....	-0.4	+0.4	-0.6	+1.9	-1.4	+1.4
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.) ²	-0.2	+1.1	-0.3	+2.2	-1.6	+1.7
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.).....	(NA)	(NA)	-0.2	+2.1	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	+0.5	+5.4	-0.1	+5.8	+1.9	+5.8
541	Grocery stores.....	+0.6	+5.4	-0.1	+5.5	+2.0	+5.6
554	Gasoline service stations.....	+0.7	+21.6	+2.6	+22.6	+13.4	+21.6
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	+0.8	+0.6	-0.3	+2.1	-2.7	+1.6
58	Eating and drinking places.....	+0.4	+3.7	-0.9	+3.2	-0.8	+3.8
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	+0.2	+8.4	+0.5	+9.8	+2.5	+9.1

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		
		Oct. 1990 prelim.	Sept. 1990 final	Oct. 1989	Oct. 1990 prelim.	Sept. 1990 final	Oct. ² 1989
	Retail trade, total.....	57,107	54,727	53,425	58,078	58,017	54,711
53	General merchandise group stores.....	15,454	14,434	15,088	16,012	16,027	15,642
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	13,324	12,447	12,994	13,666	13,678	13,327
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.) ²	13,708	12,815	13,388	14,059	14,067	13,745
533	Variety stores.....	450	393	460	460	458	475
539	Miscellaneous general merchandise stores.....	1,680	1,594	1,634	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	17,229	16,943	16,031	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
541	Grocery stores.....	17,025	16,753	15,844	17,302	17,397	16,351
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	4,277	4,253	4,089	4,403	4,420	4,195
562,3,8	Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers.....	1,519	1,472	1,458	1,547	1,553	1,477
566	Shoe stores.....	847	938	837	909	926	889
591	Drug stores and proprietary stores.....	3,389	3,200	2,967	3,545	3,493	3,140

NA Not Available.

²Revised.

¹Data 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, ER-90-10.

²Includes 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 -0.4 percent to +1.2 percent with the average of the absolute differences about 0.4 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 October 1990 and final estimates for September 1990 based on the full sample are published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for October (BR-90-10). 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 margin of sampling error, as used on page 1, indicates a range about the estimate which corresponds to a 90 percent confidence interval. If, for example, the estimate is up 0.8 percent and the margin of sampling error is 1.2 percentage points above or below the estimate, then the indicated range is -0.4 percent to +2.0 percent. 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	Ave. of absolute diff.	
		Range ¹		Median	Median	Median	Median	Range ²		Mean	Ave. of absolute diff.
		From	To					From	To		
	Retail trade, total.....	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.9	0.8	1.0	-0.4	+1.2	+0.2	0.4
	Total (excl. auto).....	0.5	0.7	0.6	0.8	0.7	0.9	-0.3	+0.5	+0.1	0.2
	Durable goods, total.....	1.4	2.0	1.6	2.3	1.8	2.2	-0.9	+1.7	-0.1	0.7
52	Building materials, group stores....	1.1	3.0	1.7	3.8	3.2	3.1	-1.9	+3.1	0.0	0.7
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	1.6	2.4	2.0	3.2	2.6	3.0	-2.1	+2.9	-0.1	0.9
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and misc. automotive dealers.....	1.3	2.0	1.6	4.0	2.8	3.3	-2.5	+3.3	-0.1	1.0
57	Furniture, home furn., and equipment stores.....	1.3	3.8	2.1	4.2	3.9	3.1	-1.9	+5.0	+0.5	1.5
	Nondurable goods, total.....	0.5	0.7	0.6	1.0	0.7	0.9	-0.2	+0.7	+0.1	0.2
53	General merch. group, total.....	0.2	0.9	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.5	-0.9	+1.3	0.0	0.4
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts.)..	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	-0.5	+1.2	+0.1	0.4
54	Food stores.....	0.8	1.3	1.0	1.7	1.3	1.6	-0.4	+1.5	+0.2	0.4
541	Grocery stores.....	0.2	0.5	0.3	1.8	1.3	1.6	-0.5	+1.3	+0.2	0.4
554	Gasoline service stations.....	0.6	1.0	0.9	2.9	2.1	2.7	-1.8	+1.9	0.0	0.7
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	1.1	3.6	1.7	2.5	2.0	1.9	-3.9	+3.8	+0.2	1.4
58	Eating and drinking places.....	0.4	1.9	0.8	2.7	2.3	2.6	-1.3	+1.6	+0.2	0.8
591	Drug and proprietary.....	0.6	1.8	0.7	2.5	1.9	2.1	-1.7	+2.1	+0.3	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 November 1988 - October 1989.

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, November 1989 - October 1990. The ranges for all other totals and kinds of business are based on the 12-month period October 1988 - September 1989.

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 of the measures of sampling variability.