

Advance Monthly Retail Sales



U.S. Department of Commerce
ECONOMICS AND STATISTICS ADMINISTRATION
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

MAY 1995

CB-95-112

FOR WIRE TRANSMISSION 8:30 A.M. EDT., Tuesday, June 13, 1995

The Census Bureau of the Department of Commerce announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for May adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$192.9 billion, an increase of 0.2 percent ($\pm 1.3\%$) from the previous month and up 5.2 percent ($\pm 1.9\%$) from May 1994. Total sales in the March through May period were 5.0 percent ($\pm 1.7\%$) above the same period a year ago. The March to April 1995 percent change was revised from -0.4 percent ($\pm 1.3\%$) to -0.3 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$).

Durable goods increased 0.2 percent ($\pm 2.3\%$) from April and were 6.5 percent above May 1994. Automotive dealers sales were up 7.9 percent from last year while furniture store sales were up 8.6 percent in the same period.

Nondurable goods increased 0.2 percent ($\pm 1.2\%$) from last month and were 4.4 percent above last year. General merchandise sales were up 6.5 percent from May 1994 while gasoline sales were up 6.7 percent during the same period.

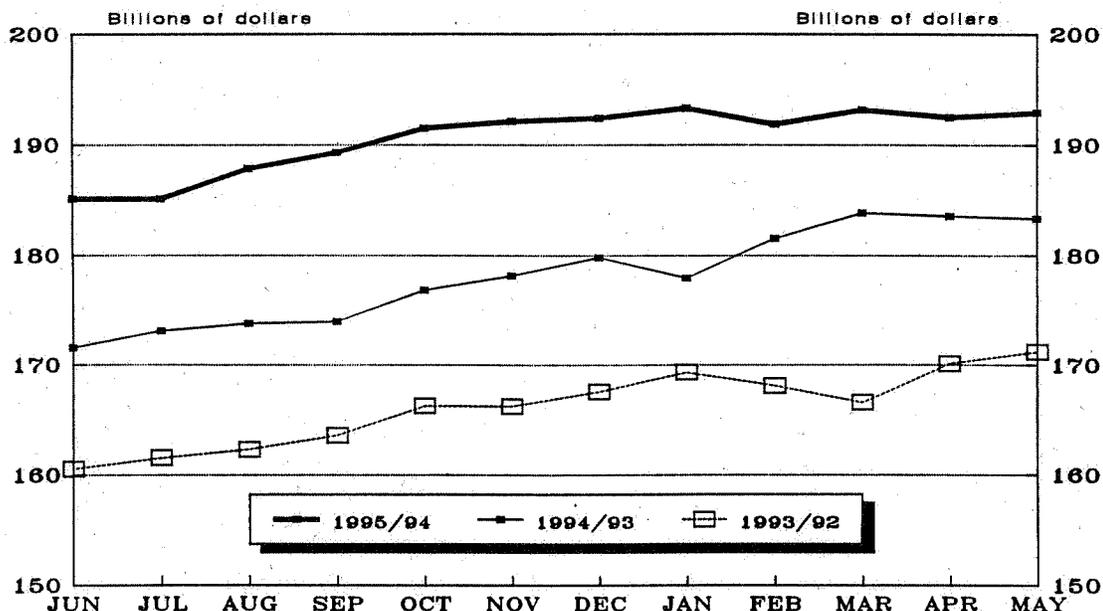
The advance estimates are based on a small subsample of the Bureau's full retail sales sample. Estimates from the advance and the subsequent full survey can differ because of the earlier reporting in the advance and because of sampling variability present in both surveys.

The Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report for June is scheduled to be released July 14, 1995 at 8:30 a.m.

ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES

June 1992 - May 1995

(Data adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes)



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This report is available the day of issue through the Department of Commerce's online Economic Bulletin Board. For information call (202) 482-1986. The data are also available through the Census Bureau's online information service - CENDATA. CENDATA is available from Dialog Information Services, INC. (1-800-334-2564) and CompuServe (1-800-848-8199). The CENDATA staff at the Bureau of the Census (301-457-1214) 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				
		1995			1994		1995			1994	
		May ² adv.	Apr. prel.	Mar. final	May	Apr.	May ² adv.	Apr. prel.	Mar. final	May ¹	Apr. ¹
	Retail trade, total.....	199,918	188,050	192,870	187,150	181,772	192,901	192,490	193,153	183,336	183,577
	Total (excl. auto group)...	148,872	141,077	142,182	141,353	135,558	146,900	146,715	146,736	140,704	140,245
	Durable goods, total.....	82,810	75,428	79,121	75,771	73,910	76,332	76,209	76,978	71,662	72,147
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	12,309	10,602	9,982	12,022	10,842	10,123	10,293	10,537	10,033	10,111
521,3	Building mat. and supply stores.....	(*)	7,979	7,700	8,667	7,960	(*)	7,924	8,097	7,589	7,661
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	1,137	1,055	1,335	1,268	(*)	1,102	1,134	1,158	1,197
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	51,046	46,973	50,688	45,797	46,214	46,001	45,775	46,417	42,632	43,332
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	47,858	44,109	47,819	43,025	43,441	42,999	42,908	43,551	39,949	40,637
551	Motor vehicle (franchised).....	(*)	38,084	41,340	37,711	38,011	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	2,864	2,869	2,772	2,773	(*)	2,867	2,866	2,683	2,695
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	10,166	9,387	10,144	9,145	8,878	10,491	10,342	10,465	9,658	9,557
571	Furniture and home furnishings.....	(*)	4,779	5,002	4,875	4,705	(*)	5,063	5,109	4,919	4,891
5722,31,4	Household appliance, radio, TV and computer stores.....	(*)	3,839	4,305	3,519	3,414	(*)	4,428	4,489	3,884	3,827
5722	Household appliance stores.....	(*)	714	790	744	712	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total.....	117,108	112,622	113,749	111,379	107,862	116,569	116,281	116,175	111,674	111,430
53	General merchandise group stores.....	23,770	22,703	22,282	22,200	21,186	24,545	24,462	24,287	23,041	23,195
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts).....	18,295	17,591	17,292	16,966	16,246	19,037	18,997	18,816	17,673	17,775
531	Dept. stores (in. leased depts) ³	(*)	17,880	17,568	17,284	16,578	(*)	19,238	19,202	18,014	18,100
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	594	545	646	637	(*)	602	602	672	686
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	4,518	4,445	4,588	4,303	(*)	4,863	4,869	4,696	4,734
54	Food stores.....	34,401	33,354	33,861	33,330	32,292	33,737	33,863	33,682	32,997	32,596
541	Grocery stores.....	32,567	31,527	32,084	31,531	30,594	31,960	32,040	31,861	31,250	30,872
554	Gasoline service stations.....	12,830	12,058	12,074	11,960	11,351	12,372	12,457	12,435	11,600	11,642
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	8,726	8,743	8,504	8,559	8,611	8,996	8,866	9,259	8,946	9,032
561	Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	920	855	944	916	(*)	955	982	976	974
562,3	Women's clothing, specialty stores.....	(*)	2,777	2,746	2,879	2,877	(*)	2,791	2,881	2,856	2,915
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	2,848	2,798	2,711	2,737	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	1,627	1,498	1,515	1,509	(*)	1,498	1,600	1,515	1,511
58	Eating and drinking places.....	20,425	19,792	19,957	19,634	18,953	19,773	19,792	19,759	18,897	18,859
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	6,997	6,846	7,050	6,759	6,596	6,900	6,957	6,960	6,766	6,683
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	1,720	1,727	1,805	1,735	(*)	1,820	1,833	1,825	1,809
5961	Total mail order.....	(*)	3,532	3,968	3,372	3,513	(*)	4,000	3,925	3,832	3,835
53,56,57 594	GAF ⁴	(*)	46,683	46,657	45,834	44,241	(*)	50,585	50,845	48,241	48,348

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

NA Not available.

¹Revised.

¹Data are concurrently adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes. 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-95-04.

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 (general merchandise, apparel, furniture, and miscellaneous shopping goods stores).

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, but not for price changes)

SIC code	Kind of business	Percent change					
		May 1995 advance from—		Apr. 1995 preliminary from—		Mar. 1995 through May 1995 from—	
		Apr. 1995 prelim.	May 1994 final	Mar. 1995 final	Apr. 1994 final	Dec. 1994 through Feb. 1995	Mar. 1994 through May 1994
	Retail trade, total.....	+0.2	+5.2	-0.3	+4.9	+0.2	+5.0
	Total (excl. automotive group).....	+0.1	+4.4	0.0	+4.6	+0.2	+4.5
	Durable goods, total.....	+0.2	+6.5	-1.0	+5.6	-0.2	+6.4
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	-1.7	+0.9	-2.3	+1.8	-1.2	+2.8
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	+0.5	+7.9	-1.4	+5.6	-0.1	+6.8
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	+0.2	+7.6	-1.5	+5.6	-0.3	+6.7
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	+1.4	+8.6	-1.2	+8.2	-1.9	+9.0
	Nondurable goods, total.....	+0.2	+4.4	+0.1	+4.4	+0.4	+4.2
53	General merchandise group stores.....	+0.3	+6.5	+0.7	+5.5	+0.9	+5.6
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	+0.2	+7.7	+1.0	+6.9	+0.8	+6.8
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.) ¹	(NA)	(NA)	+0.2	+6.3	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	-0.4	+2.2	+0.5	+3.9	-0.5	+2.7
541	Grocery stores.....	-0.2	+2.3	+0.6	+3.8	-0.3	+2.7
554	Gasoline service stations.....	-0.7	+6.7	+0.2	+7.0	+1.4	+6.6
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	+1.5	+0.6	-4.2	-1.8	-1.0	+0.4
58	Eating and drinking places.....	-0.1	+4.6	+0.2	+4.9	+0.9	+4.9
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	-0.8	+2.0	0.0	+4.1	-0.1	+3.0

NA Not available.

¹Includes data for leased departments operated within department stores. Data for this line not included in broader kind-of-business totals.

Official Business

Penalty for Private Use, \$300

Sample Design and Reliability of Data

The advance estimates are based on a small subsample of the Bureau's full retail sales sample. Estimates from the advance and the subsequent full survey can differ because of the earlier reporting in the advance and because of sampling variability present in both surveys.

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 -1.0 percent to +0.6 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 April 1995 and final estimates for March 1995 based on the full sample are published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for April (BR-95-04). 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 3. 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	Avg. of absolute diff.	
		Range ¹		Median	Median	Median	Median	From	To		
		From	To								
	Retail trade, total.....	0.5	1.3	0.7	1.0	0.8	1.0	-1.0	+0.6	0.0	0.3
	Total (excl. auto).....	0.5	0.9	0.7	1.1	0.8	1.0	-1.6	+0.7	-0.1	0.4
	Durable goods, total.....	1.2	3.4	1.4	2.2	1.7	2.2	-0.9	+1.1	+0.2	0.5
52	Building materials, group stores.....	0.9	2.6	1.6	4.1	2.9	3.4	-4.2	+2.5	-0.4	1.4
55 ex. 554 551,2,5, 6,7,9	Automotive dealers.....	1.6	3.2	2.1	3.4	2.6	3.1	-1.3	+2.2	+0.6	1.1
	Motor vehicle and misc. automotive dealers.....	1.2	3.0	1.5	4.0	2.8	3.2	-1.5	+2.3	+0.5	1.1
57	Furniture, home furn., and equipment stores.....	1.3	3.6	2.1	4.6	3.4	4.1	-3.4	+2.3	-0.1	1.5
	Nondurable goods, total.....	0.4	0.8	0.6	1.1	0.8	1.1	-1.1	+0.5	0.0	0.3
53	General merch. group, total.....	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.5	-0.3	+0.7	+0.1	0.2
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts.).....	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	-0.4	+0.6	-0.1	0.2
54	Food stores.....	0.6	1.0	0.7	1.7	0.9	1.7	-0.5	+0.8	+0.1	0.3
541	Grocery stores.....	0.1	0.8	0.3	1.8	0.9	1.7	-0.6	+0.5	0.0	0.2
554	Gasoline service stations.....	0.5	1.9	0.9	2.7	1.8	3.0	-1.4	+1.2	-0.4	0.8
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	0.8	3.4	1.4	3.3	2.8	2.6	-2.4	+1.3	-0.4	1.1
58	Eating and drinking places.....	0.8	2.0	1.2	4.6	4.0	3.9	-3.6	+2.4	0.0	1.0
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	0.4	1.8	1.0	2.5	1.5	2.5	-1.0	+1.3	+0.2	0.6

¹The ranges of sampling variability shown are based on sales estimates not adjusted for seasonal variation, holiday, and trading-day differences for the data months of April 1993 - March 1994.

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, May 1994 - April 1995. The ranges for all other totals and kinds of business are based on the period April 1993 - February 1994.

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.

