

**INTENTION TO REVISE ESTIMATES.** The annual revision of the monthly retail sales estimates will be published in the press release the week of April 27. Unadjusted estimates will be revised for the months of January 1993 through March 1998, while corresponding adjusted data will be revised for January 1990 through March 1998.

FOR WIRE TRANSMISSION 8:30 A.M. E.T., Thursday, February 12, 1998

**ADVANCE MONTHLY RETAIL SALES  
JANUARY 1998**

The Census Bureau of the Department of Commerce announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for January adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$214.8 billion, an increase of 0.1 percent ( $\pm 0.7\%$ ) from the previous month and up 2.4 percent ( $\pm 0.9\%$ ) from January 1997. Total sales for the November through January period were up 3.4 percent ( $\pm 0.7\%$ ) from the same period a year ago. The November to December 1997 percent change was revised from +0.7 percent ( $\pm 0.7\%$ ) to +0.3 percent ( $\pm 0.4\%$ ).

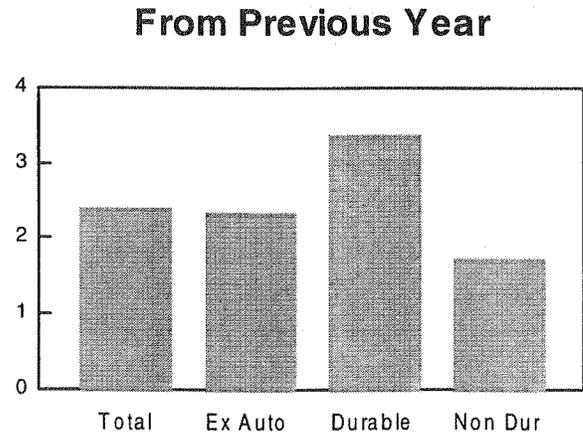
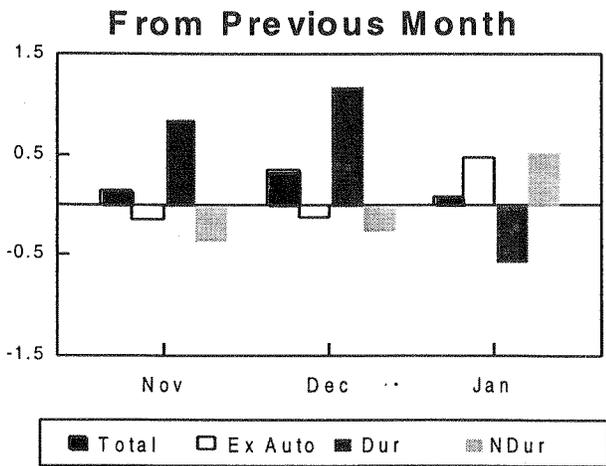
Durable goods declined 0.6 percent ( $\pm 1.4\%$ ) from December but were 3.4 percent above last year.

Nondurable goods increased 0.5 percent ( $\pm 0.6\%$ ) from last month and were 1.8 percent above last year.

*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.*

**Percent Change in Retail Sales**

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



The Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report for February is scheduled to be released March 12, 1998 at 8:30 a.m.

Address inquiries concerning this report to Ronald Pienycoski, Services Division, Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. 20233. Telephone: (301) 457-2713 or (301) 457-2666.

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 on the internet - <http://www.census.gov/svsd/www/advttable.html>.

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

(In Millions of Dollars)

SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted					Adjusted <sup>1</sup>				
		1998	1997			1996	1998	1997			1996
		Jan. <sup>2</sup> (a)	Dec. (p)	Nov. (r)	Jan.	Dec.	Jan. <sup>2</sup> (a)	Dec. (p)	Nov. (r)	Jan. (r)	Dec. (r)
	<b>Retail trade, total .....</b>	<b>190,944</b>	<b>257,453</b>	<b>214,093</b>	<b>186,064</b>	<b>244,719</b>	<b>214,760</b>	<b>214,582</b>	<b>213,834</b>	<b>209,663</b>	<b>206,672</b>
	Total (excl. auto group).....	144,641	209,998	168,301	140,539	201,187	162,568	161,794	161,982	158,787	156,945
	<b>Durable goods, total.....</b>	<b>76,137</b>	<b>97,742</b>	<b>82,391</b>	<b>74,051</b>	<b>90,163</b>	<b>88,169</b>	<b>88,658</b>	<b>87,610</b>	<b>85,268</b>	<b>83,505</b>
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.....	9,146	11,086	11,066	8,859	10,350	12,050	11,936	11,883	11,651	11,356
521,3	Building mat. and supply stores.....	(*)	8,340	8,543	6,862	7,608	(*)	9,226	9,127	8,866	8,597
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	1,302	1,264	1,113	1,359	(*)	1,221	1,270	1,311	1,302
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	46,303	47,455	45,792	45,525	43,532	52,192	52,788	51,852	50,876	49,727
551,2,5, 6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	43,705	44,688	42,966	42,853	40,761	49,273	49,875	48,936	47,880	46,744
551	Motor vehicle (franchised).....	(*)	39,839	37,996	38,051	36,237	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	2,767	2,826	2,672	2,771	(*)	2,913	2,916	2,996	2,983
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	11,270	17,232	13,212	10,390	15,608	12,184	12,148	12,016	11,288	11,138
571	Furniture and home furnishings.....	(*)	7,594	6,800	5,227	6,720	(*)	6,245	6,148	5,776	5,642
5722,31,4	Household appliance, radio, TV and computer stores.....	(*)	7,921	5,483	4,398	7,263	(*)	4,988	4,985	4,659	4,626
5722	Household appliance stores.....	(*)	1,033	876	740	1,031	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	<b>Nondurable goods, total.....</b>	<b>114,807</b>	<b>159,711</b>	<b>131,702</b>	<b>112,013</b>	<b>154,556</b>	<b>126,591</b>	<b>125,924</b>	<b>126,224</b>	<b>124,395</b>	<b>123,167</b>
53	General merchandise group stores.....	21,775	46,627	32,819	20,783	44,935	28,222	27,774	27,872	27,160	26,751
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts).....	17,013	37,890	26,293	15,994	36,188	22,415	22,080	22,039	21,297	21,064
531	Dept. stores (in. leased depts) <sup>3</sup> .....	(*)	38,432	26,714	16,229	36,701	(*)	22,473	22,449	21,601	21,416
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	1,203	854	545	1,218	(*)	705	773	737	714
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	7,534	5,672	4,244	7,529	(*)	4,989	5,060	5,126	4,973
54	Food stores.....	35,724	39,134	36,089	35,132	38,008	36,149	36,285	36,352	35,843	35,698
541	Grocery stores.....	33,822	36,329	33,966	33,317	35,463	34,026	34,144	34,205	33,824	33,742
554	Gasoline service stations.....	11,823	12,564	12,393	12,529	12,990	12,564	12,729	12,923	13,371	13,255
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	7,291	15,988	11,041	6,957	15,130	9,853	9,786	9,792	9,664	9,395
561	Men's and boy's clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	1,651	1,100	751	1,514	(*)	898	958	903	820
562,3	Women's clothing, specialty stores.....	(*)	4,524	2,921	2,030	4,406	(*)	2,753	2,692	2,847	2,743
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	6,643	4,624	2,480	6,234	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	2,164	1,614	1,161	2,017	(*)	1,665	1,614	1,595	1,581
58	Eating and drinking places.....	19,306	20,322	19,495	18,576	19,822	20,715	20,527	20,286	20,169	19,982
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	8,365	10,549	8,119	7,827	9,602	8,501	8,460	8,440	7,922	7,813
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	2,793	2,081	1,702	2,525	(*)	2,083	2,069	1,932	1,911
5961	Total mail order.....	(*)	6,735	5,361	3,804	6,203	(*)	4,323	4,248	4,082	4,078
53,56,57, 594	GAF(4).....	(*)	97,500	66,146	44,565	92,927	(*)	57,821	57,899	56,166	55,384

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

NA Not available. (a) Advance estimates. (p) Preliminary. (r) Revised.

- (1) Data 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-97-12.
- (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 (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

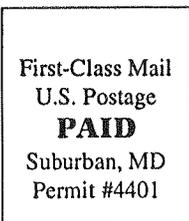
(Adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes)

SIC code	Kind of business	Percent change <sup>1</sup>					
		Jan. 1998 Advance from --		Dec. 1997 Preliminary from --		Nov. 1997 through Jan. 1998 from --	
		Dec. 1997 (p)	Jan. 1997 (r)	Nov. 1997 (r)	Dec. 1996 (r)	Aug. 1997 through Oct. 1997	Nov. 1996 through Jan. 1997
	<b>Retail trade, total .....</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>3.4</b>
	Total (excl. automotive group) .....	0.5	2.4	-0.1	3.1	0.1	3.0
	<b>Durable goods, total .....</b>	<b>-0.6</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>4.8</b>
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers ....	1.0	3.4	0.4	5.1	0.2	4.3
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	-1.1	2.6	1.8	6.2	0.5	4.4
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	-1.2	2.9	1.9	6.7	0.7	4.8
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	0.3	7.9	1.1	9.1	2.0	8.2
	<b>Nondurable goods, total.....</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>-0.2</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>-0.3</b>	<b>2.4</b>
53	General merchandise group stores.....	1.6	3.9	-0.4	3.8	0.5	4.6
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	1.5	5.2	0.2	4.8	1.1	5.9
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.) <sup>2</sup> .....	(NA)	(NA)	0.1	4.9	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	-0.4	0.9	-0.2	1.6	0.1	1.6
541	Grocery stores.....	-0.3	0.6	-0.2	1.2	0.2	1.2
554	Gasoline service stations.....	-1.3	-6.0	-1.5	-4.0	-2.9	-4.0
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	0.7	2.0	-0.1	4.2	-0.4	3.6
58	Eating and drinking places.....	0.9	2.7	1.2	2.7	0.0	2.1
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	0.5	7.3	0.2	8.3	2.1	8.1

NA Not available. (p) Preliminary. (r) Revised.

(1) Percent change rounded to nearest tenth.

(2) Includes 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

### 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 each survey. The margin of sampling error, as used on page 1, gives a range about the estimate which is a 90% confidence interval. If, for example, the trend estimate is +1.2% and the standard error is 0.9%, then the margin of sampling error is  $\pm 1.65 \times 0.9\%$  or  $\pm 1.5\%$ , and the 90% confidence interval is -0.3% to +2.7%. If the interval contains 0, it is uncertain whether there was an increase or decrease. For monthly level, the coefficient of variation (CV) is given. The resulting confidence interval is the estimated value  $\pm 1.65 \times CV \times$  (the estimated value).

Estimates of sampling variability are given in Table 3. They are based on two components. The first component is a measure of the average difference

between the Advance and the Preliminary estimates. The second reflects the variability of the Preliminary estimate. Additionally, both the Advance and the full survey are subject to nonsampling errors. Such errors can occur because of nonresponse, insufficient coverage of the universe of retail businesses, and response errors, among others. Precautionary steps are taken to minimize these errors, but their magnitude is not directly measured.

Preliminary estimates for the current month and final estimates for the previous month based on the full sample are published next month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report. This report will provide sales estimates in greater detail and additional measures of sampling variability. It will also present a description of revisions and the techniques used in developing the estimates, and an explanation of confidence intervals and sampling variability (Appendix B, Reliability of Data).

**Table 3. Measures of Variability of and Revision to Advance Estimates for Level and Trend**

SIC code	Kind of Business	Level of sales: Estimated CV <sup>1</sup> for Current Mo. (x 100)	Trend (percent change): Estimated standard error <sup>1</sup> for			Revision for month- to-month change <sup>2</sup>	
			Current Mo. to Previous Mo.	Current Qtr. to Previous Qtr.	Current Mo. to Current Mo. Last Yr.	Average revision	Median absolute revision
	<b>Retail trade, total.....</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>0.2</b>
	Total (excl. auto) .....	1.0	0.6	0.3	0.7	-0.1	0.4
	<b>Durable goods, total .....</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>0.4</b>
52	Building materials, group stores .....	3.5	1.9	1.1	2.7	0.1	0.7
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers .....	1.6	1.2	0.8	1.5	0.4	0.4
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and misc. automotive dealers .....	1.8	1.3	0.9	1.6	0.4	0.4
57	Furniture, home furn, and equipment stores .....	2.0	1.4	0.7	1.8	0.1	1.0
	<b>Nondurable goods, total .....</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.3</b>
53	General merch. group, total.....	0.6	0.6	0.2	0.6	0.0	0.2
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts.) ....	0.4	0.5	0.1	0.4	0.0	0.2
54	Food stores .....	1.2	0.2	0.3	0.6	0.0	0.1
541	Grocery stores .....	1.2	0.2	0.3	0.6	0.0	0.1
554	Gasoline service stations .....	2.2	1.2	1.4	1.4	-0.2	0.8
56	Apparel and accessory stores .....	1.9	1.5	0.6	1.6	0.1	0.8
58	Eating and drinking places .....	5.1	1.0	0.9	2.2	-0.1	0.4
591	Drug and proprietary stores .....	1.7	0.8	0.4	1.2	0.2	0.5



(1) The coefficients of variation (CVs) for level of sales and the standard errors for trends are medians based on estimates for the preceding 12 months.  
 (2) These columns measure the difference between the Advance/Preliminary ratio and the Preliminary/Final ratio estimates -- i.e., the difference between estimates of trend for the same pair of data months. The revisions for Retail trade total are based on the latest 12 months of data while all other kinds of business are based on the preceding 12 months.