

FOR WIRE TRANSMISSION 8:30 A.M. ET, Tuesday, December 14, 1999

**ADVANCE MONTHLY RETAIL SALES
NOVEMBER 1999**

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 \$255.8 billion, an increase of 0.9 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$) from the previous month and up 9.2 percent ($\pm 0.9\%$) from November 1998. Total sales for the September through November period were up 9.4 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$) from the same period a year ago. The September to October 1999 percent change was revised from unchanged ($\pm 0.7\%$) to +0.3 percent ($\pm 0.2\%$).

Durable goods increased 1.5 percent ($\pm 1.4\%$) from October and were 10.1 percent above last year. Automotive sales were up 12.0 percent from November a year ago, while furniture sales were up 8.4 percent from last year.

Nondurable goods increased 0.4 percent ($\pm 0.6\%$) from October and were up 8.6 percent from November 1998. Gasoline sales were up 20.3 percent from November a year ago, while drug store sales were up 8.5 percent from last year.

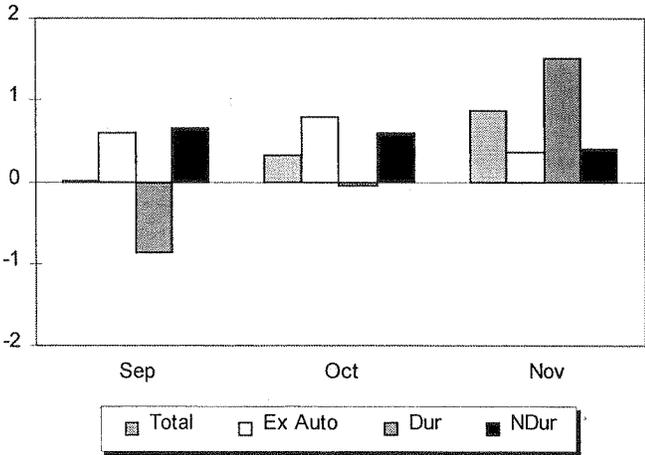
The scheduled release dates for 2000 are as follows: January 13, February 11, March 14, April 13, May 11, June 13, July 14, August 11, September 14, October 13, November 14, and December 13.

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.

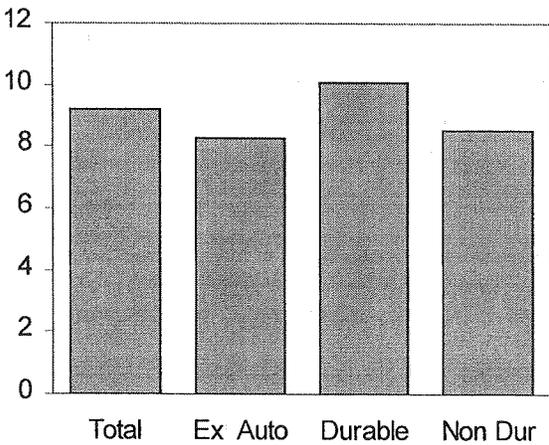
Percent Change in Retail Sales

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

From Previous Month



From Previous Year



The Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report for December is scheduled to be released January 13, 2000 at 8:30 a.m.

Address inquiries concerning this report to Scott Scheleur, Service Sector Statistics Division, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC 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/advtable.html>.

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

(In Millions of Dollars and Annual Percent Change)

SIC code	Kind of business	Not adjusted							Adjusted ¹				
		11 month total		1999			1998		1999			1998	
		1999	Change from 1998	Nov. ² (a)	Oct. (p)	Sept. (r)	Nov.	Oct.	Nov. ² (a)	Oct. (p)	Sept. (r)	Nov. (r)	Oct. (r)
	Retail trade, total.....	2,680,764	8.8	257,037	251,023	245,736	232,852	234,928	255,787	253,609	252,803	234,250	232,881
	Total (excl. auto dealers).....	1,993,686	7.8	198,137	189,860	182,624	181,899	177,226	191,457	190,769	189,277	176,817	175,650
	Durable goods, total.....	1,135,363	10.2	103,350	102,878	104,272	91,559	97,193	107,366	105,776	105,837	97,527	97,070
52	Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers.	167,615	10.3	14,425	15,478	15,538	13,171	14,867	15,200	15,062	14,942	14,266	14,046
521,3	Building mat. and supply stores..	(*)	(*)	(*)	12,133	11,943	10,125	11,453	(*)	11,599	11,418	10,829	10,605
525	Hardware stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,279	1,275	1,200	1,268	(*)	1,258	1,279	1,233	1,227
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	687,078	11.6	58,900	61,163	63,112	50,953	57,702	64,330	62,840	63,526	57,433	57,231
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	651,586	12.0	55,700	57,840	59,822	47,965	54,365	61,075	59,629	60,304	54,320	54,095
551	Motor vehicle (franchised)....	(*)	(*)	(*)	49,744	51,805	42,148	47,027	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
553	Auto and home supply stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,323	3,290	2,988	3,337	(*)	3,211	3,222	3,113	3,136
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	144,012	7.9	15,408	13,410	13,433	13,978	12,639	14,033	13,962	13,974	12,950	12,878
571	Furniture and home furnishings.	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,596	6,431	6,618	6,145	(*)	6,589	6,576	6,049	6,007
5722,31,4	Household appliance, radio, TV and computer stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,840	5,996	6,354	5,503	(*)	6,327	6,352	5,905	5,817
5722	Household appliance stores.	(*)	(*)	(*)	952	943	922	911	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
	Nondurable goods, total.....	1,545,401	7.7	153,687	148,145	141,464	141,293	137,735	148,421	147,833	146,966	136,723	135,811
53	General merchandise group stores.	326,803	8.3	36,953	31,342	29,250	34,787	29,271	32,373	32,195	32,127	30,178	29,839
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts)..	254,308	7.5	29,011	24,257	22,684	27,587	22,864	25,205	25,059	25,065	23,660	23,450
531	Dept. stores (in. leased depts) ³ ..	(*)	(*)	(*)	24,721	23,110	28,143	23,324	(*)	25,559	25,579	24,118	23,909
533	Variety stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,243	1,077	1,152	1,015	(*)	1,223	1,173	1,035	986
539	Misc. general mdse. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,842	5,489	6,048	5,392	(*)	5,913	5,889	5,483	5,403
54	Food stores.....	417,116	4.9	38,479	38,867	38,256	36,396	37,388	39,063	38,881	38,723	37,065	36,938
541	Grocery stores.....	395,590	5.1	36,478	36,884	36,353	34,501	35,416	37,034	36,884	36,720	35,133	34,962
554	Gasoline service stations.....	163,132	9.6	15,637	16,255	15,822	12,844	13,841	16,038	15,859	15,775	13,337	13,386
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	117,119	6.7	12,634	11,260	10,756	11,870	10,816	11,392	11,299	11,296	10,709	10,625
561	Men's and boy's clothing and furnishings stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	965	852	1,048	945	(*)	942	936	921	919
562,3	Women's clothing, specialty stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,911	2,786	3,063	2,833	(*)	2,976	2,964	2,884	2,825
565	Family clothing stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,574	4,229	5,068	4,339	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
566	Shoe stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,629	1,677	1,708	1,708	(*)	1,750	1,763	1,759	1,785
58	Eating and drinking places.....	261,067	7.2	23,504	25,273	23,524	21,742	23,385	24,741	24,609	23,980	22,983	22,660
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	106,087	11.1	9,822	9,881	9,520	8,936	9,033	10,033	10,114	10,032	9,251	9,097
592	Liquor stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,321	2,223	2,149	2,148	(*)	2,330	2,328	2,166	2,118
5961	Total mail order.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,764	7,266	7,551	6,835	(*)	7,373	7,452	6,230	6,271
53,56,57,594	GAF ⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	63,820	61,034	69,645	60,159	(*)	66,219	66,018	62,043	61,592

* 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-99-10.
- (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 ¹					
		Nov. 1999 Advance from --		Oct. 1999 Preliminary from --		Sept. 1999 through Nov. 1999 from --	
		Oct. 1999 (p)	Nov. 1998 (r)	Sept. 1999 (r)	Oct. 1998 (r)	June 1999 through Aug. 1999	Sept. 1998 through Nov. 1998
	Retail trade, total	0.9	9.2	0.3	8.9	1.7	9.4
	Total (excl. automotive dealers)	0.4	8.3	0.8	8.6	2.0	8.5
	Durable goods, total	1.5	10.1	-0.1	9.0	1.4	10.2
52	Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers	0.9	6.5	0.8	7.2	0.1	7.1
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	2.4	12.0	-1.1	9.8	0.9	12.1
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers.....	2.4	12.4	-1.1	10.2	0.8	12.6
57	Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores.....	0.5	8.4	-0.1	8.4	2.5	8.7
	Nondurable goods, total.....	0.4	8.6	0.6	8.9	2.0	8.8
53	General merchandise group stores.....	0.6	7.3	0.2	7.9	1.5	8.0
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.).....	0.6	6.5	0.0	6.9	1.2	7.1
531	Dept. stores (in. leased dept.) ²	(NA)	(NA)	-0.1	6.9	(NA)	(NA)
54	Food stores.....	0.5	5.4	0.4	5.3	1.5	5.4
541	Grocery stores.....	0.4	5.4	0.4	5.5	1.6	5.5
554	Gasoline service stations.....	1.1	20.3	0.5	18.5	6.1	18.9
56	Apparel and accessory stores.....	0.8	6.4	0.0	6.3	-0.1	7.1
58	Eating and drinking places.....	0.5	7.6	2.6	8.6	3.1	7.8
591	Drug and proprietary stores.....	-0.8	8.5	0.8	11.2	1.2	10.2

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 ¹ for Current Mo. (x 100)	Trend (percent change): Estimated standard error ¹ for			Revision for month- to-month change ²	
			Current Mo. to Previous Mo.	Current Qtr. to Previous Qtr.	Current Mo. to Current Mo. Last Yr.	Average revision	Median absolute revision
	Retail trade, total	7.0	0.4	0.3	0.6	0.2	0.3
	Total (excl. auto dealers)	1.0	0.6	0.3	0.7	0.2	0.3
	Durable goods, total	1.4	0.9	0.6	1.1	0.2	0.5
52	Building materials group stores	3.5	1.9	1.1	2.7	0.1	1.2
55 ex. 554	Automotive dealers.....	1.6	1.2	0.8	1.5	0.2	0.6
551,2,5,6,7,9	Motor vehicle and misc. automotive dealers.....	1.8	1.3	0.9	1.6	0.3	0.8
57	Furniture, home furn, and equipment stores	2.0	1.4	0.7	1.8	0.2	0.4
	Nondurable goods, total	1.1	0.4	0.2	0.5	0.2	0.3
53	General merch. group, total.....	0.6	0.6	0.2	0.6	0.1	0.3
531	Dept. stores (ex. leased depts.)..	0.4	0.5	0.1	0.4	0.0	0.3
54	Food stores.....	1.2	0.2	0.3	0.6	0.2	0.3
541	Grocery stores	1.2	0.2	0.3	0.6	0.2	0.4
554	Gasoline service stations	2.2	1.2	1.4	1.4	0.6	0.9
56	Apparel and accessory stores	1.9	1.5	0.6	1.6	0.0	0.7
58	Eating and drinking places	5.1	1.0	0.9	2.2	0.5	0.6
591	Drug and proprietary stores	1.7	0.8	0.4	1.2	-0.1	0.3



- (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 are based on the latest 12 months of data.