# Advance Monthly Retail Sales August 1990

U.S. Department of Commerce
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

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The Census Bureau of the Department of Commerce announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail sales for August adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were $149.2 billion, a decrease of 0.6 percent (±1.2%) from the previous month but 1.7 percent above August 1989. Total sales in the June through August period were 2.9 percent above the same period a year ago.

Durable goods decreased 2.6 percent (±2.7%) from the previous month.

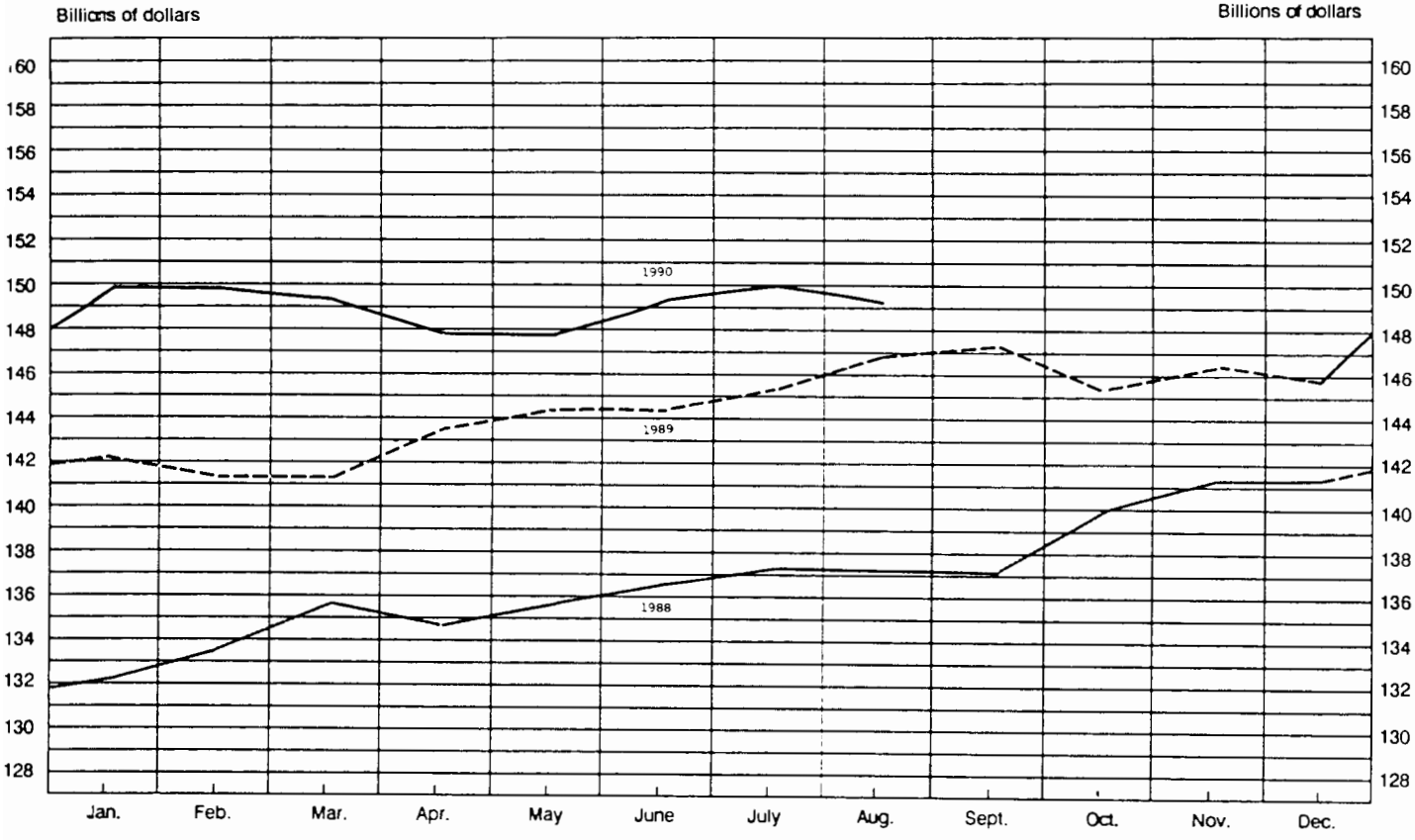
Nondurable goods increased 0.6 percent (±1.5%) from the previous month and were 5.8 percent above last year. General merchandise stores were up 5.0 percent from August 1989 while food stores were up 5.2 percent in the same period. Gasoline service stations increased 6.4 percent from July and were up 11.7 percent from the previous year.

The Advance Monthly Retail Sales Report for September is scheduled to be released October 12, 1990 at 8:30 a.m.

## ESTIMATED MONTHLY RETAIL SALES

### January 1988-August 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 | |
| | | Aug.[2] adv. | July prel. | June final | Aug. | July | Aug.[2] adv. | July prel. | June final | Aug.[r] | July[r] |
| | Retail trade, total | 156,365 | 148,898 | 153,472 | 153,030 | 144,546 | 149,198 | 150,049 | 149,432 | 146,767 | 145,170 |
| | Total (excl. auto group) | 122,966 | 115,956 | 119,209 | 116,864 | 111,586 | 119,124 | 118,639 | 118,324 | 113,843 | 113,456 |
| | Durable goods, total | 56,889 | 55,403 | 57,730 | 59,703 | 55,021 | 52,788 | 54,191 | 53,841 | 55,610 | 54,092 |
| 52 | Building mat., hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers | 8,569 | 8,664 | 9,108 | 8,808 | 8,441 | 7,804 | 7,999 | 7,961 | 7,954 | 7,817 |
| 521,3 | Building mat. and supply stores | (*) | 6,314 | 6,412 | 6,529 | 6,187 | (*) | 5,693 | 5,679 | 5,697 | 5,625 |
| 525 | Hardware stores | (*) | 1,134 | 1,205 | 1,050 | 1,076 | (*) | 1,082 | 1,088 | 1,020 | 1,021 |
| 55 ex. 554 | Automotive dealers | 33,399 | 32,942 | 34,263 | 36,166 | 32,960 | 30,074 | 31,410 | 31,108 | 32,924 | 31,714 |
| 551,2,5, 6,7,9 | Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers | 30,463 | 30,072 | 31,302 | 33,301 | 30,249 | 27,395 | 28,695 | 28,379 | 30,329 | 29,142 |
| 551 | Motor vehicle (franchised) | (*) | 26,482 | 27,406 | 29,224 | 26,469 | (*) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) |
| 553 | Auto and home supply stores | (*) | 2,870 | 2,961 | 2,865 | 2,711 | (*) | 2,715 | 2,729 | 2,595 | 2,572 |
| 57 | Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores | 7,881 | 7,372 | 7,551 | 7,696 | 7,181 | 7,719 | 7,667 | 7,613 | 7,526 | 7,438 |
| 571 | Furniture and home furnishings | (*) | 4,030 | 4,145 | 4,296 | 3,952 | (*) | 4,133 | 4,104 | 4,135 | 4,053 |
| 5722,32 | Household appliance, radio, and TV stores | (*) | 2,740 | 2,774 | 2,721 | 2,640 | (*) | 2,848 | 2,813 | 2,707 | 2,719 |
| 5722 | Household appliance stores | (*) | 790 | 803 | 707 | 718 | (*) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) |
| | Nondurable goods, total | 99,476 | 93,495 | 95,742 | 93,327 | 89,525 | 96,410 | 95,858 | 95,591 | 91,157 | 91,078 |
| 53 | General merchandise group stores | 17,360 | 15,263 | 16,746 | 16,616 | 14,790 | 17,654 | 17,681 | 17,577 | 16,815 | 16,863 |
| 531 | Dept. stores (ex. leased depts.) | 14,158 | 12,419 | 13,600 | 13,528 | 12,012 | 14,315 | 14,324 | 14,256 | 13,610 | 13,619 |
| 531 | Dept. stores (in. leased depts)[3] | (*) | 12,776 | 13,975 | 13,940 | 12,356 | (*) | 14,719 | 14,649 | 13,996 | 13,993 |
| 533 | Variety stores | (*) | 522 | 543 | 575 | 534 | (*) | 589 | 592 | 593 | 595 |
| 539 | Misc. general mdse. stores | (*) | 2,322 | 2,603 | 2,513 | 2,244 | (*) | 2,768 | 2,729 | 2,612 | 2,649 |
| 54 | Food stores | 32,321 | 31,485 | 31,671 | 30,140 | 30,285 | 30,806 | 30,856 | 30,646 | 29,273 | 29,261 |
| 541 | Grocery stores | 30,376 | 29,606 | 29,829 | 28,460 | 28,649 | 28,930 | 28,997 | 28,820 | 27,631 | 27,627 |
| 554 | Gasoline service stations | 11,464 | 10,734 | 10,633 | 10,264 | 10,454 | 10,674 | 10,032 | 10,060 | 9,557 | 9,825 |
| 56 | Apparel and accessory stores | 8,385 | 7,130 | 7,631 | 8,107 | 6,814 | 8,032 | 8,101 | 8,067 | 7,726 | 7,647 |
| 561 | Men's and boys' clothing and furnishings stores | (*) | 662 | 796 | 697 | 658 | (*) | 801 | 799 | 776 | 777 |
| 562,3,8 | Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers | (*) | 2,517 | 2,680 | 2,702 | 2,418 | (*) | 2,870 | 2,897 | 2,716 | 2,699 |
| 565 | Family clothing stores | (*) | 2,101 | 2,240 | 2,351 | 1,896 | (*) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) |
| 566 | Shoe stores | (*) | 1,323 | 1,423 | 1,618 | 1,257 | (*) | 1,490 | 1,452 | 1,433 | 1,417 |
| 58 | Eating and drinking places | 16,497 | 16,174 | 16,152 | 15,672 | 15,434 | 15,135 | 15,244 | 15,267 | 14,525 | 14,451 |
| 591 | Drug and proprietary stores | 5,434 | 5,291 | 5,393 | 5,065 | 4,840 | 5,500 | 5,529 | 5,509 | 5,132 | 5,057 |
| 592 | Liquor stores | (*) | 1,756 | 1,775 | 1,716 | 1,768 | (*) | 1,697 | 1,715 | 1,692 | 1,687 |
| 5961 (pt.) | Mail-order houses (department store merchandise) | (*) | 322 | 368 | 375 | 329 | (*) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) |
| 53,56,57 594 | GAF[4] | (*) | 34,649 | 37,038 | 37,571 | 33,297 | (*) | 39,082 | 38,823 | 37,456 | 37,146 |

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

NA Not available. [r]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-90-07.

[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 | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Aug. 1990 advance from-- | | July 1990 preliminary from-- | | June 1990 through Aug. 1990 | |
| | | July 1990 prelim. | Aug. 1989 final | June 1990 final | July 1989 final | Mar. 1990 through May 1990 | June 1989 through Aug. 1989 |
| | Retail trade, total | -0.6 | +1.7 | +0.4 | +3.4 | +0.8 | +2.9 |
| | Total (excl. automotive group) | +0.4 | +4.6 | +0.3 | +4.6 | +1.2 | +4.7 |
| | Durable goods, total | -2.6 | -5.1 | +0.7 | +0.2 | -0.6 | -1.5 |
| 52 | Building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealers | -2.4 | -1.9 | +0.5 | +2.3 | +2.4 | +0.9 |
| 55 ex. 554 | Automotive dealers | -4.3 | -8.7 | +1.0 | -1.0 | -0.6 | -3.4 |
| 551,2,5, 6,7,9 | Motor vehicle and miscellaneous automotive dealers | -4.5 | -9.7 | +1.1 | -1.5 | -0.5 | -4.2 |
| 57 | Furniture, home furnishings, and equipment stores | +0.7 | +2.6 | +0.7 | +3.1 | -1.6 | +1.9 |
| | Nondurable goods, total | +0.6 | +5.8 | +0.3 | +5.2 | +1.7 | +5.5 |
| 53 | General merchandise group stores | -0.2 | +5.0 | +0.6 | +4.9 | +1.9 | +4.9 |
| 531 | Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.) | -0.1 | +5.2 | +0.5 | +5.2 | +1.8 | +5.1 |
| 531 | Dept. stores (in. leased dept.)[2] | (NA) | (NA) | +0.5 | +5.2 | (NA) | (NA) |
| 54 | Food stores | -0.2 | +5.2 | +0.7 | +5.5 | +1.1 | +5.4 |
| 541 | Grocery stores | -0.2 | +4.7 | +0.6 | +5.0 | +1.1 | +4.9 |
| 554 | Gasoline service stations | +6.4 | +11.7 | -0.3 | +2.1 | +3.2 | +5.5 |
| 56 | Apparel and accessory stores | -0.9 | +4.0 | +0.4 | +5.9 | +2.3 | +5.3 |
| 58 | Eating and drinking places | -0.7 | +4.2 | -0.2 | +5.5 | +0.5 | +5.2 |
| 591 | Drug and proprietary stores | -0.5 | +7.2 | +0.4 | +9.3 | +2.3 | +8.8 |

## 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] | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | July 1990 prelim. | June 1990 final | July 1989 | July 1990 prelim. | June 1990 final | July[r] 1989 |
| | Retail trade, total | 54,371 | 56,559 | 51,803 | 57,489 | 57,231 | 54,182 |
| 53 | General merchandise group stores | 13,941 | 15,379 | 13,486 | 16,240 | 16,161 | 15,489 |
| 531 | Dept. stores (ex. leased dept.) | 12,047 | 13,196 | 11,625 | 13,847 | 13,818 | 13,165 |
| 531 | Dept. stores (in. leased dept.)[2] | 12,392 | 13,559 | 11,957 | 14,276 | 14,213 | 13,541 |
| 533 | Variety stores | 409 | 425 | 415 | 467 | 461 | 470 |
| 539 | Miscellaneous general merchandise stores | 1,485 | 1,758 | 1,446 | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) |
| 54 | Food stores | 17,374 | 17,599 | 16,722 | (NA) | (NA) | (NA) |
| 541 | Grocery stores | 17,174 | 17,398 | 16,537 | 17,140 | 17,007 | 16,165 |
| 56 | Apparel and accessory stores | 3,911 | 4,287 | 3,632 | 4,513 | 4,537 | 4,140 |
| 562,3,8 | Women's clothing, specialty stores, furriers | 1,414 | 1,547 | 1,343 | 1,585 | 1,639 | 1,477 |
| 566 | Shoe stores | 825 | 897 | 786 | 928 | 914 | 890 |
| 591 | Drug stores and proprietary stores | 3,186 | 3,271 | 2,886 | 3,382 | 3,372 | 3,057 |

NA Not available. [r]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-90-07.

[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).

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## 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 July 1990 and final estimates for June 1990 based on the full sample are published later this month in the Monthly Retail Trade Report for July (BR-90-07). 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 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: Advance-to-preliminary ratio | | | Ratio to same month a year ago | Dollar volume sales est. | Ratio of current quarter to prev. quarter | Preliminary-to-final percent change minus the Advance-to-preliminary percent change | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Range[1] From | Range[1] To | Median | Median | Median | Median | Range[2] From | Range[2] To | Mean | Aver. of absolute diff. |
| | 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 |
| | Nondur. stores, 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 acc. 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 ..... | 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 |

[1]The 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.
[2]The 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, August 1989 - July 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 on the measures of sampling variability.