



U. S. Department of Commerce
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

Manufacturers' Shipments, Inventories, and Orders

March 1992

M3-1-(92)-03

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(All figures in text are in seasonally adjusted current dollars)

Summary

New orders for manufactured goods in March increased \$3.9 billion or 1.6 percent to \$240.8 billion, the Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census reported today. The March increase follows increases of 0.7 percent in February and 0.5 percent in January. Both durables and nondurables increased in March.

Shipments were up \$2.2 billion or 0.9 percent to \$243.9 billion. This is the eleventh increase in the last twelve months. Both durables and nondurables increased.

Unfilled orders decreased \$3.1 billion or 0.6 percent to \$502.4 billion and are at the lowest level since \$501.5 billion in August 1989. This is the seventh consecutive monthly decline and the thirteenth in the last fifteen months. A decline in durables more than offset a nondurables increase.

Inventories were unchanged at \$372.8 billion, the lowest level since \$372.4 billion in February 1989. This follows declines in eleven of the last twelve months. An increase in nondurables offset a decrease in durables. The inventories-to-shipments ratio in March decreased to 1.53 from 1.54 in February.

New Orders

New orders for durable goods in March increased a revised \$2.5 billion or 2.1 percent to \$123.4 billion. The March increase follows a revised 0.2 percent increase in February and a 2.4 percent increase in January. Excluding transportation, new orders were up 0.6 percent.

Transportation equipment had the largest increase, up \$1.9 billion or 6.4 percent to \$32.0 billion, primarily due to aircraft and parts, and has increased for three consecutive months. Industrial machinery and equipment increased \$0.8 billion or 3.7 percent to \$21.4 billion, with increases in nearly all categories. The largest decrease occurred in primary metals, down \$0.6 billion or 5.7 percent to \$10.3 billion. Fabricated metal products declined \$0.3 billion or 2.1 percent to \$14.8 billion.

New orders for nondurable goods increased \$1.4 billion or 1.2 percent to \$117.4 billion, following a 1.3 percent increase in February. The largest increases occurred in textile mill products and petroleum and coal products.

Shipments

Shipments of durable goods in March increased \$1.2 billion or 0.9 percent to \$126.5 billion, following increases of 3.1 percent in February and 1.5 percent in January. Like

all manufactured goods, durable goods has increased in eleven of the last twelve months. Industrial machinery and equipment had the largest increase, up \$0.8 billion or 4.0 percent to \$21.7 billion, with increases in nearly all categories. Transportation equipment was down \$0.2 billion or 0.5 percent to \$33.5 billion, as a decrease in aircraft and parts more than offset increases in all other categories.

Shipments of nondurable goods increased \$1.0 billion or 0.9 percent to \$117.3 billion, following a 1.4 percent increase in February. Except for printing and publishing and leather and leather products, all major groups increased in March. The largest increase occurred in petroleum and coal products, up \$0.5 billion or 3.6 percent to \$13.2 billion.

Unfilled Orders

Unfilled orders for durable goods in March decreased \$3.2 billion or 0.7 percent to \$480.6 billion and are at the lowest level since \$479.6 billion in August 1989. This is the seventh consecutive monthly decline. Transportation equipment was down \$1.5 billion or 0.6 percent to \$266.6 billion, and is at the lowest level since \$262.1 billion in February 1990. Electronic and other electrical equipment was down \$0.4 billion or 0.9 percent to \$46.7 billion. Primary metals, down \$0.4 billion or 2.0 percent to \$19.9 billion, has declined in six of the last seven months. Industrial machinery and equipment, down \$0.3 billion or 0.5 percent to \$52.3 billion, has declined in five of the last six months and is at the lowest level since \$51.9 billion in December 1987. Unfilled orders for nondurable goods increased \$0.1 billion or 0.6 percent to \$21.8 billion.

Inventories

Inventories for durable goods in March were down \$0.6 billion or 0.3 percent to \$236.9 billion and are at the lowest level since \$235.1 billion in October 1988. This is the fourteenth decline in the last sixteen months. The largest decreases were in industrial machinery and equipment, down \$0.4 billion, and instruments and related products, down \$0.2 billion. Nondurable goods increased \$0.7 billion or 0.5 percent to \$135.9 billion.

By stage of fabrication, finished-goods inventories were up 0.4 percent in durables and 0.7 percent in nondurables. Work in process declined 0.4 percent in durables and increased 0.3 percent in nondurables. Materials and supplies decreased 0.6 percent in durables and increased 0.4 percent in nondurables.

(SEE BACK PAGE FOR UPCOMING REVISIONS)

**Table 2. VALUE OF MANUFACTURERS' NEW ORDERS FOR INDUSTRY GROUPS
(Millions of dollars)**

Industry	Seasonally adjusted						Not seasonally adjusted ¹						
	Monthly			Percent Change			Monthly			Percent change Mar. 92/91	Year to date		
	Mar. 1992 ^P	Feb. 1992 ^f	Jan. 1992	Feb.- Mar.	Jan.- Feb.	Dec.- Jan.	Mar. 1992 ^P	Feb. 1992 ^f	Jan. 1992	Mar. 1991	1992 ^P	1991	
All manufacturing industries	240,796	236,942	235,188	+1.6	+0.7	+0.5	252,923	234,914	215,622	238,355	+6.1	703,459	689,869
Manufacturing industries with unfilled orders	130,981	128,336	129,343	+2.1	-0.8	+1.2	140,235	127,818	117,943	133,306	+5.2	385,996	382,826
Durable goods industries	123,350	120,862	120,567	+2.1	+0.2	+2.4	132,758	120,448	108,873	120,990	+9.7	362,079	347,897
With unfilled orders	102,664	100,341	101,426	+2.3	-1.1	+2.4	110,927	99,636	91,748	103,933	+6.7	302,311	297,875
Stone, clay, and glass products	4,898	4,760	4,722	+2.9	+0.8	+2.5	4,923	4,594	4,040	4,569	+7.7	13,557	13,059
Primary metals	10,328	10,955	10,099	-5.7	+8.5	+2.3	11,141	11,250	10,013	10,591	+5.2	32,404	30,882
Blast furnaces, steel mills	4,382	4,408	3,915	-0.6	+12.6	+7.7	4,552	4,497	4,185	3,808	+19.5	13,234	12,008
Iron and steel foundries	837	794	888	+5.4	-10.6	-2.0	887	783	854	826	+7.4	2,524	2,422
Nonferrous and other primary metals	5,109	5,753	5,296	-11.2	+8.6	-0.6	5,702	5,970	4,974	5,957	-4.3	16,646	16,452
Fabricated metal products	14,814	15,134	15,447	-2.1	-2.0	+2.1	15,807	15,162	14,014	15,416	+2.5	44,983	43,784
Industrial machinery and equipment	21,404	20,648	21,002	+3.7	-1.7	+5.8	23,698	19,932	18,443	21,992	+7.8	62,073	60,512
Engines and turbines	1,571	1,375	1,482	+14.3	-7.2	+17.0	1,547	1,187	1,203	1,397	+10.7	3,937	3,877
Construction, mining and material handling equipment	2,372	2,474	2,353	-4.1	+5.1	-7.7	2,561	2,501	2,261	2,626	-2.5	7,323	7,962
Metalworking machinery	2,010	1,853	1,958	+8.5	-5.4	-10.6	2,267	1,861	1,639	1,987	+14.1	5,767	4,951
Computer and office equipment	6,282	6,086	6,148	+3.2	-1.0	+18.7	7,548	5,289	4,583	6,929	+8.9	17,420	16,713
Electronic and other electrical equipment	17,277	16,996	17,354	+1.7	-2.1	-5.1	18,149	17,326	15,908	16,621	+9.2	51,383	49,739
Electrical transmission and distribution equipment and industrial apparatus	2,208	2,119	2,457	+4.2	-13.8	+4.4	2,397	2,232	2,296	2,420	-1.0	6,925	7,109
Electric lighting and wiring equipment	1,308	1,335	1,308	-2.0	+2.1	-5.8	1,359	1,364	1,147	1,266	+7.3	3,870	3,891
Communications equipment	4,711	4,113	4,297	+14.5	-4.3	-11.1	4,958	3,945	3,777	3,631	+36.5	12,680	11,021
Electronic components	4,784	5,418	5,573	-11.7	-2.8	-0.7	5,069	5,869	5,355	5,389	-5.9	16,293	16,158
Transportation equipment	31,953	30,039	29,577	+6.4	+1.6	+1.9	35,433	30,331	25,897	31,157	+13.7	91,661	89,466
Aircraft, missiles, space vehicles, and parts	10,574	8,322	9,661	+27.1	-13.9	-3.5	12,496	7,755	7,437	13,651	-8.5	27,688	35,797
Shipbuilding and tanks	394	521	647	-24.4	-19.5	-15.3	419	480	464	822	-49.0	1,363	2,807
Instruments and related products	9,802	9,586	9,847	+2.3	-2.7	+11.6	10,121	9,165	8,956	9,045	+11.9	28,242	27,175
Search and navigation equipment	2,968	2,779	2,930	+6.8	-5.2	+32.6	2,835	2,523	2,561	2,009	+41.1	7,919	6,797
Measuring and controlling devices	2,355	2,215	2,380	+6.3	-6.9	+0.1	2,530	2,140	2,261	2,530	0.0	6,931	7,050
Medical instruments and supplies	2,346	2,505	2,546	-6.3	-1.6	+18.1	2,503	2,532	2,416	2,400	+4.3	7,451	7,214
All other durable goods	12,874	12,744	12,519	+1.0	+1.8	+2.5	13,486	12,688	11,602	11,599	+16.3	37,776	33,280
Nondurable goods industries	117,446	116,080	114,621	+1.2	+1.3	-1.5	120,165	114,466	106,749	117,365	+2.4	341,380	341,972
With unfilled orders	28,317	27,995	27,917	+1.2	+0.3	-2.9	29,308	28,182	26,195	29,373	-0.2	83,685	84,951

^P Preliminary. ^f Revised.

1 Shipments and new orders are the totals for the period and are adjusted for trading-day and calendar-month variations.

(n) When new orders for a prior month are negative because of cancellations, the percentage change calculation is algebraically negative, even though there is a net dollar increase from the prior month to the current month.

Table 3. VALUE OF MANUFACTURERS' UNFILLED ORDERS FOR INDUSTRY GROUPS
 (Millions of dollars)

Industry	Seasonally adjusted						Not seasonally adjusted				Percent change Mar. 92/91	
	Monthly			Percent Change			Monthly					
	Mar. 1992 ^P	Feb. 1992 ^R	Jan. 1992	Feb.- Mar.	Jan.- Feb.	Dec.- Jan.	Mar. 1992 ^P	Feb. 1992 ^R	Jan. 1992	Mar. 1991		
All manufacturing industries	502,372	505,428	510,169	-0.6	-0.9	-0.2	505,564	506,983	509,953	529,259	-4.5	
Durable goods industries	480,620	483,804	488,320	-0.7	-0.9	-0.2	483,528	485,614	488,731	508,443	-4.9	
Stone, clay, and glass products	6,290	6,250	6,306	+0.6	-0.9	+0.4	6,290	6,238	6,133	5,418	+16.1	
Primary metals	19,863	20,269	20,204	-2.0	+0.3	-2.8	20,640	20,577	20,235	21,246	-2.9	
Blast furnaces, steel mills	6,988	7,027	7,122	-0.6	-1.3	-7.1	7,288	7,329	7,308	7,364	-1.0	
Iron and steel foundries	2,554	2,644	2,786	-3.4	-5.1	-0.8	2,597	2,642	2,781	2,963	-12.4	
Nonferrous and other primary metals	10,321	10,598	10,296	-2.6	+2.9	-0.3	10,755	10,606	10,146	10,919	-1.5	
Fabricated metal products	26,225	26,495	26,589	-1.0	-0.4	+1.1	26,349	26,542	26,633	27,432	-3.9	
Industrial machinery and equipment	52,343	52,619	52,809	-0.5	-0.4	+0.2	52,238	53,062	53,190	56,013	-6.7	
Engines and turbines	8,606	8,568	8,650	+0.4	-0.9	+0.7	8,469	8,671	8,864	7,896	+7.3	
Construction, mining and material handling equipment	6,778	6,754	6,683	+0.4	+1.1	+0.6	6,846	6,865	6,823	7,680	-10.9	
Metalworking machinery	7,465	7,459	7,408	+0.1	+0.7	+3.3	7,465	7,459	7,408	6,945	+7.5	
Computer and office equipment	9,921	10,093	10,349	-1.7	-2.5	-3.3	9,703	9,906	10,056	12,072	-19.6	
Electronic and other electrical equipment	46,748	47,196	47,540	-0.9	-0.7	+0.5	47,028	47,545	47,245	49,722	-5.4	
Electrical transmission and distribution equipment and industrial apparatus	6,400	6,515	6,645	-1.8	-2.0	+2.9	6,429	6,590	6,674	6,812	-5.6	
Electric lighting and wiring equipment	2,313	2,388	2,389	-3.1	0.0	+0.3	2,313	2,388	2,389	2,181	+6.1	
Communications equipment	19,726	19,469	19,676	+1.3	-1.1	-0.5	19,775	19,564	19,729	21,741	-9.0	
Electronic components	14,103	14,673	14,644	-3.9	+0.2	+1.4	14,216	14,769	14,367	14,505	-2.0	
Transportation equipment	266,583	268,083	271,661	-0.6	-1.3	-0.4	268,271	268,694	272,172	283,149	-5.3	
Aircraft, missiles, space vehicles, and parts	233,530	234,191	237,643	-0.3	-1.5	-0.4	235,170	234,746	238,134	247,473	-5.0	
Shipbuilding and tanks	23,767	24,450	24,948	-2.8	-2.0	-1.0	23,616	24,295	24,807	26,766	-11.8	
Instruments and related products	55,451	55,545	55,826	-0.2	-0.5	+0.3	55,619	56,042	56,349	58,862	-5.5	
Search and navigation equipment	39,734	39,533	39,628	+0.5	-0.2	+0.5	39,909	40,064	40,175	41,562	-4.0	
Measuring and controlling devices	7,855	7,934	8,078	-1.0	-1.8	+0.1	7,855	7,934	8,078	8,369	-6.1	
Medical instruments and supplies	7,188	7,414	7,427	-3.0	-0.2	+0.3	7,188	7,414	7,427	7,949	-9.6	
All other durable goods	7,117	7,347	7,385	-3.1	-0.5	-1.2	7,093	6,914	6,774	6,601	+7.5	
Nondurable goods industries	21,752	21,624	21,849	+0.6	-1.0	-0.6	22,036	21,369	21,222	20,816	+5.9	

^P Preliminary. ^R Revised.

Table 8. RATIOS OF MANUFACTURES' INVENTORIES TO SHIPMENTS AND UNFILLED ORDERS TO SHIPMENTS, BY INDUSTRY GROUP
(Based on seasonally adjusted data)

Industry	Inventory / Shipments ratio				Unfilled Orders / Shipments ratio ¹			
	Mar. 1992 ^P	Feb. 1992 ^R	Jan. 1992	Dec. 1991	Mar. 1992 ^P	Feb. 1992 ^R	Jan. 1992	Dec. 1991
All manufacturing industries	1.53	1.54	1.58	1.59	3.75	3.80	3.91	3.94
Durable goods industries	1.87	1.89	1.96	2.01	4.54	4.61	4.77	4.84
Stone, clay, and glass products	1.62	1.65	1.68	1.73	1.43	1.43	1.48	1.50
Primary metals	1.96	1.92	1.96	2.05	1.85	1.86	1.89	2.00
Fabricated metal products	1.51	1.50	1.52	1.49	1.91	1.90	1.91	1.89
Industrial machinery and equipment	2.03	2.13	2.15	2.22	2.58	2.70	2.71	2.74
Electronic and other electrical equipment	1.61	1.65	1.67	1.60	2.64	2.72	2.78	2.66
Transportation equipment	2.09	2.08	2.29	2.40	11.77	11.78	12.95	13.85
Instruments and related products	2.29	2.31	2.37	2.37	5.60	5.63	5.75	5.66
Nondurable goods industries	1.16	1.16	1.18	1.17	0.77	0.77	0.78	0.77
Food and kindred products	0.87	0.87	0.88	0.87	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Tobacco products	2.36	2.48	2.36	2.58	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Textile mill products	1.55	1.56	1.56	1.57	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
Paper and allied products	1.33	1.33	1.34	1.33	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
Chemicals and allied products	1.36	1.37	1.36	1.39	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Petroleum and coal products	0.82	0.83	0.88	0.86	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)
Rubber and plastics products	1.35	1.38	1.41	1.46	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)

^P Preliminary. ^R Revised. (X) Not applicable. (NA) Not available.

¹ Excludes the following industries with no unfilled orders : Wood and lumber products; glass containers; metal cans, barrels and drums; farm and garden machinery; motor vehicle assembly operations; other transportation equipment; foods and related products; tobacco; knitting mill products; apparel and related products; chemicals; petroleum and coal products; and rubber and plastics products.

Table 9. AVERAGE REVISIONS TO PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED MONTHLY PERCENT CHANGES
(Based on seasonally adjusted data)

Industry	Shipments			New orders			Unfilled orders			Inventories		
	Mar. 1991	Mar. 1987- 1991	Mar. 1991- Feb. 1992	Mar. 1991	Mar. 1987- 1991	Mar. 1991- Feb. 1992	Mar. 1991	Mar. 1987- 1991	Mar. 1991- Feb. 1992	Mar. 1991	Mar. 1987- 1991	Mar. 1991- Feb. 1992
All manufacturing industries	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1
Durable goods industries	0.4	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1
Stone, clay, and glass products	0.4	0.7	0.7	1.1	0.8	1.0	0.6	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.1	0.2
Primary metals	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.6	0.5	0.6	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.0	0.2	0.1
Fabricated metal products	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.5	0.4	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1
Industrial machinery and equipment	0.8	0.4	0.3	0.1	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.1
Electronic and other electrical equipment	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.4	0.8	0.0	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.1
Transportation equipment	0.5	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.3
Instruments and related products	0.0	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.7	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0
Nondurable goods industries	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1
Food and kindred products	0.2	0.1	0.2	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	0.0	0.1	0.1
Tobacco products	0.0	0.0	0.2	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	0.0	0.0	0.0
Textile mill products	0.2	0.5	0.2	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	0.1	0.2	0.2
Paper and allied products	0.1	0.4	0.2	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	0.1	0.2	0.2
Chemicals and allied products	1.0	0.5	0.3	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	0.1	0.2	0.1
Petroleum and coal products	0.1	0.4	0.2	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	0.1	0.3	0.1
Rubber and plastics products	0.4	0.5	0.4	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	0.0	0.1	0.2
Capital goods industries :												
Nondefense	0.8	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.3
Defense	0.9	0.2	0.5	1.8	1.5	1.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0

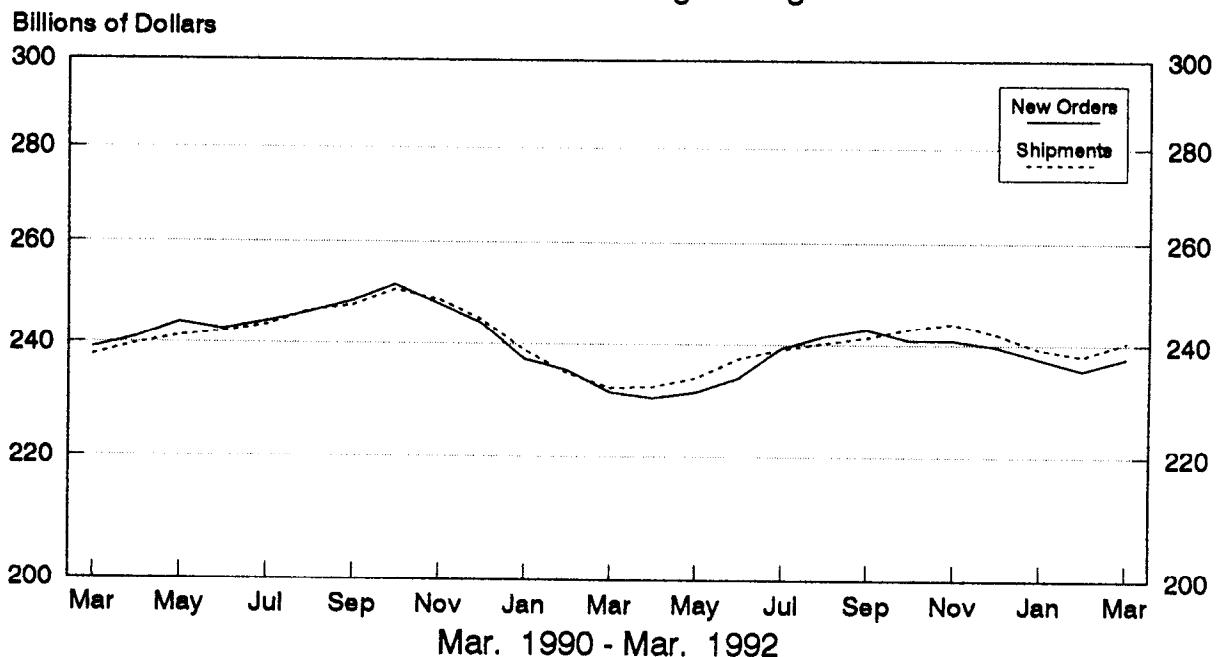
(X) Not applicable. (NA) Not available.

Note : The revisions are the differences between the month-to-month percent changes of the preliminary and final estimates. The monthly averages are the simple averages of the absolute values of the differences for the months specified. The advance to final percent change revisions for the durable goods industries are shown in the advance report for the month.

¹ Average for this month for the last five years.

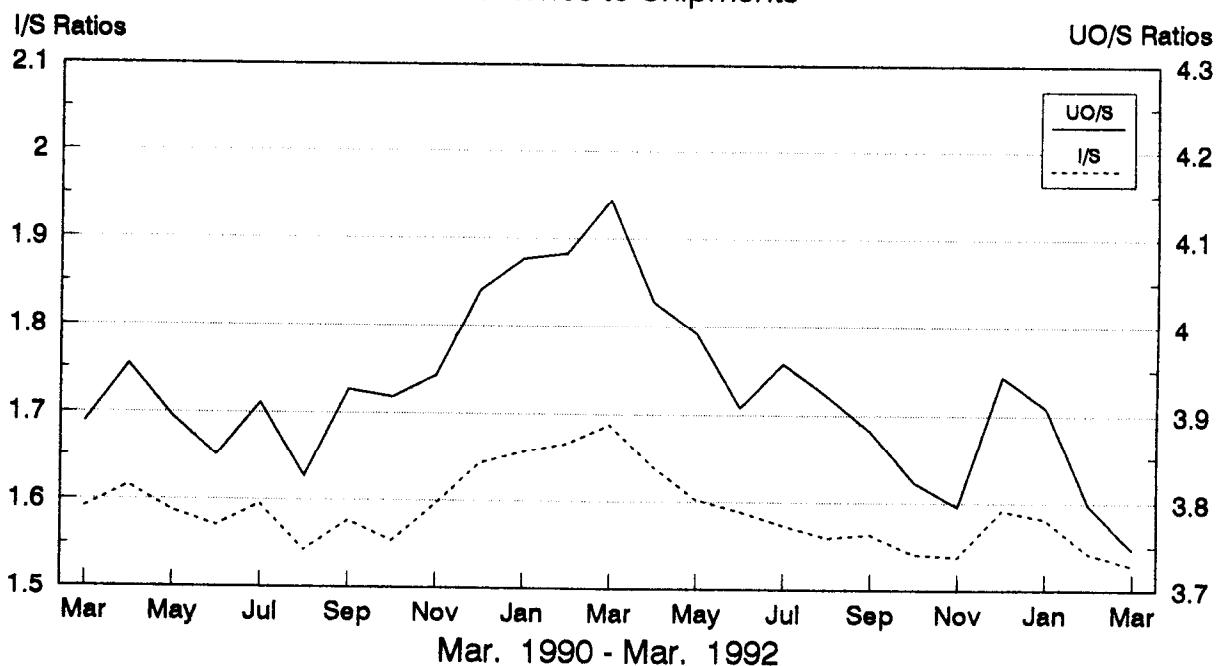
Total Manufacturing

New Orders and Shipments
Three Month Moving Averages



Total Manufacturing

Ratio of Unfilled Orders and Inventories to Shipments



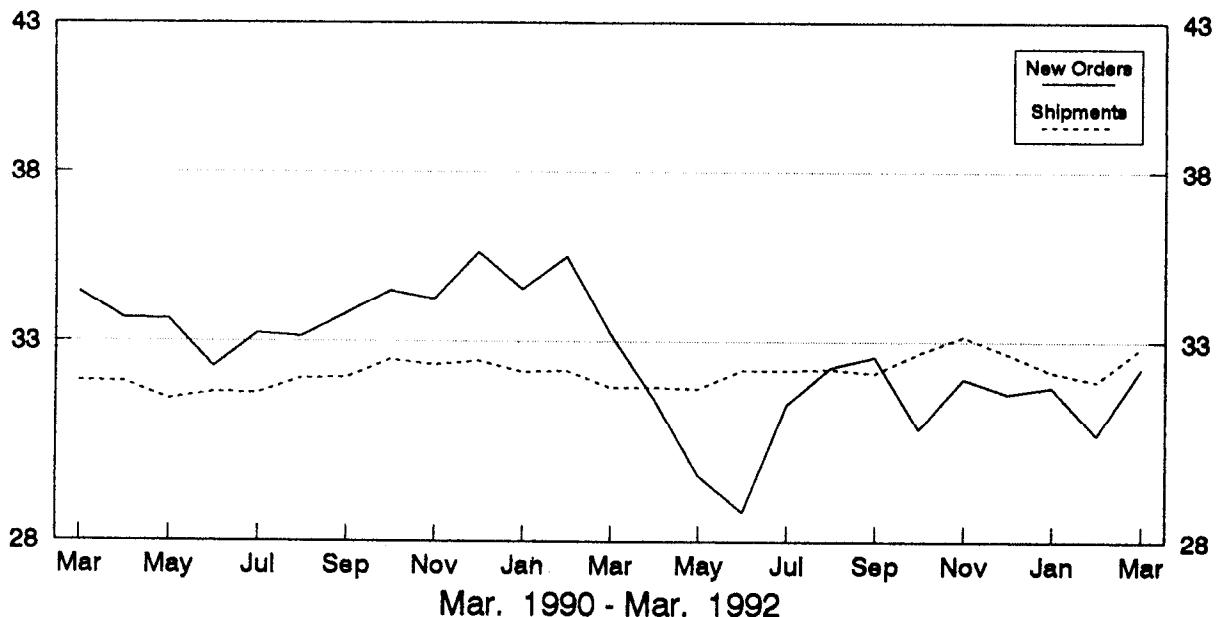
Note: All Charts based on seasonally adjusted current dollars.

NonDefense Capital Goods

New Orders and Shipments

Three Month Moving Averages

Billions of Dollars

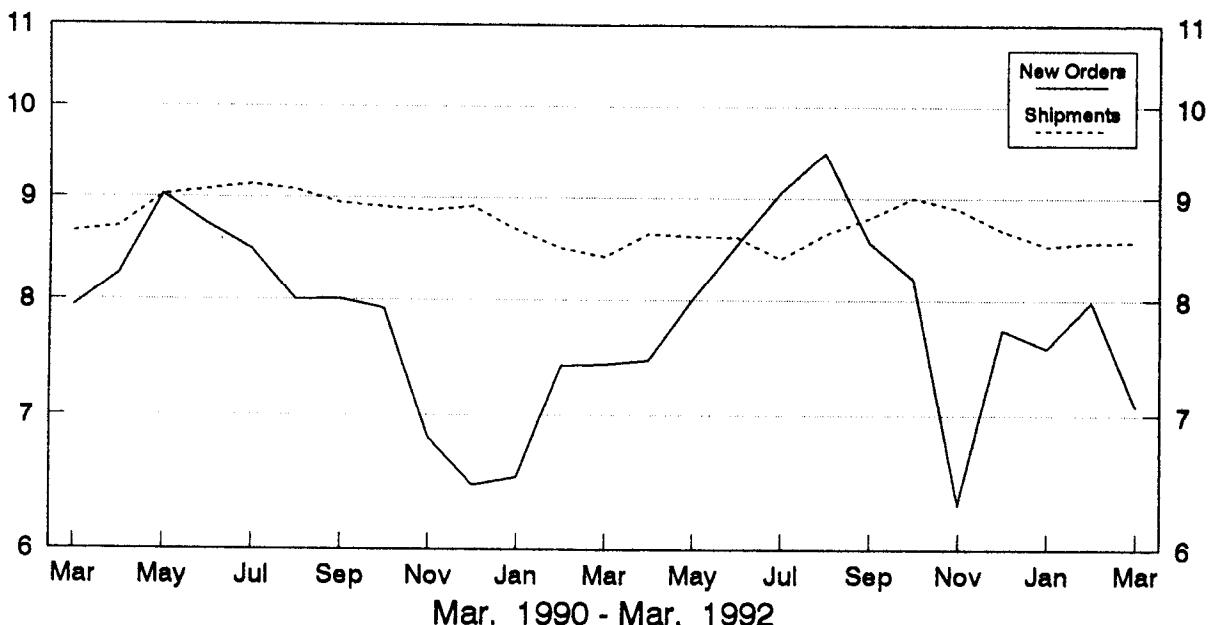


Defense Capital Goods

New Orders and Shipments

Three Month Moving Averages

Billions of Dollars



Note: All Charts based on seasonally adjusted current dollars.