

BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM

G.16

July 6, 1954

RETAIL FURNITURE REPORT FOR MAY 1954

Instalment accounts outstanding at furniture stores were practically unchanged during May after four months of decreases. Balances outstanding continued below a year ago, however, and at the end of May were 3 per cent below a year earlier. The collection ratio on instalment accounts, estimated at 12 per cent, was the same as a month ago and a year ago.

All types of sales at furniture stores increased from April to May, as is usual for this time of year. Instalment sales increased 9 per cent, cash sales 7 per cent, and charge-account sales 5 per cent. However, sales continued below a year ago. For the first five months of the year, instalment sales were 13 per cent below the corresponding period of last year, cash sales were down 9 per cent, and charge-account sales were down 6 per cent.

The retail value of furniture store inventories decreased 3 per cent during May, and at the end of the month was 9 per cent below a year earlier. At the May rate of sales, stocks on hand amounted to about a 5 month's supply.

Furniture Store Statistics for May 1954

Item	Percentage change from:		
	Month ago	Year ago	Jan.-May 1953 to Jan.-May 1954
Net sales during month			
Total	+ 8	-11	-11
Cash	+ 7	- 9	- 9
Instalment	+ 9	-13	-13
Charge account	+ 5	- 7	- 6
Accounts receivable, at end of month			
Total	+ 1	- 5	xxxx
Instalment	0	- 3	xxxx
Charge account	+ 3	- 9	xxxx
Inventories, end of month, at retail value	- 3	- 9	xxxx
	May 1954	Apr. 1954	May 1953
Collection ratios on instalment accounts $\frac{1}{2}$	12	12	12

$\frac{1}{2}$ Collections during month as percentage of accounts outstanding at beginning of month.

RETAIL FURNITURE STORES - MAY 1954
Sales by Type of Transaction
(Percentage changes)

Federal Reserve District	Total net sales		Cash sales		Instalment sales		Charge-account sales	
	Month ago	Year ago	Month ago	Year ago	Month ago	Year ago	Month ago	Year ago
Boston	+13	-13	+25	-10	+ 2	-18	+28	-11
New York	0	-15	- 3	- 8	+ 1	-17	- 1	-10
Philadelphia	+10	-12	+10	-16	+ 9	-15	+ 9	+ 3
Cleveland	+14	-12	- 3	-14	+16	-13	+20	- 3
Richmond	+17	-10	+ 1	-24	+14	-11	+23	-10
Atlanta	+18	- 9	+36	+10	+22	-11	-32	- 4
Chicago	+ 7	-12	+ 3	-11	+ 7	-11	+19	- 6
St. Louis	+ 4	- 8	+ 5	- 4	+ 7	-15	- 2	+ 4
Minneapolis	+ 6	+ 1	+13	+ 1	+10	+ 6	- 1	- 8
Kansas City	0	-11	+ 1	- 5	0	-15	+ 2	- 7
Dallas	+10	-10	+25	- 7	+16	- 5	-15	-20
San Francisco	0	-12	+ 2	-13	- 2	-14	+ 1	- 7
U. S. Total	+ 8	-11	+ 7	- 9	+ 9	-13	+ 5	- 7

Cumulative Sales by Type of Transaction, Instalment Accounts Receivable, and Inventories
(Percentage changes)

Federal Reserve District	Cumulative sales, Jan. - May, change from 1953 to 1954				Instalment Receivables, end of month		Inventories end of month, at retail value	
	Total	Cash	Instalment	Charge-account	Month ago	Year ago	Month ago	Year ago
Boston	-13	- 8	-15	-11	- 2	N.A.	- 2	- 4
New York	-17	-14	-21	+ 4	- 2	- 6	- 5	-17
Philadelphia	-12	-12	-16	+ 1	0	- 5	- 5	- 9
Cleveland	-14	- 8	-17	- 5	0	- 7	- 5	-12
Richmond	- 9	-11	- 9	- 8	0	- 5	- 3	- 9
Atlanta	- 5	- 1	- 5	- 2	0	N.A.	- 5	- 3
Chicago	-12	- 7	-14	- 9	0	- 4	- 2	- 6
St. Louis	- 8	- 6	-13	+ 1	0	0	+ 1	- 6
Minneapolis	- 2	- 2	- 1	- 9	+ 1	+ 2	- 6	-15
Kansas City	-15	- 5	-22	- 8	- 1	-19	- 3	- 9
Dallas	-13	-16	-10	-19	+ 2	+ 1	- 2	-14
San Francisco	-10	-12	-11	- 7	0	N.A.	0	-10
U. S. Total	-11	- 9	-13	- 6	0	- 3	- 3	- 9

N. A. -- Not available.