

BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM

G.16

July 10, 1951

RETAIL FURNITURE REPORT FOR MAY 1951

Furniture store sales showed an increase of 9 per cent in May, about the usual change for that time of year. Since the seasonal low of the beginning of the year, however, the overall gain in sales has been less rapid than in other postwar years. Cash sales during May were 11 per cent above the April figure, instalment sales increased 10 per cent, and charge account sales were up 4 per cent. Despite the sales gain during May, total sales during the month were 5 per cent below those of May 1950. The year-to-year decrease was due to the 12 per cent drop in instalment sales, which was more than enough to offset the gains in cash sales and charge-account sales.

Instalment accounts receivable declined 2 per cent in May, in contrast to increases for the corresponding month of previous postwar years. The decline from the level of May 31, 1950 was also 2 per cent. Collections on instalment accounts during May were the same as in April, but were 4 per cent above those of May a year ago.

The retail value of inventories at furniture stores decreased 3 per cent during May, but at the month-end was still 33 per cent above the level of a year ago. At the prevailing rate of sales, inventories on hand at the end of May were equal to somewhat less than 6 months' supply. While this was a decline from the previous month, it compares with a 4 months' supply on hand a year ago.

Furniture Store Statistics for May 1951

Item	Percentage change from:	
	Apr. 1951 to May 1951	May 1950 to May 1951
Net Sales		
Total		
Cash sales	+ 9	- 5
Credit sales: Instalment	+11	+ 3
Charge account	+10	-12
	+ 4	+ 8
Accounts receivable, at end of month		
Total	- 1	0
Instalment	- 2	- 2
Collections during month		
Total	+ 1	+11
Instalment	0	+ 4
Inventories, end of month, at retail value	- 3	+33

NOTE:--These figures are preliminary and subject to revision.

RETAIL FURNITURE STORES - MAY 1951*

Sales and Inventories

Federal Reserve District	Percentage change							
	Total net sales		Cash sales		Credit sales		Inventories end of month ^{1/}	
	Apr. '51	May '50	Apr. '51	May '50	Apr. '51	May '50	Apr. '51	May '50
	to	to	to	to	to	to	to	to
May '51	May '51	May '51	May '51	May '51	May '51	May '51	May '51	
Boston	+ 6	-14	+19	- 3	+ 4	-16	- 3	+32
New York	+ 4	- 2	+ 4	+12	+ 5	- 9	- 4	+27
Philadelphia	+14	- 6	+15	-16	+15	- 5	- 6	+31
Cleveland	+11	- 4	+18	0	+12	- 3	- 3	+34
Richmond	+10	-10	+20	-12	+ 9	- 8	- 2	+24
Atlanta	+23	-17	+38	- 1	+19	-21	- 3	+27
Chicago	+ 5	- 5	+ 5	+ 9	+ 3	-10	- 3	+29
St. Louis	+ 6	-10	+18	+ 5	+ 7	-10	- 2	+24
Minneapolis	+ 2	- 7	+ 4	+ 3	+ 1	-10	0	+36
Kansas City	+ 3	- 6	+11	- 3	+ 2	- 7	- 3	+41
Dallas	+13	- 4	- 1	- 1	+14	- 2	- 3	+51
San Francisco	+11	+ 1	+13	+ 8	+10	0	- 1	+39
U. S. Total	+ 9	- 5	+11	+ 3	+ 9	- 8	- 3	+33
Number of stores	777	777	624	624	624	624	561	561

^{1/} At retail value.

Accounts Receivable and Collections

Federal Reserve District	Percentage change							
	Accounts receivable, end of month				Collections during month			
	Total		Instalment		Total		Instalment	
	Apr. '51	May '50	Apr. '51	May '50	Apr. '51	May '50	Apr. '51	May '50
to	to	to	to	to	to	to	to	
May '51	May '51	May '51	May '51	May '51	May '51	May '51	May '51	
Boston	- 3	- 6	- 2	0	+ 6	+ 7	+10	+10
New York	- 2	+ 4	- 2	+ 2	+ 2	+ 6	0	+ 2
Philadelphia	0	+ 4	- 1	+ 3	+ 3	+ 7	0	+ 9
Cleveland	0	+ 1	0	-15	+ 1	+16	+ 1	+10
Richmond	- 1	- 3	- 3	-12	+ 4	+ 8	+ 4	+ 1
Atlanta	+ 1	-18	- 1	- 8	+ 5	- 7	0	0
Chicago	- 2	- 1	- 1	-10	+ 1	+15	+ 3	+ 8
St. Louis	- 2	- 6	- 4	-14	- 3	0	- 1	+ 3
Minneapolis	- 2	0	- 1	+ 2	- 1	+10	- 3	+15
Kansas City	- 1	+ 8	- 1	+ 4	- 1	+12	- 1	+25
Dallas	- 1	- 3	0	0	+ 2	+12	+ 1	- 6
San Francisco	- 2	+11	- 2	-12	- 1	+25	- 4	+ 5
U. S. Total	- 1	0	- 2	- 2	+ 1	+11	0	+ 4
Number of stores	710	710	262	262	710	710	262	262

* For May 1951 figures are preliminary and subject to revision.