

BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM

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DEPARTMENT STORE CREDIT

DECEMBER 1945

Instalment accounts outstanding at department stores showed more than the customary seasonal increase in December, and were four per cent higher than a year ago. Collections on instalment accounts rose slightly, resulting in a collection ratio of 36 per cent, as compared with 37 per cent last year. The average period instalment accounts were outstanding was approximately four and one-half months, about the same average as for December 1944.

Charge accounts outstanding increased by more than the usual seasonal amount, and were 13 per cent above the year-ago level. Collections on charge accounts showed a small increase during the month, and continued one-tenth larger than a year earlier. Charge accounts were outstanding approximately 49 days, about the same length of time as for December 1944.

Both cash and credit sales showed about the usual seasonal expansion from November to December. The dollar volume of cash sales, which comprised 64 per cent of the total, reached a new high, exceeding the peak level of last year by ten per cent. Instalment sales gained slightly over the year-period, while charge-account sales rose 12 per cent.

Department Store Sales, Accounts Receivable and Collections

	Percentage change from:		
	November 1945 to December 1945	December 1944 to December 1945	
Sales during month			
Cash	+31	+10	
Instalment	+ 7	+ 4	
Charge account	+24	+12	
Accounts receivable, end of month			
Instalment accounts	+16	+ 4	
Charge accounts	+27	+13	
Collections during month			
Instalment accounts	+ 3	0	
Charge accounts	+ 4	+10	
Ratio of collections during month to accounts receivable at beginning of month:			
	Dec. 1945	Nov. 1945	Dec. 1944
Instalment accounts	36	40	37
Charge accounts	61	67	62

Note: Figures for December 1945 are preliminary and subject to revision.

DEPARTMENT STORES - DECEMBER 1945

Cash and Credit Sales, by Federal Reserve Districts

Federal Reserve District	Indexes; 1941 average = 100								
	Cash sales			Installment sales			Charge-account sales		
	Dec. 1945p	Nov. 1945	Dec. 1944	Dec. 1945p	Nov. 1945	Dec. 1944	Dec. 1945p	Nov. 1945	Dec. 1944
Boston	337	215	311	106	101	95	191	146	176
New York	314	236	273	127	119	127	190	149	167
Philadelphia	370	274	313	136	111	130	207	173	135
Cleveland	343	258	314	84	88	77	215	170	185
Richmond	362	270	342	120	121	110	199	167	191
Atlanta	317	300	283	81	109	90	177	172	159
Chicago	343	227	313	102	83	99	192	157	173
St. Louis	355	285	326	133	109	132	198	169	176
Minneapolis	414	303	358	116	131	92	209	162	189
Kansas City	473	355	429	107	104	92	187	153	179
Dallas	559	425	520	116	112	116	271	211	230
San Francisco	433	r333	407	80	r76	82	223	r179	192
U. S. Total	357	272	324	108	101	104	204	165	181

Accounts Receivable and Collections, by Federal Reserve Districts

Federal Reserve District	Accounts outstanding, end of month						Collection ratios *					
	Indexes; 1941 average = 100						Installment			Charge accounts		
	Dec. 1945p	Nov. 1945	Dec. 1944	Dec. 1945p	Nov. 1945	Dec. 1944	Dec. 1945p	Nov. 1945	Dec. 1944	Dec. 1945p	Nov. 1945	Dec. 1944
Boston	51	40	48	146	110	126	26	31	32	54	58	53
New York	54	47	52	137	105	120	25	34	27	53	58	53
Philadelphia	51	40	50	151	100	141	39	42	35	58	67	58
Cleveland	49	41	44	150	118	123	33	40	35	59	66	59
Richmond	57	46	58	127	109	125	30	33	25	52	60	52
Atlanta	52	43	50	139	111	123	26	37	35	40	54	51
Chicago	37	37	36	150	119	123	45	45	52	67	73	72
St. Louis	48	39	45	144	113	127	45	49	49	67	72	69
Minneapolis	57	r54	51	134	104	123	41	r51	41	79	61	80
Kansas City	53	47	45	129	104	117	43	46	51	69	75	71
Dallas	49	45	40	150	120	127	35	35	41	64	67	67
San Francisco	39	33	40	148	r110	128	42	r40	41	59	75	69
U. S. Total	48	41	46	144	113	128	30	r40	37	61	67	62

p - Preliminary.

r - Revised.

* - Collections during month as percentage of accounts receivable at beginning of month.

Notes: These data are based on reports of about 175 large department stores reporting sales by type of transaction, more than 100 having charge accounts and about 300 having installment accounts. Back figures may be obtained on request from