

# **THE U.S. AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY: MONTHLY REPORT ON SELECTED ECONOMIC INDICATORS**

**Report to the Subcommittee on Trade  
Committee on Ways and Means,  
on Investigation No. 332-207  
Under Section 332 of the  
Tariff Act of 1930**

**USITC PUBLICATION 1961**

**APRIL 1987**



# UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION

## COMMISSIONERS

Susan Liebeler, Chairman  
Anne E. Brunsdale, Vice Chairman  
Paula Stern  
Alfred E. Eckes  
Seeley G. Lodwick  
David B. Rohr

This report was prepared principally by

Jim McElroy and Gary Cohen

Transportation Branch  
Machinery and Equipment Division

---

Office of Industries  
Erland Heginbotham, Director

---

Address all communications to  
Kenneth R. Mason, Secretary to the Commission  
United States International Trade Commission  
Washington, DC 20436

# C O N T E N T S

Page

## Tables

1. New passenger automobiles: U.S. retail sales of domestic production, production, inventory, days' supply, and employment, by specified periods, April 1985-March 1987-----	1
2. New passenger automobiles: U.S. imports for consumption, by principal sources and by specified periods, March 1985-February 1987-----	2
3. Lightweight automobile trucks and bodies and cab/chassis for lightweight automobile trucks: U.S. imports for consumption, by principal sources and by specified periods, March 1985-February 1987-----	3
4. New passenger automobiles: U.S. exports of domestic merchandise, by principal markets and by specified periods, March 1985-February 1987-----	4
5. Lightweight automobile trucks and bodies and cab/chassis for lightweight automobile trucks: U.S. exports of domestic merchandise, by principal markets and by specified periods, March 1985-February 1987-----	5
6. New passenger automobiles: Sales of domestic and imported passenger automobiles and sales of imported passenger automobiles as a percent of total U.S. sales, by specified periods, 1986 and 1987-----	6
7. New passenger automobiles: Price indexes, by specified periods, 1986 and 1987-----	6
8. New passenger automobiles: Retail price changes in the U.S. market during March 1987-----	7
9. Manufacturers' suggested retail prices of selected U.S. and Japanese automobiles, April 1981-April 1987-----	8



Table 1.—New passenger automobiles: U.S. retail sales of domestic production, production, inventory, days' supply, and employment, by specified periods, April 1985–March 1987

Item	(In thousands of units; thousands of employees)				
	1986–87			1985–1986	
	Feb. 1987	Mar. 1987	Apr. 1986– Mar. 1987	Mar. 1986	Apr. 1985– Mar. 1986
<b>Retail sales of domestic production:</b>					
Subcompact.....	105	138	1,603	123	2,158
Compact.....	160	167	1,812	136	1,445
Intermediate.....	179	237	2,756	233	2,659
Standard.....	70	89	1,130	84	883
Luxury.....	44	51	675	74	989
Total.....	557	682	7,976	650	8,134
<b>Production:</b>					
Subcompact.....	138	124	1,588	140	1,590
Compact.....	156	183	1,908	193	2,024
Intermediate.....	260	273	2,791	227	2,941
Standard.....	78	91	798	40	622
Luxury.....	65	73	752	67	834
Total.....	696	743	7,835	667	8,011
<b>Inventory:</b>					
Subcompact.....	346	371	1/	317	1/
Compact.....	397	394	1/	414	1/
Intermediate.....	611	697	1/	695	1/
Standard.....	211	231	1/	248	1/
Luxury.....	168	178	1/	193	1/
Total.....	1,734	1,870	1/	1,867	1/
<b>Days' supply: 2/</b>					
Subcompact.....	117	86	1/	65	1/
Compact.....	103	65	1/	72	1/
Intermediate.....	105	89	1/	72	1/
Standard.....	98	78	1/	100	1/
Luxury.....	102	99	1/	68	1/
Average.....	105	81	1/	73	1/
<b>Employment: 3/</b>					
Total employees.....	4/ 822	5/ 833	1/	6/ 859	1/
Production workers...	4/ 635	5/ 645	1/	6/ 663	1/

1/ Not applicable.

2/ Days' supply is an average for each class size which is determined by the previous month's retail sales.

3/ Employment data are for SIC 371 (motor vehicles and motor vehicle equipment).

4/ Data are for January 1987, revised.

5/ Data are for February 1987.

6/ Data are for February 1986.

Source: Retail sales and production, Data Resources, Inc. Auto Information Bank; days' supply and inventory, Automotive News; and employment, U.S. Department of Labor.

Note.—Because of rounding, figures may not add to the totals shown.

Table 2.—New passenger automobiles: U.S. imports for consumption, by principal sources and by specified periods, March 1985–February 1987 <sup>1/</sup>

Source	1986–87			1985–86	
	Jan. 1987	Feb. 1987	Mar. 1986– Feb. 1987	Feb. 1986	Mar. 1985– Feb. 1986
	Quantity (units)				
Japan.....	197,238	188,261	2,583,607	182,827	2,573,437
Canada.....	53,765	97,687	1,128,505	95,422	1,160,704
West Germany.....	26,160	35,217	429,073	41,600	465,121
Korea.....	20,825	19,548	203,748	5,934	5,934
Sweden.....	11,740	16,033	147,076	16,148	141,664
Mexico.....	4,635	457	36,402	4,303	24,154
Yugoslavia.....	3,623	4,208	42,562	1,474	11,355
United Kingdom...	2,730	5,364	31,279	1,822	26,190
Italy.....	633	8,916	19,553	601	9,110
France.....	946	2,693	12,751	650	18,297
All other.....	557	887	12,210	695	9,023
Total.....	322,852	379,271	4,646,766	351,476	4,444,989
	Value (1,000 dollars)				
Japan.....	1,710,337	1,593,277	21,372,186	1,318,022	16,875,408
Canada.....	583,897	1,065,768	11,643,608	941,367	11,377,569
West Germany.....	571,838	753,168	8,132,701	631,454	6,410,780
Korea.....	103,066	98,210	963,285	25,996	25,996
Sweden.....	151,756	212,099	1,839,843	194,254	1,655,469
Mexico.....	46,021	8,618	371,385	44,904	193,670
Yugoslavia.....	8,925	87,398	183,692	2,784	27,487
United Kingdom...	70,400	48,979	730,668	46,535	638,899
Italy.....	9,423	88,135	237,649	12,482	134,233
France.....	10,484	6,855	121,713	7,059	182,148
All other.....	7,894	13,569	170,335	9,223	114,027
Total.....	3,274,041	3,976,076	45,767,065	3,234,080	37,635,686

<sup>1/</sup> Data include imports into Puerto Rico and TSUSA item 692.1005; data do not include automobiles assembled in U.S. foreign trade zones.

Source: Compiled from official statistics of the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Note.—Because of rounding, figures may not add to the totals shown.

Table 3.—Lightweight automobile trucks 1/ and bodies and cab/chassis for lightweight automobile trucks: U.S. imports for consumption, by principal sources and by specified periods, March 1985–February 1987 2/

Source	1986–87			1985–86	
	Jan. 1987	Feb. 1987	Mar. 1986– Feb. 1987	Feb. 1986	Mar. 1985– Feb. 1986
	Quantity (units) <u>3/</u>				
Japan.....	79,039	78,020	967,145	68,289	843,475
Canada.....	13,690	19,030	243,917	27,712	324,761
Mexico.....	1,320	1,485	17,876	885	26,754
All other.....	1	74	1,031	1	2,059
Total.....	94,050	98,609	1,229,969	96,887	1,197,049
	Value (1,000 dollars)				
Japan.....	431,177	421,768	4,975,748	321,646	3,686,817
Canada.....	148,280	168,351	2,244,504	252,438	2,643,389
Mexico.....	10,086	11,343	135,107	6,528	191,288
All other.....	1,666	1,846	59,565	5,390	53,593
Total.....	591,209	603,308	7,414,924	586,002	6,575,087

1/ Defined as not over 10,000 pounds gvw.

2/ Partially estimated, all data include imports into Puerto Rico.

3/ Quantity data include complete trucks and cab/chassis, but exclude bodies.

Source: Compiled from official statistics of the U.S. Department of Commerce, except as noted.

Note.—Because of rounding, figures may not add to the totals shown.

Table 4.—New passenger automobiles: U.S. exports of domestic merchandise, by principal markets and by specified periods, March 1985–February 1987

Market	1986–87			1985–86	
	Jan. 1987	Feb. 1987	Mar. 1986– Feb. 1987	Feb. 1986	Mar. 1985– Feb. 1986
	Quantity (units)				
Canada.....	28,109	55,365	604,982	61,882	687,262
Japan.....	203	280	2,864	181	1,123
All other.....	5,675	4,588	37,048	1,521	21,553
Total.....	33,987	60,233	644,814	63,584	709,938
	Value (1,000 dollars)				
Canada.....	280,303	521,754	5,552,822	560,295	5,899,118
Japan.....	2,895	4,056	44,502	3,295	18,164
All other.....	77,344	61,741	500,628	18,561	259,214
Total.....	360,542	587,551	6,097,952	582,151	6,176,496

Source: Compiled from official statistics of the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Note.—Because of rounding, figures may not add to the totals shown.



Table 5.—Lightweight automobile trucks 1/ and bodies and cab/chassis for lightweight automobile trucks: U.S. exports of domestic merchandise, by principal markets and by specified periods, March 1985–February 1987 2/

Market	1986–87			1985–86	
	Jan. 1987	Feb. 1987	Mar. 1986–Feb. 1987	Feb. 1986	Mar. 1985–Feb. 1986
	Quantity (units) <u>3/</u>				
Canada.....	13,345	11,612	167,213	11,877	142,523
All other.....	1,393	799	10,733	378	9,502
Total.....	14,738	12,411	177,946	12,255	152,025
	Value (1,000 dollars)				
Canada.....	132,251	104,001	1,516,641	108,600	1,218,242
All other.....	19,923	7,683	122,289	3,365	99,213
Total.....	152,174	111,684	1,638,930	111,965	1,317,455

1/ Defined as not over 10,000 pounds gvw.

2/ Partially estimated.

3/ Quantity data include complete trucks and cab/chassis, but exclude bodies.

Source: Compiled from official statistics of the U.S. Department of Commerce, except as noted.

Note.—Because of rounding, figures may not add to the totals shown.

Table 6.—New passenger automobiles: Sales of domestic and imported passenger automobiles and sales of imported passenger automobiles as a percent of total U.S. sales, by specified periods, 1986 and 1987

Period	Sales of— Domestic automobiles 1/		Imported automobiles 2/		Total U.S. sales		Ratio of im- port sales to total sales	
	1987	1986	1987	1986	1987	1986	1987	1986
	—Percent—							
January..	427,678	635,904	197,941	237,281	625,619	873,185	31.6	27.2
February.	556,953	613,371	220,162	218,096	777,115	832,467	28.3	26.3
Jan.—Feb.	984,631	1,249,275	418,103	456,377	1,402,734	1,705,652	29.8	26.8
March....	682,117	649,351	247,966	247,487	930,083	896,838	26.7	27.6
Jan—Mar..	1,666,748	1,898,626	666,069	703,864	2,332,817	2,602,490	28.6	27.0

1/ Domestic automobile sales include U.S. and Canadian-built automobiles sold in the United States.

2/ Does not include automobiles imported from Canada.

Source: Automotive News.

Table 7.—New passenger automobiles: Price indexes, by specified periods, 1986 and 1987

Item	(1967 = 100)					
	1986-87			1986 and 1987		
	Jan. 1987	Feb. 1987	Percent change	Feb. 1986	Feb. 1987	Percent change
Consumer Price Index:						
Unadjusted....	233.0	230.2	-1.2	220.4	230.2	+4.4
Seasonally adjusted....	231.8	229.3	-1.1	219.5	229.3	+4.5
Producer Price Index:						
Unadjusted....	247.0	238.1	-3.6	229.6	238.1	+3.7
Seasonally adjusted....	245.3	236.9	-3.4	228.7	236.9	+3.6

Source: U.S. Department of Labor.

Table 8.—New passenger automobiles: Retail price changes in the U.S. market during March 1987

Source and size of category	Retail price changes, in dollars, March 1987 (+ or -)
U.S. producers:	
General Motors.....	No change.
Ford.....	No change.
Chrysler.....	+500
European Community producers:	
Subcompact.....	No change.
Compact.....	No change.
Luxury.....	+915 to +5,000
Japanese producers:	
Subcompact.....	No change.
Compact.....	+200
Luxury.....	+500
Korean producers:	
Subcompact.....	No change

Source: Automotive News, March 1987.

Table 9.—Manufacturers' suggested retail prices of selected U.S. and Japanese automobiles, April 1981–April 1987 1/

Company, model, and options 2/	April 1, 1981		April 1, 1987		Percent change in optionally equipped model	
	Base model 3/	Optionally equipped model 3/	Base model 3/	Optionally equipped model 3/	Jan. 1987–Apr. 1987	April 1981–Apr. 1987
<b>General Motors:</b>						
Chevette CS, 2 door HB (PB, RMD, TG).....	\$5,155	\$5,405	\$4,995	\$5,350	0.0	-1.0
Cimarron, 4 door (AT).....	4/ 12,131	4/ 12,501	15,032	15,447	0.0	+23.6
<b>Ford:</b>						
Escort GL 2 door HB (PB, RMD, TG).....	5,556	5,857	6,949	7,199	0.0	+22.9
Tempo GL 4 door (RMD, AT, TG) 5/.....	6,421	6,953	9,310	9,057	0.0	+30.3
LTD Crown Victoria, 4 door (RMD, TG, ILG, AC).....	8,519	10,102	15,410	15,555	0.0	+54.0
<b>Chrysler:</b>						
Plymouth Turismo, 2 door HB (RMD).....	5,938	6,188	7,199	7,199	0.0	+16.3
Reliant, 4 door (RMD, TG, R, AT).....	5,980	6,680	8,364	9,161	0.0	+37.1
Dodge 600, 4 door (RMD, AC) 6/.....	6,672	7,502	10,672	11,646	0.0	+55.2
<b>Toyota:</b>						
Corolla, Deluxe, 4 door (R).....	5,688	5,793	8,378	8,378	-0.9	+44.6
Cressida, 4 door.....	11,599	11,599	19,380	19,850	+2.6	+71.1
<b>Nissan (Datsun):</b>						
Sentra E, 2 door 7/.....	5,369	5,369	7,499	7,499	0.0	+39.7
Stanza GXE, 4 door (AT) 7/.....	6,839	7,749	11,849	12,549	0.0	+61.9
Maxima GXE, 4 door.....	10,379	10,379	16,099	16,099	0.0	+55.1
<b>Honda:</b>						
Civic 1300, 2 door HB (R).....	4,599	4,694	5,799	5,966	0.0	+27.1
Accord DX, 4 door (R, AT).....	7,645	7,950	10,625	11,283	0.0	+41.9
<b>Mazda:</b>						
323 Deluxe, 2 door HB (R) 8/.....	5,495	5,650	7,649	8,029	0.0	+42.1

1/ Suggested retail prices do not include any dealer incentives, below-market financing or rebates offered by manufacturers or importers.

2/ The following codes apply: PB = power brakes; RMD = rear window defroster; TG = tinted glass; HB = hatchback; AT = automatic transmission; AC = air conditioning; R = radio; ILG = interior luxury group.

3/ Base models are 2 door or 2 door hatchback and 4 door or 4 door hatchback models. Optionally equipped models are base models which have been equipped with the options listed in parenthesis.

4/ Cimarron not sold until May 21, 1981.

5/ Tempo replaced the Fairmont Futura.

6/ Dodge 600 replaced the Diplomat.

7/ Sentra replaced the 210; Stanza replaced the 510. (Both are 1987 models.)

8/ 323 replaced the GLC.

Source: Compiled from data supplied by U.S. manufacturers, Japanese importers, and Automotive News.

Note: Some 1981-86 models have been discontinued; these models have been replaced by comparable models where possible. In addition, some equipment that was optional on prior models is now included in the base price or equipment that was standard has been deleted, making price comparisons of prior-year models difficult.