

**Money BEST PLACES TO LIVE** 2006

- Winners
- High incomes
- Hottest
- Top 100
- Coldest
- Most singles
- Cities
- Pricey homes
- Youngest
- States
- Educated
- Skinniest
- FAQ
- Job growth
- Clean air

**FINALIST**

**Columbia, MO**

Top 100 rank: 76  
Population: 91,800

[Compare Columbia to Top 10 Best Places](#)

[PREVIOUS](#) [FULL LIST](#) [NEXT](#)

**Financial**

|   | City stats | Best places average |
|---|------------|---------------------|
| Median family income (per year)                           | \$55,834   | \$76,893            |
| Family purchasing power (annual, cost-of-living adjusted) | \$62,038   | \$68,109            |
| Sales tax   | 7.35%      | 6.55%               |
| State income tax rate (highest bracket)                   | 6.00%      | 6.46%               |
| State income tax rate (lowest bracket)                    | 1.50%      | 2.74%               |
| Auto insurance premiums (Average for the state)           | \$2,001    | \$2,207             |
| Job growth % (2000-2005)                                  | 8.02%      | 10.97%              |

**Housing**

|                             | City stats | Best places average |
|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------|
| Median home price           | \$167,580  | \$259,566           |
| Home price gain (2004-2005) | 7.60%      | 9.26%               |

**Education**

|   | City stats | Best places average |
|---|------------|---------------------|
| Colleges, universities and professional schools | 3          | 8                   |
| Junior colleges and technical institutes        | 0          | 0                   |
| Test scores reading (% +/- state average)       | 21.2%      | 13.3%               |
| Test scores math (% +/- state average)          | 12.7%      | 16.9%               |
| % students attending public/private schools     | 91.4/8.60  | 88.4/11.59          |

**Quality of life**

|   | City stats | Best places average |
|---|------------|---------------------|
| Air quality index (% of days AQI ranked as good)            | 72.3%      | 71.9%               |
| Personal crime risk (100 is nat'l average; lower is better) | 80         | 45                  |
| Property crime risk (100 is nat'l average; lower is better) | 121        | 74                  |
| Personal crime incidents (per 100,000)                      | 480        | 228                 |
| Property crime incidents (per 100,000)                      | 3,378      | 3,105               |
| Median commute time (in minutes)                            | 13.0       | 20.8                |
| % population with commute 45 mins. or longer                | 4.5%       | 13.4%               |

**Leisure and culture**

|                                  | City stats | Best places average |
|----------------------------------|------------|---------------------|
| Movie theaters (within 15 miles) | 6          | 22                  |
| Restaurants (within 15 miles)    | 362        | 2,268               |



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Data: OnBoard, FORTUNE. Details  
Click map to enlarge  
Show: Top companies | Colleges | Hospitals | Museums | Wineries | Gardens | Ski resorts | Zoos/aquariums (Map sources)

**Nearby places**

| See city stats    | Compare                  |
|-------------------|--------------------------|
| O'Fallon, MO      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| St. Peters, MO    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| St. Charles, MO   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Florissant, MO    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Lee's Summit, MO  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Independence, MO  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| St. Louis, MO     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Kansas City, MO   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Overland Park, KS | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Kansas City, KS   | <input type="checkbox"/> |

[COMPARE](#)

**What the bloggers say**

- I lived in some of those places in the top 20 and am surprised to see them ...
- I live in Kansas City, and Overland Park in a suburb of Kansas City. I do ...
- can anyone tell me more about albuquerque,nm.i heard tis agreat place.i liv...

[Have your say](#)

**Missouri companies**

**FORTUNE: Best to work for**

| Company                      | Best Companies Rank |
|------------------------------|---------------------|
| Edward Jones                 | 16                  |
| American Century Investments | 22                  |
| A.G. Edwards                 | 70                  |

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**FORTUNE 500**

| Company          | F500 rank |
|------------------|-----------|
| Emerson Electric | 126       |
| Express Scripts  | 134       |
| Anheuser-Busch   | 146       |

[See the rest](#)

**Biggest employers**

| Company              | Employees |
|----------------------|-----------|
| Ozark Purchasing Llc | 15,000    |
| Hammons, John Q.     | 10,500    |

**Find your best place**

| Criteria                     | Not important                    | Very important        |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Affordable housing           | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Plentiful leisure activities | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Plentiful cultural options   | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Job growth                   | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Sunny weather                | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Short commute time           | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Good health care access      | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

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**Top earning cities**

|               | Median household income |
|---------------|-------------------------|
| Greenwich, CT | \$112,493               |
| Cupertino, CA | \$110,518               |
| San Ramon, CA | \$109,500               |

|   |    |     |
|---|----|-----|
| Bars (within 15 miles)                      | 28 | 127 |
| Public golf courses (within 30 miles)       | 16 | 74  |
| Libraries (within 15 miles)                 | 8  | 43  |
| Museums (accredited by AAM within 30 miles) | 1  | 7   |
| Ski resorts (within 100 miles)              | 1  | 10  |

**Weather**

|                               | City stats | Best places average |
|-------------------------------|------------|---------------------|
| Annual precipitation (inches) | 40.28      | 36.00               |
| Clear days                    | 120        | 107                 |
| High temp in July ° F         | 88.6°      | 87.7°               |
| Low temp in Jan ° F           | 18.2°      | 23.5°               |


**Health\***

|  | City stats | Best places average |
|--|------------|---------------------|
| Has health plan (% of residents)             | 89.1%      | 88.2%               |
| Body mass index (avg. for residents)         | 27         | 27                  |
| Cancer mortality (per 100,000, age-adjusted) | 226.6      | 191.3               |
| Cardiac mortality (per 100,000)              | 142.8      | 202.0               |

**Meet the neighbors**

|   | City stats | Best places average |
|---|------------|---------------------|
| Median age  | 28.5       | 34.5                |
| Completed at least some college (% of residents)                          | 77.0%      | 63.9%               |
| Married   | 37.3%      | 54.3%               |
| Divorced  | 9.6%       | 9.3%                |
| Amount spent on vacations (domestic and foreign, household avg. per year) | \$6,569    | \$7,549             |

|                                |       |
|--------------------------------|-------|
| Hotels, Incor                  |       |
| Union Electric Development Cor | 3,200 |

 Feedback on the Best Places to Live list? [E-mail the editors](#)

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Additional data and consulting services provided by Bert Sperling's [bestplaces.net](http://bestplaces.net).

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**Hottest cities**

|              | Avg. high temp in July (°F) |
|--------------|-----------------------------|
| Avondale, AZ | 107.6°F                     |
| Glendale, AZ | 107.6°F                     |
| Peoria, AZ   | 107.6°F                     |

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**Priciest homes**

|                   | Median price |
|-------------------|--------------|
| Newport Beach, CA | \$1,362,500  |
| Greenwich, CT     | \$1,129,000  |
| Santa Barbara, CA | \$979,500    |

[See the rest](#)

**Most educated**

|               | % residents with graduate degrees |
|---------------|-----------------------------------|
| Arlington, VA | 35.7%                             |
| Davis, CA     | 34.6%                             |
| Brookline, MA | 32.5%                             |

[See the rest](#)

**Most singles**

|                     | % single residents |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| Bloomington, IN     | 58.2%              |
| New Brunswick, NJ   | 54.6%              |
| College Station, TX | 54.3%              |

[See the rest](#)

**Youngest**

|                   | Median age |
|-------------------|------------|
| Jacksonville, NC  | 22.90      |
| Provo, UT         | 23.28      |
| New Brunswick, NJ | 24.16      |

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