

# Phoenix is No. 1 in U.S. for Population Growth by Numbers

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Within the United States, both natural population growth and the number of people moving are on the decline in recent years, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. But that doesn't mean all the country's towns and cities are experiencing population slowdowns. The city with the largest absolute population growth between 2010 and 2020 is Phoenix.

A variety of factors lead to population growth in cities and towns across the U.S. In places where the number of residents is growing, birth rates may be higher, death rates may be down, or people may be arriving for better job opportunities or a lower cost of living — or a combination of natural growth and migration may be occurring.

The ConsumerAffairs Research Team recently analyzed census data from 2010 to 2020, the latest official statistics available, to identify the fastest-growing cities both by percentage increase in population and absolute numbers. There were several main takeaways:

- The city with the largest absolute increase in population between 2010 and 2020 is Phoenix, which grew by over 262,000 people. Phoenix is currently the fifth-largest city by population in the U.S.

- Among cities with a population of at least 100,000 in 2020, Frisco, Texas, had by far the most explosive growth, with a 79.5% total increase since 2010 — 18% higher than the next fastest-growing city.
- Texas is home to 9 of the 15 fastest-growing cities in the U.S. by percentage population growth between 2010 and 2020. Seven are suburbs of Dallas, Houston or Austin.
- All 15 of the fastest-growing cities in the U.S. by percentage population increase are in the Southern or Western U.S.
- Five of the 10 fastest-growing cities in the U.S. by raw population are in Texas: In order from highest to lowest population increases, they are San Antonio, Houston, Austin, Fort Worth and Dallas.

## **Population growth by the numbers**

The cities that attracted the highest numbers of new residents from 2010 to 2020 include well-known metropolitan areas. Here's a look at the top 15 fastest-growing cities by population number.

### **#1 Phoenix, Arizona**

#### **Current population: 1,708,127 — 262,495 more people than in 2010**

Arizona, home to the Grand Canyon, is known for its natural beauty, but the state's scenic vistas expand beyond the national park. Phoenix residents are just a short drive from Echo Canyon Trail, Lookout Mountain Preserve and Quartz Ridge Trail. Downtown Phoenix has also attracted many businesses in recent years. In a survey on why new residents moved to Phoenix, 30% of respondents cited job opportunities, 20% cited affordability, and 12% cited lifestyle. Its unemployment rate is close to the national average, at 6.2% in May 2021. As Phoenix's popularity grows, so does its cost of living; the median home price is \$395,000.

### **#2 San Antonio, Texas**

#### **Current population: 1,567,118 — 239,711 more people than in 2010**

San Antonio is perhaps best known for being the home to the Alamo, but an increasing number of people are finding its affordability and trendy neighborhoods, like the Pearl District and King William Historic District, to be the real attractions. Families also enjoy the zoo, the River Walk and Six Flags Fiesta Texas. The median home price in San Antonio is \$268,000, and the unemployment rate is about 5.3%.

### **#3 Houston, Texas**

#### **Current population: 2,316,120 — 216,669 more people than in 2010**

Beyoncé, Kenny Rogers and Shelley Duvall once called Houston home; over the last decade, so have many more. Since 2010, Houston and the surrounding region have experienced 19% job growth. The unemployment rate as of May 2021 was about 6.6%. Warm weather, family-friendly attractions and sprawling neighborhoods have helped boost the population too. The median home price in Houston is \$340,000.

### **#4 Austin, Texas**

#### **Current population: 995,484 — 205,094 more people than in 2010**

Austin has gained a reputation for its popularity among California expats. It has similarly sunny weather and trendy food and shopping scenes, and it has become a second home for tech giants like Facebook, Apple and Amazon. Austin also boasts unique attractions like spring-fed pools and the kitschy Cathedral of Junk. People are definitely catching on to Austin's quirks, making it one of the pricier places to live in Texas. The median home price is \$575,000.

## **#5 Fort Worth, Texas**

**Current population: 927,720 — 186,514 more people than in 2010**

There was a time when St. Louis was considered the entrance to the Western U.S., but Fort Worth considers itself "Where the West Begins." Its attractions include the National Cowgirl Museum and multiple local rodeos. Fort Worth's schools have been ranked among the best in Texas, and the city is home to major companies like American Airlines. Homes have remained relatively affordable, with a median price of \$300,000. The unemployment rate is around 5.3%.

## **#6 Los Angeles, California**

**Current population: 3,970,219 — 177,598 more people than in 2010**

Los Angeles has long been known for its cross-country allure. Though a fair share of new residents may be on the hunt for fame, Los Angeles is also experiencing steady growth due to the laid-back Southern California lifestyle, tech job opportunities and cultural attractions. For homebuyers, Los Angeles isn't an easy market, with a median home price of \$969,000. The city also has a higher unemployment rate, at around 10%.

## **#7 Charlotte, North Carolina**

**Current population: 900,350 — 168,926 more people than in 2010**

Named after Queen Charlotte, the wife of King George III, Charlotte, North Carolina, is currently experiencing some growth in corporate job opportunities. The city is close to the Appalachian Mountains, making it ideal for people looking to balance city and outdoor life. It's also become known for its food scene, making dining out its own attraction. The median home price is \$360,000, and the unemployment rate was 4.3% as of May 2021.

## **#8 Seattle, Washington**

**Current population: 769,714 — 161,054 more people than in 2010**

Amazon is Seattle's biggest employer, and its sprawling Washington campus has been one of the biggest contributors to the city's population growth. But beyond the tech industry, residents appreciate the mild weather, the scenic Pacific Northwest and the relaxing cafe culture. For people who aren't big coffee drinkers, craft breweries are also big in the city. Funky housing options are also available, from houseboats to co-living spaces. The median home price is \$769,000, and the unemployment rate in King County was under 5% as of May 2021.

## **#9 Dallas, Texas**

**Current population: 1,343,266 — 145,450 more people than in 2010**

Dallas has a big selection of jobs in diverse industries. Trade, transportation and professional services are some of the biggest industries in Dallas, and its unemployment rate is near 5.3%. Dallas has cultural attractions including art museums and galleries, an opera house and a botanical garden. Sports fans can also catch Dallas Cowboys, Dallas Mavericks and Texas Rangers games. The city's median home price is \$450,000.

## **#10 Denver, Colorado**

**Current population: 735,538 — 135,380 more people than in 2010**

Denver is known for its outdoor beauty and cultural sights. Larimer Square is a colorful street full of restaurants and shopping, and Red Rocks Park and Amphitheatre hosts unforgettable outdoor concerts. Denver's location means road trips to national parks throughout the Western U.S. are always on the table. The city and its surroundings are also home to nearly 150 breweries. The median listing price of a Denver home is \$535,000, and the unemployment rate is right around the national average.

## **#11 Columbus, Ohio**

**Current population: 903,852 — 116,819 more people than in 2010**

Columbus is the most affordable city on this list for owning a home, with a median listing price of \$229,000. And it doesn't sacrifice on attractions — it boasts entertaining nightlife, in large part thanks to Ohio State University. Families also love the city for its zoo and the Legoland Discovery Center. Columbus's unique neighborhoods, including German Village, leave countless streets to explore. Health care is a major industry in Columbus, which has several large medical facilities. The unemployment rate is lower than the national level, at 4.9% as of May 2021.

## **#12 San Diego, California**

**Current population: 1,422,420 — 115,018 more people than in 2010**

Southern California is one of the biggest surfing destinations, and San Diego, with Mission Beach Boardwalk and Pacific Beach, is a major surfing city. Beaches are for more than just surfing, though, and the relaxed oceanside lifestyle San Diego is known for is a draw for new residents. Manufacturing and military/defense are some of the biggest industries in the city. The median home price is \$790,000, and the unemployment rate was just above the national average as of May 2021, at 6.4%.

## **#13 Washington, D.C.**

**Current population: 712,816 — 111,093 more people than in 2010**

Washington, D.C., seems to be known mostly for just politics and government. But beyond the White House and Capitol Hill are charming neighborhoods, world-class museums and riverfront parks. Cyclists also love its 60-plus miles of trails to explore. The skyline is unique, with no building taller than the Washington Monument. While nearby suburbs are more affordable, homes in D.C. are pricey, with a median listing price of \$610,000. The unemployment rate as of June 2021 was 7%.

## **#14 Jacksonville, Florida**

**Current population: 920,570 — 98,786 more people than in 2010**

Jacksonville has the largest city park system in the nation, sprawling over 80,000 acres. Those public parks include miles of shoreline. Beyond the beach, Jacksonville's First Wednesday Art Walk is an opportunity to explore the local art scene and enjoy bites from food trucks. The MOSH, or Museum of Science and History, is fun for kids and adults alike. The median home price in Jacksonville is \$250,000, and the unemployment rate was 4.2% as of May 2021.

## **#15 Frisco, Texas**

**Current population: 209,980 — 92,991 more people than in 2010**

Frisco is the only city to make our lists for both population growth by percent and by numbers. The many amenities and its close proximity to Dallas make it popular for commuters and those who want to be part of a smaller community while still being able to access everything a larger city has to offer.