

Living in Minneapolis: Pros and Cons

When trying to decide if a new city is a good place to live, there are many factors you should consider including crime rate, education standards, the cost of living, and the rate of employment, and fortunately, Minneapolis ranks pretty high on most of these considerations.

In fact, Minneapolis has received a number of accolades from major publications across America; in 2017, [Wallet Hub](#) ranked Minneapolis the 10th-best city for active lifestyles, [Culpwrit](#) ranked it the second-best big city to start a career, and [Zumper](#) rated it number one in renter satisfaction.

Minneapolis is also a major tourist destination and ranks high on a number of travel websites' top lists of cities to visit in the United States, and there are plenty of things to do year-round in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis-Saint Paul. While most people move to the city for work, it's also a great destination for some outdoor fun and indoor events.

Employment Rates and the Commute

The Twin Cities metro area, including Minneapolis, has historically experienced lower unemployment rates than the average for the United States. The economy of the Twin Cities is healthy and diverse—no particular industry dominates.

There are several large companies headquartered or with a substantial presence in Minneapolis and a variety of small businesses, too, making employment opportunities plentiful—for the most part. As of December 2017, the unemployment rate in Minneapolis was at just 3%, which is slightly lower than the national rate of 4.1%.

Major employers and industries in Minneapolis and the Twin Cities include those in finance, healthcare, technology, transportation, food, retail, government, and educational institutions. [Data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics](#), there are over two million people employed in the Twin Cities, with manufacturing, professional and business services, government, and trade, transportation, and utility jobs accounting for over half of the workforce.

If you're [moving to Minneapolis](#) and are worried about the [commute time](#), other than during rush hours that occur at 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. and 4 to 5:30 p.m., it usually takes under 20 minutes to get from one part of the city to another.

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Housing Costs and the Cost of Living

The [cost of living in Minneapolis](#) is about 5% higher than the national average, but still considerably cheaper than other major cities like Chicago, New York, and Los Angeles. According to [Sperling's Best Places](#), the cost of living index for Minneapolis is 109, which compares to a national average of 100.

The median house price in the Twin Cities was approximately \$242,000 in early 2018, and rent is not much better as surveys have put Minneapolis as one of most expensive cities in the Midwest to rent. According to [Rent Cafe](#), the average rent for a one-bedroom apartment is \$1,223 and a two-bedroom is \$1,637.

Minneapolis is slightly more expensive in other areas as well. The cost of food is 5% higher than the U.S average, and items like clothing and auto repairs are about 9% more expensive than elsewhere in the midwest. However, a standard utility bill in Minneapolis is about 1% lower than the national average and paying for heating costs in the winter accounts for a substantial portion of a household's annual utility bills.

Fortunately, these expenses are offset by relatively higher wages in the city. In mid-2016, the [average wage](#) in the Twin Cities, including Minneapolis, was \$55,000, which is still experiencing a gentle upward trend and is slightly higher than the national average. Ultimately, then, moving to Minneapolis is worth it if you're employed but can be a bit too expensive for those who are currently between jobs.

Health and Quality of Life

Many surveys have noted the health and wellbeing of Minneapolis' residents, and as a result, Minnesota was ranked as the 4th healthiest state in the nation in a [2018 Gallup survey](#), which noted that the Minneapolis-St. Paul metro area's residents were more likely than average to be healthy mentally and physically.

Minnesotans are more likely to be active, with a higher percentage than average of runners, and one of the highest number of commuters who ride a bicycle to work. Since the early 2010s, surveys have ranked Minneapolis-St. Paul as one of the metro areas with the [best quality of life in the nation](#).

It's important to note that in these surveys, Minneapolis suffers most from a lack of "purpose" in its residents—meaning they're not typically motivated by

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the city itself to do things as much as by their friends and small social circles. Speaking of which, making friends in the city is also ranked as pretty hard compared to some other places in the United States.

Education

Minneapolis' elementary, middle, and high schools are operated by Minneapolis Public Schools, and although some schools are excellent, many struggle financially and educationally—on average, academic performance at Minneapolis Public schools are far behind Minnesota schools.

Individual schools vary widely, though, and several exceed the state averages. For example, Kenwood Elementary, Dowling Elementary, Lake Harriet Upper School, Southwest Senior High all rank highly according to individual school data available at the [Minnesota Department of Education](#) website. Many private and charter schools operate in Minneapolis and [Great Schools](#) has rankings and reviews of almost every school in Minneapolis.

For higher education, the largest college is the well-regarded [University of Minnesota](#), with a large campus in Minneapolis. The [Minnesota State Colleges and University \(MnSCU\)](#) system operates Metropolitan State University in Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minneapolis Community and Technical College in Minneapolis, and several other institutions in the Twin Cities and across Minnesota.

There are a large number of other private non-profit and for-profit colleges, technical schools, and [universities in the Twin Cities](#), so be sure to check out their [city, state, and national college rankings](#) if you're thinking about attending one of them.

Demographics

According to the 2010 census, Minneapolis' population demographics are as follows,

- White, 63.8%
- Black, 18.6%
- American Indian and Alaska Native, 1.1%
- Asian, 5.6%
- Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, less than 0.1%
- Persons reporting two or more races, 4.4%
- Hispanic or Latino, 10.5%

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Things to Do

Minneapolis has many regular events, from the Juneteenth festival, Aquatennial, 4th of July celebration, May Day Parade, City of Lakes Loppet, and Pride Parade and Festival. The Minnesota State Fair is one of the biggest in the nation. The arts, entertainment and music scene is vibrant.

Minneapolis is relatively isolated—it's a long way to Chicago or another major city. Fortunately, the Twin Cities are large enough to attract touring shows and exhibitions, and there are enough people here that you are likely to find friends who share your interests.

Minneapolis has several professional sports teams. [Downtown Minneapolis](#) is home to the Minnesota Twins, who play in their lovely new ballpark, Target Field, and the Minnesota Timberwolves who play at the Target Center in downtown Minneapolis. The Minnesota Vikings used to play in the Metrodome but relocated to the U.S. Bank Stadium in the suburbs in 2016.

Travel and Weather

[Metro Transit](#) operates the city buses, which covers most of Minneapolis, parts of St. Paul, and relatively little of the suburbs around them. Metro Transit also operates one light rail line, from Downtown Minneapolis to the Airport, and there is another light rail line linking Downtown Minneapolis and St. Paul.

Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport is 10 miles south of downtown Minneapolis, incredibly convenient for air travelers, and cab services typically cost less than \$20 from the airport.

The [weather](#) is something that Minnesota has going against it. The winter is long and cold; the spring is gloomy and wet; the summer is hot, humid and can be filled with bugs and the occasional tornado; but autumn is gorgeous and just too short.

Finding air-conditioned sanctuaries and swimming will get you through the summer. The right clothing, a willingness to learn a new winter sport, and managing your budget to make it easier to pay the heating bills will [help you survive the Minneapolis winter](#).

Safety and Crime

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Like any major metropolis, Minneapolis does experience crime, but the crime rate is relatively low compared to other troubled cities in the United States. The [Minneapolis Police Department publishes crime statistics, reports, and crime maps of the city](#), and although some neighborhoods are more [dangerous](#) than others, the violent crime rate is approximately 1000 violent crimes per 100,000 residents.

Minneapolis has wrestled with its murder rate, which has fluctuated between 20 and 99 murders annually since 1995. In recent years, the average murder rate has been around 45 per year and is following a slow downward trend.

Property crime is possible in every part of the city, but violent crime affects some [neighborhoods](#) more than others. Statistically, North Minneapolis has the highest crime rates, as do Phillips, Midtown Minneapolis, and Downtown Minneapolis while South Minneapolis has significantly lower crime rates.

In 2012, The Twin Cities was ranked as the 4th most peaceful metro area, in a study which examined the homicide rate, violent crime rate, incarceration rate, police presence, and availability of small arms in major metro areas in the U.S.