

The Top 10 Places to Buy a Home

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When you go to buy a house, a market with cheap prices is not the only factor you should consider. Rather, look for communities with a strong job market and stable housing values. Some common threads: cities with military bases, state capitals and college towns all fare well because they are more "recession proof," according to Zillow, an online real estate company. A strong tourism industry helps, too.



Virginia Beach, Va.

- Median home value: \$223,800, down 1 percent from a year ago.
- Property values are up 7 percent compared with five years ago.
- Houses cost an average of \$139 per square foot.
- Buyers are paying 2 percent less than the listing price.

Albany, N.Y.

- Median Home Value: \$190,700, down 3 percent from a year ago.
- Property values are up 4.4 percent compared with five years ago.
- Houses cost an average of \$123 dollars per square foot.
- Buyers are paying 3 percent less than listing price.

San Diego, Calif.

- Median Home Value: \$346,000, down 14 percent from a year ago but with shrinking declines.
- Thirty-six percent of homes on the market are foreclosure resales.
- Forty percent of homes are being sold for less than the owners paid for them.
- Eighty-nine percent of home values are decreasing, but the declines are slowing and the bottom is in sight.
- Houses cost an average of \$219 per square foot.

Austin, Texas

- Median Home Value: \$172,800, down 12 percent from a year ago.
- Property values are up 3 percent compared with five years ago.
- Buyers are paying 9 percent less than listing price.
- Houses cost an average of \$98 per square foot.

Madison, Wis.

- Median Home Value: \$207,600, down 4 percent from a year ago.
- Property values are flat compared with five years ago.
- Houses cost an average of \$113 per square foot.
- Buyers are paying 3 percent less than listing price.

Greenville, S.C.

- Median Home Value: \$132,000, down 1 percent from a year ago.
- Property values are up 3 percent compared with five years ago.
- Houses cost an average of \$83 per square foot.
- Buyers are paying 4 percent less than listing price.

Gainesville, Fla.

- Median Home Value: \$ 157,800, down 11 percent from a year ago.
- Property values are up 3.2 percent compared with five years ago.
- Buyers are paying 5 percent less than listing price.
- Houses cost an average of \$106 per square foot.

Knoxville, Tenn.

- Median Home Value: \$ 141,900, down 2 percent from a year ago.
- Property values are up 5.1 percent compared with five years ago.
- Houses cost an average of \$89 per square foot.
- Buyers are paying 4 percent less than listing price.

Richmond, Va.

- Median Home Value: \$ 207,000, down 7 percent from a year ago.
- Property values are up 5 percent compared with five years ago.
- Houses cost an average of \$119 per square foot.
- Buyers are paying 3 percent less than listing price.

Flagstaff, Ariz.

- Median Home Value: \$274,000, down 14 percent from a year ago.
- Property values are up 4 percent compared with five years ago.
- Buyers are paying 8 percent less than listing price.
- Houses cost an average of \$164 per square foot.