

OHIO

Ohio city ranked among best

Money magazine ranks Powell the top small city in Ohio and the 18th-best place to live in the United States. Powell is in Delaware County, about 18 miles north of Columbus. The magazine bases its annual list of 100 small cities on economic, education and safety factors, including housing affordability, taxes and real-estate appreciation. Moores-town, N.J., takes the top spot. Solon ranks 42nd, and elsewhere in Ohio, West Chester in suburban Cincinnati ranks 45th.

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Two cities cited as top places to live

Northeast Ohio is home to two of the 100 best places to live in the United States, according to an annual ranking by *Money* magazine and CNN.com.

In the rankings, which can be found at <http://money.cnn.com/best/bplive>, Solon ranked 42nd and Hudson ranked 47th. Two other northern Ohio communities — Uniontown in Stark County and Canfield in Mahoning County — ranked 68th and 82nd, respectively.

Money began the ranking process by examining a list of 1,321 cities with populations above 14,000 and above-median household income, population growth and real estate appreciation during the past five years. It then eliminated places that aren't within 60 miles of a major airport and 30 miles of

RANKINGS

a major teaching hospital, that have low education scores, or that fall below the 25th percentile in any two of the following categories: unemployment, income growth, crime, or arts resources.

"That left 100 towns, which we ranked, weighing economic, education and safety factors twice as much as arts, leisure and park space," the editors of *Money* wrote.

The rankings' focus on income, crime rates and education "rendered meaningless any comparisons between big cities and the relatively affluent suburbs or small cities that make up this list," according to *Money*. The magazine plans a future list that will focus exclusively on big cities. ■

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Rank	Best place	Pop.*	Nearest city
26	Saratoga, CA	30,600	San Jose
27	Redmond, WA	64,000	Seattle
28	Wexford, PA	18,300	Pittsburgh
29	Tolland, CT	14,400	Hartford
30	Overland Park, KS	160,400	Kansas City
31	Hopewell Junction, NY	24,100	New York City
32	Evans, GA	27,600	Augusta, GA
33	Yorktown, VA	41,800	Newport News, VA
34	Cary, NC	115,300	Raleigh
35	Scottsdale, AZ	289,400	Phoenix
36	Westborough, MA	19,600	Worcester, MA
37	Midlothian, VA	74,300	Richmond
38	Olive Branch, MS	35,000	Memphis
39	Rochester, MI	92,100	Detroit
40	Colleyville, TX	22,600	Dallas
41	East Amherst, NY	18,500	Buffalo
42	Solon, OH	22,200	Cleveland
43	Saline, MI	19,600	Ann Arbor
44	West Linn, OR	26,900	Portland, OR
45	West Chester, OH	58,100	Cincinnati
46	Sugar Land, TX	134,700	Houston
47	Hudson, OH	24,200	Akron
48	Boerne, TX	29,400	San Antonio
49	Merrimack, NH	27,200	Manchester, NH
50	Ponte Vedra Beach, FL	35,400	Jacksonville

*The data represent the zip codes associated with the town name. The listed populations often include areas outside an incorporated municipality. For instance, the town of Vienna has a population of 14,900, but 61,700 residents have a Vienna postal address. Source: OnBoard, Brooklyn.

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How we chose the best places

Solon, OH

Population, town and surrounding area: **21,941**

Financial	City Stats	Best places average
Median household income (per year)	\$83,629	\$68,053
Sales tax	8.00%	6.77%
State income tax rate (highest bracket)	7.50%*	n/a
State income tax rate (lowest bracket)	0.74%*	n/a
Auto insurance premiums (Average for the state)	\$648	\$855
Housing	City Stats	Best places average
Median home price	\$256,489	\$315,351
Home price gain (2-5 year gain)	4.07%	14.88%
Education	City Stats	Best places average
Colleges, universities and professional schools	20	32
Junior colleges and technical institutes	10	15
Student to teacher ratio (grade schools)	11.90	15.37
Quality of life	City Stats	Best places average
Air pollution index (100 is national average; lower is better)	116	90
Personal crime risk (100 is national average; lower is better)	16	69
Property crime risk (100 is national average; lower is better)	55	78
Leisure and culture	City Stats	Best places average
Movie theaters (within 15 miles)	16	27
Restaurants (within 15 miles)	2,318	3,738
Bars (within 15 miles)	314	267

- Nearby places:**
- Twinsburg, OH
 - Chagrin Falls, OH
 - Aurora, OH
 - Northfield, OH
 - Hudson, OH
 - Cleveland, OH
 - Broadview Heights, OH
 - Stow, OH
 - North Royalton, OH
 - Chardon, OH

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 - Hottest**
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Golf courses (public courses; within 30 miles)	127	72
Libraries (within 15 miles)	60	60
Museums (accredited by AAM; within 30 miles)	6	10
Weather	City Stats	Best places average
Annual precipitation (inches)	41.93	37.80
High temp in July ° F	80.00°	86.11°
Low temp in Jan ° F	15.60°	26.60°

-  **Fastest jobs growth**
-  **Most golf courses**
-  **Least polluted**
-  **Lowest commute time**

*Plus an additional \$20 per exemption tax credit.

Average is based only on data for more than 1,300 cities in the Best Places database. Included are cities with population of more than 14,000 with above-average income, population growth and real estate appreciation during the past five years. The data represent the zip codes associated with the town name. The listed populations often include areas outside an incorporated municipality. For instance, the town of Vienna has a population of 14,900, but 61,700 residents have a Vienna postal address.

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* : Time reflects local markets trading time. † - Intraday data is at least 15-minutes delayed. [Disclaimer](#)

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Behind the best places

Which towns were in contention; where the data comes from.

August 1, 2005: 11:03 AM EDT

Money magazine and CNN/Money teamed with data researchers at OnBoard to research the Best Places to Live for 2005.

OnBoard maintains a database of nearly 40,000 places. To narrow our search, we began by considering only those with population above 14,000, above-median household income, population growth and real estate appreciation over the past 5 years.

Those restrictions led to a list of roughly 1,100 places.

From there, we eliminated places that aren't within 60 miles of a major airport and 30 miles of a major teaching hospital.

We also eliminate towns with low education scores or that fall below the 25th percentile in any two of the following: unemployment, income growth, crime, or arts resources.

That left 850 towns, which we reviewed, weighing economic, education and safety factors twice as much as arts, leisure and park space.

We then limited any metropolitan area to one or two places to arrive at the list of 100 finalists.

To pick the winners, we culled more data on education, environment, housing affordability, taxes, commute times and job market. MONEY writers also interviewed residents and community leaders.

Our focus on income, crime rates and education rendered meaningless any comparisons between big cities and the relatively affluent suburbs or small cities that make up this list. Big cities couldn't compete on those particular numbers and, of course, they offer plenty of quality-of-life benefits that suburbs don't have. We'll look at big cities as part of another project in the future.

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Also, a note on the definition of "place:" In assembling this list, we examined data from the zip codes that correspond to a place name designated by the postal service.

We do this because we can get more and better -- that is, more accurate -- data about an area using zip codes than by using Census designations or by looking only at an incorporated area, which often is a small part of what most people would consider a "place."

That's why our list gives an area population and not just the population of a municipality. In a few cases, in fact, there is no incorporated municipality corresponding to the place name.

Note: Using our [state by state listing](#), readers can search for detailed statistics on the 1,100 places we considered for this year's best places to live.

As an added feature, we also included reports for 250 large cities that weren't considered -- to look them up, search by city name in the upper right hand corner of the [main page](#).

The data

On Board's Neighborhood Content is drawn from an extensive array of sources, including:

- US Census Bureau estimates and projections, including latest monthly estimates for population at the city level
- Bureau of Labor for employment data by industry and occupation
- Internal Revenue Service statistics on tax filers and year-to-year migration
- Experian's Performance Data System (PDS) for household level credit and demographics
- Experian MOSAIC for lifestyle segmentation
- Federal Bureau of Investigation and local sources for crime information

Recent Sales Transactions are compiled primarily from leading regional and national public records providers as well as individual municipalities around the country.

On Board works with several industry leaders and government agencies in the aggregation of School Information. All records are phone verified for accuracy at least once per year.

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