

10 Best Cities For African Americans

For most, living the good life includes high-paying jobs, affordable homes, a vibrant social life, and short commutes. How can you achieve such a first-rate lifestyle? Well, we identified 10 locales that promise a trove of business, professional, and personal opportunities: BLACK ENTERPRISE's Top 10 Cities for African Americans.

Our 2007 ranking offers some major changes and repositioning in comparison to our 2001 and 2004 lists. Five cities found on both lists remain: Atlanta; Charlotte, North Carolina; Dallas; Houston; and the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. Nashville, Tennessee, and Columbus, Ohio, represent returnees from our 2004 roster. Three cities failed to make the cut this time around: Birmingham, Alabama, which received a low response from its residents, and Baltimore and Memphis, Tennessee, which were knocked out of contention because of residents' great dissatisfaction with several key living standards. Our newcomers to the list are Indianapolis; Jacksonville, Florida; and Raleigh-Durham, North Carolina.

Top City	% Black Pop.	Cost of Living Index	Medium Home Values (\$)	Medium Black Household Income (\$)	Violent Crime Rate
Jacksonville, FL	22.5	97.7	162,000	32,246	730.9
Columbus, OH	14.1	100.1	155,600	32,347	444.4
Indianapolis, IN	14.6	97.6	136,500	29,877	533.3
Charlotte, NC	23.4	92.7	150,900	30,781	763.3
Dallas, TX	14.2	91.8	133,900	34,388	554.9
Nashville, TN	15.3	90.9	148,500	27,153	872.4
Houston, TX	16.8	90.0	123,400	31,809	723.6
Raleigh-Durham, NC	21.3	94.8	166,500	34,301	424.6
Atlanta, GA	30.8	95.6	177,200	39,516	521.9
Washington, D.C. Metro	26.6	138.8	404,900	53,686	446.5
B.E. Cities Average	20.0	99.0	175,940	34,610	--
National Average		100.0	167,500	30,939	456.0

HOW THE CITIES WERE CHOSEN

In assessing the locations, we actually looked at metropolitan areas-the core cities and surrounding suburbs as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau. This year's survey showed

respondents were satisfied overall with earnings potential, entrepreneurial opportunities, jobs, cost of living, affordable housing, higher education, access to technology, and medical care. In general, respondents were discontent with the quality of public schools, availability of daycare facilities, race relations, crime rates, and black political clout.

Our analysis did not stop there. Using a series of statistical data, the list was then narrowed to 13 metro areas. Heavier weighting was applied to seven of the 22 factors-"super factors"-that pertain specifically to African Americans:

- Black median household income compared with overall median household income
- Percent of black households earning greater than \$100,000 divided by the percent of all households earning greater than \$100,000 per year
- Black unemployment
- Number of black-owned businesses per 1,000 black residents
- Percentage of black home loan rejections
- Percentage of black college graduates
- Black homeownership rate

By combining survey response scores with the quality of life scores, we arrived at a final ranking of the top 10 cities for African Americans.