

Our articles, research studies, tools, and reviews maintain strict [editorial integrity](#); however, we may be compensated when you click on or are approved for offers from our partners.

10 Best Places to Live for Young Adults - 2020

[Richard Barrington](#) | MoneyRates.com Senior Financial Analyst, CFA

Last updated: June 25, 2020 [Personal finance](#), [Research center](#)

For new graduates and young workers entering the job market, now is a good time to think about where to put down roots - and this study can help identify where opportunity is knocking.



Where are young adults choosing to live these days? The answer might surprise.

Based on analysis of seven factors, MoneyRates.com found that Utah is the most attractive state for young adults.

Not only is it the most youthful state in the country, but there are other reasons it attracts so many young people.

Best Cities for Young Professionals May Change

When you think about youth culture and opportunity, the high-profile job markets of Silicon Valley or New York City's financial district naturally come to mind.

You might also expect young people to be drawn to the nightlife scene and party atmospheres of Las Vegas or Miami.

This year, we looked beyond cost of living and affordable rent - though they remain central factors in the study - and considered other things that affect how someone lives, especially in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic.

With concerns raised by COVID-19, the millennial population may be less drawn to living in a great city than in the past. They may be more interested now in how much work flexibility job opportunities offer. Public transportation may be less appealing today than cost of living.

Given how much things have changed, this is a great time to rethink what each state plus the District of Columbia has to offer young professionals looking for opportunity and a decent place to live.

What Are the Best Places to Live for Young Adults?

- 1. Utah**
- 2. Iowa**
- 3. Nebraska**
- 4. North Dakota**
- 5. Idaho**
- 6. Kansas**
- 7. Wyoming**
- 8. Arkansas**
- 9. Colorado**
- 10. South Dakota**

Methodology: Best States to Live in for Young Adults

So how did MoneyRates.com rank the best states for young adults?

Each state plus the District of Columbia was ranked based on the following seven factors:

- Broadband connectivity, according to data from the U.S. Census Bureau.

- Percentage of jobs in the finance and information sectors, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).
- Relative size of the young adult population in each state, according to BLS data.
- Unemployment rate of 16- to 24-year-olds, according to the BLS.
- Affordability of a one-bedroom apartment, according to the Census Bureau.
- Availability of residential rentals, according to Census data.
- Affordability of 4-year-public-college tuition for in-state students, according to the College Board's 2019 Trends in College Pricing report.

Individual rankings were determined for each of the seven categories, and then those seven rankings were averaged to determine the overall ranking.

[Compare Robo Advisors](#)

Comparing Conditions: What Influences Where Young Adults Live?

The United States may be one country, but the differences in conditions among the different states can be huge. And since the coronavirus pandemic is making it so more job opportunities can be found irrespective of location, young people are able to prioritize other things that they value.

Comparing each attribute yields some interesting insights into where young adults might be positively and negatively impacted.

Broadband connection

The coronavirus pandemic has shown that broadband connection is not just a source of entertainment options. It can also give you added flexibility in how and where you work.

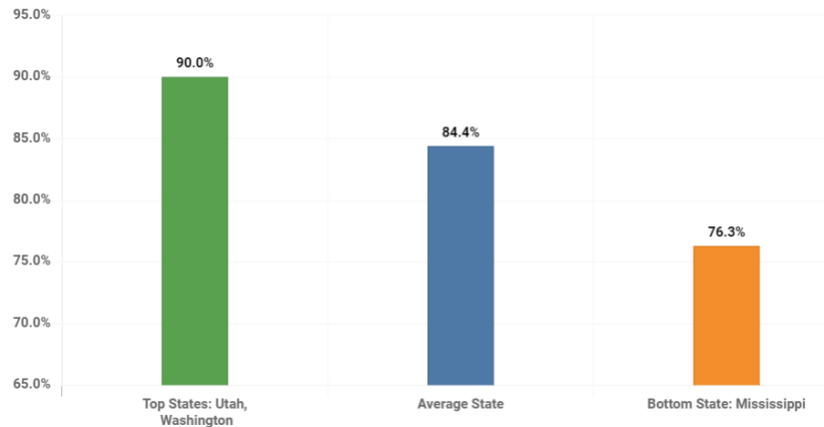
Two states - Utah and Washington - tied at 90% for the highest percentage of households with broadband connection.

Residents of Mississippi, New Mexico and four other states are more than twice as likely as those in Utah and Washington to lack a broadband connection.

This not only affects how people work, but also how they handle the money they earn. Young people are more likely to engage with options that let them save money, manage it better, and invest it all online.

And that's a good thing because, even if they didn't realize it, online banking generally offers better **savings account rates** and lower **checking account costs** than banking in person.

% of Households With Broadband Connection

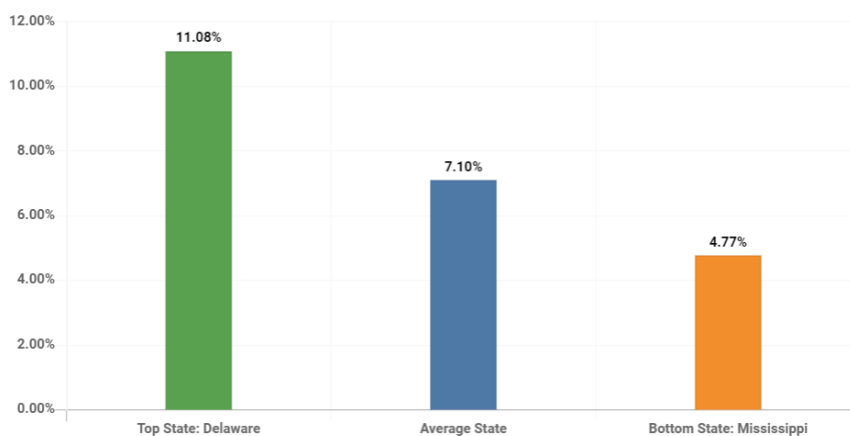


Finance- and information-sector jobs

COVID-19 precautions favor people in industries that allow flexible working arrangements. Those working arrangements have proven to be so beneficial that they may become permanent in many cases.

Delaware has the highest percentage of its jobs in sectors like finance and information that have remote-working opportunities. Mississippi and six other states have less than half Delaware's percentage of jobs in those sectors.

% of Finance- & Information-Sector Jobs

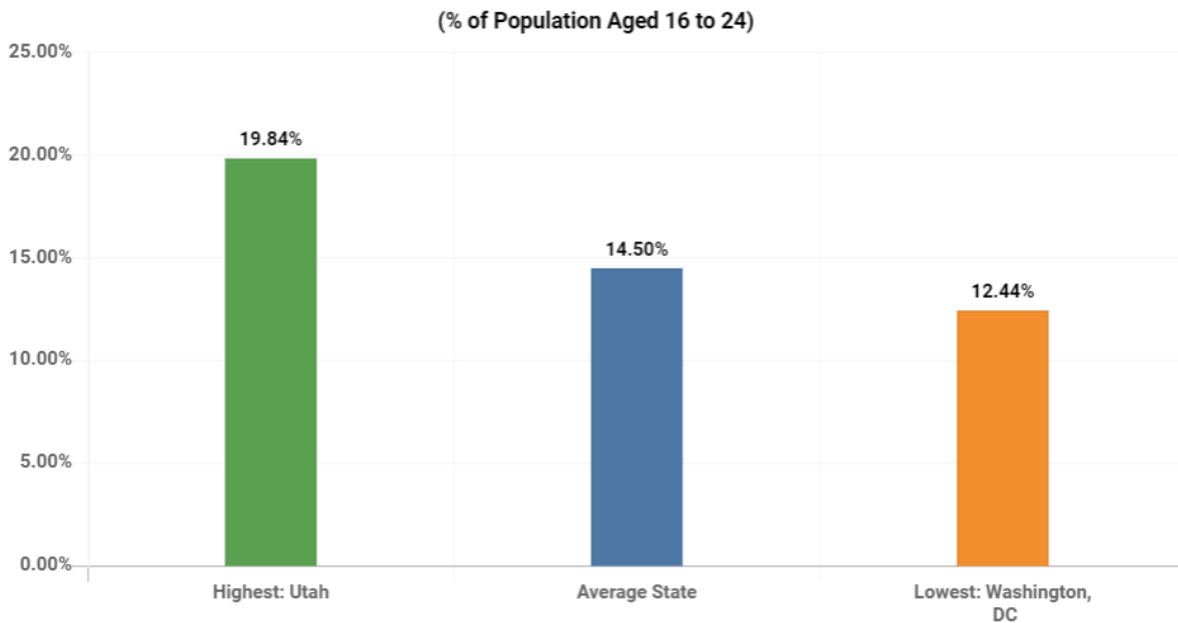


Young adult population

Young people generally like to be around other young people.

This is easiest to do in Utah, which has the highest percentage of young adults in its population, at nearly 20%. Things are very different in the District of Columbia, where young adults are just 12.44% of the population.

Young Adult Population



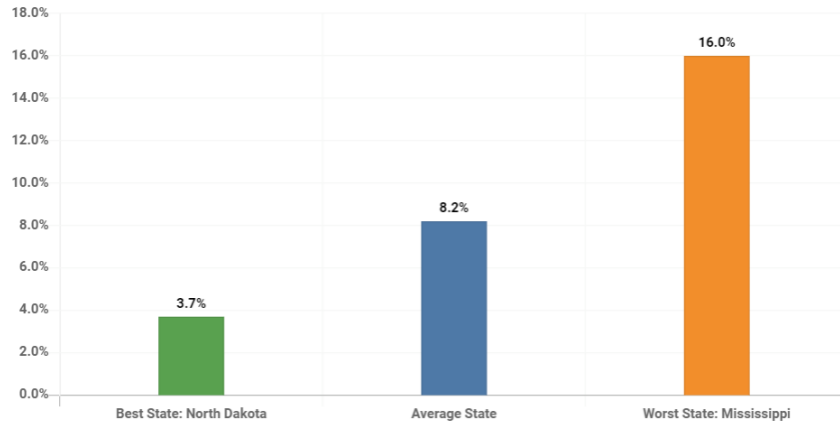
Unemployment rate

Young adults have an especially hard time finding a job. When you're getting started in life, it helps to know where it's easiest to obtain work.

North Dakota has the lowest unemployment rate among 16- to 24-year-olds. The unemployment rate for that age group is more than four times as high in Mississippi.

This is actually one of the most critical factors for young people to consider since saving for retirement when you're young is one of the best money moves you could make.

Young Adult Unemployment Rate

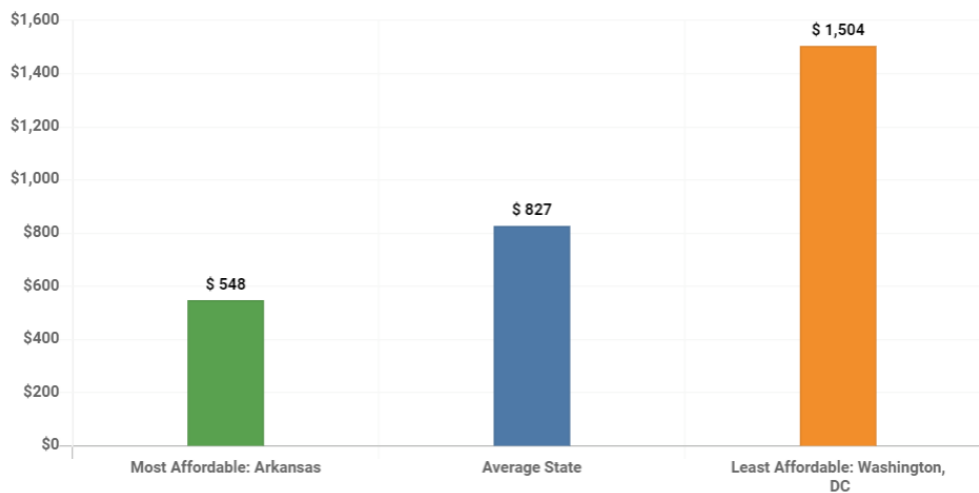


[Related: Starting your career? How to start a retirement fund in your 20s](#)

Affordable housing

Young people are often on limited budgets, so housing costs are key. Arkansas has the lowest average monthly rent for a one-bedroom apartment, at \$548. If you choose to live in Washington, DC, you'll pay nearly three times as much on average.

Rental Affordability

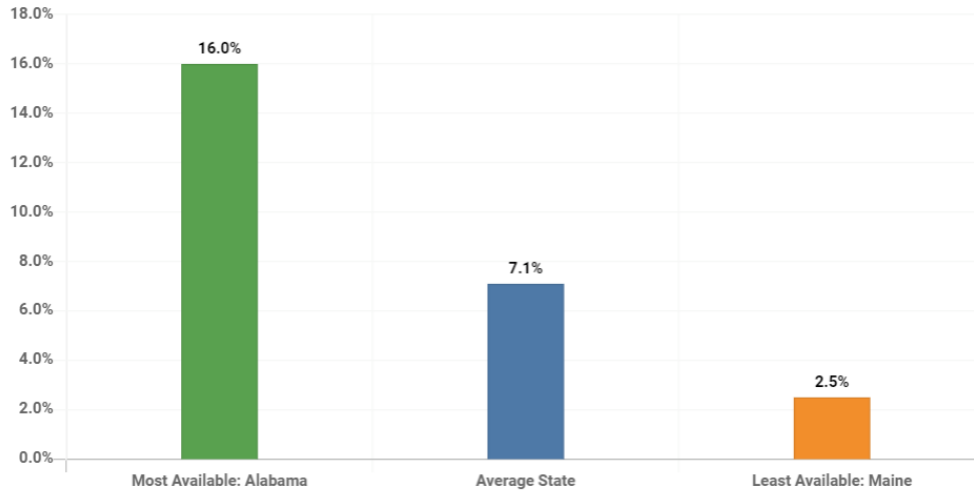


Available housing

Then there's the matter of whether housing is available. Young people just getting started in life probably aren't in a position to buy a house at this point - but they still need a place to live.

As a percentage, residential rentals are more than six times as available in Alabama as they are in Maine.

Rental Availability

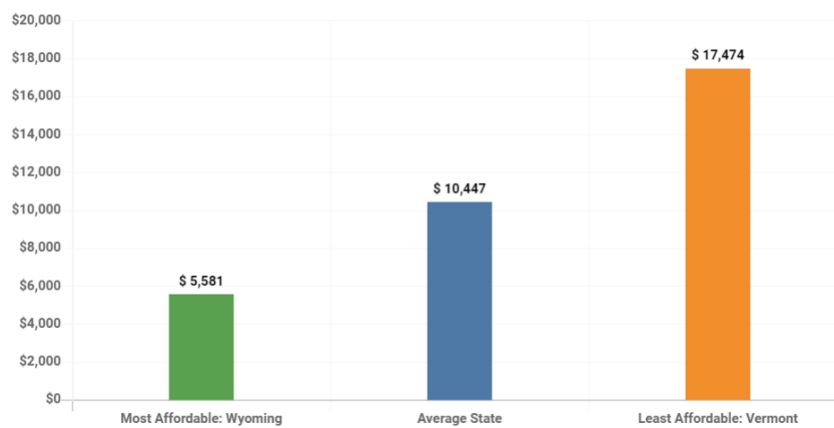


In-state public tuition

Young people pursuing a college degree may be interested to know that Wyoming has the lowest in-state, 4-year-public-college tuition in the country.

The average annual cost of \$5,581 is less than a third the average in Vermont, which has the most expensive average tuition.

2019/2020 4-year In-state Public Tuition



[Related: Retirement Savings: How Much You Should Have at 25, 30, 40, 50 and 65](#)

The 10 Best States for Millennials

Considering each factor thought to be important to young adults, Utah came out on top overall. In fact, the Mountain West region of the country generally did much better than coastal states.

After balancing the good and bad of each state, the following were ranked as the ten best states for young adults:

1. Utah

Utah led the way in two individual categories, and made the top ten in three others.

One telling indicator of the state's appeal: 19.84% of the population is aged from 16 to 24, giving Utah the biggest portion of young adults in the nation.

Utah also led the way (tied with Washington State) in broadband connectivity, with 90% of its population having a broadband connection. Other top-ten rankings for Utah were percentage of jobs in finance and information, affordability of college tuition and young adult employment.

The only two areas where Utah was below median involved housing. A one-bedroom apartment costs more in Utah than in most states, and rental availability is below median. Even so, Utah was nowhere near the worst states in those categories.

State	Overall Rank	Connectivity Rank	% of Info & Finance Jobs Rank	Young Adult Population % Rank	Young Adult Employment Rank	Rental Affordability Rank	Rental Availability Rank	Tuition Affordability Rank
Utah	1	1	9	1	5	30	33	

2. Iowa

Iowa ranked fourth for young adult employment, and has the fourth-lowest average rent for a one-bedroom apartment.

While those were Iowa's only top-ten finishes, the state's average was helped by being below median in just one category. The broadband connectivity rate of 83.6% in Iowa ranked 34th.

State	Overall Rank	Connectivity Rank	% of Info & Finance Jobs Rank	Young Adult Population % Rank	Young Adult Employment Rank	Rental Affordability Rank	Rental Availability Rank	Total Affordability Rank
Iowa	2	34	11	20	4	4	13	

3. Nebraska

Iowa's neighbor to the west has the second-highest young adult population as a percentage of its overall population.

That's one clue that young people like living there. Perhaps one of the more surprising points of attraction is that Nebraska has the fifth-highest proportion of finance- and information-sector jobs of any state.

Nebraska's weakest point was a low rental vacancy rate of just 6.4%. This ranked 31st in the nation, meaning that finding your first place to live might be a little tougher than in most states.

State	Overall Rank	Connectivity Rank	% of Info & Finance Jobs Rank	Young Adult Population % Rank	Young Adult Employment Rank	Rental Affordability Rank	Rental Availability Rank	Total Affordability Rank
Nebraska	3	18	5	2	27	20	31	

4. North Dakota

If you just go by preconceived notions, North Dakota may not be one of the first places you think of as a great place for young adults. However, when you dig into the numbers, you find a few reasons why it has consistently been appealing for that age group in recent years.

Start with one of the most important challenges young adults face: getting a job. North Dakota has the country's best rate of employment for the 16-to-24 age group.

On top of that, North Dakota ranks third for availability of residential rentals, and seventh for the proportion of its young adult population.

The biggest drawback is a lack of connectivity. North Dakota is one of the ten worst states for availability of broadband.

State	Overall Rank	Connectivity Rank	% of Info & Finance Jobs Rank	Young Adult Population % Rank	Young Adult Employment Rank	Rental Affordability Rank	Rental Availability Rank	Affordability Rank
North Dakota	4	45	23	7	1	22	3	

5. Idaho

This is one of the ten most youthful states, in terms of the proportion of its young adult population.

Among the things that appeal to those young residents may be affordable college tuition, a high rate of young adult employment and affordable rents. Idaho ranks among the ten best states in all three categories.

All those pluses may be attracting enough people to overwhelm the supply of residential rental properties. Idaho's biggest shortcoming in this study was falling into the bottom ten for rental availability.

State	Overall Rank	Connectivity Rank	% of Info & Finance Jobs Rank	Young Adult Population % Rank	Young Adult Employment Rank	Rental Affordability Rank	Rental Availability Rank	Tuition Affordability Rank
Idaho	5	14	36	9	6	9	43	

6. Kansas

Kansas is another state on this top-ten list that ranks among the ten most youthful in the country. That suggests the conditions in this survey help attract and keep young adult residents.

Young people who aren't yet ready to buy a house should have no problem finding a place to live in Kansas. The state ranks fourth for residential rental availability.

Kansas performed just a few slots below median in only two categories: broadband connectivity and percentage of jobs in the information and investment sectors.

State	Overall Rank	Connectivity Rank	% of Info & Finance Jobs Rank	Young Adult Population % Rank	Young Adult Employment Rank	Rental Affordability Rank	Rental Availability Rank	Af
Kansas	6	29	30	8	23	14	4	

7. Wyoming

Looking for cheap college tuition? Wyoming is your best bet, with the nation's lowest tuition for in-state students at 4-year public colleges.

The state is also kind on renters, ranking among the ten best states for affordability and availability of rental properties.

On the down side, this may not be the best state if you want a career in finance or info tech. Wyoming's proportion of jobs in those sectors ranked second to last.

State	Overall Rank	Connectivity Rank	% of Info & Finance Jobs Rank	Young Adult Population % Rank	Young Adult Employment Rank	Rental Affordability Rank	Rental Availability Rank	Af
Wyoming	7	18	50	37	12	5	9	

8. Arkansas

This is the state with the cheapest average rent in the nation for a one-bedroom apartment. It also ranked among the ten best for youthfulness of its population, young adult employment, and rental availability.

On the negative side, Arkansas lacks some 21st-century elements. It ranks third to last in broadband connectivity and is also in the bottom ten for proportion of information and financial jobs.

State	Overall Rank	Connectivity Rank	% of Info & Finance Jobs Rank	Young Adult Population % Rank	Young Adult Employment Rank	Rental Affordability Rank	Rental Availability Rank
Arkansas	8	49	42	10	9	1	9

9. Colorado

Colorado ranked third for broadband connectivity and for young adult employment. It also scored a top-ten ranking for the proportion of jobs in information and finance.

Before you move there, though, be sure to research where you would live. Colorado ranks 43rd for rental availability, and 40th for rental affordability.

State	Overall Rank	Connectivity Rank	% of Info & Finance Jobs Rank	Young Adult Population % Rank	Young Adult Employment Rank	Rental Affordability Rank	Rental Availability Rank
Colorado	9	3	6	13	3	43	40

10. South Dakota

As the third cheapest state to rent a one-bedroom apartment, South Dakota is definitely kind on the budget for people just starting their careers.

South Dakota was also better than median in four other categories. Its chief shortcoming was ranking 40th for broadband connectivity.


State	Overall Rank	Connectivity Rank	% of Info & Finance Jobs Rank	Young Adult Population % Rank	Young Adult Employment Rank	Rental Affordability Rank	Rental Availability Rank	Affordability Rank
South Dakota	10	40	18	24	33	3	11	


Retirement Savings Calculator

The Best States for Young Adults - Complete List

State	Overall Rank	Connectivity Rank	% of Info & Finance Jobs Rank	Young Adult Population % Rank	Young Adult Employment Rank	Rental Affordability Rank	Rental Availability Rank
Alabama	25	46	44	28	27	5	1
Alaska	19	11	49	4	49	36	1
Arizona	18	14	3	5	37	29	4
Arkansas	8	49	42	10	9	1	9
California	31	5	14	21	34	50	4
Colorado	9	3	6	13	3	43	4
Connecticut	45	12	4	39	46	40	3
Delaware	12	6	1	50	14	34	7
District of Columbia	50	16	35	51	50	51	2
Florida	17	24	13	48	27	41	1
Georgia	16	33	16	25	20	38	2
Hawaii	47	18	40	49	7	48	2
Idaho	5	14	36	9	6	9	4
Illinois	28	25	10	15	41	33	2
Indiana	23	38	46	11	20	16	2
Iowa	2	34	11	20	4	4	1
Kansas	6	29	30	8	23	14	4
Kentucky	38	43	39	26	41	8	1

Here are leading offers from other online banks

Account Type: Interest Checking 	Zip Code <input type="text" value="462001"/>	<input type="button" value="Update"/>
---	---	---------------------------------------

 Sorry! We couldn't find any results that match your search. Please change your entries and try again

Archive of Best States for Young People


Best States for Millennials 2017

(+)

Best States for Millennials 2016

(+)

Give Us Feedback - Did You Enjoy This Article? Feel Free to Leave Your Comment Here.

 Add a comment