



Living fit

You can stay in shape anywhere, of course, but it's easier when your hometown fosters healthy behavior. To find out which cities do (and don't), the American College of Sports Medicine and the WellPoint Foundation analyzed the most recent wellness data from population surveys to rate the 50 fittest U.S. cities. See if your locale made the cut, then read about the perks and pitfalls of residing in the highest- and lowest-ranking metropolitan areas.

26% Proportion of New Orleans that's made up of parkland, making it the greenest city in America (though only the 39th fittest). Second place went to San Diego, the eighth-fittest city, which is 23 percent parkland. Studies link spending time in green outdoor areas to everything from less stress to a better mood.

84% Amount of San Jose citizens with a BMI of less than 30, the highest percentage in the country. The lack of obesity in the sixth-fittest city may be due to exercise: A whopping 79 percent of residents participated in physical activity in the month prior to the study period, more than most other locales.

7-13 Range of daily servings of produce called for by the latest dietary guidelines. San Diego scored highest on fruit consumption,

Photograph by Matt Hawthorne

Top 10 fittest cities in America

- 1 Washington, DC
- 2 Minneapolis, MN
- 3 Portland, OR
- 4 Denver, CO
- 5 San Francisco, CA
- 6 San Jose, CA
- 7 Seattle, WA
- 8 San Diego, CA
- 9 Boston, MA
- 10 Sacramento, CA

with nearly 37 percent of residents eating at least two servings a day. San Jose bested all other cities when it came to veggies, with 22 percent of people getting three or more daily servings.

61% Amount of people in Minneapolis, the second-fittest city, who consider themselves to be in excellent or very good health—tied with San Jose for the highest percentage in the nation.

150 Minutes of moderate aerobic activity the CDC advises getting every week. Even in top-ranking Washington, DC, just 28 percent of locals met that goal, and only 1 in 5 people in America's least-fit city (Memphis) hit the target.

84 San Francisco's Walk Score, a measure of how pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods are based on a 100-point scale. The hilly city is bested only by the Big

Apple, which earned a chart-topping 88. That may explain why the two locales boast some of the highest numbers in the nation of people who commute car-free. In NYC, 7 percent of residents walk or use a bike to get to work; in San Francisco, 6 percent do. But in Memphis, which garnered a Walk Score of just 33, a mere 1 percent of people hoof it or cycle to the office.

29 Number of farmers' markets per 1 million people found in three of the top-ranking cities: Washington, DC; Portland; and San Francisco. Easy access to fresh produce is a promising sign, since research shows that living near a farmers' market is associated with a lower BMI. To compare,

Memphis hosts just 11 per million. But even that beats out the 35th city in the rankings, Houston, which had the lowest number in the country, at three.

326,603 Number of cigarette smokers currently residing in Louisville, KY. The city, which placed 49th in the overall rankings, has the highest percentage of smokers in the country (26 percent). Twelve percent of its population also has asthma, the highest rate in the nation.

32% Amount of Minneapolis residents who were ill or injured in the month prior to the study period. Louisville fared the worst; 43 percent of its population fell sick in the same 30 days.



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