

Bureau of the Census Statistical Brief

Housing in Metropolitan Areas — Motor Vehicles Available

Since the days of the “Model T,” America has had a love affair with the automobile. But access to a vehicle never became universal. In 1990, 9 million of the Nation’s metropolitan households — or 1 in 8 — didn’t have a motor vehicle (automobile, van, or light truck) available at home for their use.

Households lacking vehicles were especially prevalent in the Northeast.

This region contained 7 of the 10 metro areas where households were most likely to be without a motor vehicle. New York, NY, led the Nation: 1 in every 2 households there lacked a vehicle. The only other metro area exceeding the 20-percent level was Jersey City, NJ, where about 1 in 3 households did not have a vehicle available. As the table on page 2 shows, this Northeast dominance was also the case among large metro areas (population over 1 million).

Florida led the Nation in households with just a single vehicle.

About one-third (34 percent) of metro households had exactly one vehicle. The Sunshine State was home to each of the 6 (and 8 of the 10) metro areas where it was most common for households to fall into this category. The two national leaders were Bradenton and Sarasota, where 49 and 47 percent, respectively, of all households had just a single vehicle.

Two other Florida metro areas — Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater and Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood-Pompano Beach — led the large metros in the likelihood of having just one vehicle. See table, page 2.

Two was the magic number

The most common scenario for metropolitan households was

having two motor vehicles. More than one-third (37 percent) fell into this group. Nashua, NH, and Lake County, IL, at 48 percent each, had the highest percentage of households with two vehicles.

Middlesex-Somerset-Hunterdon, NJ, and Ft. Worth-Arlington, TX, (at 43 percent each) headed the parade of large metro areas. New York, NY, (14 percent) brought up the rear among all areas. See table, page 2.

... but some did at least one better.

Twelve million metropolitan households — or 1 in every 6 — had at least a trio of vehicles. This group of households outnumbered households without vehicles by 3 million. Three-or-more-vehicle households were most prevalent in the metropolitan areas of Provo-Orem, UT; Oxnard-Ventura, CA; and Decatur, AL, where they accounted for just over

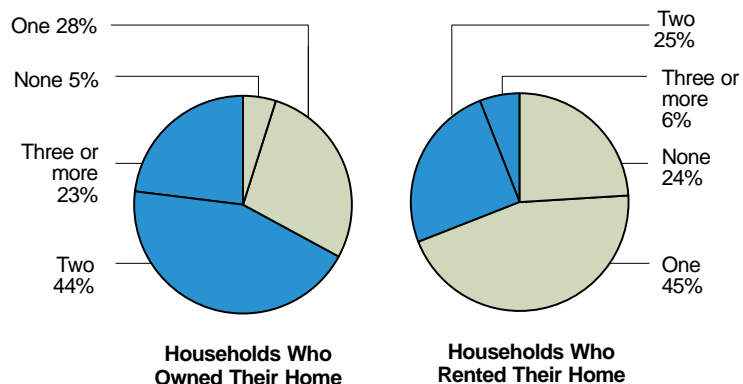


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Homeowners Had More Vehicles Than Renters Did

Percent distribution of metropolitan households, by tenure and number of vehicles they kept at home for their use: 1990



one-quarter (27 percent) of all households.

Meanwhile, San Jose, CA, was the lone large metro area topping the one-quarter mark for three-or-more vehicle households. But Nassau-Suffolk, NY, was not far behind. See table.

More information:

Subject Summary Tape File 7 (Metropolitan Housing Characteristics) presents 1990 census data for States

and metro areas. Call Customer Services (301-457-4100) for more information on 1990 census products.

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This Brief uses data collected in the 1990 Census of Population and Housing to examine housing in America's metropolitan areas. The MA's reflect definitions that were in place in 1990. The count of 335 MA's equals the total number of MSA's (metropolitan statistical areas) and PMSA's (primary metropolitan statistical areas). PMSA's are aggregated into consolidated metropolitan statistical areas. The SSTF 7 documentation has a description of statistical quality and limitations.

Metro Area Rankings by Motor Vehicles Available

(Metro areas with 1 million or more persons)

Percent distribution of households, by number of vehicles available: 1990

Metropolitan area	None		One		Two		Three or more	
	Percent of all households	Rank	Percent of all households	Rank	Percent of all households	Rank	Percent of all households	Rank
Anaheim-Santa Ana, CA PMSA	4.7	46	29.4	44	42.4	3	23.6	3
Atlanta, GA MSA	8.9	27	29.9	42	39.9	14	21.3	7
Baltimore, MD MSA	16.4	8	31.6	36	36.0	33	16.1	28
Bergen-Passaic, NJ PMSA	11.2	16	34.9	17	37.0	31	16.9	24
Boston, MA PMSA	16.9	6	36.9	9	33.5	42	12.7	39
Charlotte-Gastonia-Rock Hill, NC-SC MSA	8.7	30	30.4	41	39.5	17	21.4	6
Chicago, IL PMSA	19.4	2	37.0	8	32.1	44	11.5	42
Cincinnati, OH-KY-IN PMSA	12.6	13	32.2	35	37.5	27	17.7	19
Cleveland, OH PMSA	14.3	11	35.3	15	35.5	35	14.9	33
Columbus, OH MSA	8.9	27	33.5	24	40.1	12	17.5	21
Dallas, TX PMSA	6.9	38	35.8	13	40.9	8	16.5	25
Denver, CO PMSA	8.1	33	33.5	24	38.7	24	19.8	11
Detroit, MI PMSA	12.5	14	32.6	31	37.4	28	17.5	21
Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood-Pompano Beach, FL PMSA	10.3	20	43.9	2	34.7	38	11.0	44
Fort Worth-Arlington, TX PMSA	5.3	44	33.5	24	43.1	2	18.1	17
Houston, TX PMSA	8.4	32	37.5	5	39.9	14	14.2	37
Indianapolis, IN MSA	8.8	29	33.8	21	39.9	14	17.5	21
Kansas City, MO-KS MSA	8.6	31	33.1	28	40.8	9	17.6	20
Los Angeles-Long Beach, CA PMSA	11.2	16	35.7	14	34.9	37	18.2	15
Miami-Hialeah, FL PMSA	16.0	9	37.3	6	33.2	43	13.6	38
Middlesex-Somerset-Hunterdon, NJ PMSA	6.5	41	30.9	40	43.4	1	19.2	13
Milwaukee, WI PMSA	13.9	12	34.0	19	37.4	28	14.7	35
Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN-WI MSA	9.1	25	31.4	39	41.4	7	18.0	18
Nassau-Suffolk, NY PMSA	6.7	39	26.6	46	42.2	4	24.5	2
New Orleans, LA MSA	18.2	4	37.3	6	33.7	40	10.8	45
New York, NY PMSA	50.2	1	31.6	36	13.5	46	4.7	46
Newark, NJ PMSA	15.5	10	32.9	30	35.6	34	16.0	29
Norfolk-Virginia Beach-Newport News, VA MSA	9.9	23	33.6	22	40.0	13	16.5	25
Oakland, CA PMSA	10.0	21	32.4	33	37.1	30	20.5	9
Orlando, FL MSA	6.6	40	35.9	12	41.7	6	15.8	31
Philadelphia, PA-NJ PMSA	18.3	3	35.1	16	33.8	39	12.7	39
Phoenix, AZ MSA	7.1	37	39.3	3	39.1	20	14.5	36
Pittsburgh, PA PMSA	16.9	6	37.7	4	33.7	40	11.7	41
Portland, OR PMSA	9.4	24	33.0	29	39.3	19	18.4	14
Riverside-San Bernardino, CA PMSA	6.4	42	32.4	33	40.2	11	21.0	8
Rochester, NY MSA	11.2	16	33.9	20	39.0	22	15.9	30
Sacramento, CA MSA	7.6	36	32.6	31	39.4	18	20.3	10
Salt Lake City-Ogden, UT MSA	6.1	43	29.5	43	42.1	5	22.4	4
San Antonio, TX MSA	10.0	21	36.7	11	37.8	26	15.5	32
San Diego, CA MSA	7.9	35	34.1	18	38.7	24	19.3	12
San Francisco, CA PMSA	17.6	5	36.9	9	30.7	45	14.8	34
San Jose, CA PMSA	5.3	44	28.4	45	40.5	10	25.8	1
Seattle, WA PMSA	8.0	34	31.5	38	38.8	23	21.7	5
St. Louis, MO-IL MSA	10.9	19	33.6	22	39.1	20	16.4	27
Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, FL PMSA	9.1	25	44.4	1	35.0	36	11.5	42
Washington, DC-MD-VA MSA	11.9	15	33.2	27	36.8	32	18.2	15

Note: Company vehicles (including police cars and taxicabs) were included in the count of vehicles if they were regularly kept at home and used for nonbusiness purposes. Cars and trucks permanently out of working order were excluded. This table presents data only for the 46 largest metropolitan areas. The information we show in it is available at a small charge for all 335 metro areas from William Chapin (301-763-8553).