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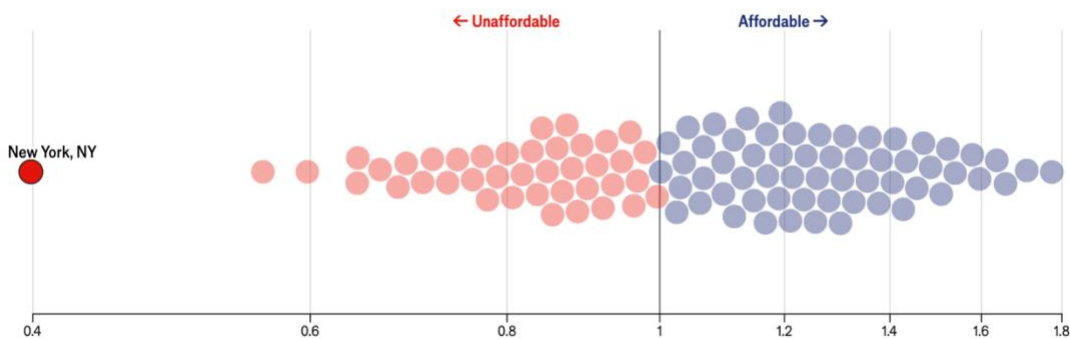
Graphic detail | I couldn't help but wonder...

# Where can Americans afford to live solo in 2025?

Sep 30th 2025 | 3 min read

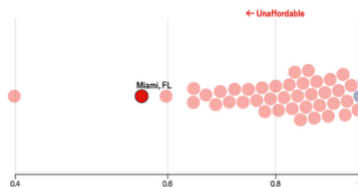
To measure affordability, we use the rule that a tenant should spend no more than 30% of their gross income on rent. Using rental prices gathered by Zumper, an online property platform, we calculated the salary needed to afford a typical studio apartment in each city (see chart 1). This figure varies widely. In New York,

**Median wage relative to affordable-studio wage**  
Selected US cities, 2024, log scale

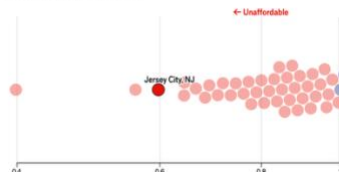


Sources: Bureau of Labour Statistics; Zumper

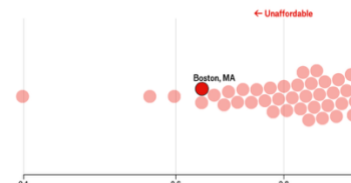
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Selected US cities, 2024, log scale



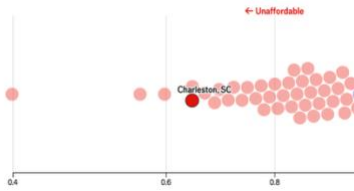
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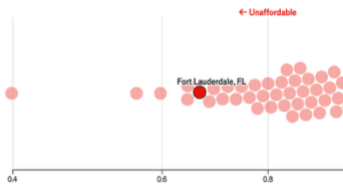
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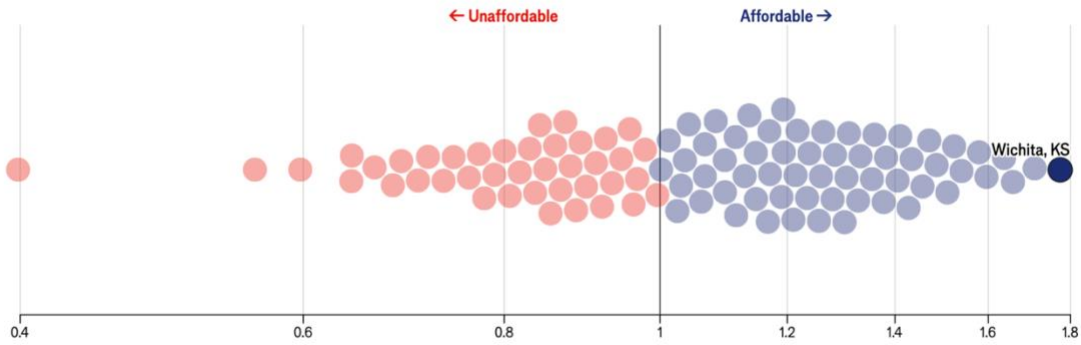
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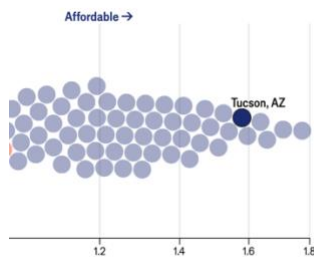
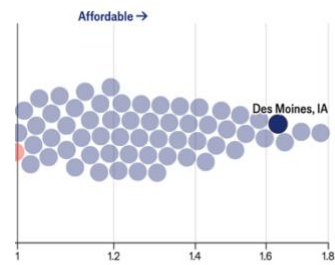
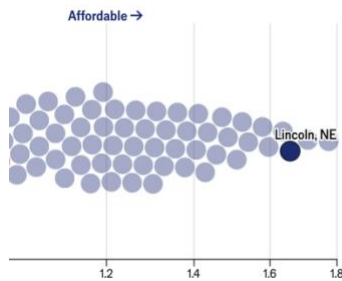
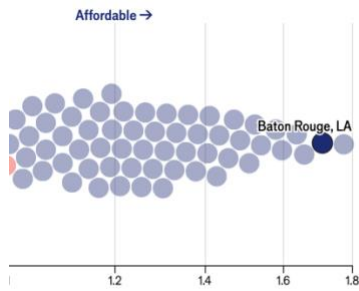
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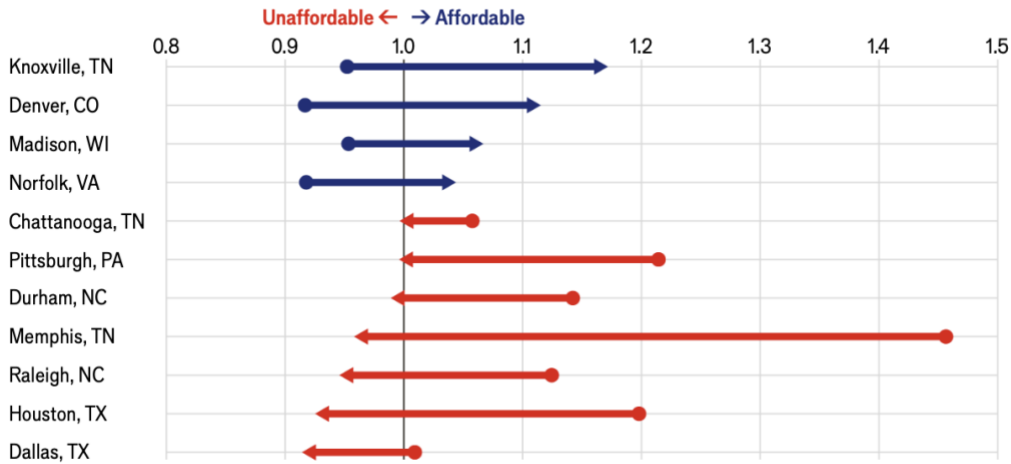
Sources: Bureau of Labour Statistics; Zumper



## Change in affordability, 2023-24

Selected cities\*, median wage relative to affordable-studio wage

2023 → 2024



\*Cities that have transitioned from unaffordable to affordable or vice versa

Sources: Bureau of Labour Statistics; Zumper

Several of the newly prohibitive cities are in Texas (see chart 3). Last year, both Houston and Dallas were deemed affordable, with Bradshaw scores of greater than one. This year, they fell below that threshold. In Austin, monthly studio rents are now \$1,580, a 25% jump from 2024. This requires a salary of \$63,200, more than \$10,000 higher than the city's median wage (giving it a Bradshaw score of 0.8). Texas has experienced an influx of people in recent years. Many tech firms and other big companies have moved their offices to the state, drawn by low taxes and favourable regulation. Salaries have increased, but rents are rising faster.