ZILLOW GROUP

NEWS RELEASE

Rent for less than $1K: Zillow shows affordable options in these areas

2025-10-16

Top markets for sub-$1,000 apartments and rooms for rent amid housing cost crunch

- More than 50% of the apartments in Wichita, Kansas and McAllen, Texas, are listed for less than $1,000
- The median rent for a room is $1,000 or less in 86 of the 100 largest U.S. metros.
- 28% of recent home buyers said "house hacking" was very or extremely important to them.

SEATTLE, Oct. 16, 2025 /PRNewswire/ -- As rent prices stabilize in some markets and surge in others, new Zillow data reveals where renters can still find low-cost options. A **new analysis from Zillow** tracked down places where rentals costing less than $1,000 a month are relatively easy to find, giving renters opportunities to save up for retirement, for unexpected expenses or for a down payment on their own home.

Housing price growth has cooled since it was supercharged early in the pandemic, but mortgage costs are still more than double those of 2019 and rent on a typical apartment is up 37% over the same timespan. Renters today would need to set aside 5% of their income for **nearly nine years** to afford a 10% down payment on a typical home — up from 7.4 years in 2019.

"It's no secret that rents and home prices have sprinted ahead of incomes. For many renters, that makes saving for a down payment feel out of reach," said Zillow Senior Economist Kara Ng. "Moving to a more affordable area can really boost long-term financial health — and in pricier cities, renting a room has become one of the few ways to keep housing costs manageable."

Sub-$1,000 apartments are scarce — but easier to find in the South and Midwest

Among the nation's 100 largest metros, 13 have more than one-third of apartments renting for less than $1,000 per

month — and they're largely clustered in smaller markets across the South and Midwest.

- Wichita, Kansas, has the highest share of apartment listings (54%) with monthly rent under $1,000.
- McAllen, Texas, follows at just over 50%, and is the only other top-100 metro with more than half of apartments renting for less than a grand.
- Little Rock, Arkansas (49%); Toledo, Ohio (46%); and Oklahoma City (42%) round out the top five.

At the other end of the spectrum, Boston, Miami, Washington, D.C., North Port, Florida, Charleston, South Carolina, and Cape Coral, Florida, all have fewer than 1.8% of listings renting for less than $1,000.

Rooms for rent offer serious savings for renters and options for homeowners

Renting a room in an apartment or larger home can save serious funds on living expenses, and options are easy to explore on Zillow Rentals. Renting a room can also bring highly desirable locations into a smaller budget.

Zillow data shows:

- The median list rent for a room is $1,000 or less in 86 of the 100 largest U.S. metros, including Seattle.
- California leads the way in room rentals. Among the top 14 metros with the highest share of room listings, eight are in California. The concentration reflects the state's high housing costs and demand for creative solutions.

Offering a room to rent in a house you own is a big draw for recent homebuyers, too. According to Zillow surveys:

- 32% of recent home buyers said the ability to rent out their entire home was very or extremely important to them.
- 28% said being able to "house hack" — renting out part of their home while living in it — was also important.

Renters can build credit with on-time payments

For those renters looking to break into homeownership, saving for a down payment doesn't stand alone on the to-do list: establishing credit is another critical component. On-time rent payments typically don't impact credit scores, but Zillow is helping change that.

Renters who pay through the Zillow app can choose to have their on-time rent payments reported to major credit reporting bureaus for free – more than 141,000 users have already done so. A Zillow partnership with Esusu is spreading the benefits even wider. Starting in November, renters will be able to pay an annual $20 fee and have their rent payments reported to credit bureaus to help build credit, even if they don't pay rent through Zillow.

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Zillow Group, Inc. (Nasdaq: Z and ZG) is reimagining real estate to make home a reality for more and more people.

As the most visited real estate app and website in the United States, Zillow and its affiliates help people find and get the home they want by connecting them with digital solutions, dedicated real estate professionals, and easier buying, selling, financing, and renting experiences.

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