

The Most Affordable Cities for Concert Tickets in America 2026

We analyzed concert ticket prices by city and income data across 20 major U.S. cities to reveal where are concerts cheapest and where fans are overpaying.

Introduction

For live music fans, attending concerts is more than just entertainment, it's an experience worth traveling for. But finding cheap concert tickets isn't easy.

But with dynamic pricing, service fees, and resale markups, catching a favorite artist live can easily cost a small fortune. Not every city offers the same value concert prices by city vary dramatically, making some places far more budget-friendly than others.

So which cities actually offer the best deal for music fans? Are the famous "music cities" truly worth the hype, or are they simply overpriced tourist destinations?

To find out, we at Wiingy analyzed ticket prices across 20 major U.S. cities. For travelers, we ranked cities by ticket price alone. If you're visiting, that's what matters most.

For the locals, we dug deeper. We compared ticket prices to what people in each city actually earn, using income data from the U.S. Census. This gave us an Affordability Index, a simple way to see where concerts are easy on the wallet and where fans are spending more of their paycheck than they might think.

Key Findings

Cleveland Has the Cheapest Tickets

With a median price of \$68, Cleveland beats every major city. That's less than half the cost of Austin (\$150) and Las Vegas (\$140).

Ticket Price Alone Doesn't Determine Affordability

New York and Nashville both charge \$91. But New York ranks #3 for affordability while Nashville ranks #8. Income matters as much as price.

San Francisco Is Most Affordable for Locals

Despite its reputation as expensive, SF has the lowest Affordability Index (6.8). A \$92 ticket represents just 0.068% of resident income.

New York Ranks Top 10 for Both Groups

#5 for travelers, #3 for locals. With three major venues competing, prices stay reasonable even in this expensive city.

Austin Charges the Highest Prices

The "Live Music Capital" charges \$150 which is more than 2 concert tickets in Pittsburgh (\$71 each) with money left over.

Same Artist, Wildly Different Prices

Entry-level tickets for identical tours show price gaps of 65% to 76% between top-ranked and bottom-ranked cities.

Top 10 Most Affordable Cities for Concert Tickets in America

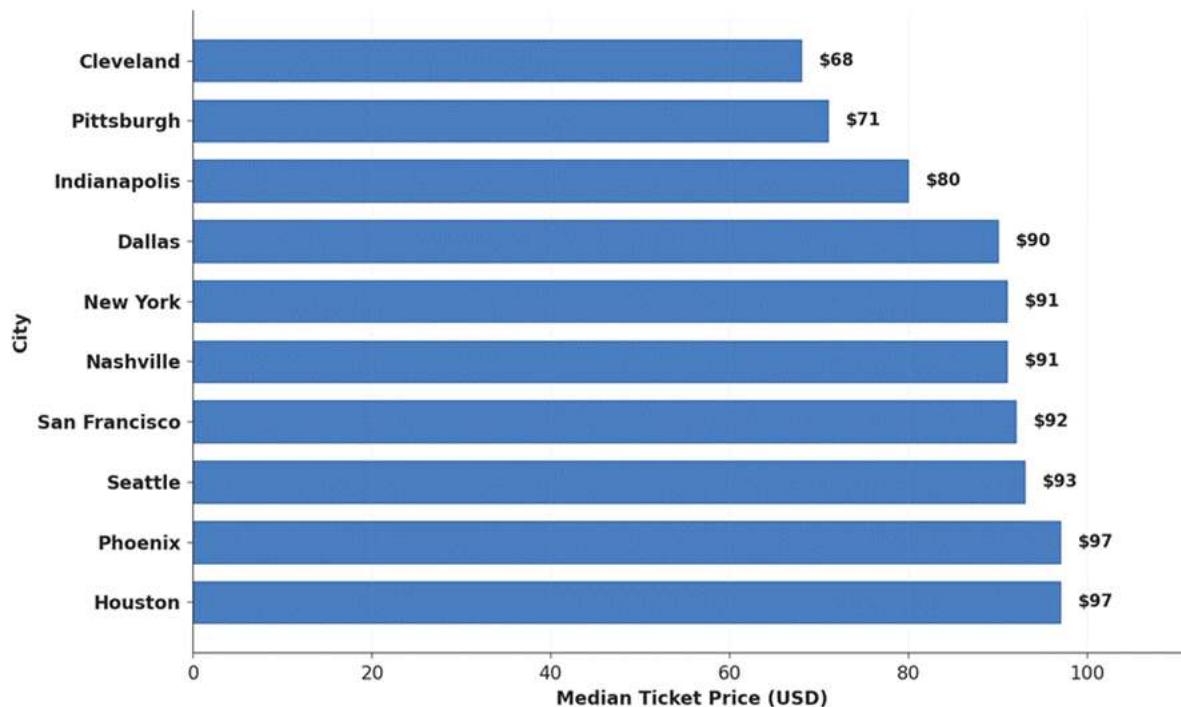
So, where can music lovers go to enjoy a live concert without spending a fortune?

Live music doesn't cost the same everywhere. To find where concert goers get the most value, we identified the U.S. cities where ticket prices stretch the furthest.

We ranked cities in two ways: by median ticket price for travelers, and by an affordability index that measures ticket prices relative to local incomes. Together, these two rankings show where concerts are simply cheap to attend and where they are easiest to afford for people who live there.

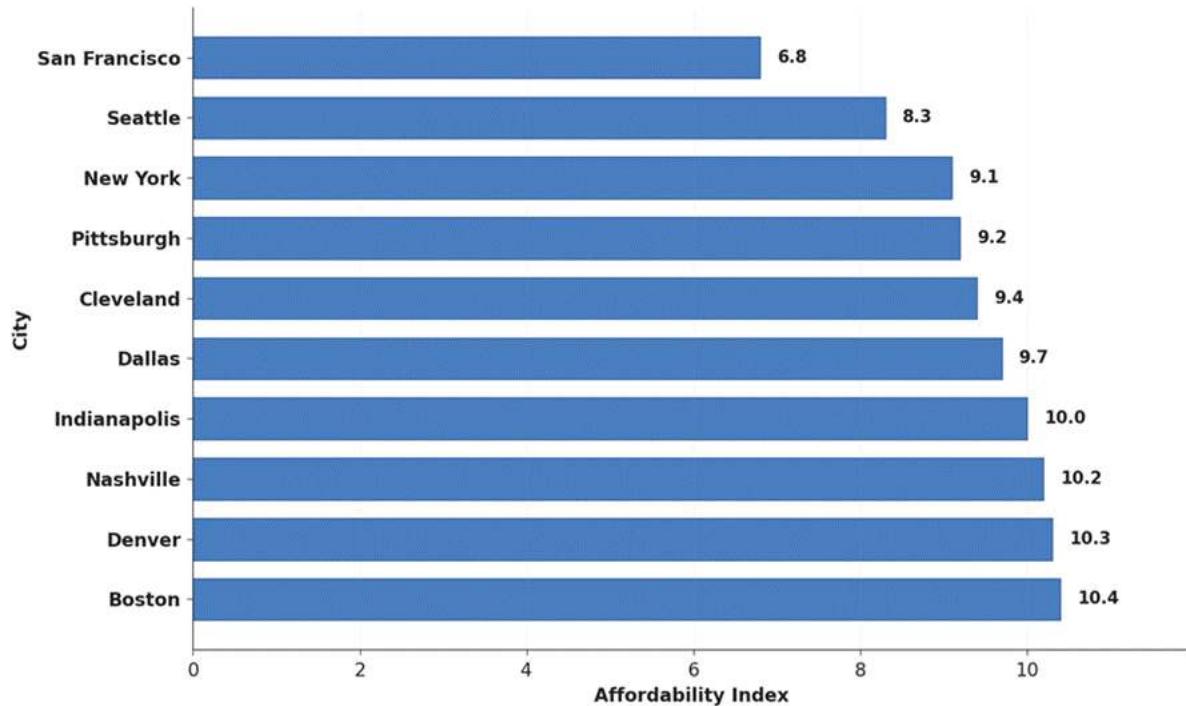
Here's where fans get the best value:

For Travelers: Which City Has the Cheapest Concert Tickets?



Rank	City	Median Price
1	Cleveland, OH	\$68
2	Pittsburgh, PA	\$71
3	Indianapolis, IN	\$80
4	Dallas, TX	\$90
5	New York, NY	\$91
6	Nashville, TN	\$91
7	San Francisco, CA	\$92
8	Seattle, WA	\$93
9	Phoenix, AZ	\$97
10	Houston, TX	\$97

For Locals: Where Are Concerts Most Affordable for Residents?



Rank	City	Index
1	San Francisco, CA	6.8
2	Seattle, WA	8.3
3	New York, NY	9.1
4	Pittsburgh, PA	9.2

5	Cleveland, OH	9.4
6	Dallas, TX	9.7
7	Indianapolis, IN	10
8	Nashville, TN	10.2
9	Denver, CO	10.3
10	Boston, MA	10.4

Note: The lower the index value, the more affordable the ticket price. The affordability index measures each city's median ticket prices in relation to its median income.

Additionally, the median ticket prices here reflect only entry-level seats; premium tickets can often cost 10 to 20 times more.

What the Data Reveals

\$68 Cleveland: Cheapest Concert Tickets in the USA for Travelers

Cleveland beats every major city in the country on ticket price alone.

At just \$68 per ticket, catching a show here costs almost half of what fans pay in Austin (\$150) or Las Vegas (\$140). For anyone planning a concert trip on a budget, Cleveland is the clear winner.

6.8 SF Index: San Francisco Concert Tickets Most Affordable for Residents Despite High Cost of Living

This may sound counterintuitive given San Francisco's cost of living, but for live music, residents get the best deal in the country.

The city has the lowest Affordability Index at 6.8, meaning concert tickets account for just 0.068% of what the typical resident earns in a year. Compare that with Las Vegas, where the index is 17.5, almost three times higher. There, buying a concert ticket takes up a much larger share of what residents earn.

In San Francisco, higher incomes make a \$92 ticket feel far more affordable, turning it into one of the easiest cities to attend concerts regularly.

9.1 NYC Index: New York Concert Prices Offer Strong Value for Both Travelers and Locals

New York is one of the few cities that ranks in the top 10 for both travelers and locals.

Travelers pay just \$91 per ticket, ranking #5 cheapest overall. For locals, an Affordability Index of 9.1 (placed #3), meaning a concert ticket takes less than 0.9% of the typical resident's yearly income.

Whether visiting for a short trip or living there year round, concerts in New York offer solid value. With major venues like Madison Square Garden, Barclays Center, and MetLife Stadium, competition for audiences helps keep prices reasonable.

#4 Pittsburgh: A Hidden Gem in the Top 5 for Affordability

Pittsburgh is rarely thought of as a concert destination, but the data suggests it should be.

It ranks #2 for travelers with tickets at just \$71. It ranks #4 for locals with an Affordability Index of 9.2, meaning concerts take up only a small share of local income.

This top 5 placement in both categories is something few cities can claim. Pittsburgh quietly stands out as one of the best all around cities for affordable live music in America.

\$91 NYC & Nashville: Why the Same Ticket Feels Different

New York and Nashville both charge \$91 for a median-priced concert ticket. But that same price feels very different depending on where people live.

In New York, the median income is \$99,852. An Affordability Index of 9.1 means that a \$91 ticket takes a relatively small expense, most locals barely feel it.

In Nashville, the median income is \$88,800 with an index of 10.2 results the same ticket takes up a larger share of local income, making concerts feel more expensive despite identical ticket prices.

This comparison shows why ticket price alone doesn't capture the full affordability story. How much people earn matters just as much as how much tickets cost.

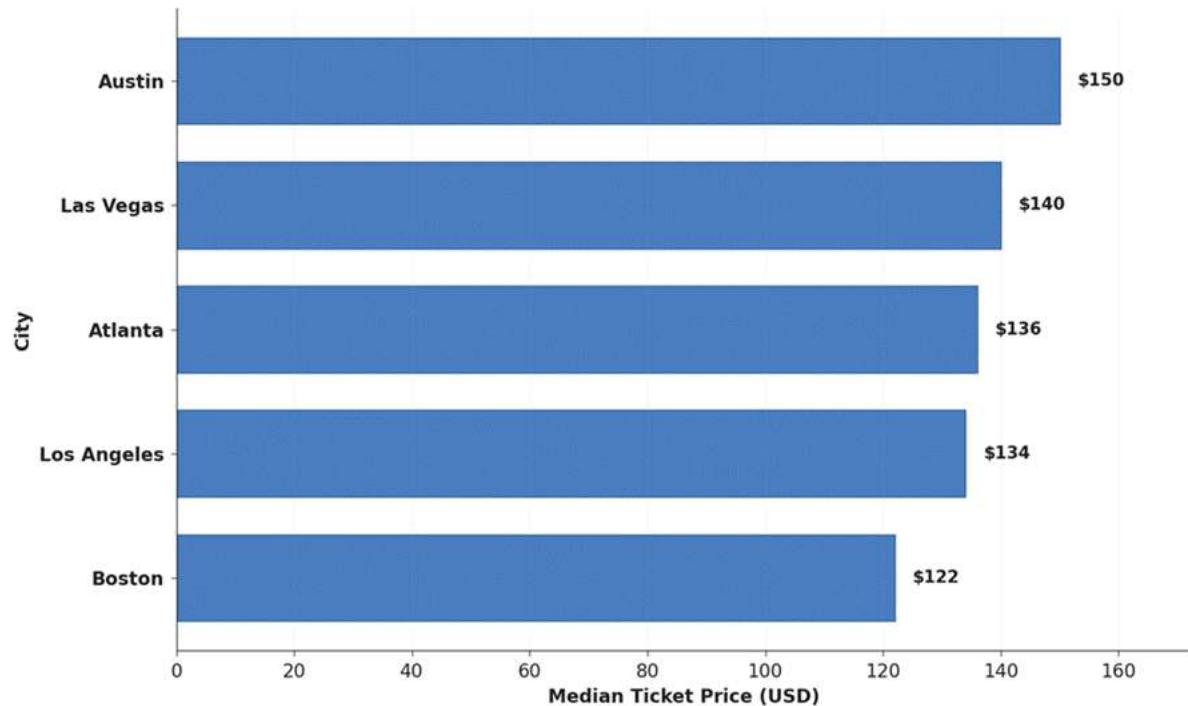
Top 5 Most Expensive Cities for Concert Tickets in America

Which cities should music fans think twice about before buying tickets?

While some high-income cities offer great value, others tell a very different story. Some of the most celebrated music destinations in America are among the priciest. These cities either charge the highest ticket prices, fall near the bottom of the Affordability Index, or both.

Here are the five Most Expensive Cities for Concert Tickets in America:

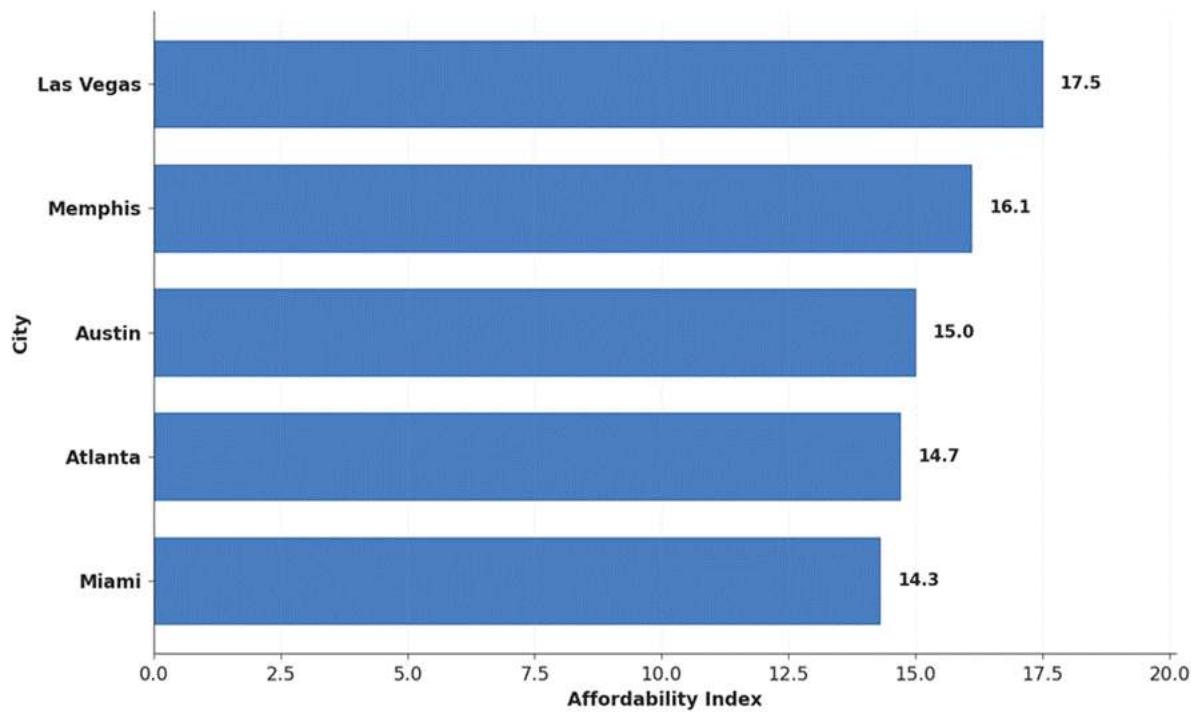
For Travelers: Which City Charges the Most for Concert Tickets?



Rank	City	Median Price
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20	Austin, TX	\$150
19	Las Vegas, NV	\$140
18	Atlanta, GA	\$136
17	Los Angeles, CA	\$134
16	Boston, MA	\$122

For Locals: Where Are Concerts Least Affordable for Residents?



Rank	City	Index
20	Las Vegas, NV	17.5
19	Memphis, TN	16.1
18	Austin, TX	15
17	Atlanta, GA	14.7

16	Miami, FL	14.3
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What the Data Reveals

\$150 Austin: Most Expensive Concert Tickets in America

At \$150 per ticket, Austin stands as the least affordable city for concert goers. That's more than double the cost of a ticket in Cleveland (\$68).

The price of one concert in Austin could cover two tickets in Pittsburgh (\$71 each) with money left over. The "Live Music Capital of the World" has become one of the priciest places to actually experience live music.

17.5 Las Vegas Index: Highest Affordability Index

Las Vegas has the highest Affordability Index at 17.5, meaning concerts take a larger share of resident income than anywhere else.

A \$140 concert ticket in Las Vegas represents 0.175% of the typical resident's annual income of \$80,028. In San Francisco, a \$92 ticket represents just 0.068% of local income at \$135,590.

Even though Las Vegas tickets cost \$48 more than San Francisco's, the real gap is much wider. Relative to income, the cost feels nearly three times higher. For locals, attending a concert is less of a casual weekend plan and more of a planned expense.

Atlanta Appears in Both Bottom Five Lists

Austin and Las Vegas get the most attention for high prices, but Atlanta also appears in the bottom five of both tables.

It ranks #18 for travelers at \$136 per ticket, exactly double Cleveland's \$68. It also ranks #17 for locals with an Affordability Index of 14.7, nearly twice San Francisco's 6.8.

For a city with a median income of \$92,496, concert tickets consume a disproportionate share of local earnings, placing Atlanta among the least affordable concert markets in the country.

Region by Region Analysis: Where Concert Tickets Cost the Least

Concert ticket prices vary significantly by region across the United States.

The Midwest is the cheapest, with fans there paying just \$88 on average. The Northeast comes next at \$95. The West costs \$111, and the South is the priciest at \$113.

Even so, every region has a budget friendly city. Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Dallas, and San Francisco top their respective regions.

Here is a closer look at each:

Region	Cities Included	Cheapest City	Cheapest Price	Regional Avg
Midwest	Cleveland, Indianapolis, Cincinnati, Chicago	Cleveland, OH	\$68	\$88
Northeast	Pittsburgh, New York, Boston	Pittsburgh, PA	\$71	\$95
West	San Francisco, Seattle, Phoenix, Denver, LA, Las Vegas	San Francisco, CA	\$92	\$111

South	Dallas, Nashville, Houston, Memphis, Miami, Atlanta, Austin	Dallas, TX	\$90	\$113
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The Midwest Has the Lowest Concert Ticket Prices in America

Among all U.S. regions, the Midwest consistently offers the lowest concert ticket prices.

Cleveland stands out with an average ticket price of \$68, the lowest in the country.

Indianapolis follows at \$80. Even Chicago, the largest city in the region, remains relatively affordable at \$103 compared to other major markets.

Overall, a concert ticket in the Midwest averages \$88, roughly \$24 less than in other parts of the country.

Pittsburgh Offers the Best Value for Concert Tickets in the Northeast

The Northeast includes several high-profile music markets, yet Pittsburgh offers the best value in the region. At \$71 per ticket, it ranks among the most affordable cities nationwide.

New York City comes in at \$91, which is pretty good for such a big place. Boston sits at the top of the regional range at \$122, pulling the regional average to about \$95.

San Francisco Offers the Cheapest Concert Tickets on the West Coast

On the West Coast, San Francisco offers the lowest average ticket price at \$92.

Seattle is close behind at \$93. Phoenix is also a good deal at \$97. Things get pricier moving toward Denver (\$111), Los Angeles (\$134), and Las Vegas (\$140).

As a result, the West's regional average lands at about \$111, making cities like San Francisco and Seattle the most budget-friendly options in the region.

Dallas Stands Out as the South's Most Affordable Concert City

Ticket prices in the South vary widely, and Dallas is the best deal at just \$90.

Nashville, the home of country music, is close at \$91. Houston is \$97, and Memphis is \$110. Things cost more in Miami (\$115) and Atlanta (\$136). Austin is the most expensive city in the whole country at \$150.

With a regional average of \$113, Dallas remains the most accessible option for concert-goers in the South.

Does the Same Concert Cost More in Some Cities?

The city rankings reveal clear affordability patterns, but does the same hold true when following a single artist across their tour?

Ticket prices for some of the biggest names in music performing across multiple U.S. cities confirm the trend.

Ed Sheeran's Stadium Tour: Concert Costs 76% More in Las Vegas Than New York

In New York, the #3 most affordable city; entry-level tickets start at just \$66. In Las Vegas, ranked dead last for affordability, the same tour costs \$116. That's a 76% premium for Vegas fans seeing the exact same show.

Cardi B Concert Tickets Cost 65% More in Atlanta Than Seattle

Cardi B tickets in Seattle, the #2 most affordable cities, start at \$93. In Atlanta, ranked #17, the same concert costs \$153, a 65% markup.

Lady Gaga Tickets Vary by Over \$100 Depending on the City

Lady Gaga tickets in Austin (#18) cost \$293, in Miami (#16) they're \$386, while Atlanta offers entry at \$183. Fans in Atlanta pay \$110 less than Austin fans and over \$200 less than Miami fans for the same tour.

The fans in top-ranked cities pay less; fans in bottom-ranked cities pay more, regardless of the artist or genre.

Why Some Cities Have Cheaper Concerts Than Others

So what drives live music affordability and the concert ticket affordability index? It's not just about ticket prices or high income on their own, it's about concert prices vs income by city and how they relate to each other.

Why Some High-Cost Cities Still Rank Among the Most Affordable for Concerts

Some of the most expensive cities in America actually rank at the top for concert affordability, not because tickets are cheap, but because residents earn enough to afford them comfortably.

San Francisco and Seattle prove that high cost of living does not automatically mean overpriced concerts.

In both cities, median household incomes significantly outpace ticket prices, reducing the share of income required to attend live events. As a result, concerts remain accessible for local fans even when headline ticket prices appear high.

Concert Venue Competition Pricing: Why More Venues Mean Lower Ticket Prices

When a city has multiple large venues, they have to compete for the same audience. That competition tends to keep prices more reasonable.

New York City has 3 major concert venues (Madison Square Garden, MetLife Stadium, Barclays Center). Austin has just 1 (Moody Center). NYC's median ticket price: \$91. Austin's: \$150.

This isn't a coincidence. With Madison Square Garden, MetLife Stadium, and Barclays Center all vying for audiences, New York venues must keep pricing competitive or risk empty seats. Austin's Moody Center, as the only major arena in town, faces no such pressure.

Destination Cities Charge More for Concert Tickets

Cities that market themselves as must-visit destinations can charge more because fans are willing to travel specifically for the experience.

The concert ticket isn't just for the music; it's for the bragging rights, the atmosphere, and the story.

These cities consistently attract out-of-town audiences, which sustains higher pricing even when local affordability is lower.

That premium is part of why the biggest-name destinations land near the bottom of the rankings.

Our Methodology

We analyzed concert ticket prices and household income data across 20 major U.S. cities to determine where live music is most and least affordable.

Cities were selected based on the presence of an active concert scene with regular major artist tours such as Beyoncé, Taylor Swift, and Ed Sheeran; broad geographic representation across U.S. regions and venues with seating capacities of at least 10,000, based on Wikipedia and Pollstar rankings.

Ticket Prices

We analyzed 600+ ticket price points from SeatGeek and Vivid Seats between December 2025 and October 2026, recording the lowest available price for 10–15 concerts per venue and calculating the median ticket price for each city.

Income Data

We sourced median household income data for each city from the U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts, allowing us to compare concert ticket prices against local earning power.

Affordability Index

We created an index to show how ticket prices relate to income. Lower index values mean concerts are more affordable for locals.

Why Median

We used median values to reduce distortion from premium or VIP ticket prices and ultra-high earners, ensuring ticket costs and household income reflect what typical residents pay and earn in each city.

Affordability Index Formula

$$\text{Affordability Index} = (\text{City Median Ticket Price} / \text{City Median Household Income}) \times 10,000$$

How to interpret the index:

- Lower index = More affordable (tickets cost a smaller share of income)
- Higher index = Less affordable (tickets cost a larger share of income)

Limitations

- Price fluctuations: resale prices change with demand, timing, and seat availability.
- Income variations: city-wide medians do not reflect neighborhood-level differences.
- Resale vs. face value: collected prices come from resale markets and may differ from original ticket prices.

Wiingy Research Team

The Wiingy Research Team includes Shifa as the Lead Researcher, along with Sharanya and Suhani. Together, they focus on data-driven studies that uncover emerging trends and meaningful insights. Their collaborative research plays a key role in guiding Wiingy's innovation and strategy.

Each member brings unique expertise, curiosity, and analytical thinking to the team. Through their work, the team continues to strengthen Wiingy's research foundation and impact.

Their insights drive the development of new initiatives and inform data-backed decisions that shape Wiingy's future.

By staying ahead of industry trends, they ensure Wiingy remains a leader in the evolving education landscape.

About Wiingy

Wiingy is a top-rated tutoring marketplace that connects school students, college students, and young adults with over 4,500 expert-vetted tutors for 350+ subjects including coding, math, science, computer science, AP, test-prep, language learning, and music. Moreover, Wiingy's CoTutor AI application turns live lessons into engaging podcasts & review tools.

We are committed to providing our students with the highest quality education possible. We vet each tutor meticulously. Our tutors are highly qualified and experienced, and most importantly they are passionate about helping students learn.

In addition to our paid lessons, we also offer a number of free resources, including web tutorials, practice problems, and study guides. We believe that everyone should have access to high-quality education, regardless of their financial situation. Since our inception, we have helped over 20,000 students across 50+ countries reach their learning goals. Find out more at Wiingy.com.

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