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# 2016 Safest Places in Indiana

by Susan Gulliford

The 6.6 million people who call Indiana home care about safety so the team at ValuePenguin analyzed the latest FBI Crime Report to determine the safest places in the Hoosier State. These 90 cities with populations of at least 5,000 have crime scores that range from 298 to 5,840. The average crime score for the state is 1,874.

The major takeaway is that suburbs dominate the safest places. Interestingly, these suburbs are not necessarily small, bedroom communities. Two suburbs with populations of over 75,000 made it into the top five. The full report is below.

## 5 Safest Places in Indiana

These cities have an average final crime score of 383, which is 80% lower than their typical peer in the state. The team at ValuePenguin determined that these five are the safest cities in the Indiana.

### 1. Zionsville

This Indianapolis suburb comes in at number one. The population grew almost 12% from the 2010 census, yet this town stayed safe. It had the lowest rate of property crime of any community in this research. The police department runs a “Teen Academy” that educates young people on topics such as identity theft and internet usage. This community is very affluent. The median household income for Zionsville was 2.1 times the state’s median, and nearly 70% of the adult residents held at least a bachelor’s degree.

## 2. New Whiteland

With a population of 5,793, New Whiteland is the smallest community in the top five. It is approximately a 27-minute drive south of Indianapolis. New Whiteland had only two violent crimes reported in 2014, and it had the fourth-lowest rate of property crime for any community in this research. The residents had a median household income of \$50,757, which was only \$2,000 above the state’s median.

## 3. St. John

The top community in the mid-size category comes in at number three overall. St. John is in northwest Indiana, approximately 24 miles southeast of Chicago. It had the second lowest rate of property crime in addition to a low rate of violent crime. This town had a low rate of poverty and a median household income 92% higher than the state’s median.

## 4. Carmel

With a population of 87,555, Carmel is the largest city in the top five. This suburb north of Indianapolis reported a mere 12 violent crimes in 2014 and had the sixth-lowest rate of property crime. The police department offers a number of programs such as Business Watch and Neighborhood Crime Watch to keep the city safe. Carmel is an affluent suburb with a median household income 2.2 times the state’s median, a very low poverty rate and a high percentage of adults (nearly 69%) with at least a bachelor’s degree.

## 5. Fishers

This large (population of 85,597) Indianapolis suburb comes in at number five. It had low rates of both violent and property crime. In addition to traditional programs, the Fishers police department offers a safety link program for seniors. Fishers is another town with a high median household income -- 88% above Indiana’s median -- as well as low poverty rate and a highly educated population.

## Population Breakdown

Although we adjusted for population in our crime rankings, it is still difficult to compare a small town to a large city. To account for this fact, we separated the safest cities into three categories: towns with populations between 5,000 and 10,000, midsize cities with populations between 10,000 and 25,000, and larger cities with populations greater than 25,000. Here are our findings:

# Safest Places in Indiana (2016)

Large	OVER 25K	Mid-sized	10K - 25K	Small	5 - 10K
1	Zionsville	1	St. John	1	New Whiteland
2	Carmel	2	Dyer	2	North Manchester
3	Fishers	3	Greensburg	3	Tell City
4	West Lafayette	4	Jasper	4	Nappanee
5	Westfield	5	Munster	5	Alexandria
6	Valparaiso	6	Auburn	6	Danville
7	Portage	7	Greenfield	7	Bargersville
8	Plainfield	8	Brownsburg	8	Columbia City
9	Goshen	9	Cedar Lake	9	Sellersburg
10	Bloomington	10	New Haven	10	Decatur

Data supplied by

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## Full List of Places in Indiana

Below is the entire list of places that we included in our “Safest Places in Indiana” study. They are listed from the safest to the least safe, according to our analysis. The calculation for the crime scores can be found in the methodology section below. Take a look at the graph and see where your hometown ranks.

Rank	City	Crime Score
1	Zionsville	298
2	New Whiteland	299
3	St. John	320

Rank	City	Crime Score
4	Carmel	488
5	Fishers	511
6	North Manchester	580
7	Dyer	656
8	West Lafayette	687
9	Greensburg	690
10	Westfield	749
11	Tell City	762
12	Nappanee	770
13	Jasper	787
14	Alexandria	825
15	Danville	848
16	Bargersville	850
17	Columbia City	855
18	Sellersburg	873

## Year-over-year Change

The top five was remarkably consistent. Four out of the five cities made the safest places list both years. Interestingly, the lone new entrant, St. John, replaced another northwest Indiana community, Dyer.

There were other consistencies as well. In both [2015](#) and 2016, the top five consisted of three cities from the large category, one city from the mid-size category and one city from the small category. Four Indianapolis suburbs and one Chicago suburb made up the safest places.

There was consistency at the other end of the survey. Indianapolis had the highest crime score for both years. Overall, three of the five least safest cities from 2015 were in the bottom five for 2016.

Safest Places in Indiana 2015 vs. 2016	2015	2016
	1 Zionsville	1 Zionsville
	2 New Whiteland	2 New Whiteland
	3 Carmel	3 St. John
	4 Fishers	4 Carmel
	5 Dyer	5 Fishers

## Methodology

To rank these places, we collected data from the 2014 FBI crime statistics by city, which provides the most recent crime data available. Not every town participates in this report and we also excluded towns with fewer than 5,000 residents because towns with small populations are more sensitive to crime score fluctuations for fewer crimes committed. The raw data report included property crimes (burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson), and violent crimes (murder/manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault) from all law enforcement agencies that chose to partake in the FBI Uniform Crime Reporting program.

We standardized the data to reflect violent and property crimes per 100,000, to account for population. Then, we aggregated a “crime score” by weighting violent crime at 80% and property crime at 20%. Though property crime is more prevalent, we figured that violent crime is more concerning to town residents. Then we adjusted the crime score for population size, giving more slack to larger cities. Finally, we ranked the cities based on their crime scores.

Here is an alphabetical table of all cities included with their ranks, making it easier to compare different cities. See where your city lies!

Rank	City	Population	Violent Crime per 100K	Property Crime per 100K	Crime Score
14	Alexandria	5,075	20	2,148	825
75	Anderson	55,545	342	4,483	2,776
44	Angola	8,661	46	4,237	1,741
21	Auburn	12,797	63	2,110	969

Rank	City	Population	Violent Crime per 100K	Property Crime per 100K	Crime Score
68	Avon	14,009	378	4,404	2,454
16	Bargersville	6,554	46	2,045	850
46	Bedford	13,372	112	3,799	1,753
54	Beech Grove	14,536	172	4,300	2,076
57	Bloomington	83,075	354	2,968	2,157
38	Bluffton	9,959	10	3,504	1,417
53	Boonville	6,198	629	2,662	1,964
24	Brownsburg	23,539	187	1,529	995
4	Carmel	87,555	14	932	488
25	Cedar Lake	11,736	170	1,892	1,047
30	Charlestown	8,091	12	2,830	1,125
88	Clarksville	21,858	554	8,015	4,439

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