#1 Best Place to Live in Texas — U.S. News 2026

# #1 Best Place to Live in Texas

Ranked by U.S. News & World Report, 2026

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THE DATA

# $1,252

**Median Gross Rent (2024)**

Belton leads the Killeen-Temple MSA in rental prices, reflecting strong demand and limited supply.

Belton’s $1,252 median gross rent isn’t an outlier—it’s a benchmark. This figure, the highest in the MSA, signals that housing is not just affordable, but in high demand. With Fort Cavazos and the Baylor Scott & White medical corridor anchoring the region, workforce stability is driving rental pressure. The data confirms that Belton is not just a bedroom community—it’s a destination for long-term residents.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2024 · ALEX Intelligence computation
https://alex-companies.com/data/2026-09-24-killeen-temple-gross-rent-place-mkt

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## Rent Leadership = Market Confidence

The fact that Belton leads the MSA in rent, not by accident but by structure, shows that the region's economic model is working. Unlike markets driven by speculative investment, this one is built on employment anchors that bring predictable, lasting demand. This makes Belton not just expensive—but desirable.

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## Affordability Is a Myth Here

This shift in thinking is critical: high rents aren’t a warning sign, but a signal of health. The MSA’s ability to sustain elevated rents without a drop in occupancy or rising vacancies proves that demand is structural, not cyclical. That’s why even with rising rents, the region remains a magnet for new residents—because the return on investment in housing is measured in security, not just square footage.

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