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Safest Cities in the Mountain West

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SAFEST CITIES IN THE MOUNTAIN WEST

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PURPOSE:

This fact sheet examines *AdvisorSmith*'s ranking list of the safest U.S. cities, drawing from the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) dataset released in September 2021.¹ Monthly crime data are presented for violent crimes (e.g. murder, rape, robbery, assault) and property crimes (e.g. burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft). Data for the Mountain West states of Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah are included.

ABOUT THE DATA:

AdvisorSmith's rankings are calculated using the number of crimes reported to the FBI's UCR dataset. The dataset compiles crime reports from more than 18,000 agencies, including city, university, college, county, state, tribal, and federal law enforcement entities. Agencies participate voluntarily by submitting their crime data through a state UCR program, or directly to the FBI's UCR program.

This fact sheet focuses on crime rates in Mountain West cities. "City" is defined by *AdvisorSmith* as "legally incorporated municipalities."² Crimes include violent (robbery, assault, rape, murder) or property-based (burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft) in nature. To account for the severity of violent crimes, *AdvisorSmith* uses a propriety crime score, weighing them higher than property crimes. The propriety score is based on an applied multiplier and added to simple assault and property crimes to form a crime score for each city. A lower crime score (closer to 0) indicates a city experiencing less crime. Violent and property crimes are assessed per 1,000 residents per year. The original report divides the cities into three groups based on population size: small, midsize, and large.

Small City	Midsize City	Large City
Populations between 10,000 to 99,999 residents	Populations between 100,000 to 300,000 residents	Populations greater than 300,000 residents

To ensure accuracy of results, the original report includes cities that provided at least six months of data, but less than 12 months, and scaled up the months reported to a proportional amount of crime for the year.

KEY FINDINGS:

1. Only one small city in the Mountain West is ranked among the 100 safest nationally: Frederick, CO (44th).
2. Among Mountain West states, Arizona has the most midsize cities (n=5) ranked among the 100 safest nationally: Gilbert (13th), Surprise (23rd), Scottsdale (40th), Peoria (54th), and Chandler (58th).
3. Henderson, NV (2nd) and Mesa, AZ (6th) rank in the top 10 safest large cities in the country.

Table 1 displays the safest small cities in the Mountain West. Only one small city in the Mountain West is ranked among the 100 safest nationally: Frederick, CO (44th).

¹ Advisor Smith Solutions Inc. "Safest Cities in America," (2021). <https://advisorsmith.com/data/safest-cities-in-america/>

² Ibid

Table 1: Safest Small Cities in the Mountain West

Small City	Rank	Population	Violent Crimes Per 1k people	Property Crimes per 1k people	Crime Score
Frederick, CO	44	14,712	0.7	3.3	5.2

*Adapted from Advisor Smith Solutions Inc. "Safest Cities in America," (2020).

Table 2 shows a total of nine midsize cities in the Mountain West that rank among the top 100 nationally. Gilbert, Arizona has a larger population than six of the other midsize cities listed in the Mountain West region and is ranked 13th out of 100 entries. Gilbert, Arizona also has the lowest property crimes per 100,000 people (10.8), and crime score of 24.9. Among midsize Mountain West cities, Centennial, Colorado has the lowest violent crimes per 100,000 people (4.3). There are no midsize cities from Nevada and New Mexico ranked among the top 100.

Table 2: Safest Midsize Cities in the Mountain West

Midsize City	Rank	Population	Violent Crimes per 1k people	Property Crimes per 1k people	Crime Score
Gilbert, AZ	13	259,629	7.8	10.8	24.9
Centennial, CO	19	112,104	4.3	17.7	28.6
Surprise, AZ	23	144,620	7.9	13.9	30.0
Fort Collins, CO	38	173,274	6.3	18.7	36.1
Scottsdale, AZ	40	263,006	7.1	18.8	36.6
Peoria, AZ	54	178,486	9.9	15.0	39.7
Chandler, AZ	58	264,071	9.6	18.5	40.5
West Jordan, UT	82	117,955	10.9	25.3	50.1
Arvada, CO	88	119,700	6.2	32.5	51.4

*Adapted from Advisor Smith Solutions Inc. "Safest Cities in America," (2021).

Table 3 shows a total of nine large cities in the Mountain West that rank among the top 100 nationally. Henderson, Nevada has the smallest population compared to the other large cities in the Mountain West, with the lowest rate of violent crime per 100,000 people (10.7), lowest property crimes per 100,000 people (14.3), and the lowest crime score (36.8). Phoenix, Arizona has the largest population in comparison to the other Mountain West cities and is ranked at 30th out of 100 entries.

Table 3: Safest Large Cities in the Mountain West

City	Rank	Population	Violent Crimes Per 1k people	Property Crimes per 1k people	Crime Score
Henderson, NV	2	328,056	10.7	14.3	36.8
Mesa, AZ	6	527,361	12.0	18.5	51.0
Las Vegas, NV	17	1,693,061	24.2	22.1	75.5
Colorado Springs, CO	21	485,083	11.6	33.8	78.8
Phoenix, AZ	30	1,708,960	22.4	29.9	95.2
Tucson, AZ	32	550,448	21.2	36.2	96.1
Denver, CO	40	737,709	16.5	46.5	110.1
Aurora, CO	45	334,644	24.3	39.1	120.5
Albuquerque, NM	52	562,065	26.9	50.1	147.9

*Adapted from Advisor Smith Solutions Inc. "Safest Cities in America," (2020).