



Where are the Highest Paying Tech Jobs in the US?

Cost of Living Adjusted Salaries Report 2016

Since the Global Financial Crisis, salary growth has remained sluggish for many workers in the US and around the world. However when it comes to tech roles, it's a different story. Here, employer demand continues to outstrip talent supply, and stiff competition for individuals with in-demand skills places upward pressure on salaries. Little wonder, then, that tech jobs often feature heavily on “best-paid” lists.

However, without adjustments for cost of living, these salary lists are limited in what they can tell us about compensation across cities. For instance, an app developer in San Francisco may on average earn an annual salary of about \$108,000, but **a median rent of \$3,357** means that housing could take up to about 37% of monthly income in The City by the Bay. By contrast, an app developer in Austin may on average earn “only” \$87,700 a year—but just 23% of monthly income is required to cover the median rent of \$1,693 in the capital of Texas. Which app developer is better off?

To understand the value of a salary, it must be set in context. This is important not only for job seekers, who want to know where they will be best rewarded for their skills, but also for employers, who are engaged in a fierce competition to attract talent. In fact, Indeed data show that tech workers increasingly focus their job hunting efforts on four cities: San Francisco, San Jose, Seattle and Austin. Incentivizing those with in-demand skills to pick one of these major tech hubs over the other, or (an even harder task) to accept a job somewhere else in a local economy that is dominated by industries other than tech, requires employers to come up with convincing and competitive offers.

In this report, we combine Indeed salary data from postings and reviews for 15 different tech job titles in the top 15 cities in our ranking of **tech job search destinations**. We then adjusted these average salaries for differences in cost of living using the most recent Regional Price Parities (RPP) data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis. The result? A salary report that provides insight into the highest paid tech jobs in real terms—and where they can be found.

App Developer



San Francisco, CA

Average annual salary: \$108,000

Median rent: \$3,357

% of salary spent on rent:

37%



Austin, TX

Average annual salary: \$87,700

Median rent: \$1,693

% of salary spent on rent:

23%



Job titles covered in this report

(ranked by the city with the highest adjusted salary)

IT Security Specialist

Software Architect

Data Scientist

Database Administrator

Software Engineer

Devops Engineer

Java Developer

Mobile Developer

Software Developer

Front-end Developer

.NET Developer

Web Developer

App Developer

Quality Analyst

Data Analyst

Overall Ranking of US Cities for Tech Salaries

Before we break down our salary data by role and city, let's take a quick look at the big picture. The table below features a ranking of the average of the 15 tech salaries in each of our 15 US cities, with and without the cost of living adjustment.

Top 15 cities for tech search ranked by salary (unadjusted vs. adjusted)

	Average Salary (unadjusted)		Average Salary (adjusted)
1. San Francisco, CA	\$113,497	1. Austin, TX	\$95,247
2. San Jose, CA	\$111,925	2. Seattle, WA	\$91,242
3. New York, NY	\$109,765	3. San Francisco, CA	\$90,457
4. Los Angeles, CA	\$98,346	4. Chicago, IL	\$89,091
5. Seattle, WA	\$98,215	5. Dallas, TX	\$88,717
6. Boston, MA	\$97,266	6. San Jose, CA	\$88,085
7. Arlington, VA	\$96,605	7. Boston, MA	\$86,664
8. Chicago, IL	\$95,386	8. Salt Lake City, UT	\$85,395
9. Washington, DC	\$94,857	9. New York, NY	\$85,287
10. Austin, TX	\$94,025	10. Denver, CO	\$84,273
11. San Diego, CA	\$93,011	11. Minneapolis, MN	\$82,089
12. Dallas, TX	\$89,433	12. Los Angeles, CA	\$80,939
13. Denver, CO	\$88,523	13. Arlington, VA	\$77,477
14. Salt Lake City, UT	\$85,139	14. San Diego, CA	\$76,641
15. Minneapolis, MN	\$84,367	15. Washington, DC	\$76,075

The significant change in rankings is immediately apparent once we account for cost of living differences. The unadjusted list is predictably dominated by cities with the highest cost of living—San Francisco, San Jose and New York City. With the cost of living adjustment, Austin tops our list with the highest average salary for our tech titles. In fact, Austin has the greatest adjusted salary for seven different titles. However, rising costs in the Texas capital, driven by strong population growth, mean the burgeoning tech hub may not retain this position in coming years.

Of the other well-known tech hubs, only Seattle and San Francisco remain strongly competitive, rounding out the top three. Demand for tech skills in these two cities is strong enough to offset their high living costs. San Jose, however, drops to #6 on the list. It may be the unofficial capital of Silicon Valley, but salary-wise, tech workers are better off in Dallas and Chicago. Meanwhile Arlington, plummets from #5 on the unadjusted list to #13 on the adjusted list, only slightly higher than neighboring Washington DC. Clearly, many government tech jobs just aren't competitive salary-wise with the private sector.

Also of note is the relatively poor performance of New York City, which drops to #9 once adjusted. Tech positions have in recent years taken on a growing role in the city's dominant financial sector, and yet the majority of cities on our list pay more for tech talent. Strikingly, Denver lands in tenth place, only just missing out on the bottom third despite leading Forbes' best places for business and careers [list](#) in 2015.

The rest of the report is organized by tech role, from highest paid to lowest paid, and city breakdowns within each section. If you're a job seeker who wants to know where your skills are most highly valued—or an employer who wants to know what you'll have to offer to attract the brightest and the best, then read on.

Where do employers and employees both get best value?

Although employers and job seekers have shared interests, they do not always align perfectly. Job seekers want to maximize the return on their skills, while employers need to keep costs as low as reasonably possible to maximize profit. Through a comparison of our list of unadjusted salaries (which represents the cost to employers) and our cost of living adjusted salaries (workers' return for their labor), we can see which cities approach this equilibrium.

The following list reveals the cities where labor costs are lowest to the business, but compensation gives employees a higher standard of living. Firms that consider these factors when planning where to open a new office are likely not only to reduce costs, but also to boost employee satisfaction and improve retention.

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1. **Austin, TX**

 2. **Salt Lake City, UT**

 3. **Dallas, TX**

 4. **Minneapolis, MN**

 5. **Denver, CO**

 6. **Chicago, IL**

 7. **Seattle, WA**

 8. **Boston, MA**

 9. **San Diego, CA**

 10. **Los Angeles, CA**

 11. **Washington, DC**

 12. **Arlington, VA**

 13. **San Francisco, CA**

 14. **San Jose, CA**

 15. **New York, NY**



IT Security Specialist

Minneapolis, MN:
\$127,757

Perhaps surprisingly, the highest paid city is not in Silicon Valley or another tech hub, but Minneapolis. Note however that this is the headquarters of retail giant Target, which suffered a much-publicized security breach in late 2013. Target's post-breach efforts at attracting top security talent may be reflected in this result.

Seattle places second, making it the best-performing of the big four tech hubs—while San Jose performs most poorly, coming in at #10.

NYC, despite its giant finance sector, which is highly attractive to cyber criminals, is a weak performer, only placing eleventh.

The lowest-paid security workers are in Arlington, VA. Their salaries are 72% (\$53,502) lower than those of their peers in Minneapolis. Arlington's low ranking, coupled with Washington DC at #12, suggest that government IT security jobs (or at least those advertised publicly), are considerably less lucrative than those in the private sector.

	Average salary (adjusted)	\$ amount higher than closest salary	% higher than closest salary	Average salary (unadjusted)
1. Minneapolis, MN	\$127,757	\$8,408	7.0%	\$131,302
2. Seattle, WA	\$119,349	\$2	0.0%	\$128,470
3. San Francisco, CA	\$119,346	\$1,456	1.2%	\$149,744
4. Dallas, TX	\$117,890	\$582	0.5%	\$118,841
5. Denver, CO	\$117,308	\$6,004	5.4%	\$123,222
6. Chicago, IL	\$111,303	\$1,113	1.0%	\$119,168
7. Austin, TX	\$110,190	\$3,984	3.8%	\$108,776
8. Salt Lake City, UT	\$106,207	\$3,935	3.8%	\$105,889
9. New York, NY	\$102,271	\$3,197	3.2%	\$131,623
10. San Jose, CA	\$99,075	\$771	0.8%	\$125,889
11. San Diego, CA	\$98,303	\$6,113	6.6%	\$119,300
12. Washington, DC	\$92,191	\$3,738	4.2%	\$114,951
13. Boston, MA	\$88,453	\$2,381	2.8%	\$99,274
14. Los Angeles, CA	\$86,072	\$11,818	15.9%	\$104,584
15. Arlington, VA	\$74,254			\$92,587

Software Architect

Austin, TX:
\$123,710

Austin takes the lead, beating out its closest competitor by nearly 8%.

Salt Lake City outperforms all other tech and finance centers, perhaps reflecting the impact of the strong local banking and finance sector.

Apart from the gap between Austin and Salt Lake City, relative differences in wages for this profession are less dramatic.

Tech hub Seattle—home to Amazon and Microsoft—is a strikingly weak performer, placing twelfth on the list.

	Average salary (adjusted)	\$ amount higher than closest salary	% higher than closest salary	Average salary (unadjusted)
1. Austin, TX	\$123,710	\$9,045	7.9%	\$122,122
2. Salt Lake City, UT	\$114,665	\$355	0.3%	\$114,322
3. San Jose, CA	\$114,309	\$713	0.6%	\$145,247
4. Dallas, TX	\$113,596	\$2,387	2.1%	\$114,512
5. Denver, CO	\$111,209	\$2,893	2.7%	\$116,816
6. Chicago, IL	\$108,316	\$754	0.7%	\$115,970
7. San Francisco, CA	\$107,562	\$687	0.6%	\$134,958
8. Boston, MA	\$106,875	\$483	0.5%	\$119,950
9. Minneapolis, MN	\$106,392	\$509	0.5%	\$109,345
10. New York, NY	\$105,884	\$541	0.5%	\$136,272
11. San Diego, CA	\$105,342	\$2,654	2.6%	\$127,843
12. Seattle, WA	\$102,689	\$3,539	3.6%	\$110,537
13. Los Angeles, CA	\$99,149	\$6,345	6.8%	\$120,473
14. Arlington, VA	\$92,804	\$1,674	1.8%	\$115,716
15. Washington, DC	\$91,131			\$113,629

Data Scientist

Austin, TX:
\$117,088

Although data scientist is probably the most-hyped tech job today it is not the highest paid, placing third after IT security specialist and software architect.

Not only is Austin the highest paid city for data scientists, but there is a substantial 8.8% (\$9,503) gap between salaries in Austin and closest competitor Chicago.

This role also registers the second biggest gap between highest and lowest paid: data scientist salaries in Austin are 53% (\$40,333) greater than those in Washington DC.

Non-tech hubs are relatively competitive, with Salt Lake City, Dallas, Denver, Chicago and NYC all beating out San Francisco.

	Average salary (adjusted)	\$ amount higher than closest salary	% higher than closest salary	Average salary (unadjusted)
1. Austin, TX	\$117,088	\$9,503	8.8%	\$115,585
2. Chicago, IL	\$107,585	\$2,008	1.9%	\$115,187
3. Seattle, WA	\$105,577	\$5,380	5.4%	\$113,646
4. San Jose, CA	\$100,197	\$227	0.2%	\$127,315
5. Salt Lake City, UT	\$99,970	\$2,096	2.1%	\$99,671
6. Dallas, TX	\$97,874	\$1,105	1.1%	\$98,664
7. Los Angeles, CA	\$96,770	\$2,137	2.3%	\$117,582
8. New York, NY	\$94,632	\$376	0.4%	\$121,792
9. San Francisco, CA	\$94,256	\$5,145	5.8%	\$118,264
10. Boston, MA	\$89,112	\$6,791	8.2%	\$100,013
11. Arlington, VA	\$82,321	\$881	1.1%	\$102,645
12. Minneapolis, MN	\$81,440	\$3,344	4.3%	\$83,700
13. San Diego, CA	\$78,096	\$213	0.3%	\$94,777
14. Denver, CO	\$77,883	\$1,129	1.5%	\$81,810
15. Washington, DC	\$76,754			\$95,704

Database Administrator

Austin, TX:
\$104,277

Austin comes top again, outperforming runner-up Chicago by almost 10% (\$9,286).

None of the other three major tech hubs place in the top five.

Denver also does well, with salaries just a fraction of a decimal point lower than Chicago.

NYC performs poorly, coming in 12th—despite demand for this kind of expertise from its financial sector.

Database administrators in Washington DC may want to consider crossing the Potomac as the five mile drive to Arlington, VA could result in a 3% (\$2,458) bump in earnings.

		Average salary (adjusted)	\$ amount higher than closest salary	% higher than closest salary	Average salary (unadjusted)
1.	Austin, TX	\$104,277	\$9,286	9.8%	\$102,939
2.	Chicago, IL	\$94,991	\$606	0.6%	\$101,703
3.	Denver, CO	\$94,384	\$106	0.1%	\$99,143
4.	Boston, MA	\$94,279	\$2,178	2.4%	\$105,812
5.	Salt Lake City, UT	\$92,101	\$738	0.8%	\$91,825
6.	San Jose, CA	\$91,363	\$892	1.0%	\$116,091
7.	Dallas, TX	\$90,472	\$2,703	3.1%	\$91,201
8.	San Francisco, CA	\$87,769	\$381	0.4%	\$110,124
9.	Seattle, WA	\$87,388	\$533	0.6%	\$94,067
10.	Minneapolis, MN	\$86,855	\$7,244	9.1%	\$89,265
11.	Arlington, VA	\$79,611	\$1,033	1.3%	\$99,265
12.	New York, NY	\$78,578	\$342	0.4%	\$101,129
13.	Los Angeles, CA	\$78,235	\$617	0.8%	\$95,061
14.	San Diego, CA	\$77,619	\$467	0.6%	\$94,197
15.	Washington, DC	\$77,152			\$96,200

Software Engineer

Seattle, WA:
\$100,691

The top three slots are all held by the tech hubs of Seattle, Austin and San Jose (in that order).

One of the strongest showings for San Jose on the overall list.

However, differences between software engineer salaries tend to be incremental, with razor thin differences between some cities: e.g. a mere 0.3% drop between San Jose (#3) and Chicago (#4) and a 0.2% drop between Boston (#8) and Denver (#9).

Dallas, TX places in the top 5 for the first time, while Chicago makes its third appearance.

	Average salary (adjusted)	\$ amount higher than closest salary	% higher than closest salary	Average salary (unadjusted)
1. Seattle, WA	\$100,691	\$2,337	2.5%	\$108,387
2. Austin, TX	\$99,601	\$2,410	2.7%	\$98,323
3. San Jose, CA	\$97,452	\$1,719	1.9%	\$123,827
4. Chicago, IL	\$95,601	\$898	1.0%	\$102,357
5. Dallas, TX	\$95,270	\$856	1.0%	\$96,038
6. San Francisco, CA	\$91,797	\$288	0.3%	\$115,178
7. Salt Lake City, UT	\$89,329	\$3,177	3.8%	\$89,062
8. Boston, MA	\$89,078	\$1,257	1.5%	\$99,975
9. Denver, CO	\$88,866	\$603	0.7%	\$93,347
10. New York, NY	\$87,044	\$3,035	3.9%	\$112,026
11. Minneapolis, MN	\$85,253	\$4,330	5.8%	\$87,619
12. Los Angeles, CA	\$84,507	\$2,200	3.1%	\$102,682
13. Arlington, VA	\$82,452	\$658	0.9%	\$102,808
14. San Diego, CA	\$79,050	\$5,213	7.9%	\$95,934
15. Washington, DC	\$76,417			\$95,282

Devops Engineer

Dallas, TX:
\$103,161

Dallas places first and Austin comes second, making Texas a lucrative state for devops engineers to apply their skills.

Once again Minneapolis performs well, beating out the tech hubs of Seattle and San Jose.

City-by-city differences for devops engineer salaries can be very small: all drops from #4 thru #8 are less than a single percentage point.

San Diego is weakest for devops salaries: \$15,350 separate it from San Francisco, the highest paid Californian city.

	Average salary (adjusted)	\$ amount higher than closest salary	% higher than closest salary	Average salary (unadjusted)
1. Dallas, TX	\$103,161	\$4,360	4.4%	\$103,993
2. Austin, TX	\$98,801	\$3,021	3.2%	\$97,533
3. San Francisco, CA	\$95,780	\$2,397	2.6%	\$120,176
4. Minneapolis, MN	\$93,383	\$171	0.2%	\$95,975
5. Seattle, WA	\$93,213	\$610	0.7%	\$100,337
6. San Jose, CA	\$92,603	\$331	0.4%	\$117,665
7. Chicago, IL	\$92,272	\$211	0.2%	\$98,792
8. Los Angeles, CA	\$92,061	\$441	0.5%	\$111,860
9. Boston, MA	\$91,620	\$2,459	2.8%	\$102,828
10. Denver, CO	\$89,161	\$201	0.2%	\$93,657
11. New York, NY	\$88,960	\$204	0.2%	\$114,491
12. Salt Lake City, UT	\$88,756	\$5,098	6.1%	\$88,491
13. Arlington, VA	\$83,658	\$1,959	2.4%	\$104,312
14. Washington, DC	\$81,699	\$1,269	1.6%	\$101,869
15. San Diego, CA	\$80,430			\$97,610

Java Developer

Austin, TX:
\$99,602

The “classic” tech hubs dominate, with Austin taking first place and San Jose, San Francisco all appearing in the top 5.

That said, although Austin is the clear leader, each city on this list is separated from one another by a very small margin.

Another strong showing for Chicago, which places 4th—and is less than \$100 behind San Francisco.

Minneapolis drops to the bottom, beating out Washington, DC and Arlington, VA for the dubious honor of paying the least to its Java developers.

	Average salary (adjusted)	\$ amount higher than closest salary	% higher than closest salary	Average salary (unadjusted)
1. Austin, TX	\$99,602	\$4,325	4.5%	\$98,324
2. San Jose, CA	\$95,278	\$447	0.5%	\$121,064
3. San Francisco, CA	\$94,830	\$62	0.1%	\$118,984
4. Chicago, IL	\$94,768	\$1,448	1.6%	\$101,465
5. Seattle, WA	\$93,321	\$2,884	3.2%	\$100,453
6. Boston, MA	\$90,437	\$1,062	1.2%	\$101,500
7. Salt Lake City, UT	\$89,374	\$1,074	1.2%	\$89,107
8. Dallas, TX	\$88,301	\$1,284	1.5%	\$89,013
9. New York, NY	\$87,016	\$2,000	2.4%	\$111,990
10. Denver, CO	\$85,016	\$1,876	2.3%	\$89,303
11. Los Angeles, CA	\$83,141	\$4,409	5.6%	\$101,021
12. San Diego, CA	\$78,731	\$1,191	1.5%	\$95,548
13. Arlington, VA	\$77,541	\$1,059	1.4%	\$96,684
14. Washington, DC	\$76,481	\$258	0.3%	\$95,363
15. Minneapolis, MN	\$76,223			\$78,338

Mobile Developer

Austin, TX:
\$97,264

Another hot job title, and another role where traditional tech hubs pay best.

However, Arlington VA places third, narrowly beating San Jose and San Francisco—a far stronger performance for the city than we see in most other tech roles.

Nearby Washington DC pays less, but still beats out NYC and Chicago which are among the worst cities for Mobile Developer pay.

Overall, this role has the smallest gap between the best-paying city (Austin) and worst-paying city (Salt Lake City): \$19,817 (25.6%).

	Average salary (adjusted)	\$ amount higher than closest salary	% higher than closest salary	Average salary (unadjusted)
1. Austin, TX	\$97,254	\$4,366	4.7%	\$96,006
2. Seattle, WA	\$92,889	\$262	0.3%	\$99,988
3. Arlington, VA	\$92,626	\$122	0.1%	\$115,494
4. San Jose, CA	\$92,504	\$117	0.1%	\$117,540
5. San Francisco, CA	\$92,387	\$292	0.3%	\$115,919
6. Denver, CO	\$92,095	\$3,018	3.4%	\$96,738
7. Dallas, TX	\$89,077	\$481	0.5%	\$89,795
8. Los Angeles, CA	\$88,596	\$2,248	2.6%	\$107,650
9. Boston, MA	\$86,348	\$21	0.0%	\$96,911
10. Minneapolis, MN	\$86,327	\$2,452	2.9%	\$88,722
11. Washington, DC	\$83,875	\$2,171	2.7%	\$104,582
12. Chicago, IL	\$81,704	\$886	1.1%	\$87,477
13. New York, NY	\$80,818	\$1,386	1.7%	\$104,012
14. San Diego, CA	\$79,431	\$1,994	2.6%	\$96,397
15. Salt Lake City, UT	\$77,437			\$77,205

Software Developer

Boston, MA:
\$95,047

The only tech role where a city in the Northeastern US places first—in this case, Boston beats out all competition for pay.

It's also a role where NYC is uncharacteristically competitive, landing in fourth place with an average salary a mere 2% lower than third place Seattle.

Salt Lake City also performs well, out-paying San Francisco by over \$6,000.

As far as major hubs go, Austin and Seattle are the best paying cities.

	Average salary (adjusted)	\$ amount higher than closest salary	% higher than closest salary	Average salary (unadjusted)
1. Boston, MA	\$95,047	\$2,337	2.5%	\$106,675
2. Austin, TX	\$92,710	\$2,410	2.7%	\$91,520
3. Seattle, WA	\$90,300	\$1,719	1.9%	\$97,201
4. New York, NY	\$88,581	\$898	1.0%	\$114,004
5. Salt Lake City, UT	\$87,683	\$856	1.0%	\$87,421
6. San Jose, CA	\$86,827	\$288	0.3%	\$110,327
7. Chicago, IL	\$86,539	\$3,177	3.8%	\$92,654
8. Dallas, TX	\$83,362	\$1,257	1.5%	\$84,034
9. Denver, CO	\$82,105	\$603	0.7%	\$86,245
10. San Francisco, CA	\$81,502	\$3,035	3.9%	\$102,261
11. San Diego, CA	\$78,467	\$4,330	5.8%	\$95,227
12. Los Angeles, CA	\$74,137	\$2,200	3.1%	\$90,081
13. Washington, DC	\$71,937	\$658	0.9%	\$89,696
14. Minneapolis, MN	\$71,278	\$5,213	7.9%	\$73,256
15. Arlington, VA	\$66,065			\$82,376

Front-end Developer

Austin, TX:
\$92,332

For this role, the four big hubs hold the top four positions, with slightly less than \$4,000 separating Austin (best paid) and Seattle (worst paid).

Once again, Chicago is the best-performing city for pay outside of the tech hubs.

That said, the difference between Chicago and Salt Lake City is so slim as to be non-existent.

Washington DC and Arlington place last, giving little hope to those who might be hoping to see improvement in the user-friendliness of government websites.

	Average salary (adjusted)	\$ amount higher than closest salary	% higher than closest salary	Average salary (unadjusted)
1. Austin, TX	\$92,332	\$1,770	2.0%	\$91,147
2. San Jose, CA	\$90,562	\$1,767	2.0%	\$115,073
3. San Francisco, CA	\$88,796	\$520	0.6%	\$111,412
4. Seattle, WA	\$88,276	\$5,167	6.2%	\$95,022
5. Chicago, IL	\$83,109	\$308	0.4%	\$88,982
6. Salt Lake City, UT	\$82,801	\$12	0.0%	\$82,554
7. Boston, MA	\$82,789	\$75	0.1%	\$92,917
8. Dallas, TX	\$82,714	\$504	0.6%	\$83,381
9. Denver, CO	\$82,210	\$2,702	3.4%	\$86,355
10. New York, NY	\$79,508	\$740	0.9%	\$102,327
11. Los Angeles, CA	\$78,768	\$1,529	2.0%	\$95,709
12. Minneapolis, MN	\$77,239	\$7,283	10.4%	\$79,382
13. San Diego, CA	\$69,956	\$49	0.1%	\$84,899
14. Washington, DC	\$69,908	\$2,441	3.6%	\$87,167
15. Arlington, VA	\$67,466			\$84,123

.NET Developer

San Francisco, CA:

\$92,112

San Francisco is the best performing tech hub, with an average salary that is 3.6% (\$3,194) higher than closest competitor Austin.

This is also a rare strong showing for NYC, which scores its highest ranking on the list by coming in third.

Differences between .NET developer salaries across cities tend to be small, once adjusted.

Once again, DC and Arlington lurk at the bottom but in this instance crossing the Potomac into DC from Arlington will add 5K to a .NET developer's earnings.

		Average salary (adjusted)	\$ amount higher than closest salary	% higher than closest salary	Average salary (unadjusted)
1.	San Francisco, CA	\$92,112	\$3,194	3.6%	\$115,574
2.	Austin, TX	\$88,918	\$1,303	1.5%	\$87,777
3.	New York, NY	\$87,616	\$844	1.0%	\$112,762
4.	Chicago, IL	\$86,772	\$1,020	1.2%	\$92,904
5.	Seattle, WA	\$85,752	\$830	1.0%	\$92,306
6.	Boston, MA	\$84,923	\$1,593	1.9%	\$95,311
7.	Denver, CO	\$83,330	\$633	0.8%	\$87,531
8.	San Jose, CA	\$82,697	\$347	0.4%	\$105,078
9.	Dallas, TX	\$82,349	\$1,605	2.0%	\$83,014
10.	Salt Lake City, UT	\$80,745	\$858	1.1%	\$80,503
11.	Los Angeles, CA	\$79,887	\$797	1.0%	\$97,068
12.	Minneapolis, MN	\$79,090	\$2,128	2.8%	\$81,284
13.	Washington, DC	\$76,962	\$1,336	1.8%	\$95,962
14.	San Diego, CA	\$75,626	\$4,116	5.8%	\$91,779
15.	Arlington, VA	\$71,510			\$89,165

Web Developer

Austin, TX:
\$91,199

“Web developer” is old enough to be recognized by the government as a job classification, but it still pays more on average than the more recent (and hotter) “app developer.”

Austin and San Francisco lead when it comes to salary, with a substantial drop to third place Seattle.

Chicago and Dallas continue their relatively strong performances when it come to tech wages relative to the other cities on the list.

Web developers in San Jose might want to consider looking for work in a city that places a higher premium on their skill set.

This role has a substantial salary gap between top (Austin) and bottom (San Diego): \$35,410 (63.5%).

	Average salary (adjusted)	\$ amount higher than closest salary	% higher than closest salary	Average salary (unadjusted)
1. Austin, TX	\$91,199	\$3,481	4.0%	\$90,028
2. San Francisco, CA	\$87,717	\$8,418	10.6%	\$110,059
3. Seattle, WA	\$79,299	\$1,245	1.6%	\$85,360
4. Chicago, IL	\$78,054	\$2,886	3.8%	\$83,570
5. Dallas, TX	\$75,169	\$1,445	2.0%	\$75,775
6. Arlington, VA	\$73,724	\$619	0.8%	\$91,925
7. San Jose, CA	\$73,104	\$77	0.1%	\$92,890
8. New York, NY	\$73,028	\$361	0.5%	\$93,987
9. Salt Lake City, UT	\$72,666	\$985	1.4%	\$72,449
10. Boston, MA	\$71,681	\$942	1.3%	\$80,450
11. Minneapolis, MN	\$70,739	\$1,486	2.1%	\$72,702
12. Washington, DC	\$69,253	\$1,352	2.0%	\$86,351
13. Denver, CO	\$67,901	\$327	0.5%	\$71,324
14. Los Angeles, CA	\$67,574	\$11,785	21.1%	\$82,107
15. San Diego, CA	\$55,789			\$67,705

App Developer

San Jose, CA:
\$90,019

App developer is the sole job title in our study in which San Jose, the unofficial capital of Silicon Valley places first, albeit by a slim 1.3% margin.

Strikingly, Seattle ranks last—despite the fact that the city is home to tech mega-firms Microsoft and Amazon.

That said, app developer salaries tend to be competitive with each other across cities: the 29.5% (\$20,499) gap between highest and lowest paid, although significant, is one of the smallest on our list.

Arlington, VA defies its typically low ranking for a second time, placing sixth overall just behind New York.

		Average salary (adjusted)	\$ amount higher than closest salary	% higher than closest salary	Average salary (unadjusted)
1.	San Jose, CA	\$90,019	\$1,180	1.3%	\$114,382
2.	Austin, TX	\$88,839	\$2,534	2.9%	\$87,699
3.	San Francisco, CA	\$86,305	\$33	0.0%	\$108,287
4.	Dallas, TX	\$86,272	\$2,060	2.4%	\$86,968
5.	New York, NY	\$84,212	\$617	0.7%	\$108,381
6.	Arlington, VA	\$83,595	\$1,066	1.3%	\$104,233
7.	Salt Lake City, UT	\$82,529	\$484	0.6%	\$82,283
8.	Boston, MA	\$82,045	\$948	1.2%	\$92,082
9.	Chicago, IL	\$81,097	\$2,274	2.9%	\$86,828
10.	Denver, CO	\$78,823	\$3,999	5.3%	\$82,798
11.	San Diego, CA	\$74,825	\$144	0.2%	\$90,807
12.	Washington, DC	\$74,681	\$3,047	4.3%	\$93,119
13.	Minneapolis, MN	\$71,635	\$687	1.0%	\$73,622
14.	Los Angeles, CA	\$70,948	\$1,428	2.1%	\$86,206
15.	Seattle, WA	\$69,520			\$74,833

Quality Analyst

Seattle, WA:
\$86,900

Seattle ranks first, but otherwise major tech hubs perform relatively poorly when it comes to salaries for this role.

In fact, San Jose comes dead last: Quality Analysts in this city earn about as much as a restaurant general manager. However the latter job can be performed by people with a high school diploma only.

Meanwhile Los Angeles ranks second—the city’s strongest result.

Overall, it’s a job where there is great polarization between the highest and lowest paying cities—salaries in San Jose are 65% lower than in Seattle.

	Average salary (adjusted)	\$ amount higher than closest salary	% higher than closest salary	Average salary (unadjusted)
1. Seattle, WA	\$86,900	\$6,798	8.5%	\$93,541
2. Los Angeles, CA	\$80,102	\$5,255	7.0%	\$97,329
3. Boston, MA	\$74,847	\$201	0.3%	\$84,004
4. Arlington, VA	\$74,646	\$5,183	7.5%	\$93,074
5. New York, NY	\$69,463	\$1,736	2.6%	\$89,399
6. Chicago, IL	\$67,727	\$440	0.7%	\$72,513
7. San Francisco, CA	\$67,287	\$1,153	1.7%	\$84,425
8. San Diego, CA	\$66,134	\$400	0.6%	\$80,259
9. Austin, TX	\$65,734	\$1,932	3.0%	\$64,891
10. Dallas, TX	\$63,802	\$1,260	2.0%	\$64,317
11. Washington, DC	\$62,542	\$5,802	10.2%	\$77,982
12. Salt Lake City, UT	\$56,740	\$1,169	2.1%	\$56,570
13. Minneapolis, MN	\$55,571	\$2,158	4.0%	\$57,113
14. Denver, CO	\$53,413	\$608	1.2%	\$56,106
15. San Jose, CA	\$52,805			\$67,097

Data Analyst

Seattle, WA:
\$73,464

Data analyst roles require less technical expertise than data scientist roles—and it shows in the salary levels which are the lowest under study.

Austin, #1 for data scientist, plummets to third from bottom for this role—even lower than Washington DC.

By contrast, Boston (#2) and NYC (# 3) perform well, perhaps reflecting the increasing demand in the finance sector for general data skills.

This is another role where we see a substantial gap between the best and least paid city—41.8% in fact.

	Average salary (adjusted)	\$ amount higher than closest salary	% higher than closest salary	Average salary (unadjusted)
1. Seattle, WA	\$73,465	\$1,044	1.4%	\$79,079
2. Boston, MA	\$72,420	\$720	1.0%	\$81,280
3. New York, NY	\$71,700	\$2,294	3.3%	\$92,279
4. San Francisco, CA	\$69,407	\$2,887	4.3%	\$87,085
5. Chicago, IL	\$66,520	\$4,038	6.5%	\$71,221
6. San Jose, CA	\$62,482	\$333	0.5%	\$79,393
7. Minneapolis, MN	\$62,149	\$700	1.1%	\$63,874
8. Dallas, TX	\$61,449	\$1,053	1.7%	\$61,945
9. Denver, CO	\$60,396	\$249	0.4%	\$63,441
10. Washington, DC	\$60,147	\$232	0.4%	\$74,997
11. Salt Lake City, UT	\$59,916	\$30	0.1%	\$59,736
12. Arlington, VA	\$59,885	\$1,437	2.5%	\$74,670
13. Austin, TX	\$58,448	\$4,316	8.0%	\$57,698
14. Los Angeles, CA	\$54,133	\$2,319	4.5%	\$65,775
15. San Diego, CA	\$51,814			\$62,881

About the Indeed Hiring Lab

The Indeed Hiring Lab is a global research institute committed to advancing the knowledge of human resource and talent management professionals worldwide.

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About Indeed

As the world's #1 job site, with over 180 million unique visitors every month from over 60 different countries, Indeed has become the catalyst for putting the world to work. Indeed is intensely passionate about delivering the right fit for every hire. Indeed helps companies of all sizes hire the best talent and offers the best opportunity for job seekers to get hired.

Data & Methodology

Cities and Titles

The cities covered in this report are the top 15 cities from the tech hub ranking included in previous Indeed Hiring Lab research, *Beyond the Talent Shortage: How Tech Candidates Search for Jobs*. These tech hubs were initially identified by ranking a subset of 25 of the most populous US cities by on each city's volume of job searches for select tech job titles in two time periods, 2013 and 2015.

For every city in our subset of 25, we calculated the share of overall job searches for each job title and then totaled these shares, giving each city one number to represent the share of searches for the entire selection of tech job titles. The city with the highest tech job searches share is ranked first.

San Francisco, San Jose, Seattle, and Austin took the top four spots in 2013 and 2015. After these four cities there was a substantial drop in interest from tech job seekers. Thus, throughout this report we refer to these four cities as major tech hubs. These cities also ranked at or near the top in a similar measure for tech job postings, further validating their status as major tech hubs.

The 15 job titles in this report were selected from some of the most popular tech job titles on Indeed. Although there is quite wide range of tech job titles, these were picked with a focus on software-related positions.

Indeed Salary Data

The salary data featured in this report were extracted from Indeed job postings in which an annual salary was specified in the job description, and from Indeed Company Pages in which employees included a salary in a review of a previous or current employer. We studied job postings and reviews postedn within the 12 month period from March 2015 to March 2016.

Salary figures for each tech position in a city are presented as the average of all appropriate salaries gathered during the stated time frame.

Cost of Living

We used a cost of living adjustment to account for differences in cost of living across cities. Data used in the calculation are the most current Bureau of Economic Analysis Regional Price Parities (RPP), collected in 2013. These RPP data are spatial price indexes which measure differences in price for rents, and goods and services across metropolitan statistical areas (MSA) during a specified time period. Each MSA is given a score in appropriate proportion to the national average price level, set at 100.

For example, let's say the average salary for a data analyst in San Francisco was \$100,000. Due to San Francisco's quite high cost of living, their RPP measure is 121.3. What this really means is that, according to BEA data, the cost of living in San Francisco is 21.3% greater than the average US price level. Therefore to adjust for cost of living, 21.3% needs to be shaved off from the average data analyst salary, which there becomes \$78,700. In other words, earning \$100,000 as a data analyst in San Francisco is the equivalent to making \$78,700 in Any Town, USA.

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