AD Mortgage

NMLS# 958660

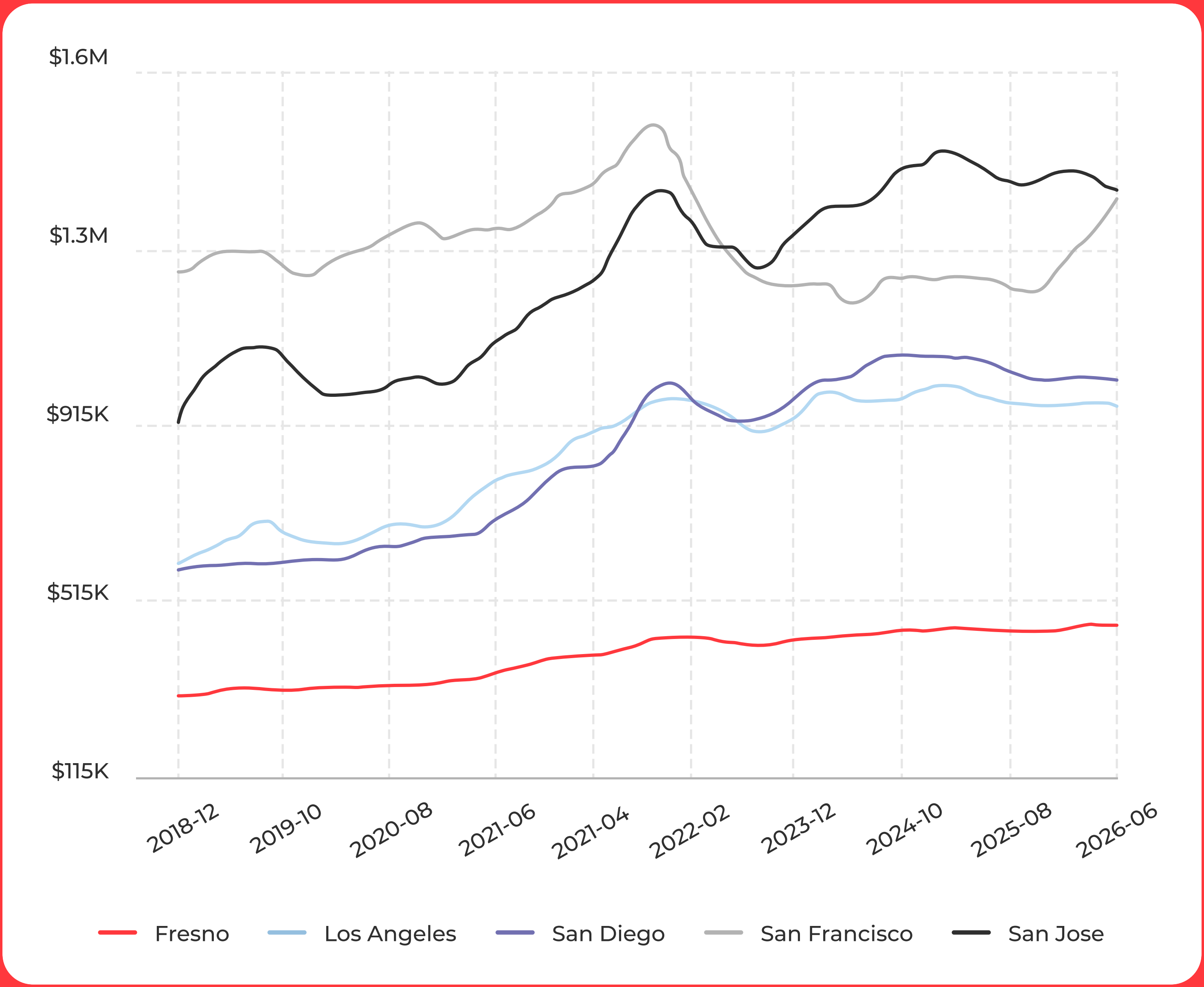
California Down Payment Cheat Sheet

How Long Buyers May Need to Save in Major California Cities

California Housing Market

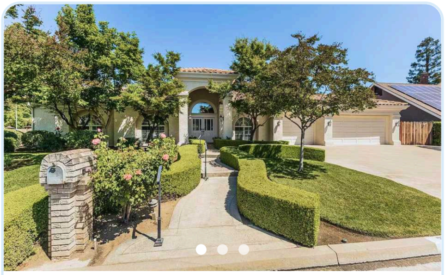
Median sales price: **$750,000**

Time on market: **19 days**



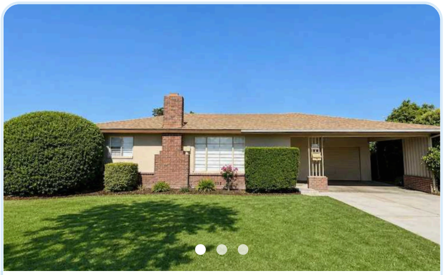
Source: Zillow

Fresno



House for sale
$899,000
4 bed **3** bath **3,098** sq ft
2856 W Athens Ave
Fresno, CA 93711

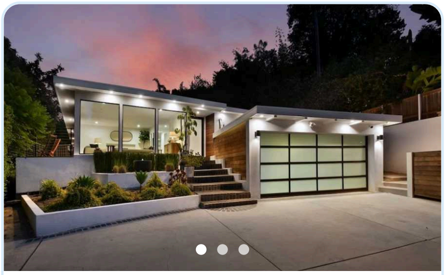
House for sale
$899,000
4 bed **3** bath **3,116** sq ft
2563 W Fir Ave
Fresno, CA 93711



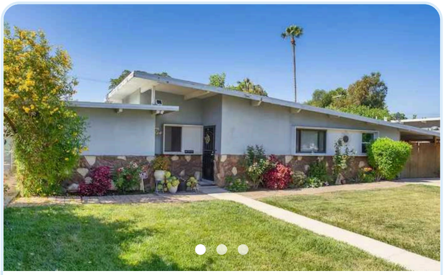
House for sale
$299,897
3 bed **2** bath **1,176** sq ft
2846 N Cedar Ave
Fresno, CA 93703

City	Typical Home Values	Median Household Income	Down Payment	Personal Saving Rate	Years to Save	Moderate Household Saving Rate	Years to Save
Fresno, CA	$391,319	$75,585	15%	4.60%	16.9	8%	9.7

Los Angeles



House for sale
$2,525,000
4 bed **3** bath **2,619** sq ft
3901 1/2 Ventura Canyon Ave
Sherman Oaks, CA 91423

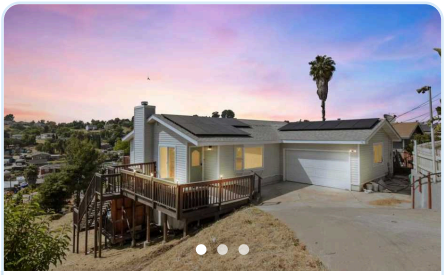


House for sale
$799,997
3 bed **1** bath **1,112** sq ft
19420 Strathern St
Reseda, CA 91335

House for sale
$4,995,000
4 bed **5** bath **4,340** sq ft
3319 Dona Lola Place
Studio City, CA 91604

City	Typical Home Values	Median Household Income	Down Payment	Personal Saving Rate	Years to Save	Moderate Household Saving Rate	Years to Save
Los Angeles, CA	$951,035	$82,263	15%	4.60%	37.7	8%	21.7

San Diego



House for sale

$749,999

4 bed **3** bath **2,035** sq ft

1150 Evelyn St
San Diego, CA 92114

House for sale

$914,500

2 bed **1** bath **696** sq ft

1428 Tyler Ave
San Diego, CA 92103

House for sale

$875,000

8 bed **8** bath **3,194** sq ft

4286 51st St
San Diego, CA 92115

City	Typical Home Values	Median Household Income	Down Payment	Personal Saving Rate	Years to Save	Moderate Household Saving Rate	Years to Save
San Diego, CA	$1,007,800	$111,032	15%	4.60%	29.6	8%	17

San Francisco

House for sale

$3,695,000

5 bed **4** bath **3,490** sq ft

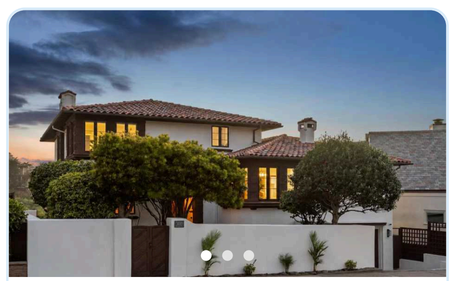
228 32nd Ave
San Francisco, CA 94121

Condo for sale

$1,495,000

2 bed **2** bath **1,379** sq ft

950 Tennessee St, Unit 313
San Francisco, CA 94107



House for sale

$8,990,000

6 bed **7** bath **4,619** sq ft

570 El Camino Del Mar
San Francisco, CA 94121

City	Typical Home Values	Median Household Income	Down Payment	Personal Saving Rate	Years to Save	Moderate Household Saving Rate	Years to Save
San Francisco, CA	$1,393,773	$139,801	15%	4.60%	32.5	8%	18.7

San Jose

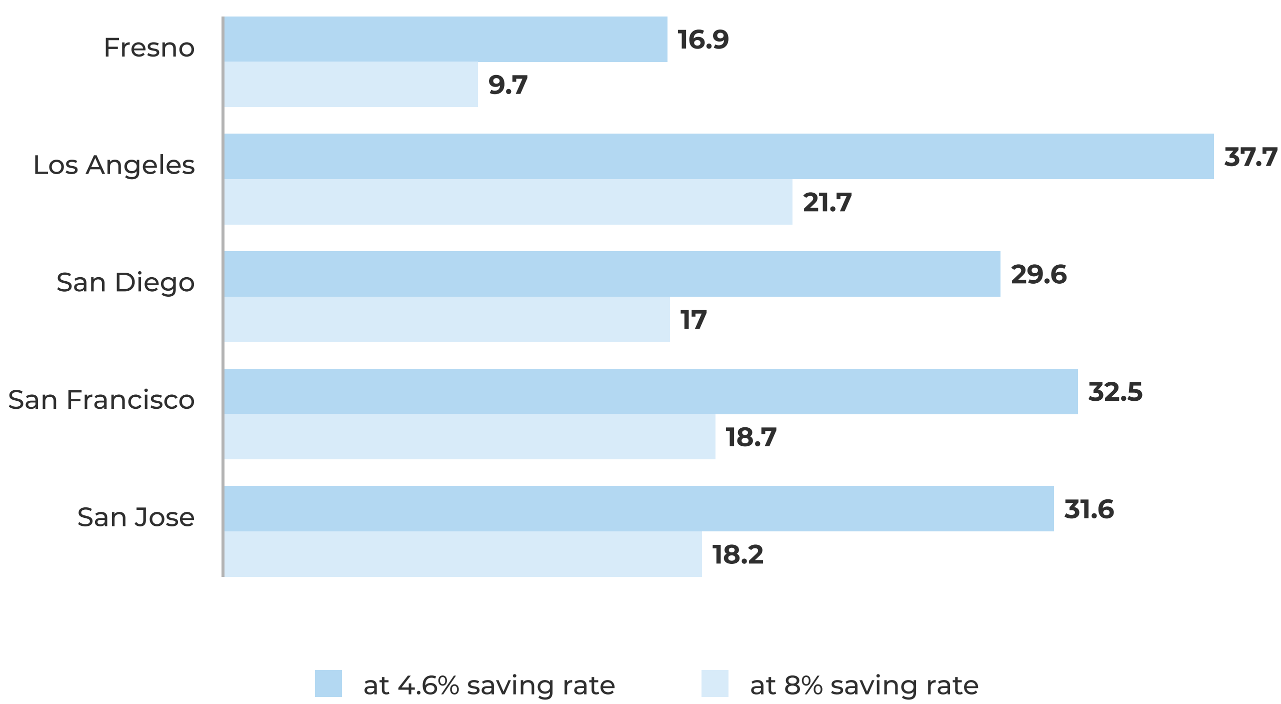
House for sale
$2,198,000
4 bed **3** bath **2,047** sq ft
2644 Briarwood Dr
San Jose, CA 95125

House for sale
$1,300,000
3 bed **2** bath **1,245** sq ft
765 Tallent Ave
San Jose, CA 95127

Condo for sale
$949,980
2 bed **2** bath **843** sq ft
2538 Yerba Hills Ct
San Jose, CA 95121

City	Typical Home Values	Median Household Income	Down Payment	Personal Saving Rate	Years to Save	Moderate Household Saving Rate	Years to Save
San Jose, CA	$1,438,450	$148,226	15%	4.60%	31.6	8%	18.2

Years to Save for a Down Payment



How to Save for a Down Payment Faster

- Set a clear target you need to save
- Keep down payment savings in a separate, high-yield account
- Consider borrowing from family or friends
- Lower bills and optimize expenses
- Pay off high-interest debts
- Explore state down payment assistance programs, including:
  - **California Dream for All Shared Appreciation Loan:** up to 20% of the home's purchase price for eligible first-time homebuyers
  - **CalHFA MyHome Assistance Program:** up to 3%-3.5% of the purchase price or appraised value for eligible first-time homebuyers
  - **CalPLUS with ZIP:** up to 3% of the first mortgage amount to help cover closing costs
  - **CalHFA Forgivable Equity Builder Loan:** up to 10% of the home's purchase price for eligible low- to moderate-income first-time homebuyers
- Explore local down payment assistance programs, including:
  - **Los Angeles Low Income Purchase Assistance (LIPA) Program:** up to $161,000 for eligible first-time, low-income homebuyers
  - **San Diego County Homeownership Program:** up to 22% of the purchase price (maximum $90,000) for eligible first-time homebuyers
  - **San Francisco Downpayment Assistance Loan Program (DALP):** up to $500,000 for eligible first-time homebuyers
  - **Sacramento SHRA First-Time Homebuyer Program:** up to $50,000 for eligible first-time homebuyers
  - **Fresno Mortgage Assistance Program (MAP):** up to $100,000 for eligible low-income first-time homebuyers

Expert Advice

Mark Cook
SVP TPO Lending Regional Director

“In the California market, homeownership success isn’t about perfectly timing the market – it’s about being financially prepared when the right home becomes available. One thing to remember is **you are buying the house, not the rate.** Having good credit, saving for a down payment, being responsible when it comes to debt, and understanding how much you can afford can help position yourself to act confidently when the opportunity is presented. The most successful buyers are often those who start preparing long before they begin looking for a house. Make sure to research first-time home buyer programs and work with a mortgage professional as they can lead you down the right path. After all, this is the American Dream, and you can make your home ownership dream come true.”

Study Methodology

Typical home values represent Zillow Home Value Index (ZHVI) data as of May 31, 2026. All values reflect housing prices at the city level, based on municipal boundaries, not metropolitan statistical areas.

The selection of cities is based on population data from the U.S. Census Bureau (May 2025), focusing on the largest incorporated places in California.

Median household income figures are based on the most recent data available from the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey (ACS). Income data was retrieved using city- or town-level queries (e.g., “Los Angeles city, California”) to ensure geographic consistency with home value estimates.

The median percent down payment (15%) is derived from the 2025 NAR Home Buyers and Sellers Generational Trends Report, which provides benchmark data on typical buyer behavior across the United States. This percentage reflects a simplified average between first-time and repeat buyers for the purposes of this model.

The personal saving rate is taken from the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), based on the most recent national release for August 2025. In addition to calculations using the official national saving rate (4.6%), the analysis includes an alternative scenario applying a moderate household saving rate of 8%, reflecting real-world saving patterns.

All estimates reflect conditions as of fall 2025 and are intended to illustrate comparative housing affordability across major California cities. Actual saving behavior and household incomes may vary by borrower profile and local market conditions