

## 100 best places to live and launch

### 43. Blacksburg, Va.

43 of 100

**Population:** 40,161

**Pros:** Strong local university; smart, wired community

**Con:** Off the beaten path

Blacksburg is the home of Virginia Tech, the state's largest university. More and more, it remains home to Virginia Tech graduates, who find it hard to leave the natural beauty of the New River Valley and the intensity of the Tech community, with its strong school spirit and raucous football weekends.

Students are able to stay in Blacksburg because the university offers significant help to fledging businesses. Virginia Tech runs the [Corporate Research Center](#), a high-tech research park which houses 120 companies with 2,000 employees. One campus spin-off keeps the town uniquely well-connected: Since 1993, the [Blacksburg Electronic Village](#) has brought Internet services to Blacksburg's residents and civic groups. The well-regarded joint city-school effort has served as a model for other civic connectivity efforts. *-Elizabeth Blaud*



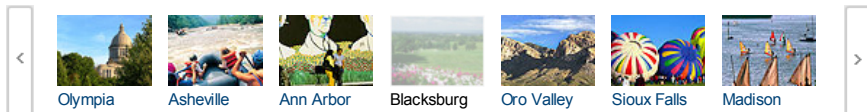
COURTESY TOWN OF BLACKSBURG

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NEXT: 44. Oro Valley, Ariz.



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### 100 best places to live and launch

Are job worries tempting you to start your own company? We canvassed the country to find towns with the best mix of business advantages and lifestyle appeal. Check out our 100 top picks and find the perfect place to build your dream. [\(More\)](#)

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