

Density

Architecture

The three ways density is measured, and why height is a poor proxy.

Different measures answer different questions. Say which you mean.

Measures

Dwellings per hectare

People per hectare

Floor area ratio, or plot ratio

Site coverage, as a percentage

Habitable rooms per hectare

Why height misleads

Paris is dense at six to seven storeys

Towers need wide gaps between them

A perimeter block is dense and low

Towers can be less dense than terraces

Household size changes people per dwelling

Floor area ratio is gross floor area divided by site area. It is the measure that survives comparison between cities.