

Hot Observations About Shade in Los Angeles

RESEARCH BRIEF

Shade is the most effective way to cool people outside.



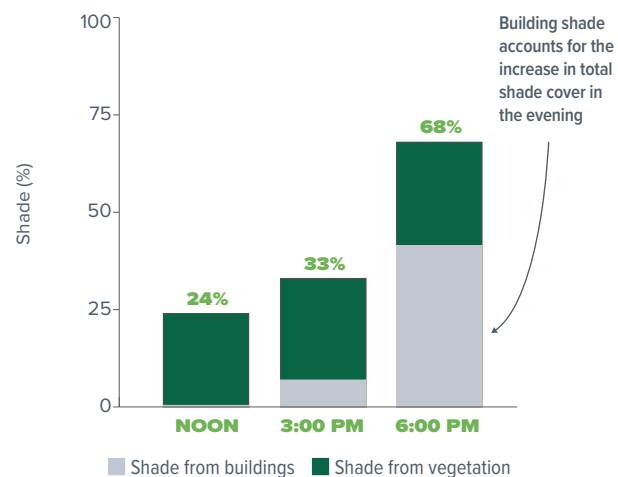
It helps people go about their daily lives [safely and more comfortably](#), even when it's hot outside. In places like Los Angeles that are often hot and getting hotter, shade is no longer a luxury but a necessity. Fortunately, shade can be a simple, cost-effective, and flexible solution. It can come from any object that blocks the sun, such as trees, buildings, awnings, and more.

But most cities are not planning for shade and do not have enough. The UCLA Luskin Center for Innovation's new national [Shade Map](#), created in collaboration with American Forests, makes it easy for leaders in 360 American cities to understand when and where shade is cast and to support taking action where shade is lacking.

Los Angeles is less shady than the average American city.

In L.A., the average amount of shade at noon is 24% (compared to the [national average](#) of 27%). Nearly all (99%) of the shade at noon comes from trees, which underscores the importance of nature-based shade. However, at 6 PM, it triples, with buildings accounting for approximately two-thirds of the total shade. This highlights the important role buildings play in providing shade later in the day.

Shade throughout the day for the City of L.A.



The City of L.A. has large shade gaps between neighborhoods.

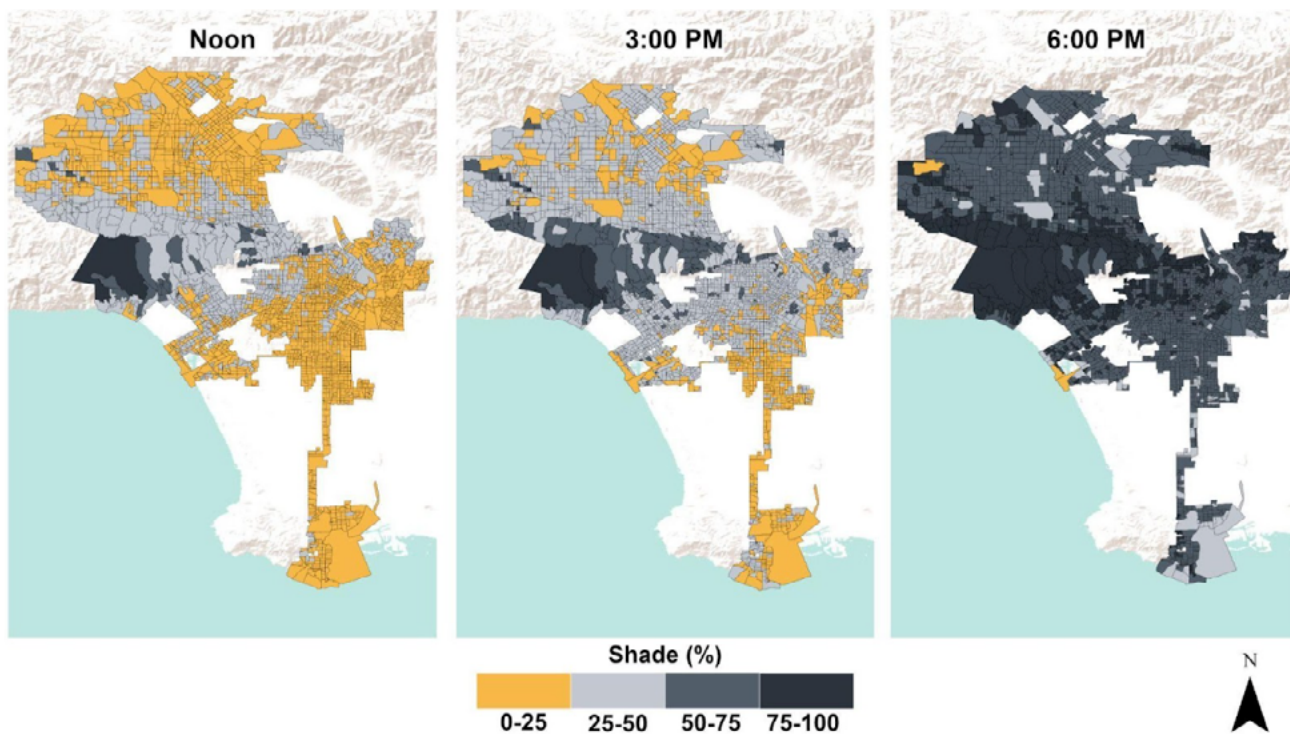
Los Angeles has both *shade oases*, where shade is plentiful, and [shade deserts](#), which are areas lacking adequate shade infrastructure. Some neighborhoods have a lot of shade, and others have little; these *shade gaps* can worsen health disparities and other inequities.

Where shade is needed most...

Los Angeles is home to millions of people and a global destination for business and tourism. As the city gets hotter, it is crucial to increase shade in the places where people are most exposed to heat, like [schools](#), [bus stops](#), and [public parks](#). **Targeting these key exposure settings will support more effective heat mitigation strategies.**

It is also important to address shade disparities. As the map below illustrates, about two-thirds of L.A.'s neighborhoods have less than 25% shade at noon, while others have more than 50% or even 75%. **The least shaded areas are in less affluent, more diverse communities, including inland neighborhoods with elevated poverty rates (over 43%) and populations of people of color (over 90%).**

City of L.A. shade variation by census block group



Visit our [Shade Map](#) to see which neighborhoods may need more shade. Learn more about our [heat equity research](#).