Domestic Life in Imperial Rome
## Population of Augustan Rome

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Plebs frumentaria</em> + families</td>
<td>520,000</td>
<td>520,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedmen + families</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slaves</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor &amp; recent migrants</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>150,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soldiers and members of elite</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>790,000</td>
<td>1,090,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Population densities
(Population per square mile)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Density</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rome, ca. 1 BC</td>
<td>188,679?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>12,172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York City</td>
<td>27,532</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paris, France</td>
<td>53,883</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delhi, India</td>
<td>75,512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manila, Philippines</td>
<td>111,576</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Capitoline Insula, early 2nd c.

Image by Vadim Zhivotovsky. Source: Wikimedia Commons. License CC BY.

Claridge, Amanda. Rome: An Oxford Archaeological Guide. Oxford University Press, 2010. © Oxford University Press. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see https://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/.
If the apartment is divided among several tenants, redress can be sought only against that one of them who lives in that part of the apartment from the level of which the liquid has been poured. If the tenant, however, while professing to have sublet, has in fact retained for himself the enjoyment of the greater part of the apartment, he shall be held solely responsible. If, on the other hand, the tenant who professes to have sublet has in fact retained for his own use only a modest fraction of the space, he and his sub-tenants shall be jointly held responsible. The same will hold good if the vessel or the liquid has been thrown from a balcony.
Who at cool Praeneste, or at Volsinii amid its leafy hills, was ever afraid of his house tumbling down?...But here we inhabit a city propped up by slats: for that is how the landlord patches up the crack in the old wall, bidding the inmates sleep at ease under the ruin that hangs above their heads.
And besides this, observing how natural and familiar at Rome were such fatalities as the conflagration and collapse of buildings, owing to their being too massive and close together, he proceeded to buy slaves who were architects and builders. Then, when he had over five hundred of these, he would buy houses that were afire, and houses which adjoined those that were afire, and these their owners would let go at a trifling price owing to their fear and uncertainty.

From *Plutarch’s Lives*. Translated by Bernadotte Perrin. This material is in the public domain.
House of the Wooden Partition, Herculaneum

Image courtesy of Tyler Bell on flickr. License CC BY.
House of the Faun, Pompeii
Plate 18  Summary plan of a Roman town house.

1  fauces (entrance)
2  atrium
3  impluvium (basin for rainwater)
4  tablinum
5  janitor
6  taberna (shop)
7  lararium (altar of lares)
8  alae (wings)
9  andron (corridor)
10 peristyle
11 triclinium
12 culina (kitchen)
13 exedra (entertaining hall)
14 oecus (living-room)
15 cubiculum (bedroom)
House of the Tragic Poet, Pompeii

Image courtesy of Simon & Vicki on flickr. License CC BY NC.

“Cave Canem”
House of the Faun, Pompeii
Polychromatic marble floor in fauces
House of the Faun, Pompeii
Architectural decoration in fauces
The Atrium

Image courtesy of Henk Bekker on flickr. License CC BY NC SA.

House of Menander
House of Tragic Poet

Wood, Nicholas. *House of the Tragic Poet: A Reconstruction*. South Hill Press, 1996. © South Hill Press. All rights reserved. This content is excluded from our Creative Commons license. For more information, see https://ocw.mit.edu/help/faq-fair-use/.
 Marriage of Zeus and Hera
House of Tragic Poet
Atrium

This image is in the public domain.
Source: [Wikimedia Commons](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Marriage_of_Zeus_and_Hera.png).
Achilles and Briseis
House of Tragic Poet
Atrium
House of Paquius Proculus
Pompeii
Atrium
Household Shrine

House of Menander
Preparation for a play
House of Tragic Poet
Tablinum

Image by Marie Lan Nguyen. This image is in the public domain. Source: [Wikimedia Commons](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:House_of_the_tragic_poet_Tablinum_%28mosaic%29_02.jpg).
House of Paquius Proculus
Pompeii
Tablinum
House of Paquius Proculus
Pompeii
Tablinum mosaic
House of the Wooden Partition, Herculaneum

Image courtesy of deadmanjones on flickr. License CC BY NC.
House of Menander
Pompeii
Peristyle garden

Image courtesy of Greger Ravik on flickr. License CC BY.
House of the Vettii, Pompeii
Peristyle garden
House of the Tragic Poet, Pompeii

Image courtesy of Andy Hay on flickr. License CC BY.