THE FULL BREAKDOWN · YC DATA 2005–2026

Inside the 1%

what 6,000+ YC companies reveal

27,000+ startups applied for one YC batch. 260 got in.
We pulled every YC company we could find and looked at who gets in, what they build, and what happens next.

6,337
YC companies analyzed

11,994
named founders

22 yrs
of batches, 2005–2026

WHAT'S INSIDE

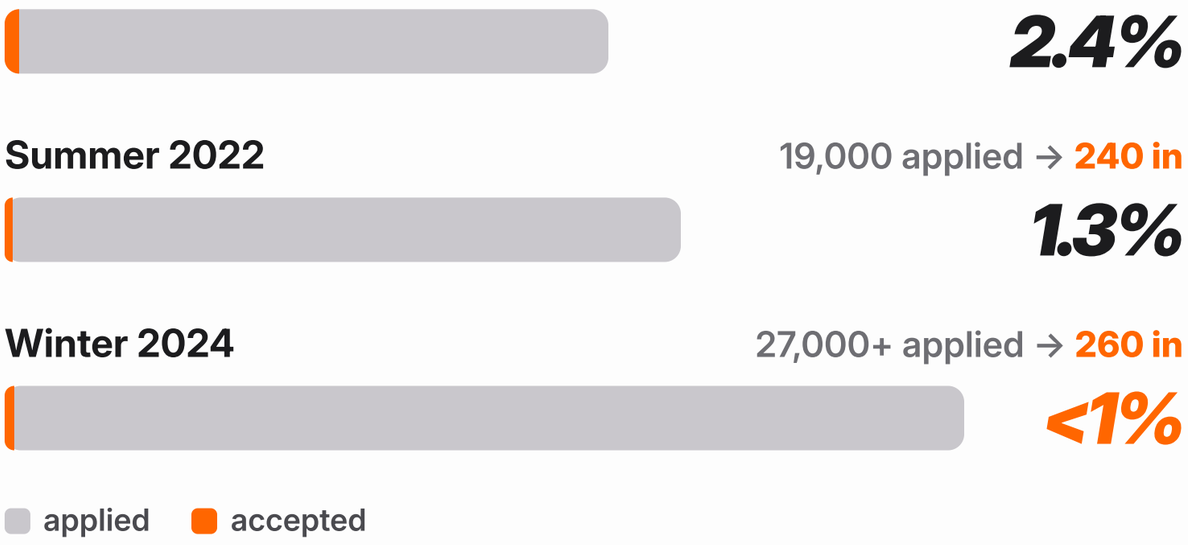
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GETTING IN

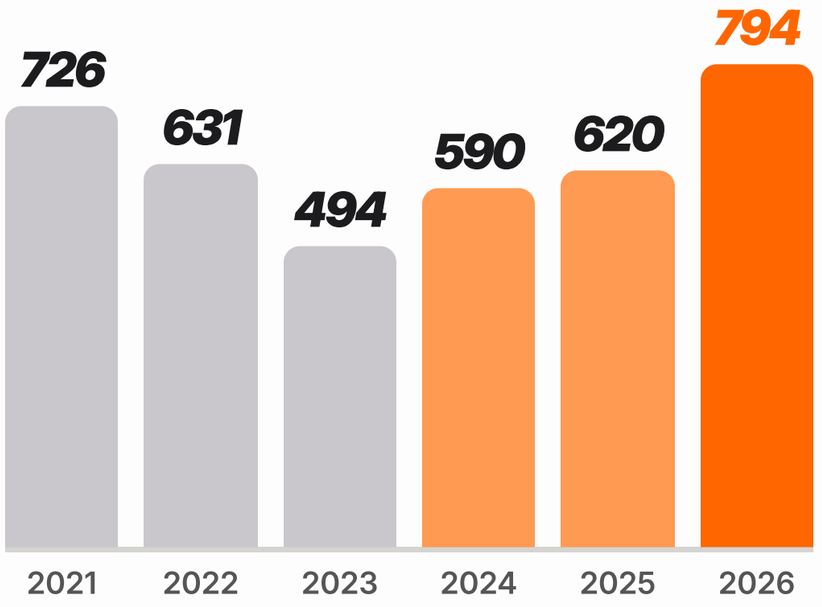
It went from 2.4% to under 1%

Applications grew faster than the batches did. YC now runs four batches a year, and still funds roughly **1 in 100** applicants.

APPLIED VS ACCEPTED, PER BATCH



YC COMPANIES FUNDED PER YEAR



2026 alone: W 197 · Sp 193 · Su 229 · F 175

WHAT THEY HAD WHEN THEY GOT IN

Most were earlier than you think

You do not need traction to get in. A big share had no revenue, some had only an idea, and more than half had applied before.

29%

of **Winter 2022** companies were **idea-only** when accepted

43%

of **Summer 2022** companies were **idea-only**

71%

of 2022 companies had **zero revenue**

57%

of **Winter 2022** founders were **reapplicants**

and the median 2024–26 team? just ***3 people***

COFOUNDERS · 2024–26 BATCHES

2 cofounders is the default

61% of recent YC companies have exactly two founders. Solo founders do get in, but their share has dropped from about 1 in 3 to under 1 in 4.

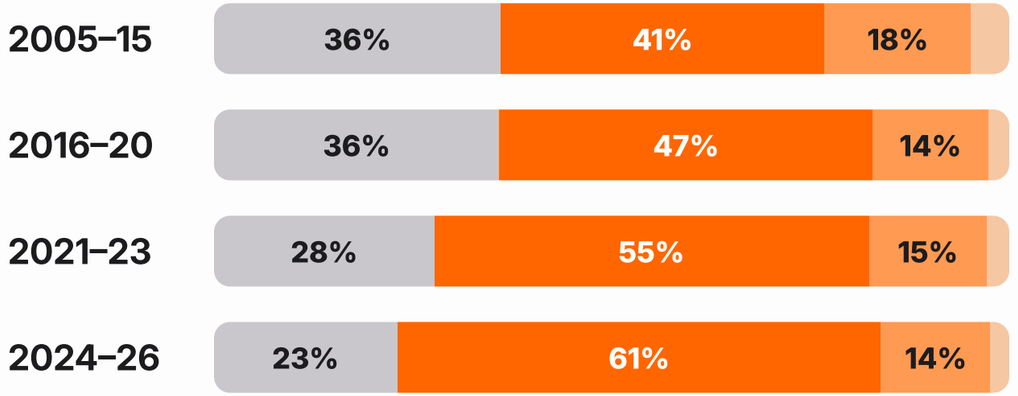
FOUNDERS PER COMPANY, 2024–26

23%	61%	14%	2%
Solo	2 founders	3 founders	4+



n = 1,986 companies with founder names listed

HOW THE MIX SHIFTED

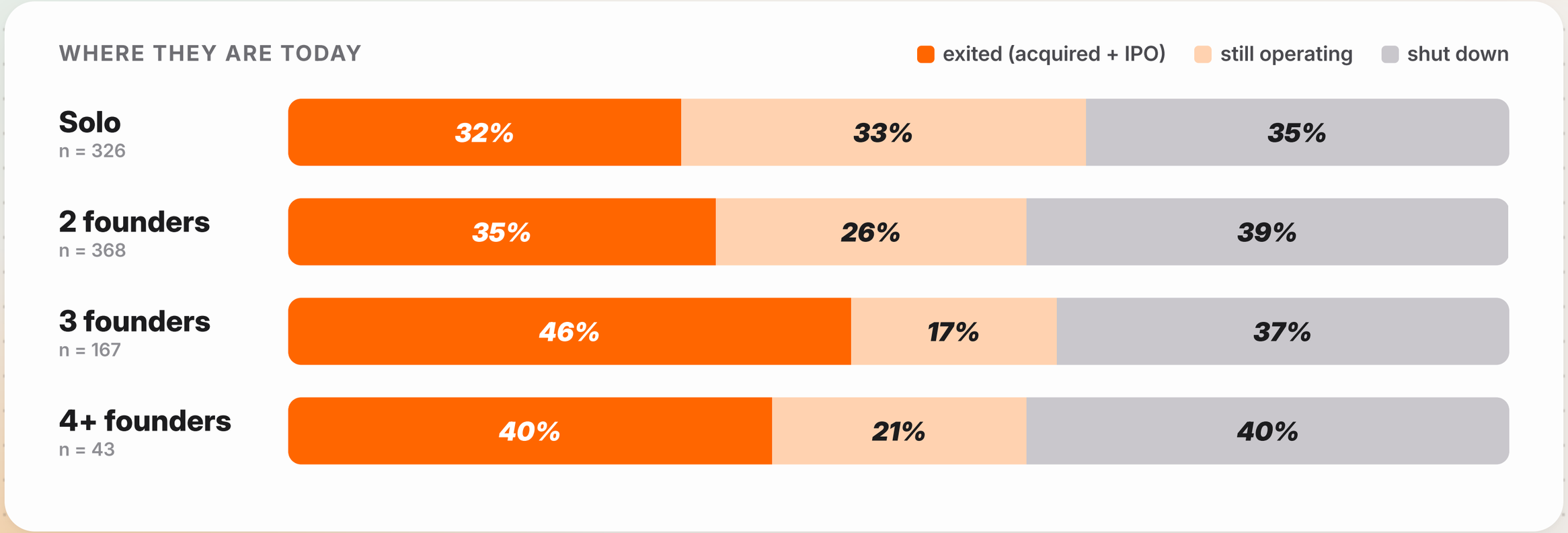


Solo: ***36%*** → ***23%*** · Two: ***41%*** → ***61%***

COFOUNDERS VS OUTCOMES · 2005–15 BATCHES

3-founder teams exited most often

We tracked every YC company from 2005–15 to today. Teams of three were acquired or went public 46% of the time. Solo founders: 32%. Shutdown rates were close for every team size.

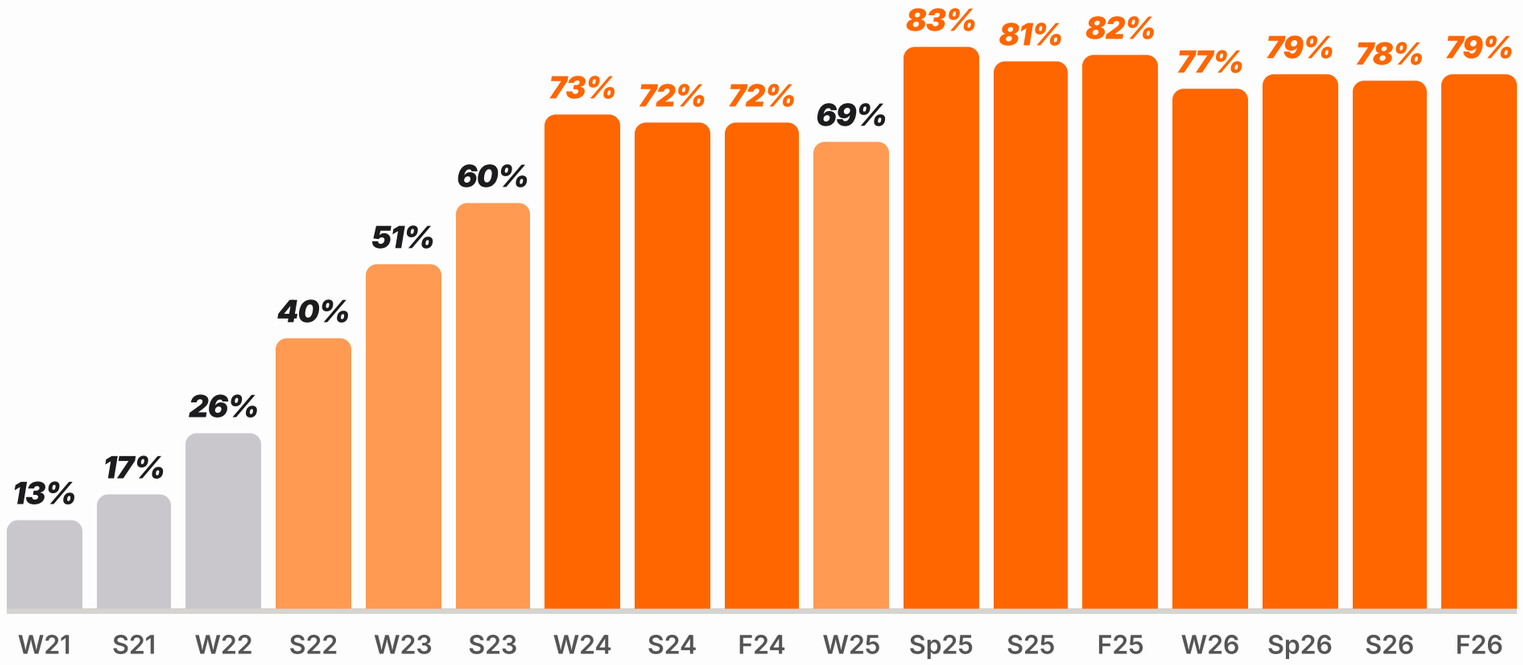


AI VS NON-AI

From 13% to ~80% AI since 2021

Share of each YC batch building AI, agents, and/or LLMs. Since Spring 2025, roughly 4 in 5 companies per batch.

AI SHARE BY BATCH



DO AI COMPANIES LAST?

2016–20 batches, status today

Still operating

AI	non-AI
63%	52%

Shut down

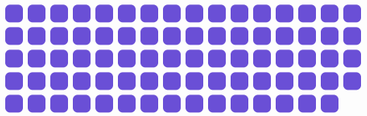
AI	non-AI
18%	28%

Acquired: 19% for both. AI = tagged AI, ML, generative AI, LLM or agents (287 AI vs 1,261 non-AI).

The ~20% not building AI

About 300 companies across the 2025–26 batches build without AI at the core. They cluster in five areas.

79
Dev infrastructure



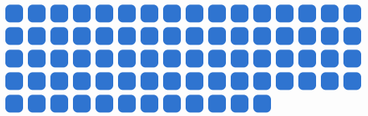
GitCafe
Git forge

Prized
cloud devbox

Caution
secure hosting

Foreman

76
Hard tech
industrial, defense, space, energy



Vernius Systems
air-defense radars

Edgerun
military exoskeletons

Kara
diamond semiconductors

Apollo Atomics
compact reactors

Instinct Space
lunar landers

~63
Consumer & marketplaces



RealRoots
friendship app

Misprint
Pokémon card trading

Parrot
language learning

58
Fintech
payments, insurance, crypto



Luca IQ
tax engine

Karsa
stablecoins

BlindPay
stablecoins

Redoubt
insurance

24
Healthcare & bio



TareBio
fast vaccines

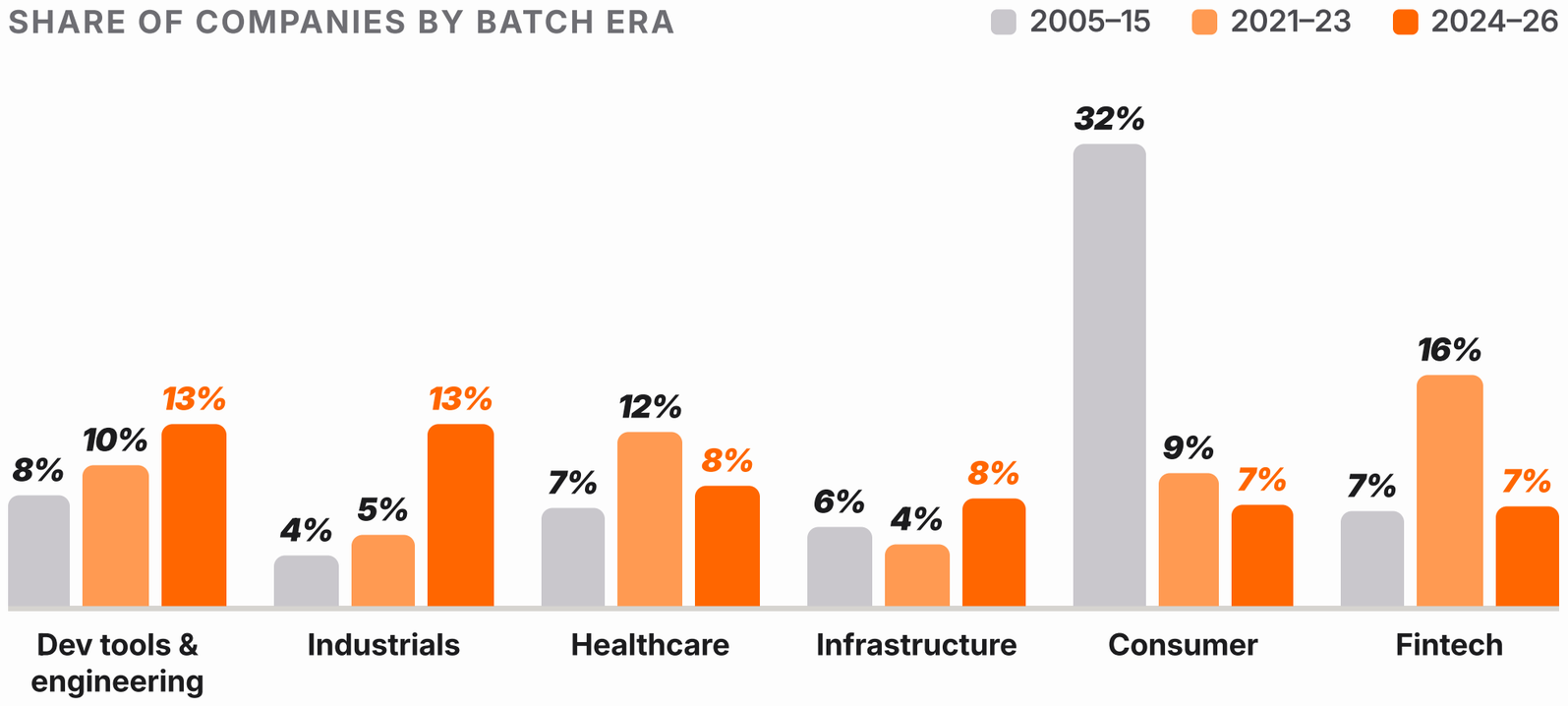
RonanRx
peptides & GLP-1s

Gutgutgoose
gut probiotics

Consumer shrank. Industrials took off.

Consumer went from about 1 in 3 YC companies to 1 in 14. Industrials nearly quadrupled, from 3.5% to 12.8%.

SHARE OF COMPANIES BY BATCH ERA



SELLING TO BUSINESSES (B2B)

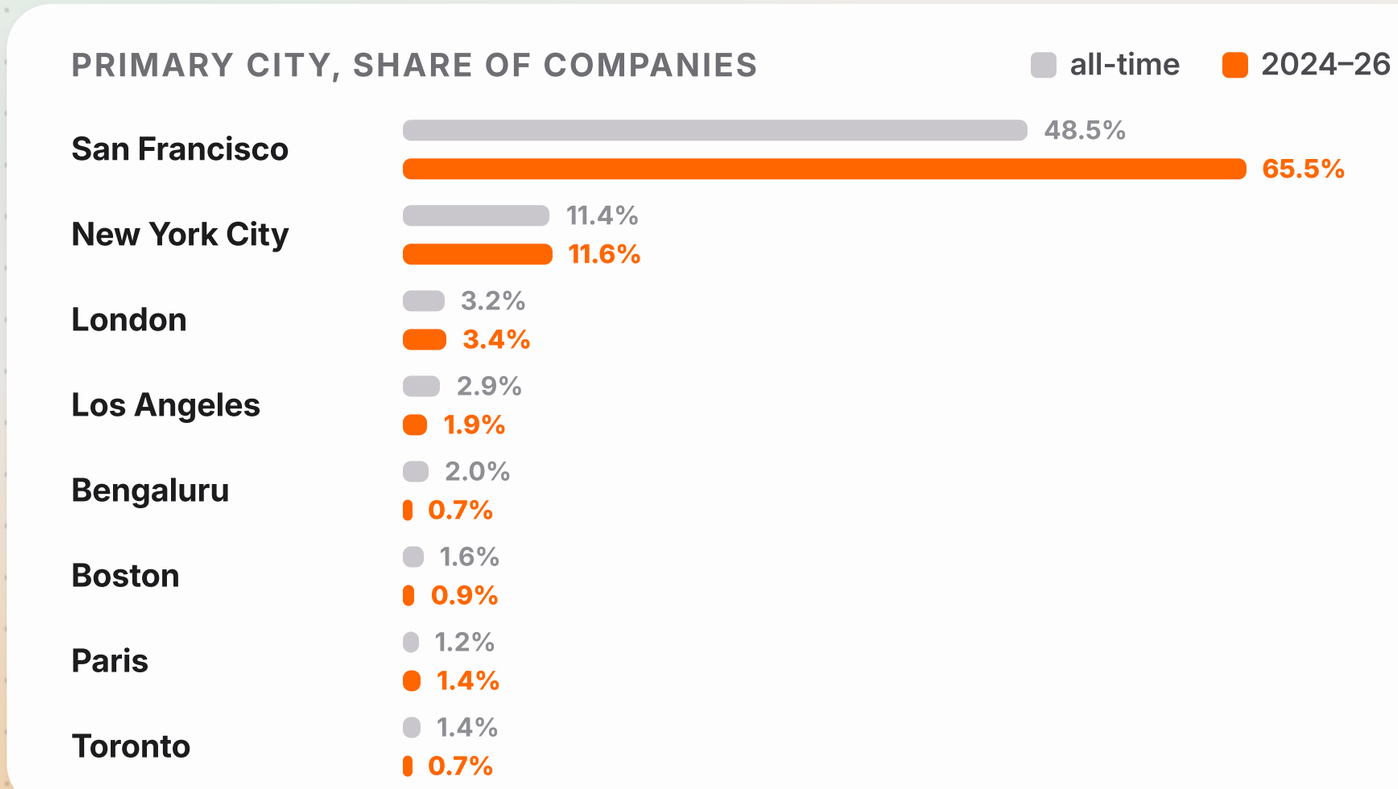
2005–15	45%
2021–23	53%
2024–26	61%

Companies can be tagged with more than one industry, so shares do not add to 100%.

CITIES AND COUNTRIES

San Francisco pulled further ahead

63% of 2024–26 companies list San Francisco as their only location. Count those with a second office and it is 66%. New York is a distant second at 12%.



BASED IN THE USA

74% → **84%**

all-time — 2024–26

NEXT COUNTRIES, ALL-TIME

UK 3.5% · India 3.4%
Canada 2.5% · France 1.2%
Mexico 1.2% · Germany 1.2%

SURVIVAL RATES AND OUTCOMES

What happens after Demo Day

Of the 924 companies from YC's first decade (2005–15), 36% were acquired or went public, 26% are still operating, and 38% shut down.

2005–15 BATCHES TODAY

34% acquired

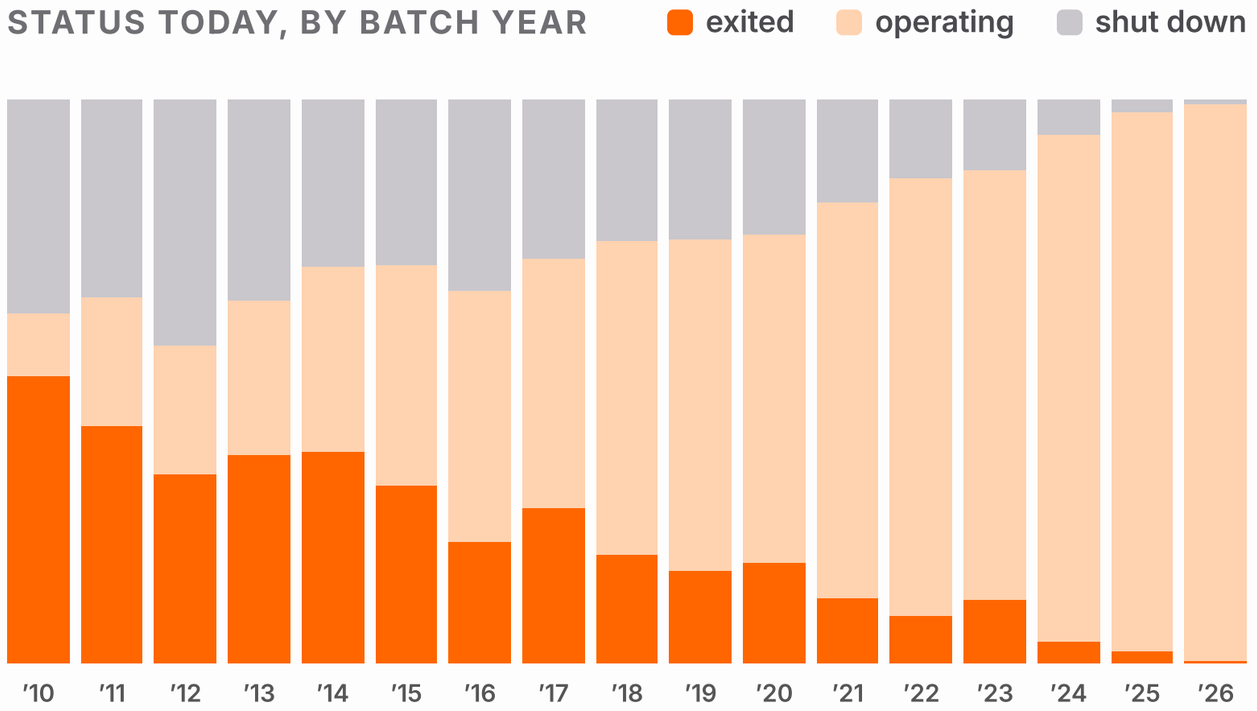
2% IPO

26% still operating

38% shut down

IPOs include Reddit, Dropbox, Airbnb, Coinbase, Instacart, DoorDash, GitLab, PagerDuty, Amplitude, Ginkgo Bioworks

STATUS TODAY, BY BATCH YEAR



KEY TAKEAWAYS

The 1% in eight numbers

~1%

get in

27,000+ applied for Winter 2024. 260 were funded.

29–43%

were idea-only

in the 2022 batches. 71% of 2022 companies had zero revenue.

57%

had applied before

in Winter 2022. Many got in on a later try.

61%

have 2 cofounders

in 2024–26. Solo founders: 23%, down from 36%.

46%

of 3-founder teams exited

in 2005–15, vs 32% of solo founders.

~80%

build with AI

The other ~20% cluster in dev infra, hard tech, consumer, fintech, health.

3.7x

growth in industrials

3.5% → 12.8% of companies. Consumer fell from 32% to 7%.

63%

are based only in SF

in 2024–26 (66% counting a second office). NYC is next at 12%.