

Statistical bulletin

Baby names in England and Wales: 2011

Most popular first names for baby boys and girls using birth registration data.



Contact:
Elizabeth McLaren
vsob@ons.gov.uk
+44 (0)1329 444110

Release date:
13 August 2012

Next release:
12 August 2013

Table of contents

1. [Key findings](#)
2. [Summary](#)
3. [Top 10 baby names in England and Wales in 2011](#)
4. [Top 100 baby names in England and Wales in 2011](#)
5. [Changes between 2001 and 2011](#)
6. [Seasonal variations](#)
7. [Regional variations](#)
8. [Users and uses of baby name statistics](#)
9. [Further information](#)
10. [References](#)
11. [Background notes](#)

1 . Key findings

- Harry and Amelia were the most popular first names given to babies born in England and Wales in 2011, replacing Oliver and Olivia in 2010
- Jacob replaced George in the top 10 most popular names for baby boys climbing five places from number 12 to number 7
- Ava and Isabella replaced Evie and Chloe in the top 10 most popular names for baby girls, both climbing two places from numbers 11 and 12 to numbers 9 and 10 respectively
- In Wales, Oliver was the most popular name for baby boys for the second year running, while Lily replaced Ruby as the most popular name for baby girls

2 . Summary

This bulletin presents the most popular baby names in England and Wales in 2011. In particular, it examines the 100 most popular first names for boys and for girls and compares the ranks of those names with the ranks in 2010 and 2001. It examines the difference in ranks between England and Wales and the regions, along with the seasonality of names.

The baby names statistics have been derived from final annual births registration data and include all live births occurring in England and Wales in 2011.

This is the first time that 2011 annual statistics on baby names in England and Wales have been published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

3 . Top 10 baby names in England and Wales in 2011

The top 10 names and changes in rank for boys and for girls in England and Wales are as follows:

Table 1: Top 10 baby names in England and Wales, 2011

Rank	Boys			Girls		
	Name	Count	Change in rank since 2010	Name	Count	Change in rank since 2010
1	Harry	7,523		2 Amelia	5,054	4
2	Oliver	7,007		-1 Olivia	4,938	-1
3	Jack	6,844		-1 Lily	4,761	1
4	Alfie	5,524		- Jessica	3,984	2
5	Charlie	5,516		- Emily	3,974	-2
6	Thomas	5,353		- Sophie	3,923	-4
7	Jacob	5,047		5 Ruby	3,702	-
8	James	4,945		2 Grace	3,691	1
9	Joshua	4,786		-1 Ava	3,621	2
10	William	4,632		-3 Isabella	3,464	2

Source: Office for National Statistics

4 . Top 100 baby names in England and Wales in 2011

Word clouds for the 100 most popular names for boys and girls are given below. The size of a name represents how many times that name was given, rather than the rank of that name.



Within the 100 most popular boys' names given to babies born in England and Wales in 2011, there were only five new entries:

- Tommy at number 65 (up 91 places from 156)
- Blake at number 79 (up 26 places from 105)
- Frankie at number 84 (up 24 places from 108)
- Elijah at number 91 (up 29 places from 120)
- Jackson at number 99 (up 40 places from 139)

These replaced Aidan (101), Bradley (105), Sam (112), Brandon (118) and Kieran (129) which fell out of the top 100.

Jenson showed the largest rise within the top 100, gaining 29 places to reach number 67. Dexter (up 20 to number 78), Arthur (up 14 to number 68) and Riley (up 12 to number 13) were also high climbers.

Ben (down 24 to number 97), Kyle (down 21 to number 95), Cameron (down 16 to number 77), Reece (down 14 to number 98), Lewis (down 12 to number 39) and Owen (down 12 to number 71) showed the largest falls.

The six new entries in the top 100 most popular girls' names were:

- Bella at number 69 (up 35 places from 104)
- Willow at number 75 (up 37 places from 112)
- Elsie at number 87 (up 21 places from 108).
- Kayla at number 98 (up 21 places from number 119)
- Francesca at number 99 (up 3 places from 102)
- Lydia at number 100 (up 7 places from 107)

These replaced Maisy (102), Tilly (103), Aimee (104), Libby (106), Alexandra (107) and Laila (124) which fell out of the top 100.

Eliza, which rose 31 places between 2010 and 2011 to 62, was the highest climber within the top 100, followed by Evelyn (up 22 to number 65), Sofia (up 15 to number 47) and Harriet (up 15 to number 71).

Caitlin (down 20 to number 86), Katie (down 17 to number 57), Keira (down 16 to number 88), Tia (down 16 to number 95) and Lauren (down 15 to number 85) were the names with the largest falls in popularity.

There are a number of possible reasons why the popularity of baby names can change over time. The popularity of names can be influenced by names of famous figures or current celebrities and what they name their own babies.

However, it is an individual choice which can be influenced by a number of other factors such as the religious, cultural and/or ethnic identities of the parents or the names of family, friends or fictional characters. As such, there is a great diversity of baby names. In 2011, there were 723,913 live births in England and Wales ([ONS, 2012](#)), with over 28,000 different boys' names and just over 35,000 different girls' names registered. The top ten names only account for 14 per cent of all names in 2011.

5 . Changes between 2001 and 2011

Five of the top 10 most popular boys' names in 2011 were also in the top 10 in 2001: Jack, Joshua, Thomas, James and Harry.

When compared with 2001, the biggest increases in popularity for those names in the top 10 in 2011 were Alfie (up 50 to number four), Charlie (up 27 to number five), and Jacob (up 21 to number seven) when compared with 2001. Matthew (down 34 to number 43) and Lewis (down 29 to number 39) have fallen the furthest since 2001.

Within the top 100 names, Kayden (up 1,041 to number 94), Ollie (up 409 to number 73), Ashton (up 346 to number 87) and Dexter (up 338 to number 78) were the highest climbers between 2001 and 2011.

Among the most popular names for baby girls, four names appear in the top 10 in both 2001 and 2011: Olivia, Jessica, Emily and Sophie.

Of the names in the top 10 in 2011, Ava (up 196 to number nine), Ruby (up 60 to number seven), and Isabella (up 44 to number 10) were the highest climbing new entries when compared with 2001, while Lauren (down 78 to number 85) and Hannah (down 33 to number 41) have fallen the furthest since 2001.

Within the top 100 names, Lexi (up 1,475 to number 45), Lexie (up 1,285 to number 74), Amelie (up 711 to number 54), Bella (up 641 to 69), Elsie (up 540 to number 87), Sienna (up 413 to number 36) and Lacey (up 359 to number 40) were the highest climbers between 2001 and 2011.

6 . Seasonal variations

Harry was the most popular name for boys in nine months during 2011, with Oliver claiming the top spot in January, April and June. Amelia was number one in five months of the year, with Olivia claiming the top spot in January, April, July and August; and Lily in February, March and May. Thirteen boys names reached the top 10 for at least one month during 2011, as did 15 girls' names.

Holly (number 26 in the annual ranks), the second most popular name for girls in December (number 21 in January), fell to number 54 in July. Summer (number 34 in the annual ranks) reached number 14 in August but fell to number 71 in December.

7 . Regional variations

There are some similarities between the top 10 most popular names in England and in Wales in 2011. For boys the two countries have seven common names in the top 10, while for girls the two countries have six common names.

However, Oliver is the most popular name for boys born to mothers in Wales instead of Harry. The three names in the top 10 for Wales which are not in the top 10 for England are: Riley (number 13 in England), Ethan (number 11 in England) and Dylan (number 24 in England).

Lily is the most popular name for girls born to mothers in Wales instead of Amelia. The four names in the top 10 for Wales which are not in the top 10 for England are: Seren (number 201 in England), Ella (number 16 in England), Mia (number 13 in England) and Megan (number 33 in England).

Table 2: Top 10 baby names, by country, 2011

Rank	Boys		Girls	
	England	Wales	England	Wales
1	Harry	Oliver	Amelia	Lily
2	Oliver	Jack	Olivia	Amelia
3	Jack	Jacob	Lily	Ava
4	Charlie	Riley	Jessica	Ruby
5	Alfie	Ethan	Emily	Olivia
6	Thomas	Alfie	Sophie	Seren
7	James	Harry	Grace	Emily
8	Jacob	Dylan	Ruby	Ella
9	Joshua	Thomas	Ava	Mia
10	William	Charlie	Isabella	Megan

Source: Office for National Statistics

Harry was the most popular name for boys in seven of the regions in England. Jack was the most popular in the North East and Daniel the most popular in London.

Among baby girls, Lily was the most popular name in five regions, Olivia in two regions (North West and Yorkshire and The Humber), Amelia in two regions (East and West Midlands), and Isabella proving the most popular in London.

Table 3: Most popular name by region, 2011

Region	Boys	Girls
North East	Jack	Lily
North West	Harry	Olivia
Yorkshire and The Humber	Harry	Olivia
East Midlands	Harry	Amelia
West Midlands	Harry	Amelia
East	Harry	Lily
London	Daniel	Isabella
South East	Harry	Lily
South West	Harry	Lily
Wales	Oliver	Lily

Source: Office for National Statistics

8 . Users and uses of baby name statistics

Users of baby name statistics can be split into five groups:

- individuals, which includes parents and soon-to-be parents who want to pick a rare or a common name for their child or are simply seeking inspiration. Other individuals include people interested in the popularity of their name or the names of friends and family, or names from a particular origin
- special interest groups, such as Bounty, produce their own popularity lists and compare their lists with those published by ONS
- those involved in the manufacture and sale of named items, such as mugs
- researchers, who examine how names are changing over the years and possibly how this reflects changes in culture
- journalists who report and produce articles on the popularity of names

9. Further information

More detailed data for [2011 baby names](#) are available on the ONS website. Data for [1996 to 2010 baby names](#) and historical ranks of baby names for [1904–1994](#) (at ten year intervals and top 100 names only) are also available.

An accompanying [video podcast](#), using audio commentary and graphical animations to cover the key trends in baby names, is also available.

[Quality and Methodology Information](#) documents for baby name and births statistics are available on the ONS website. Further information on data quality, legislation and procedures relating to births is available in [births metadata \(439.7 Kb Pdf\)](#).

[A baby names comparison tool](#) is available which allows you to analyse changing trends in boys and girls names in England and Wales. The tool enables comparison of baby name rankings in 2011 with 2010 and 2001.

[National Records of Scotland](#) provides baby names statistics for Scotland.

[Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency](#) provides baby names statistics for Northern Ireland.

A user feedback survey for the baby names tables took place in July 2011. The [results and responses to this survey](#) will be published in August 2012.

10. References

Office for National Statistics (2012) [Births and Deaths in England and Wales \(provisional\), 2011](#).

11. Background notes

1. Birth registration is a legal requirement under the Births and Deaths Registration Act (1836). The registration of births occurring in England and Wales is a service carried out by the Local Registration Service in partnership with the General Register Office (GRO).
2. The published ranks have been produced using exact spelling of first names given on the birth certificate. Grouping names with similar pronunciation would change the ranks. Although some groupings are straightforward, others are more a matter of opinion, and thus raw data are given so users can group if they wish.
3. The separate England and Wales ranks are based on the usual residence of the mother, rather than where the baby was born.
4. Births where the name of the baby was not stated (13 boys and 8 girls in the 2011 dataset) were excluded from all the ranks. Births where the usual residence of the mother was not in England and Wales or not stated (98 boys and 97 girls in the 2011 dataset) were excluded from the regional ranks and from the separate England and Wales ranks.

5. Baby names with a count of two or less are not included within the tables in order to protect the confidentiality of individuals.
6. Follow ONS on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).
7. Special extracts and tabulations of baby names data for England and Wales are available to order for a charge (subject to legal frameworks, disclosure control, resources and agreements of costs, where appropriate). Such enquiries should be made to:

Vital Statistics Outputs Branch Health and Life Events Division Office for National Statistics Segensworth Road Titchfield Fareham Hampshire PO15 5RR

Tel: +44 (0)1329 444 110 E-mail: vsob@ons.gsi.gov.uk

The [ONS charging policy](#) is available on the ONS website.

8. We would welcome feedback on the content, format and relevance of this release. The Health and Life Events user engagement strategy is available to download from the ONS website. Please send feedback to the postal or email address above.
9. Next publication date: July/August 2013.
10. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available by visiting www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html or from the Media Relations Office email: media.relations@ons.gsi.gov.uk

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs
- are well explained and readily accessible
- are produced according to sound methods
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.