

Data and analysis from Census 2021

From Star Wars to the Kardashians: the cultural influences that could be driving baby name trends

We explore the popular culture-inspired baby names that have found favour with parents in recent years

5 October 2022

Famous figures, both real and fictional, have [long set baby naming trends](#)

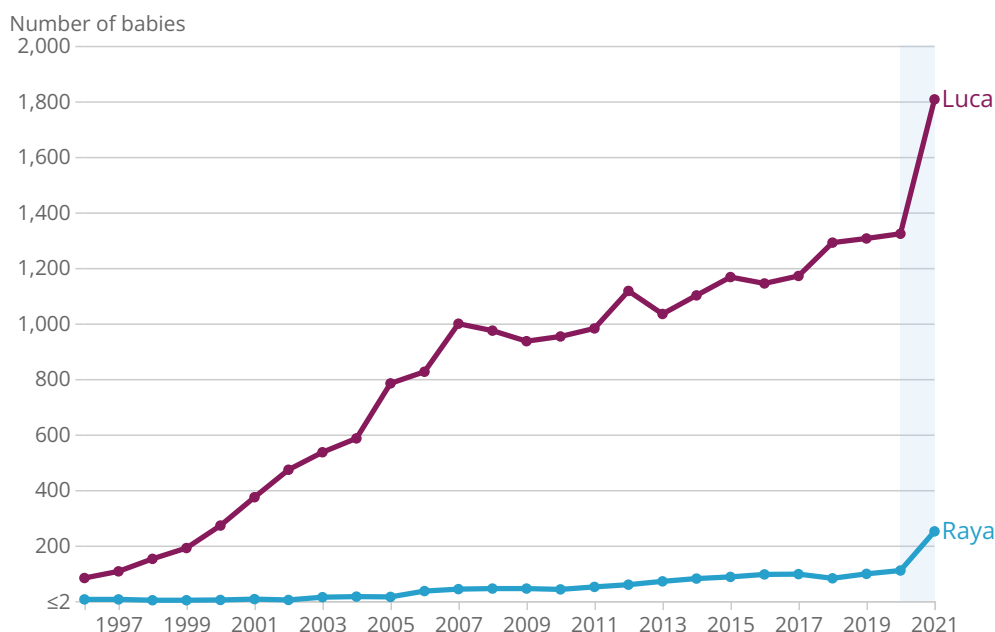
(<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/livebirths/articles/10popcultureinfluencesonbabynamesgameofthronesmarvelfrozenandmore/2015-08-17>), and 2021 appears to have been no exception. While it is not possible to know exactly what was behind parents' decisions, some noteworthy names from across the cultural spectrum have surged up the charts of late.

You can see the latest list of the most popular baby names in England and Wales in our [accompanying bulletin](#) (<http://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/livebirths/bulletins/babynamesenglandandwales/latest>).

Names from films feature strongly

A popular Pixar fantasy may have helped Luca enter the top 30

Number of boys registered with the name Luca and girls named Raya at birth, England and Wales, 1996 to 2021



Source: Office for National Statistics – Baby names in England and Wales

[Embed code](#)

[Download the data for babies named Luca and Raya \(XLSX, 12KB\)](#)

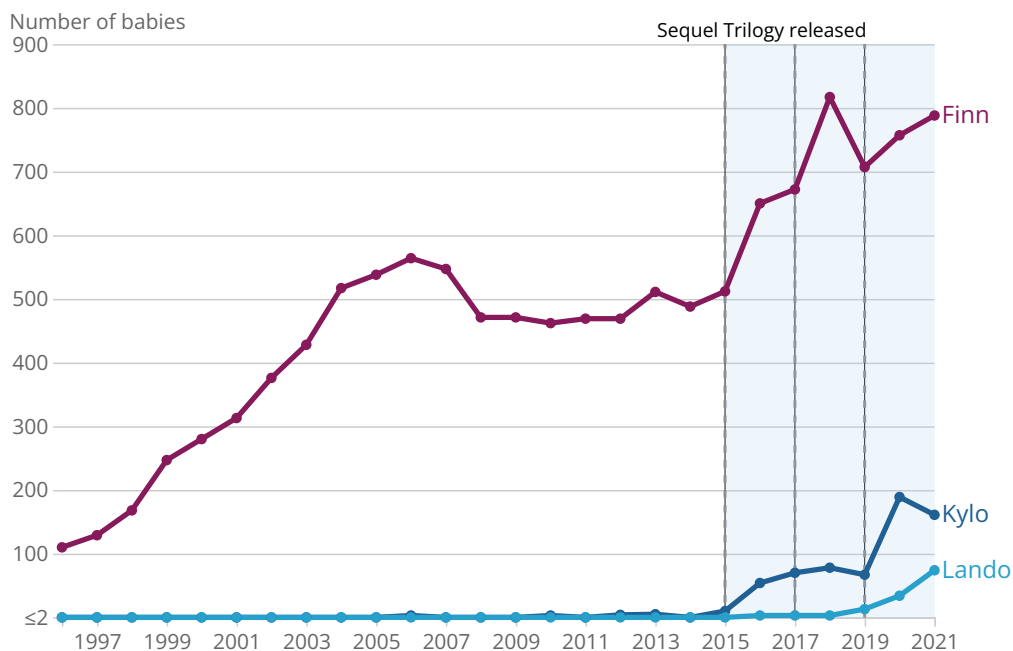
(<https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/dvc2170/rayaLuca/datadownload.xlsx>)

Last year's highly streamed coming-of-age tale "Luca" could have increased interest in the name, with the number of boys named Luca jumping from 1,323 in 2020 to 1,807 in 2021, which made it the 28th-most popular name for boys that year.

The release of Disney adventure "Raya and the Last Dragon" in 2021 could be another animation influencing parents. The film, which follows the exploits of warrior princess Raya, coincided with a big increase in the number of registrations of the name, with the count more than doubling from 110 girls in 2020 (joint-393rd) to 251 (203rd) in 2021.

Kylo sees a boost after "Star Wars" character renounces the dark side

Number of boys registered with the names Finn, Kylo and Lando at birth, England and Wales, 1996 to 2021



Source: Office for National Statistics – Baby names in England and Wales

[Embed code](#)

[Download the data for babies named Finn, Kylo and Lando \(XLSX, 12KB\)](#)

(<http://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/dvc2170/starWars/datadownload.xlsx>)

The number of newborn boys named Kylo rose more than fivefold to 54 in 2016 after "The Force Awakens" hit cinema screens, introducing audiences to villain Kylo Ren.

The count peaked at 189 in 2020, possibly driven by Kylo turning his back on the dark side in the third film of the latest trilogy, which was released in 2019.

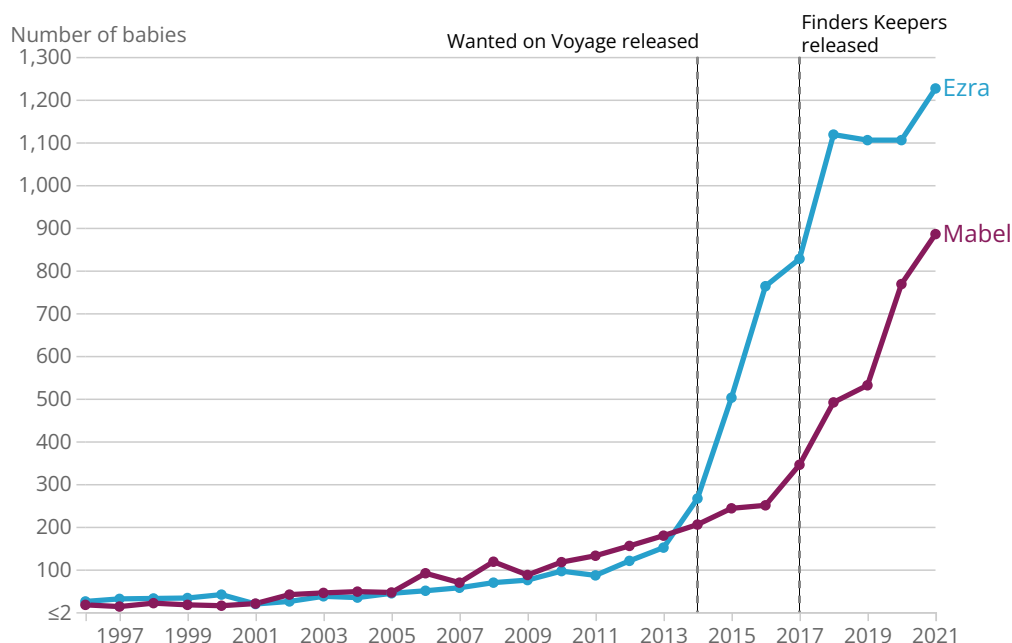
The number of Landos has also risen since the appearance of Lando Calrissian in the third film, rising more than fivefold from 13 in 2019 to 74 last year.

The name Finn, one of the trilogy's main characters, also rose in popularity from 512 registrations for boys in 2015 to 788 in 2021. This could also be influenced by crime drama "Peaky Blinders" (see below).

Musical names are climbing the charts

There were 14 times the number of baby boys named Ezra in 2021 compared with a decade before

Number of boys registered with the name Ezra and girls named Mabel at birth, England and Wales, 1996 to 2021



Source: Office for National Statistics – Baby names in England and Wales

[Embed code](#)

[Download the data for babies named Ezra and Mabel \(XLSX, 12KB\)](#)

(<http://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/dvc2170/ezraMabel/datadownload.xlsx>)

Ezra was just outside the top-50 most popular names given to boys in 2021, with 1,226 registered that year.

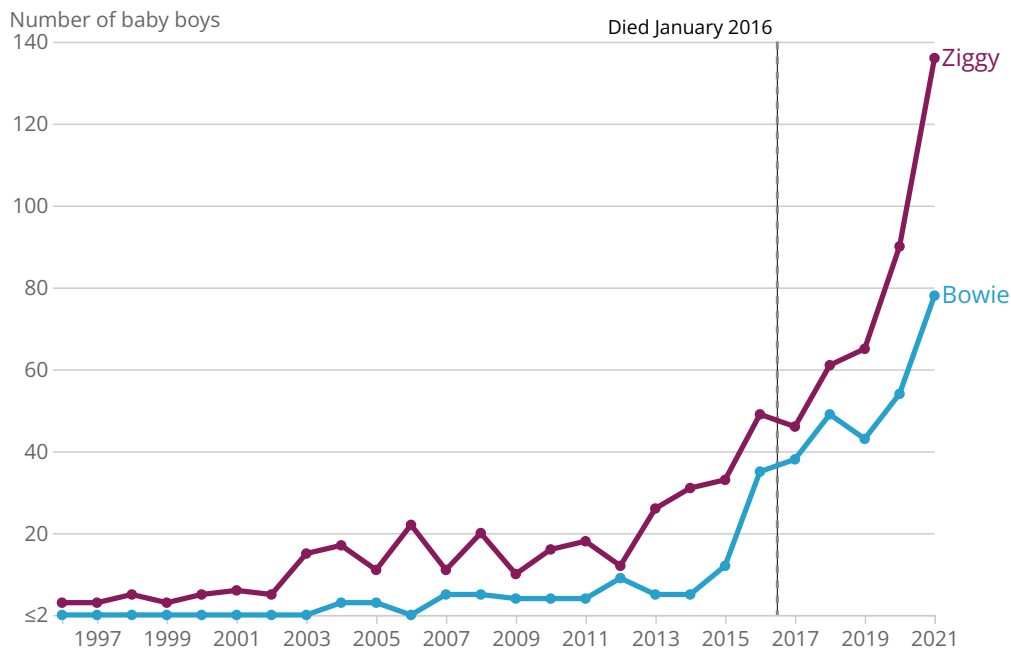
The name rose in prominence at around the same time that musician George Ezra achieved widespread fame, with an 89% increase in 2015 coming after his debut album "Wanted on Voyage" topped the charts.

Like Ezra, the number of baby girls named Mabel also peaked in 2021 at 885, which followed particularly large increases in 2018 and 2020.

This may have been influenced by the singer and songwriter Mabel, whose breakthrough single "Finders Keepers" reached the top 10 in 2017. Her album "High Expectations" later reached number three in 2019.

The 2020s prove golden years for Bowie-inspired boys' names

Number of boys registered with the names Bowie and Ziggy at birth, England and Wales, 1996 to 2021



Source: Office for National Statistics - Baby names in England and Wales

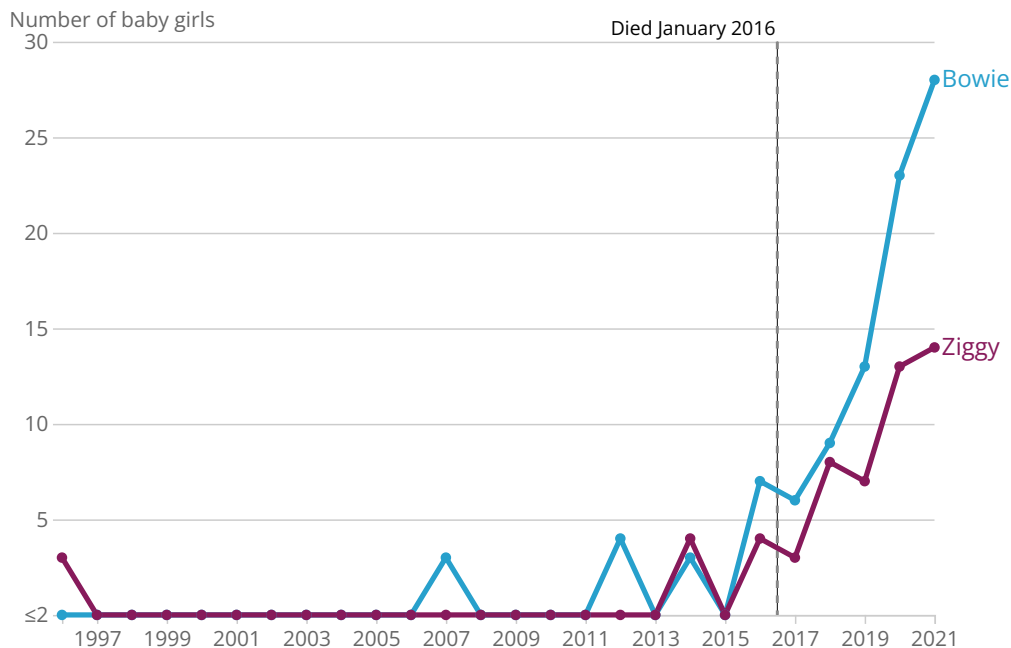
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[Download the data for baby boys named Bowie and Ziggy \(XLSX, 12KB\)](#)

(<http://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/dvc2170/bowieM/datadownload.xlsx>)

...as well as for some girls

Number of girls registered with the names Bowie and Ziggy at birth, England and Wales, 1996 to 2021



Source: Office for National Statistics - Baby names in England and Wales

[Embed code](#)

[Download the data for baby girls named Bowie and Ziggy \(XLSX, 11KB\)](#)

(<http://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/dvc2170/bowieF/datadownload.xlsx>)

The death of musical legend David Bowie in January 2016 seems to have led to some tributes, with the name Bowie increasing from a count of 12 for boys in 2015 to 78 last year.

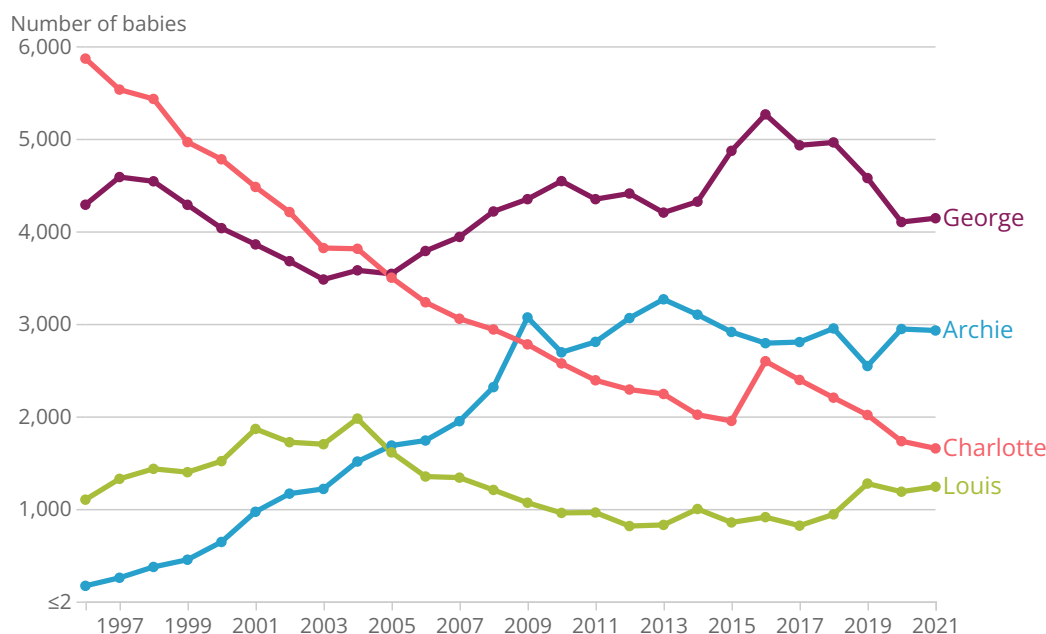
The name Ziggy, perhaps inspired by Bowie's iconic stage persona Ziggy Stardust, has proved even more popular for boys – rising from 33 registrations to 136 over the same period.

Both names have also risen in popularity for girls, which is perhaps apt given the singer's reputation for blurring traditional gender roles.

Newborns with a Royal connection

Some names have risen in the ranks after Royal births

Number of boys registered with the names Archie, George and Louis and girls named Charlotte at birth, England and Wales, 1996 to 2021



Source: Office for National Statistics – Baby names in England and Wales

[Embed code](#)

[Download the data for babies named Archie, George, Louis and Charlotte \(XLSX, 13KB\)](#)

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/dvc2170/royals/datadownload.xlsx>

The birth of the Prince and Princess of Wales' first child George in 2013 was followed by an increase in registrations of the name, peaking at 5,263 in 2016.

Archie ascended to the ninth-most popular boy's name in 2020 after the birth of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle's first child, with 2,944 Archies registered that year. However, that only returned the name to levels seen in 2018.

Louis also rose in popularity after the birth of William and Kate's third child, with 1,274 registrations in 2019 compared with 941 the previous year.

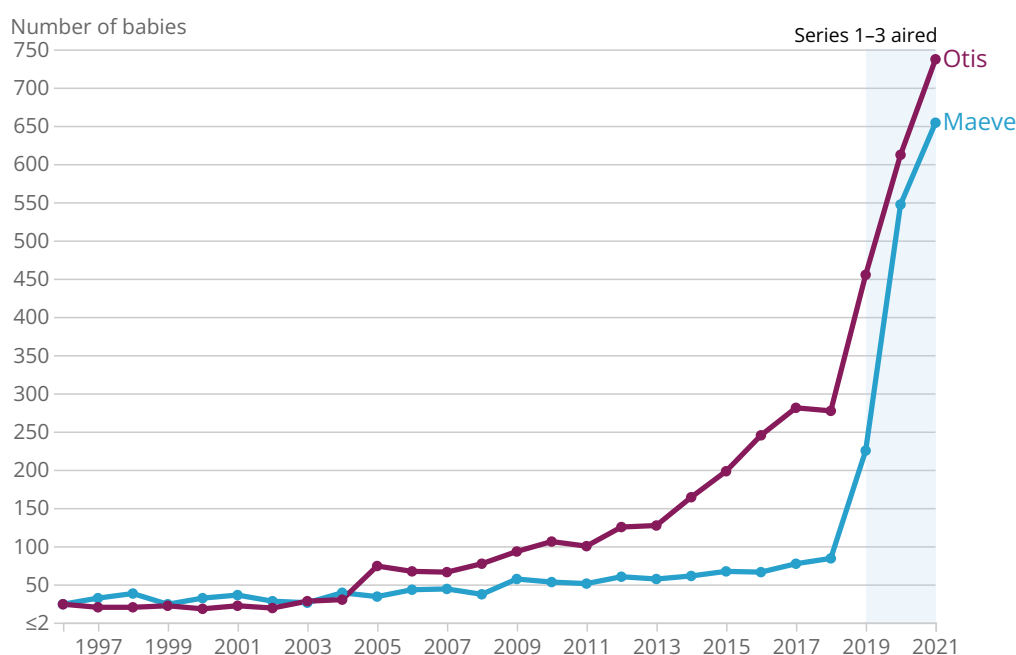
The birth of the Wales' second child Charlotte in 2015 caused the name to climb from a count of 1,951 that year to 2,596 in 2016, rising from the 25th-most popular name to 12th. However, Charlotte has gradually fallen back to 25th in the rankings since.

The Sussexes' second child Lilibet was not born until June 2021 but still appears to have drawn some admiration, with eight Lilibets registered in total over the year compared with fewer than three in each of the previous seven years.

TV character names are proving a hit

Names featured in "Sex Education" are still on the rise

Number of girls registered with the name Maeve, and boys with the name Otis, at birth, England and Wales, 1996 to 2021



Source: Office for National Statistics – Baby names in England and Wales

[Embed code](#)

[Download the data for babies named Maeve and Otis \(XLSX, 12KB\)](#)

(<http://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/dvc2170/sexEd/datadownload.xlsx>)

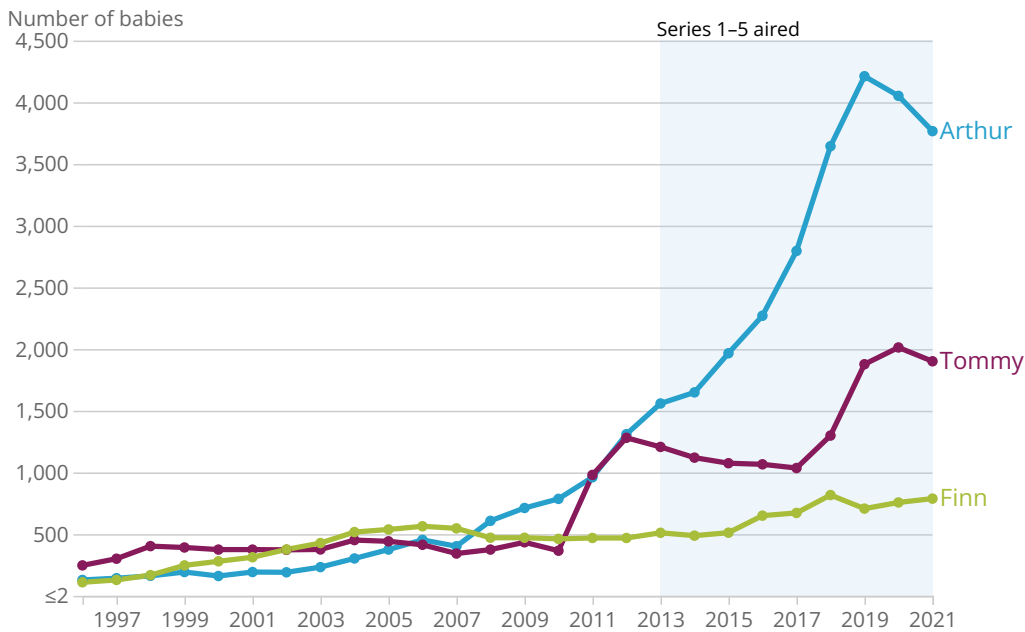
Maeve and Otis are still on the up after the second series of the successful Netflix show aired in 2020, and the third series in September 2021.

There were 737 boys born in 2021 who were named Otis, compared with 277 in 2018 before the first series, meaning it rose in the ranks from 192nd to 81st.

Maeve saw an even more dramatic rise, from a count of 84 (joint-507th) in 2018 to 654 (77th) in 2021.

Arthurs have more than doubled since the arrival of Birmingham's infamous gangster family on TV screens

Number of boys registered with the names Arthur, Finn and Tommy at birth, England and Wales, 1996 to 2021



Source: Office for National Statistics – Baby names in England and Wales

[Embed code](#)

[Download the data for babies named Arthur, Finn and Tommy \(XLSX, 13KB\)](#)

(<http://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/dvc2170/peakyBlinders/datadownload.xlsx>)

Arthur had been rising in popularity before the show "Peaky Blinders" first appeared on the BBC in 2013 but jumped into 7th place in 2018 and 3rd in 2020.

Overall, the number of Arthurs has more than doubled from 1,559 in 2013 to 3,766 in 2021.

Finn has also risen from 511 registrations (116th place) for boys born in 2013, to 788 (72nd) in 2021, although this could also be influenced by the "Star Wars" films.

Although Tommy was the show's central character, the name fell in popularity during the early years of the show.

However, it rose by 263 registrations to a total of 1,299 in 2018 after the fourth series was aired.

Netflix show "Stranger Things" may have inspired some uncommon names

Dustin rose from a relatively obscure four registrations in 2015 to 25 in 2020, after the first three series of the sci-fi horror appeared between 2016 and 2019.

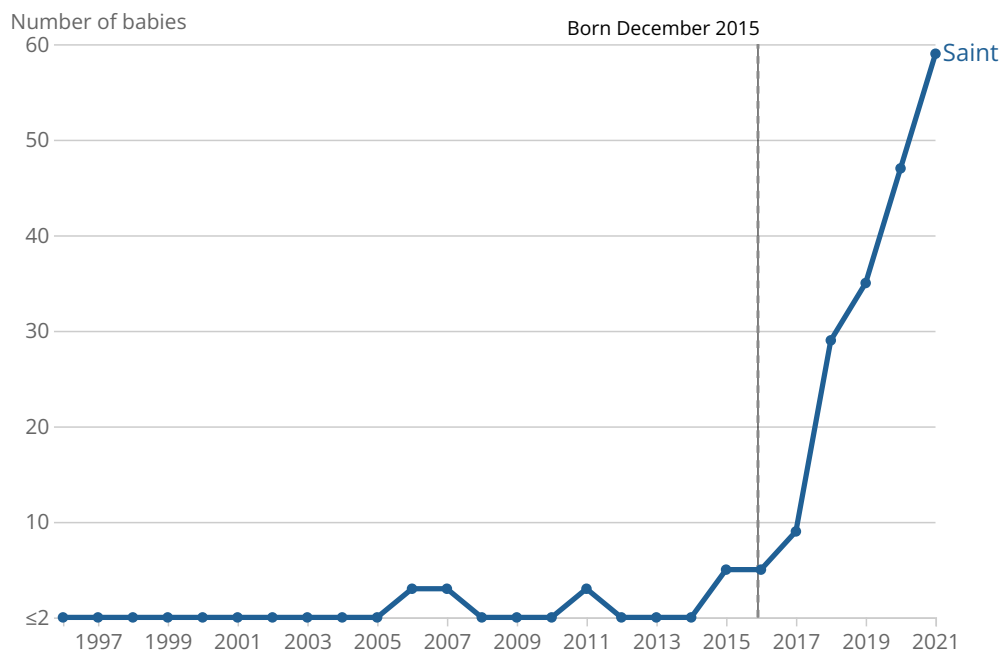
There have also been 10 newborn girls named Max since 2018, which was the year after the female character of the same name appeared in series two of the show.

There were even three babies registered with the name Eleven in 2018, another name shared with one of the show's protagonists.

Are parents trying to keep up with the Kardashians?

Saints have risen more than tenfold since the birth of Kim Kardashian's son

Number of boys registered with the name Saint at birth, England and Wales, 1996 to 2021



Source: Office for National Statistics – Baby names in England and Wales

[Embed code](#)

[Download the data for babies named Saint \(XLSX, 12KB\)](#)

(<http://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/dvc2170/saint/datadownload.xlsx>)

Kim Kardashian and Kanye West's son Saint, who features on the long-running reality TV shows following the Kardashian family, was born in December 2015, when there were five registrations of the name for boys. By 2021, the number had reached 59.

Khloe Kardashian's daughter True was born in April 2018, after which the number of registrations of the name for girls rose from fewer than three that year, to 10 in 2021. Her birth may also have caused a brief increase in the number of boys named True, with three registered in 2019 and four the following year, compared with fewer than three in 2018.

The number of boys named Psalm rose slightly from three in 2018 to six in 2021 after the birth of Kim's second son, while there were also three girls called Psalm last year.

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