

Statistical bulletin

Baby names in England and Wales: 2016

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



Contact:
Nicola Haines
vsob@ons.gsi.gov.uk
+44 (0)1329 444110

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1 . Main points

- Olivia was the most popular first name given to baby girls born in England and Wales in 2016, replacing Amelia, which has been the most popular girls' name since 2011.
- Oliver remains as the most popular first name given to baby boys in England and Wales in 2016 and has been the most popular boys name since 2013.
- Olivia was the most popular name for baby girls in five out of the nine English regions in 2016.
- Oliver was the most popular name for baby boys in six out of the nine English regions in 2016.
- Olivia and Oliver were the most popular first names given to babies born in Wales in 2016.
- Lily replaced Poppy in the top 10 girls' names for England and Wales in 2016, compared with 2015.
- Muhammad replaced William in the top 10 boys' names for England and Wales in 2016, compared with 2015.

2 . Statistician's comment

"With over 696,000 babies born in England and Wales in 2016, and nearly 64,000 different names chosen for them, it's interesting how relatively stable the top 10 names have been over recent years. Olivia replaced Amelia as the most popular name for girls in 2016, returning to the top position it previously held between 2008 and 2010. Oliver remained the most popular name for baby boys born in 2016, having held the top spot since 2013. It is as you move down the rankings that you begin to notice social and cultural changes being reflected in name choices. Harper was the girls' name in the top 100 in 2016 with the biggest rise in popularity over the previous 10 years, whilst for boys it was Jaxon."

Nick Stripe, Vital Statistics Outputs Branch, Office for National Statistics.

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3 . Things you need to know about this release

Important information for interpreting these baby name statistics:

- baby name statistics are compiled from first names recorded when live births are registered in England and Wales as part of civil registration, a legal requirement
- the statistics are based only on live births that occurred in the calendar year, as there is no public register of stillbirths
- babies born in England and Wales to women whose usual residence is outside England and Wales are included in the statistics for England and Wales as a whole, but excluded from any sub-division of England and Wales
- the statistics are based on the exact spelling of the name given on the birth certificate; grouping names with similar pronunciation would change the rankings and exact names are given so users can group if they wish

4 . The number of different baby names in 2016

In 2016, there were [696,271 live births](#) in England and Wales. Table 1 provides information on the number of different names registered to baby boys and girls, including the number of babies with a name that only occurred once or twice in 2016.

Table 1: Live births and the number of different baby names registered in 2016 England and Wales

England and Wales

| | Boys | Girls |
|--|---------------|---------------|
| Number of live births | 357,046 | 339,225 |
| Number of different baby names registered | 28,274 | 35,645 |
| Number of babies with a name in the top 100 | 181,730 (51%) | 142,257 (42%) |
| Number of babies with a name in the top 10 | 46,601 (13%) | 33,624 (10%) |
| Number of babies with a name that occurred once in 2016 | 19,005 (5%) | 24,198 (7%) |
| Number of babies with a name that occurred twice in 2016 | 6,048 (2%) | 7,874 (2%) |
| Number of babies with a name that occurred three or more times in 2016 | 331,981 (93%) | 307,145 (91%) |
| Number of births registered without a name | 12 | 8 |

Source: Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Baby name datasets only include names with counts of three or more to protect the confidentiality of uncommon baby names.
2. Percentages may not sum due to rounding.

5 . Which names entered the top 100 in 2016?

There were six new entries into the top 100 most popular boys' names in 2016 for England and Wales: Albie, Arlo, Ezra, Finn, Jasper and Jesse. These replaced Callum, Connor, Jamie, Kian, Seth and Sonny, which were in the top 100 in 2015.

There were four new entries in the top 100 most popular girls' names in 2016 in England and Wales: Felicity, Iris, Luna and Lydia. These replaced Bethany, Hollie, Katie and Lacey.

Use our interactive chart to compare changes in the top 100 boys' and girls' names between 1904 and 2016. Data for 1904 to 1994 are only available at 10-yearly intervals; for 1996 to 2016, figures are available for every year.

Compare changes in the top 100 baby boys' and girls' names between 1904 and 2016

The top 100 boys' and girls' names for 2016 are also available for England and Wales separately in our [datasets](#).

6 . How do the top 10 names in 2016 compare with 2006?

The top 10 names in 2016 in England and Wales and changes in rank since 2006 for boys and girls are outlined in Figures 1 and 2.

Top 10 boys' baby names in England and Wales, 2006 and 2016

Five of the 10 most popular boys' names in 2016 were also in the top 10 in 2006: Oliver, Harry, Jack, Charlie and Thomas.

When compared with 2006, the names with the greatest increase in popularity in the top 10 in 2016 were Noah, Oscar and Muhammad (up 41, 36 and 35 places in the rankings respectively). The largest decrease was for Daniel, down 20 places in the rankings since being in the top 10 in 2006.

Top 10 girls' baby names in England and Wales, 2006 and 2016

Of the 10 most popular girls' names in 2016, there were four that were also in the top 10 in 2006; Olivia, Emily, Lily and Jessica.

Compared with 2006, the biggest increases in popularity for those names in the top 10 in 2016 were Isla and Ava (up 89 and 55 places in the rankings respectively). The largest decrease in popularity since being in the top 10 in 2006 was for Ellie (down 38 rank places).

7 . Oliver and Olivia most popular names in Wales and most English regions

In 2016, Oliver was the most popular name for baby boys in six out of the nine English regions and Olivia was the most popular name for baby girls in five out of the nine regions (Table 2). Oliver and Olivia were also the most popular names respectively for baby boys and girls born in Wales in 2016.

Table 2: Most popular names for baby boys and girls in 2016, England, Wales, and regions within England

| Country / Region | Most popular boys' name | Most popular girls' name |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| ENGLAND | Oliver | Olivia |
| North East | Harry | Olivia |
| North West | Oliver | Olivia |
| Yorkshire and The Humber | Oliver | Amelia |
| East Midlands | Oliver | Amelia |
| West Midlands | Muhammad | Amelia |
| East | Oliver | Olivia |
| London | Muhammad | Amelia |
| South East | Oliver | Olivia |
| South West | Oliver | Olivia |
| WALES | Oliver | Olivia |

Source: Office for National Statistics

8 . Links to related statistics

More detailed data for [2016 baby names](#) by country, region and month for England and Wales are available on our website alongside data for 1996 to 2015.

Historical rankings of baby names for [1904 to 1994](#) (top 100 rankings at 10-year intervals) were provided by the General Register Office. Office for National Statistics (ONS) took responsibility for producing baby name statistics in 2009 and does not have the data to compile figures prior to 1996. This represents all the historic data available; we are unable to provide counts for years prior to 1996.

[A baby names comparison tool](#) has been developed by Anna Powell-Smith using our data. It allows you to analyse changing trends in names for boys and girls in England and Wales since 1996.

Special extracts and tabulations of baby names data for England and Wales are available to order (subject to legal frameworks, disclosure control, resources and the [ONS charging policy](#), where appropriate). Enquiries should be made to Vital Statistics Outputs Branch by email to ysob@ons.gsi.gov.uk or telephone on +44 (0)1329 444110. User requested data will be published onto [our website](#).

9 . Quality and methodology

This is the first time that annual statistics on baby names in England and Wales for 2016 have been published. Baby names statistics are derived from final annual births registration data and represent all live births occurring in England and Wales in the specific calendar year but include a very small number of late registrations.

1. Minimal automated editing is conducted on the names. Detail on the edits applied is available in the [Baby names quality and methodology information](#) report.
2. Baby name statistics for England and its regions and for Wales are based on the area of usual residence of the mother, rather than where the baby was born.
3. Births where the name of the baby was not stated (12 boys and 8 girls in the 2016 dataset) were excluded from all the rankings. Births where the usual residence of the mother was not in England and Wales or not stated (81 boys and 97 girls in the 2016 dataset) were excluded from the regional rankings and from the separate England and Wales rankings.
4. The primary users of the data are parents and soon-to-be parents, register offices who display the data and the media. Baby name websites and those who manufacture and sell named items such as souvenir mugs also make use of the data.
5. The [Baby names Quality and Methodology Information](#) and the [Births Quality and Methodology Information](#) reports contain important information on:
 - the strengths and limitations of the data and how it compares with related data
 - uses and users
 - how the output was created
 - the quality of the output including the accuracy of the data
6. Our [User guide to birth statistics](#) provides further information on data quality, legislation and procedures relating to births and includes a glossary of terms.
7. The [Revisions policy for population statistics \(including baby name statistics\)](#) is available on our website.
8. The [baby names comparison tool](#) has been developed by Anna Powell-Smith (a web developer external to Office for National Statistics (ONS)) using our data. Because the tool has been produced external to ONS, it will not contain 2016 data until sometime after 9.30am on Wednesday 20 September; we cannot provide 2016 data to Anna Powell-Smith until the release is published.
9. Baby names with a count of two or less in England and Wales as a whole are not included within published datasets to protect the confidentiality of individuals.