

Statistical bulletin

Baby names in England and Wales: 2017

Most popular first names for baby boys and girls in 2017 using birth registration data.



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1 . Main points

- Oliver remained the most popular first name given to baby boys in England and Wales in 2017, a position held since 2013; Harry and George have remained in second and third places respectively since 2016.
- Olivia remained the most popular first name given to baby girls in 2017, a position held since 2016; Amelia remained in second place and Isla moved up to third.
- Leo replaced Thomas in the top 10 for boys, whilst Hunter and Ralph replaced Aaron and Jasper in the top 100 in 2017.
- Poppy replaced Jessica in the top 10 for girls, whilst Aurora, Orla, Edith, Bonnie, Lyla and Hallie replaced Lexi, Zoe, Maddison, Sarah, Felicity and Lydia in the top 100 in 2017.
- Most of the top 10 baby names of 2007 have declined in popularity, with the names Thomas, Daniel, Ruby, Grace, Jessica and Chloe all given to at least 50% fewer babies in 2017 than they were 10 years previously.
- Regionally, Olivia was the most popular name for baby girls throughout England and in Wales in 2017, but for baby boys Oliver was beaten by Muhammad in London, the West Midlands, and Yorkshire and The Humber, with Harry the most popular name in the North East.

2 . Statistician's comment

“Although Oliver and Olivia remained the most popular baby names in 2017, some fascinating changes took place beneath them. Leo entered the boys' top 10 for the first time, whilst Hunter rocketed into the top 100, also for the first time, reaching number 78. Sarah, the most popular name for baby girls throughout much of the 1970s and 1980s, dropped out of the top 100 for the first time since our records began in 1904. Brand new entries into the top 100 for girls include the names Aurora and Hallie.”

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 . There were over 63,000 unique baby names registered in 2017

In 2017, there were [679,106 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 registered with a name that only occurred once or twice in 2017.

Table 1: Live births and the number of different baby names registered in 2017, England and Wales

	Boys	Girls
Number of live births	348,071	331,035
Number of different baby names registered	28,222	35,475
Number of babies with a name in the top 100	174,064 (50%)	136,004 (41%)
Number of babies with a name in the top 10	43,584 (13%)	31,946 (10%)
Number of babies with a name that occurred once in 2017	18,950 (5%)	23,982 (7%)
Number of babies with a name that occurred twice in 2017	6,216 (2%)	7,956 (2%)
Number of babies with a name that occurred three or more times in 2017	322,902 (93%)	299,089 (90%)
Number of births registered without a name	3	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 to 100 due to rounding.

5 . Which names entered the top 100 in 2017?

There were two new entries into the top 100 most popular boys' names in 2017 for England and Wales: Hunter and Ralph, which replaced Aaron and Jasper from the top 100 in 2016. This is the first time Hunter has been in the top 100 boys' names, Ralph last appeared in the top 100 in 1944.

There were six new entries in the top 100 most popular girls' names in 2017 in England and Wales: Aurora, Orla, Edith, Bonnie, Lyla and Hallie. These replaced Lexi, Zoe, Maddison, Sarah, Felicity and Lydia. This is the first appearance in the top 100 girls' names for all except Edith, which was last present in the top 100 in 1934.

Use our interactive chart in Figure 1 to compare changes in the top 100 boys' and girls' names between 1904 and 2017. Data for 1904 to 1994 are only available at 10-yearly intervals; for 1996 to 2016, figures are available for every year.

Figure 1: Changes in the top 100 baby boys' and girls' names between 1904 and 2017

England and Wales

[Download the data](#)

Top 100 boys' and girls' names for 2017 are also available for England and for Wales separately in our [datasets](#).

6 . How do the top 10 names in 2017 compare with 2007?

The top 10 names in 2017 in England and Wales and changes in rank since 2007 for boys and girls are outlined in Figures 2 and 3.

Figure 2: Top 10 boys' baby names in England and Wales, 2007 and 2017

[Download the data](#)

Four of the ten most popular boys' names in 2017 were also in the top 10 in 2007: Oliver, Harry, Jack and Charlie. Compared with 2007, Noah, Leo and Oscar from the 2017 top 10 increased the greatest amount (up 46, 36 and 33 places in the rankings respectively). The largest decrease was for Daniel, down 26 places in the rankings since being in the top 10 in 2007.

Figure 3: Top 10 girls' baby names in England and Wales, 2007 and 2017

[Download the data](#)

Of the 10 most popular girls' names in 2017, there were five that were also in the top 10 in 2007: Olivia, Amelia, Emily, Ella and Lily. Compared with 2007, the biggest increases in popularity for those names in the top 10 in 2017 were Isla and Ava (up 62 and 34 places in the rankings respectively). The largest decrease in popularity since being in the top 10 in 2007 was for Chloe (down 25 rank places).

7 . Baby names vary by mother's usual area of residence

Based on mother's usual area of residence, in 2017, Oliver was the top baby boys' name in five out of the nine regions of England, as well as the top baby boys' name in Wales. In Yorkshire and The Humber, the West Midlands and London, Muhammad ranked first followed by Oliver in second place. In the North East, Harry was top followed by Oliver. Olivia was the top baby girls' name in all nine regions of England and in Wales, followed by Amelia in all regions apart from the South West where Isla came in second place.

There is much greater variation in the [top baby names at local authority level](#); in 2017, Oliver was the top boys' name in only 36% of local authorities, while Olivia was the top girls' name in 49% of local authorities.

8 . Links to related statistics

More detailed data for [2017 baby names](#) by country, region and month for England and Wales are available alongside data for 1996 to 2016.

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.

The [baby names comparison tool](#) has been developed by Anna Powell-Smith (a web developer external to ONS) using our data. Because the tool has been produced external to ONS, it will not contain 2017 data until sometime after 9:30am on Friday 21 September; we cannot provide 2017 data to Anna Powell-Smith until the release is published.

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 vsob@ons.gov.uk or telephone on +44 (0)1329 444110. [User requested data](#) will be published.

9 . Quality and methodology

This is the first time that annual statistics on baby names in England and Wales for 2017 have been published. Baby name 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.

Minimal automated editing is conducted on the names. Detail on the edits applied is available in our [Baby names quality and methodology information](#).

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.

Births where the name of the baby was not stated (three boys and eight girls in the 2017 dataset) were excluded from all the rankings. Births where the usual residence of the mother was not in England and Wales or not stated (65 boys and 71 girls in the 2017 dataset) were excluded from the regional rankings and from the separate England and Wales rankings.

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.

The [Baby names Quality and Methodology Information](#) and the [Births Quality and Methodology Information](#) 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

Our [User guide to birth statistics](#) provides further information on data quality, legislation and procedures relating to births and includes a glossary of terms.

The [Revisions policy for population statistics \(including baby name statistics\)](#) is available.

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.