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# Babies' First Names 2012

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A National Statistics publication for Scotland

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## Main Points

The key points in this publication are:

- **Jack** remains the most popular first forename for baby boys. **Lewis** stays in second place, and **Riley** has risen 11 places to third.
- For the eighth year, **Sophie** is the most popular first forename for baby girls. **Emily** has climbed four places to second, and **Lily** has fallen from second to seventh.
- In total, 3,157 different boys' first forenames and 4,222 different girls' first forenames were registered in the first eleven months of the year.
- The top 50 boys' names accounted for 44 per cent of all boys' first forenames registered, and the top 50 girls' names accounted for 41 per cent of the girls' registrations.

## The most popular first forenames in Scotland, 2012 (provisional)

All the information for 2012 in this publication is provisional, being based on data for births that were registered in the first eleven months of the year ([Note 2 on page 9](#) gives the precise specification of the 'cut-off' date). The information given for 2011 is based on data for all the births that were registered in that year, and so supersedes the provisional figures that appeared in the previous edition of this publication.

Table A (below) shows the Top Twenty boys' and girls' first forenames included in the statistics for 2012. The following more detailed information may be downloaded from our website:

- the Top 100 boys' and girls' first forenames in Scotland in 2012, showing changes since the previous year:
  - a) in order of popularity ([Table 1](#)); and
  - b) in alphabetical order ([Table 2](#));
- the Top Ten boys' and girls' first forenames for each Scottish council area ([Table 3](#)).

Full lists of all the first forenames which were given to babies in Scotland in 2011 (including those registered too late to be counted in the previous edition of this publication) are available from the '[Babies' First Names 2011](#)' pages of the website. Equivalent lists of all the first forenames given to babies whose births were registered in Scotland in 2012 will be made available when the preliminary annual statistics for 2012 are published.

**Table A: First forenames registered in Scotland in 2012 (provisional)**

<b>Boys</b>				<b>Girls</b>			
Rank	Name	Number	Change in Rank 2011 - 2012 (prov.)	Rank	Name	Number	Change in Rank 2011 - 2012 (prov.)
1	Jack	503	no change	1	Sophie	582	no change
2	Lewis	409	no change	2	Emily	460	4
3	Riley	398	11	3	Olivia	403	1
4	James	393	-1	4	Ava	401	-1
5	Logan	363	1	5	Lucy	395	no change
6	Daniel	359	-2	6	Isla	388	1
7	Ethan	336	-3	7	Lily	378	-5
8	Harry	306	no change	8	Jessica	370	no change
9	Alexander	298	-2	9	Amelia	305	20
10	Oliver	285	no change	10	Mia	285	4
11	Max	282	15	11	Millie	277	7
12	Tyler	278	20	12	Eva	265	1
13=	Aaron	274	-2	13	Ellie	262	-4
13=	Charlie	274	4	14	Chloe	261	-4
15	Adam	272	3	15	Freya	245	4
16	Finlay	271	3	16	Sophia	237	1
17	Alfie	268	6	17	Grace	228	-2
18	Mason	262	13	18	Emma	220	-7
19	Ryan	258	-10	19	Hannah	208	5
20=	Liam	253	5	20	Holly	202	-5
20=	Lucas	253	-7				

## Commentary

### Boys' Names

**Jack** remains the most popular first forename for baby boys, and **Lewis** stays in second place. Between them, Jack and Lewis have been the top two boys' first forenames for the past fourteen years. Jack has been number one (with Lewis second) in ten of those years, with Lewis top (and Jack second) for the other four.

**Riley** has risen 11 places to third. **James**, **Logan** and **Daniel** are fourth, fifth and sixth respectively, with each of them being within a place or two of their position in 2011. **Ethan**, **Harry**, **Alexander** and **Oliver** make up the rest of the Top Ten.

Riley is the only new entrant to the Top Ten, and is also the fastest climber within the Top Twenty, followed by **Charlie** (up 4 places to joint 13th), **Max** (up 15 places to 11th), **Tyler** (up 20 places to 12th), **Alfie** (up 6 places to 17th), **Mason** (up 13 places to 18th) and **Liam** (up 5 places to joint 20th) are the new entrants to the Top Twenty.

**Harris** (up 20 places to 29th), **Noah** (up 7 places to 31st) and **Luke** (up 6 places to joint 40th) are among the other climbers within the Top Fifty. There are also three new entrants to the Top Fifty: **Rhys** (up 12 places to 43rd), **Joseph** (up 7 places to 47th) and **Leon** (up 5 places to 50th).

A little further down the Top 100, **Harrison** (up 20 places to 53rd), **Brodie** (up 17 places to 54th) and **Finn** (up 13 places to 66th) are also moving upwards. By this stage, a relatively small change in numbers could make a marked difference to the ranking - for example, Blair (67th) was the first forename of only 20 more babies than Kaiden (87th). **Alex**, **Blake**, **Calvin**, **George**, **Olly**, **Sebastian**, **Shay** and **Zac** are all new entrants to the Top 100.

Names with clear falls in their popularity include **Ethan** (down 3 places to seventh), **Ryan** (down 10 places to 19th), **Lucas** (down 7 places to joint 20th), **Callum** (down 8 places to 24th), **Cameron** (down 13 places to 25th), **Matthew** (down 13 places to 28th), **Aiden** (down 16 places to 36th) and **Jayden** (down 10 places to joint 40th). **Ben**, **Jay** and **John** drop out of the Top Fifty; **Corey**, **Hamish**, **Jackson**, **Kieran**, **Lennon**, **Mohammed**, **Reece**, **Taylor** and **Zak** are no longer in the Top 100.

By the 'cut-off' date, 27,674 boys' births had been registered, with 3,157 different first forenames being used. The top 50 names accounted for 44 per cent of all the first forenames. A total of 2,014 boys were given first forenames that were unique (within the first eleven months of 2012).

## Girls' Names

For the eighth year in a row, **Sophie** is the most popular first forename for baby girls. **Emily** climbs four places to second. **Olivia, Ava, Lucy** and **Isla** are third, fourth, fifth and sixth respectively, with each of them being within one place of their position in 2011. **Lily** has fallen from second to seventh; **Jessica** remains eighth.

Emily is the fastest climber within the Top Ten, to which there are two new entrants: **Amelia** has risen 20 places to ninth, and **Mia** is up 4 places to 10th.

Within the Top Twenty, **Millie** has moved up 7 places to 11th, and **Freya** is up 4 places to 15th. Besides Amelia, the other new entrant to the Top Twenty is **Hannah** (up 5 places to 19th).

**Ella** (up 8 places to joint 25th), **Poppy** (up 11 places to 34th) and **Lexi** (up 12 places to 38th) are among the other climbers within the Top Fifty. There are also four new entrants to the Top Fifty: **Orla** (up 19 places to 36th), **Hollie** (up 18 places to 39th), **Lacey** (up 12 places to joint 41st) and **Amber** (up 11 places, also to joint 41st).

A little further down the Top 100, **Georgia** (up 13 places to 58th), **Lola** (up 24 places to joint 63rd) and **Mollie** (up 24 places to 68th) are also moving upwards. By this stage, a relatively small change in numbers could make a marked difference to the ranking - for example, Keira (67th) was the first forename of only 20 more babies than Nicole (84th). **Bella, Darcy, Emelia, Lois, Scarlett** and **Willow** are all new entrants to the Top 100.

Names with clear falls in their popularity include **Lily** (down 5 places to seventh), **Ellie** (down 4 places to 13th), **Chloe** (down 4 places to 14th), **Emma** (down 7 places to 18th), **Holly** (down 5 places to 20th), **Erin** (down 11 places to 23rd), **Kayla** (down 12 places to 32nd), **Abbie** (down 12 places to joint 47th) and **Megan** (down 16 places to 50th). **Abigail, Aimee, Caitlin, Lauren** and **Lilly** drop out of the Top Fifty; **Ayla, Bethany, Jasmine, Laila, Laura, Neve, Phoebe** and **Sara** are no longer in the Top 100.

By the 'cut-off' date, 26,382 girls' births had been registered, with 4,222 different first forenames being used. The top 50 names accounted for 41 per cent of all first forenames. A total of 2,738 girls were given first forenames that were unique (within the first eleven months of 2012).

## Changing Trends in Naming Babies

For both boys and girls, the range of names used has been consistently widening over the last 100 years. Parents are increasingly selecting names which are different. The following table illustrates this trend.

**Table B: Top Ten names, as a percentage of all names, selected years, Scotland**

	Boys	Girls
<b>1900</b>	68.4	58.1
<b>1950</b>	53.3	36.3
<b>1975</b>	32.6	20.2
<b>2000</b>	21.7	20.4
<b>2011</b>	13.2	15.0

NB: [Note 8](#) explains the definition of the 'Top Ten'

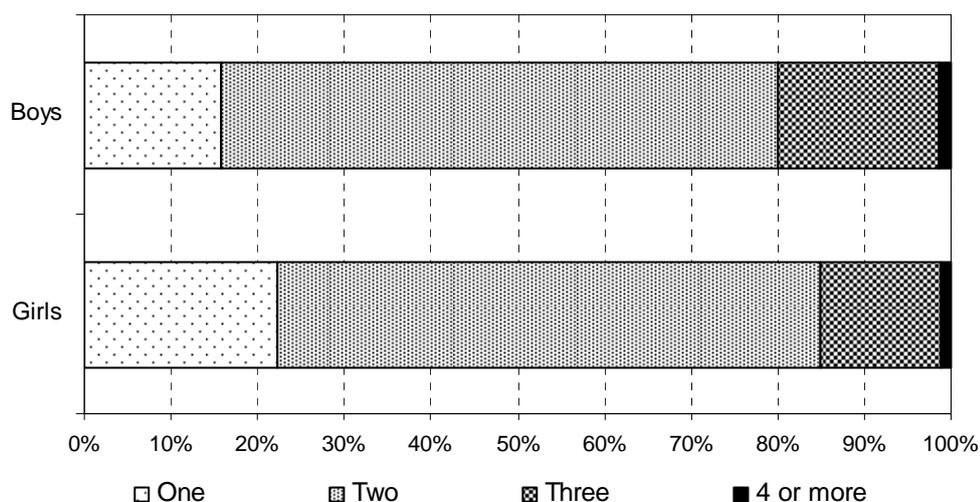
Another aspect of the changing range of names is an increasing variation in spelling. The tables presented here count different spellings separately. If combined, **Callum/Calum** (24th and 68th, respectively) would be in seventh place and **Amy/Aimee** (22nd and 51st, respectively) would be in tenth. That assumes, of course, that they would not be overtaken by other combinations of different spellings of what some might consider should be counted together (for example, 'Aidan' and 'Aiden', 'Ben' and 'Benjamin', 'Charles' and 'Charlie', and so forth).

## Number of Forenames

### Additional names

The number of forenames given in the births counted in the statistics for 2012 is summarised in the chart below. Eighty-four per cent of boys and seventy-eight per cent of girls registered in 2012 have more than one forename.

**Figure A: Number of forenames, Scotland 2012 (provisional)**



The following table shows the relative popularity of second names:

**Table C: Most popular second forenames, Scotland, 2012 (provisional)**

Boys			Girls		
Rank	Name	Number	Rank	Name	Number
1	James	2,112	1	Rose	954
2	John	1,309	2	Elizabeth	949
3	William	993	3	Louise	593
4	David	871	4	Grace	558
5	Alexander	848	5	Margaret	504
6	Thomas	684	6	Jane	466
7	Robert	650	7	Anne	434
8	Andrew	506	8	Ann	366
9	George	409	9	Catherine	355
10	Michael	407	10	Mary	336
11	Joseph	270	11	May	330
12=	Ian	242	12	Marie	291
12=	Scott	242	13	Isabella	215
14	Peter	238	14	Lily	208
15	Paul	215	15	Jean	186
16	Patrick	204	16	Helen	174
17	Christopher	192	17	Sarah	160
18	Alan	191	18	Mae	149
19	Daniel	178	19	Maria	143
20	Jack	173	20	Christina	134

It is clear that second names are more ‘traditional’, reflecting the names of previous generations in many cases. There are few changes in the lists of second names from year to year, with **James** and **Elizabeth** being consistently popular (although the latter was overtaken by **Rose** this year). In the statistics for 2012 the top ten second names for boys and girls are the same as in the previous six years with just a few minor changes in ranking.

## Regional variations

**Jack** was the top boys’ first forename in 13 council areas, whilst **Lewis** and **Riley** were each top in 5 areas. **Sophie** was the most popular girls’ first forename in 17 council areas, whilst **Isla** was top in 7 areas and **Emily** was top in 5 areas. In some areas, these names may have been top jointly with other names.

The Top Ten first forenames in each Council area can be downloaded from our website.

## Notes

1. By law, all births have to be registered, and the details are sent by local registrars to the National Records of Scotland (NRS). These data allow the production of tables showing the most popular first forenames, not just for a section of the population or those announced in a particular newspaper, but for all new babies born in Scotland.
2. All of the information for 2012 contained in these tables is provisional. It is based on births which were registered up to and including Saturday 1st December 2012 (unless their details had not been entered into the computer system by that date, which could have happened in a few cases - for example, if the registrar did not have access to the computer system, and the details were not keyed in until after this 'cut-off' date).
3. The information for 2011 contained in this paper is for all births that were registered in the whole year, and therefore differs from that contained in previous edition of this publication.
4. The rankings were based on the first forename that was recorded on the birth register.
5. Different spellings (e.g. Stephen, Steven) were counted separately.
6. Accents were ignored.
7. The NRS statistical database from which the tables are produced holds people's names in upper-case form. For example, in the statistical database, 'Mary-Frances' is held as 'MARY-FRANCES', and 'McKenzie' and 'Mckenzie' are both held as 'MCKENZIE'. When NRS produces the tables, it uses a computer function to convert the names appearing in the tables into 'proper case' format. The method used by the function produces the correct result in almost all cases (e.g. it will convert 'MARY-FRANCES' to 'Mary-Frances'). However, in a very small percentage of cases, it cannot return a name to its original form. For example, all names that are held in the statistical database as 'MCKENZIE' will be converted to 'Mckenzie': the function cannot convert some of them to 'Mckenzie' and others to 'McKenzie'. As a result, a few names in the full lists will have a lower-case letter where there should be an upper-case letter (for example, a first forename of 'JK' would appear in these lists as 'Jk'). Please note that this issue affects only a tiny proportion of the names which appear in lists that have been produced from the statistical copy of the data, and that the administrative computer system's record of every birth registration (from which any further copies of birth certificates will be produced) has the names exactly as they were given (i.e. with upper-case letters where the original name has upper-case letters).
8. For the purpose of [Table B](#), the 'Top Ten names' should consist of exactly ten names. For example, if two or more names were tied in tenth place, only one of them should be counted when the percentage given in [Table B](#) is calculated; similarly, if three or more names were tied in ninth place, only two of them should be counted for the calculation; and so on. This differs from the approach which is used for the other tables (both in this publication and on the website): other tables will show more than (say) 20 names in the 'Top Twenty' if (e.g.) two names are tied in twentieth place, or three names are tied in nineteenth place.
9. The lists of the Top Ten first forenames for each council area do not show any first forenames which were given to fewer than three babies in that area.

## Notes on statistical publications

### National Statistics

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority (UKSA) 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 (available on the [UKSA](#) website).

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, and
- 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.

### National Records of Scotland

From 1 April 2011, the General Register Office for Scotland (GROS) merged with the National Archives of Scotland to become the National Records of Scotland (NRS). The GROS website will remain active until it is replaced by a new website for NRS.

We, the National Records of Scotland, are a non-ministerial department of the devolved Scottish Administration. Our aim is to provide relevant and reliable information, analysis and advice that meets the needs of government, business and the people of Scotland. We do this as follows.

- Preserving the past – We look after Scotland's national archives so that they are available for current and future generations, and we make available important information for family history.
- Recording the present – At our network of local offices, we register births, marriages, civil partnerships, deaths, divorces and adoptions in Scotland.
- Informing the future – We are responsible for the Census of Population in Scotland which we use, with other sources of information, to produce statistics on the population and households.

You can get other detailed statistics that we have produced from the [Statistics section](#) on the NRS/GROS website. Statistics from the 2001 Census are available from Scotland's Census Results On-Line ([SCROL](#)) website and the [Census section](#) of the NRS/GROS website.

We also provide information about [future publications](#) on our website. If you would like us to tell you about future statistical publications, you can register your interest on the Scottish Government [ScotStat](#) website.

## **Enquiries and suggestions**

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## Related organisations

Organisation	Contact
<p>The Scottish Government (SG) forms the bulk of the devolved Scottish Administration. The aim of the statistical service in the SG is to provide relevant and reliable statistical information, analysis and advice that meets the needs of government, business and the people of Scotland.</p>	<p>Office of the Chief Statistician            Scottish Government            4.N06, St Andrew's House            Edinburgh, EH1 3DG</p> <p>Phone: 0131 244 0442</p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:statistics.enquiries@scotland.gsi.gov.uk">statistics.enquiries@scotland.gsi.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Website: <a href="http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics">www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics</a></p>
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<p>The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) is Northern Ireland's official statistics organisation. The agency is also responsible, for registering births, marriages, adoptions and deaths in Northern Ireland, and the Census of Population.</p>	<p>Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency            McAuley House            2-14 Castle Street            Belfast, BT1 1SA</p> <p>Phone: 028 9034 8100</p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:info.nisra@dfpni.gov.uk">info.nisra@dfpni.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Website: <a href="http://www.nisra.gov.uk">www.nisra.gov.uk</a></p>

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