

## CHANGING FASHIONS IN NAMES FOR BOYS

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This article on the changing popularity of male names since 1880 is based on Popular Baby Names, the Social Security Administration database described in the preceding article. Details on the layout of the following table can be found there. In general, male names are far less subject to fashion than female names, often persisting for decades. Names reaching the first rank include

John 1880-1923	?	44	54	26
Robert 1924-39, 1953	37	30	47	55
James 1940-1952	61	13	40	18
Michael 1954-59, 1961-98	12	45	11+	3
David 1960	25	1	32	14
Jacob 1999-2009	6	11		1

Names which achieved the second rank include

William 1880-1909, 1911-20	?	30	55	5
Jason 1974-78	3	5	5	66
Christopher 1972-73, 1979-94	5	22	14	11
Matthew 1995-96	24	2	12	13
Ethan 2009	6	1		2

Only one name reached the third rank.

Joshua 2002-06	24	5	3	6
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Other names reached lower ranks:

4th rank: George 1881-82, 1884-1909, 1911

5th rank: Joseph 1912-17, Charles 1918-29, Richard 1930-47, Daniel 1985,1990, 1995,  
Andrew 1988, 1991-92, 2003, Tyler 1993-94, Nicholas 1999

6th rank: Frank 1880-92, Donald 1934, Brandon 1996, Alexander 2008

7th rank: Justin 1998, Anthony 2007-08

8th rank: Thomas 1882, 1884, 1936-55, Henry 1881, 1883, 1885, 1887, Harry 1889,  
Edward 1912-23, Jayden 2009

9th rank: Gary 1954, Ronald 1941-43, Austin 1997

10th rank: Larry 1947, 1949, Steven 1955-61, Noah 2009

The briefest period of popularity was that of Jason, which at 13 years was almost as short as that of Brittany and Alexis. William reached a minimum rank of 20 in 1992 and has since enjoyed a small renaissance.

This is an update and expansion of an earlier study, "Changing Male Fashions 1870-1950", which appeared in the Nov 1999 issue of Word Ways. A reprint of a talk given to the 23rd Annual Names Institute in May 1984, the earlier study was based on a sample of a few thousand names drawn from Who's Who in America.