

Medieval English Names

As the spelling of English was not standardized during the Middle Ages, names can be found in many different forms in written records. The French diminutive endings which arrived with the Normans ('-et', '-in' and '-on') became less common and English forms such as '-cock', and '-kin' took their place. Double diminutives such as 'Hodgekin' (Roger) or 'Simcock' (Simon) existed. Few of these forms are still used but many are found as surnames as they were current during the surname formation period.

Many documents relating to the medieval period use a Latin written form ending in '-us' for men's names. It is not always certain what the actual spoken form would have been but it is probable that the Latin forms were not in daily use.

It should be remembered that the Latin feminine ending '-a' was usually added to male names only in the written form so Philippa and Juliana would actually have been called Philip and Julian. (The medieval mystic Julian of Norwich was a woman). The Latin '-ae' (feminine genitive) ending was often reduced to an '-e' in the Middle Ages so forms ending in '-e' are often versions of names which ended in the nominative '-a' in Latin. The letter 'u' often replaces 'v' in old spellings. Diminutives often take a French form with endings including '-ette', '-ina' or '-ota'.

Intermarriage for dynastic and political reasons was common amongst European medieval royalty, and the Plantagenet and Tudor monarchs of England followed this rule. As a result, further foreign names arrived with the royal brides and their retinues although many were anglicised rather than coming into common usage in their original form.

Common Names

Male These accounted for about 70% of the male population in the 13th and 14th centuries.

Adam	Geoffrey	Gilbert
Henry	Hugh	John
Nicholas	Peter	Ralf
Richard	Robert	Roger
Simon	Thomas	Walter
William		

Female These names accounted for about 60% of the female population in the 13th/14th centuries.

Agnes	Alice	Avice
Beatrice	Cecily	Emma
Isabella	Joan	Juliana
Margery	Matilda	Rohesia

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Men's Names

- Adam
- Ailwin
- Alan
- Alard
- Aldred
- Alexander
- Alured
- Amaury
- Amalric
- Anselm
- Arnald
- Asa
- Aubrey
- Baldric
- Baldwin
- Bartholomew
- Bennet
- Bertram
- Blacwin
- Colin
- Constantine
- David
- Edwin
- Elias
- Helyas
- Engeram
- Ernard
- Eustace
- Fabian
- Fordwin
- Forwin
- Fulk
- Gamel
- Geoffrey*
- Gerard
- Gervase
- Gilbert
- Giles
- Gladwin
- Godwin
- Guy
- Hamo
- Hamond
- Harding
- Henry*
- Herlewin
- Hervey
- Hugh
- James
- Jocelin
- John
- Jordan
- Lawrence
- Leofwin
- Luke
- Martin
- Masci
- Matthew
- Maurice
- Michael
- Nigel
- Odo
- Oliva
- Osbert
- Norman
- Nicholas
- Peter*
- Philip
- Ralf/Ralph*
- Ranulf
- Richard*
- Robert*
- Roger*
- Saer
- Samer
- Savaric
- Silvester
- Simon*
- Stephan
- Terric
- Terry/Thierry
- Theobald
- Thomas*
- Thurstan
- Umfrey
- Waleran
- Walter
- Warin
- William*
- Wimarc
- Ymbert

Women's Names

- Ada
- Adelina
- Agnes*
- Albreda
- Aldith
- Aldusa
- Alice*
- Alina
- Amanda
- Amice/Amicia*
- Amiria
- Anabel
- Annora
- Ascilia
- Avelina
- Avoca
- Avice
- Beatrice
- Basilea
- Bela
- Berta
- Celestria
- Christian(a)*
- Cicely/Cecilia*
- Clarice
- Constance
- Dionisia/Denise
- Edith
- Ellen/Eleanor
- Elizabeth
- Emma
- Estrilda
- Isabel*
- Eva
- Felicia
- Fina
- Goda
- Golda
- Grecia
- Gundrea
- Gundred
- Gunnora
- Haunild
- Hawisa*
- Helen/Elena
- Helewise
- Hilda
- Ida
- Idonea
- Isolda
- Joan(na)*
- Julian(a)*
- Katherine
- Leticia/Lettice
- Liecia
- Linota
- Lora/Laura
- Lucia
- Mabel/Amabilia
- Malota
- Margaret
- Margery*
- Marsilia
- Mary
- Matilda/Maud
- Mazelina
- Millicent
- Muriel
- Nesta
- Nicola(a)
- Philippa
- Parnel/Petronilla
- Primeveire
- Richenda
- Richolda
- Roesia
- Sabina
- Sabelina
- Sarah
- Susanna
- Sybil(la)*
- Wymarc

*denotes most common names

The names given here are taken from four collections of legal documents from around England: *_Cartulary of Blyth Priory_*, R.T. Timson, ed. (London: HMSO, 1973) DA 670 N9B5; *_Feet of Fines for Essex_*, R.E.G. Kirk, ed. (Colchester: Wiles and Son, 1899) DA 670 E7A12, *_Feet of Fines for Somerset : Richard I-Edward I_*, E. Green, ed. (London: Harrison and Sons, 1892) DA 670 S49S5, and *_Warwickshire Feet of Fines v. I_* E. Stokes and F.C. Wellstood, eds. (London: Oxford University Press, 1932) DA 670 W3 D9 v.11