

The Royal Family

The British royal family are often regarded as cultural icons and are seen as a symbol of national identity and unity. Led by the current monarch, King Charles III, each family member has a number of ceremonial duties and responsibilities, such as representing the country at official events and supporting charitable causes. Here are some facts you might not know about them.



husband's surnames) but often use different names based on their titles. Prince Harry was known as 'Harry Wales' (after his father's title) during his military service and now goes by Sussex. Prince William used 'Wales' and 'Cambridge' before becoming Wales again due to its current title.

Fascinating code names >

Every senior member of the Royal family has a code name inspired by a UK bridge, used to announce their death.

This is meant to prevent the

news from leaking before the official notice.

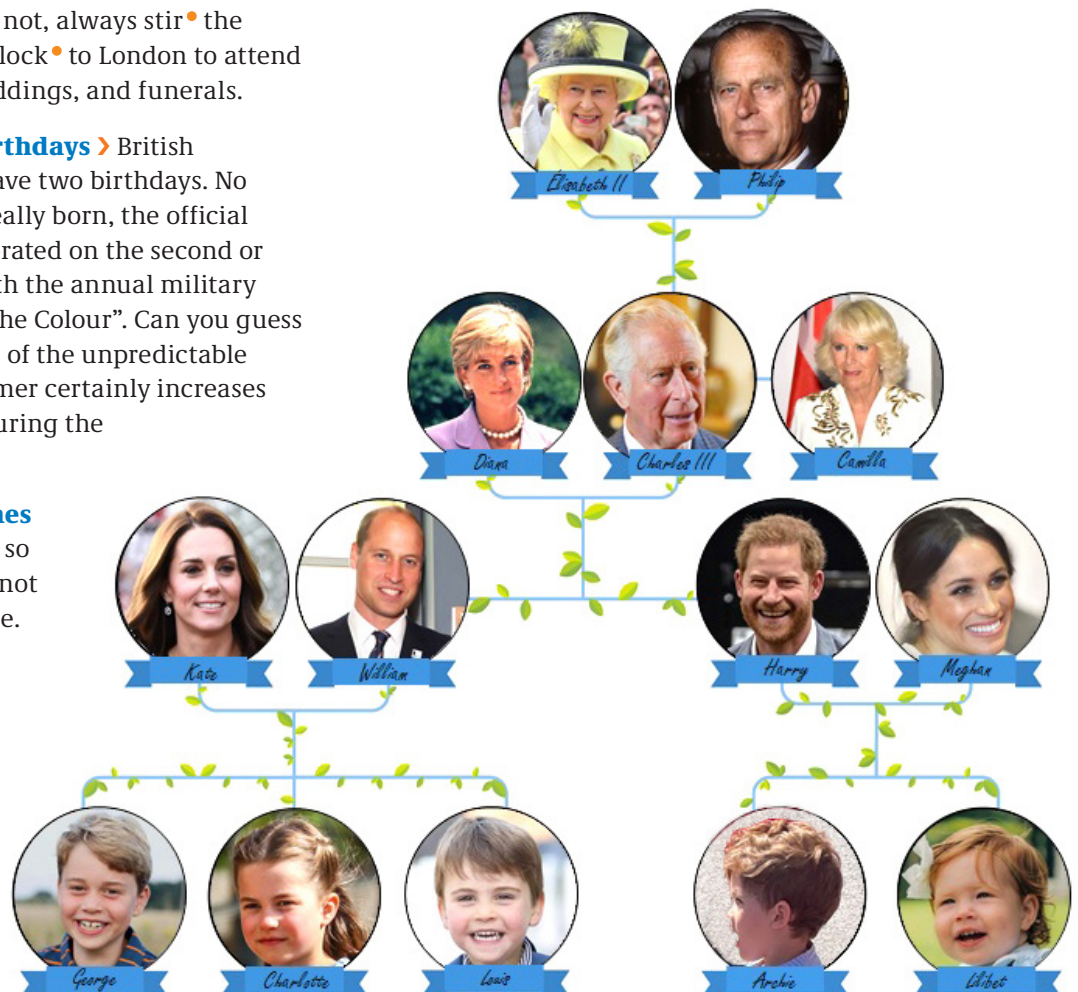
For example, Queen Elizabeth II's code name was London Bridge and her death was announced to the world with the phrase "London Bridge is down".

Advocate for the British Culture > The royal family attract a huge number of tourists to landmarks like Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle, generating revenue and promoting the English heritage. Events regarding the royal family, whether happy or not, always stir the curiosity of people, who flock to London to attend coronations, jubilees, weddings, and funerals.

Monarchs with two birthdays > British monarchs traditionally have two birthdays. No matter when they were really born, the official birthday is typically celebrated on the second or third Saturday in June with the annual military parade called "Trooping the Colour". Can you guess why? Simply put, because of the unpredictable British weather. The summer certainly increases the chance of sunshine during the ceremony.

No need of real surnames

> The royals are typically so well known that they do not need to use their surname. The British royal family shares the surname Mountbatten-Windsor (a blend of Queen Elizabeth II's and her



Royal privileges > Besides having no need of a passport to travel abroad, British monarchs can also drive without a driving licence or a registration plate*. They don't even need to take a driving test. The late Queen Elizabeth drove without a licence but she was an experienced driver because during World War II she was trained as a military driver and mechanic.

Weird wedding traditions > Most families, including the royal family, have their own wedding traditions. One unusual tradition is that royal couples save the top layers* of their wedding cakes to eat years later, freezing and enjoying them at their future children's christenings*. Catherine and Prince William's cake had indeed its layers eaten at their children's christenings!

Adapted from: <https://www.womanandhome.com/life/royal-news/weirdest-facts-about-the-british-royal-family/>



1 READING WRITING Answer the questions.

- 1 What is the primary role of the British royal family as cultural icons?
- 2 Why do British monarchs have two birthdays?
- 3 How did Prince Harry refer to himself during his military service?
- 4 Why do royal family members use code names?
- 5 What unique privilege do British monarchs have regarding driving?
- 6 What unusual wedding tradition is carried on by royal couples?

2 SPEAKING GROUPWORK Discuss this topic: "The British monarchy is an outdated institution". Make a list of what you think the pros and cons are. Then, share your opinions with the rest of the class.

3 SPEAKING Answer the questions to see how much you know about the British royals.

- 1 Name the members of the royal family you know of.
- 2 Who was the heir to the throne as of 2024?
- 3 Who is next in line for the British throne, after heir number 1?
- 4 What title is traditionally given to the male heir to the British Crown?
- 5 Members of what religion can never become British monarchs?
- 6 Which animals swimming in open waters throughout the country does the Crown own?
- 7 Where is the royal family's main residence?
- 8 Who was the longest reigning monarch in British history?
- 9 Which famous British Royal died in a car accident?
- 10 Where do coronations usually take place?

glossary

blend: *fusion*
by hair's breath: *per un pelo*
christening: *battesimo*
to flock: *affluire*

layer: *strato*
to leak: *trapelare*
registration plate: *targa*
revenue: *entrate, gettito*
to stir: *suscitare*