

WHAT'S IN A TITLE?



A QUICK GUIDE TO THE ROYALS

Queen Elizabeth II is our longest reigning monarch and at 91-years-old, is also the world's oldest living monarch. She was not destined to be queen. In fact, she was already 10-years-old when her uncle, Edward VIII, abdicated after a short reign because of his love for divorcee and US citizen Wallis Simpson, resulting in Elizabeth's father becoming King George VI.

The Queen's two birthdays

As a British monarch, Queen Elizabeth is also lucky enough to enjoy two birthdays. Her actual birthday is 21st April, but for more than 200 years the monarch's official birthday has been celebrated in June with the ceremony 'Trooping the Colour'. On this day, you will see almost 1,500 soldiers, 200 horses and 400 musicians marching along The Mall to Horseguards Parade, a Royal Air Force fly-past and a 41-gun salute in Green Park.

Prince Charles, names and succession

Prince Charles is now the longest-waiting heir to the British throne at 68 years old. As the heir and eldest son of the monarch, he is known as the Prince of Wales and also the Duke of Cornwall, but will not necessarily be called King Charles III when he ascends the throne. In fact, monarchs sometimes take a different name and apparently Prince Charles might choose to become King George VII, as kings named Charles have not always been popular. King

Charles I was executed by the people in 1649, leading to 11 years of Britain as a republic, and Charles II's extravagant lifestyle meant that he was not always well behaved!

Who can be a King, Queen or Princess?

Camilla, Prince Charles' wife, has the title the Duchess of Cornwall and as the wife of the Prince of Wales, could also be called Princess of Wales. She decided not to take this title because it was clearly connected with Charles' first wife, Diana. Diana is often mistakenly called 'Princess Diana', when in fact her actual title was Diana, Princess of Wales. It is likely Camilla will become Queen, when Charles becomes King.

Given this, why is the Queen's husband not a king? Well, the husband of a queen is known as the Prince Consort and does not become King. Examples of this are Prince Philip, who is also known as the Duke of Edinburgh, and Queen

Victoria's husband, Prince Albert.

There are many official titles in the royal family, and it is tradition that Royal Dukedoms are the highest-ranking honour. Only the eldest son of the sovereign is entitled to the Dukedoms of Cornwall and Rothesay; these are held by Prince Charles who is addressed as the Duke of Rothesay when in Scotland. The second son of the monarch is usually given the title Duke of York, in the current case this is Prince Andrew. The Queen's third son is officially known as the Earl of Wessex and his wife, Sophie, as the Countess, which is a reinvented historic title given to him by the Queen. Princess Anne, who is known as the Princess Royal, has two children without titles because they can't be inherited through the female line. Prince William has the title Duke of Cambridge; his wife Catherine is officially the Duchess of Cambridge, and is not a Princess.

I am often asked lots of questions about the British Royal family and the one most often asked about the Queen is what does she actually carry in her handbag? Rumour has it a comb, a handkerchief, a small gold compact and a lipstick!

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Our Queen has seen some of the most significant events of the last 100 years and her statistics are impressive!

65 years reign

13 Prime Ministers

13 US Presidents

7 Popes

More than 30 Corgi dogs

Previous longest-reigning British monarch: Queen Victoria

British monarch with the shortest reign: Lady Jane Grey (9 days)