

150 Most Common Scottish Surnames in the United States

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| 1. Smith | 51. Craig | 101. McElroy |
| 2. Brown | 52. Fletcher | 102. Leslie/Lesley |
| 3. Wilson | 53. McDaniel | 103. Sterling/Stirling |
| 4. Anderson | 54. Ramsey | 104. McLellan/McClelland |
| 5. Thompson | 55. Cummings/Cumming | 105. Burrell/Birral |
| 6. Clark | 56. Stevenson/Stephenson | 106. Ritchie |
| 7. Walker | 57. Maxwell | 107. McQueen |
| 8. Young | 58. Lindsey/Lindsay | 108. McKinley |
| 9. Scott | 59. McBride | 109. McLendon |
| 10. Mitchell | 60. McLaughlin/MacLachlan | 110. McCain |
| 11. Campbell | 61. Buchanan | 111. McCord |
| 12. Stewart | 62. Logan | 112. Carmichael |
| 13. Bell | 63. McKenzie | 113. McCauley/MacAulay |
| 14. Bailey | 64. Burnett | 114. Pollock/Polk |
| 15. Cooper | 65. Nicholson | 115. Irvin/Irvine/Irving |
| 16. Watson | 66. Monroe/Munro | 116. McGraw |
| 17. Ross | 67. Calhoun/Colquhoun | 117. McCollum |
| 18. Henderson | 68. Bruce | 118. Kilgore/Kilgour |
| 19. Patterson | 69. Gilmore | 119. Trotter |
| 20. Alexander | 70. McClaine/McLaine | 120. Akins/Aiken/Eakins |
| 21. Hamilton | 71. Keith | 121. McRae |
| 22. Graham | 72. McDowell | 122. McKenna |
| 23. Wallace | 73. McLean | 123. Drummond |
| 24. McDonald | 74. McCall | 124. McNair |
| 25. Marshall | 75. McKee | 125. Laird |
| 26. Murray | 76. Livingston(e) | 126. Abernathy |
| 27. Crawford | 77. McIntosh | 127. Napier |
| 28. Boyd | 78. McCulloch/McCullough | 128. Weir |
| 29. Kennedy | 79. McKnight | 129. Christie |
| 30. Burns | 80. McMillan | 130. McCracken |
| 31. Gordon | 81. McIntyre | 131. Crenshaw |
| 32. Shaw | 82. Gillespie | 132. Witherspoon/Wotherspoon |
| 33. Robertson | 83. McNeil/McNeal/McNeill | 133. Kincaid/Kincade |
| 34. Ferguson | 84. McFarland/McFarlane | 134. MacBain/McBean |
| 35. Rose | 85. Dunlap/Dunlop | 135. Sherer/Shearer |
| 36. Duncan | 86. McKay | 136. McKinnon |
| 37. Cunningham | 87. McCarty | 137. Duff |
| 38. Armstrong | 88. McPherson | 138. Nesbitt/Nisbet |
| 39. Elliott | 89. Stuart | 139. McHugh |
| 40. Austin | 90. McCray | 140. Bowie |
| 41. Carr/Kerr | 91. McFadden | 141. McGregor |
| 42. Montgomery | 92. McLeod/McCloud | 142. Snodgrass |
| 43. Johnston(e) | 93. Forbes | 143. Kilpatrick |
| 44. Morrison | 94. Guthrie | 144. Moffett |
| 45. Reid | 95. Rankin | 145. McCrary |
| 46. Frazier/Fraser | 96. Hanna/Hannah | 146. McWhorter |
| 47. Douglas | 97. Lockhart | 147. McDuffie |
| 48. Fleming | 98. Sinclair | 148. McCurdy |
| 49. Davidson | 99. Kirkpatrick | 149. McAdams |
| 50. McKinney | 100. Dunbar | 150. Chisholm |

Top 100 Surnames in Scotland

According to a survey by the Registrar General for Scotland in 1990

1 Smith	34 Martin	68 Munro
2 Brown	35 Grant	69 Hughes
3 Wilson	36 Bell	70 Johnstone
4 Stewart	37 Hunter	71 McKenzie
5 Thomson	38 Ferguson	72 Sinclair
6 Campbell	39 Kelly	72 Williamson
7 Robertson	40 Simpson	74 Ritchie
8 Anderson	41 Allan	75 Murphy
9 Scott	42 Black	76 Bruce
10 MacDonald	43 McLean	77 Jones
11 Murray	44 MacLeod	78 McGregor
12 Reid	45 MacKenzie	79 Boyle
13 Taylor	46 Wallace	80 Crawford
14 Clark	47 Mackay	81 Fleming
15 Young	48 Marshall	82 Dickson
16 Ross	49 Gibson	82 Douglas
17 Watson	50 Russell	82 Shaw
18 Morrison	51 Kennedy	85 McLaughlin
19 Mitchell	52 Wright	86 Alexander
20 Walker	53 Stevenson	87 Docherty
21 Paterson	54 Gordon	88 Jamieson
22 Fraser	55 Wood	89 Lindsay
23 Kerr	56 Sutherland	90 King
24 Miller	57 White	91 Donaldson
25 Duncan	58 Milne	92 Christie
26 Hamilton	59 Burns	93 Hill
27 Cameron	60 Muir	94 McIntyre
28 Gray	61 Watt	95 Findlay
29 Johnston	62 McKay	96 Ramsay
30 Graham	63 McMillan	97 Aitken
31 Davidson	64 Millar	98 McFarlane
32 McDonald	65 McIntosh	99 McLeod
33 Henderson	66 Craig	100 Mackie
	67 Cunningham	100 MacLean

Note that different spellings have not been added together. If they had been:

Mac/McDonald would come after Brown

Miller/ar would come after Scott

Johnston/e would come after Miller/ar

Mac/McLean would come after Clark

Mac/McLeod would come after Mac/McLean

Mac/McKenzie would come after Taylor

Mac/McKay would come after Mac/McKenzie

All of the 'top 50' except McDonald, Kelly, McLean, Wallace and Marshall were in the 'top 100' in 1858, and of the current 'second 50', only Sutherland, White, Munro, Sinclair and MacLean were in the 'top 100' in 1858. This is a significant change in a relatively short time.

Below is a brief extract from Black's 'Surnames of Scotland' for the 150 Most Common Scottish Surnames in the United States.

Black states quite specifically that the Scottish patronymic is "Mac" and that he regards the contraction to "Mc" or "M" as incorrect. This, no doubt, will annoy many a good Scot, both at home and overseas!

1. Smith - occupational, as in 'blacksmith or goldsmith' (English)
2. Brown - descriptive, from the colour (English)
3. Wilson - patronymic - 'son of William' (English/Norman/Germanic)
4. Anderson - patronymic - 'son of Andrew' (English/Greek)
5. Thompson - patronymic - 'son of Thomas' (English/Hebrew) the normal spelling in Scotland is Thomson
6. Clark - occupational, as clerk (Latin)
7. Walker - occupational, from 'wealcere' meaning a fuller (Old English)
8. Young - descriptive (English)
9. Scott - (1) a Scotsman (English) or (2) descriptive, from 'scutt' (English)
10. Mitchell - patronymic - 'son of Michael' (English/Hebrew)
11. Campbell - descriptive, from 'cam beul' meaning 'crooked mouth' (Gaelic)
12. Stewart - occupational, from 'stig-weard' meaning 'sty-warden' (Old English)
13. Bell - (1) descriptive, from 'bel' meaning 'beautiful' (French) or (2) territorial, meaning 'one who lives near a bell' (English) or (3) matronymic, meaning 'son of Isabella' (English)
14. Bailey - occupational, meaning 'bailiff' (French)
15. Cooper - occupational (English)
16. Watson - patronymic - 'son of Walter' (English/Norman/Germanic)
17. Ross - (1) territorial, from Ross in northern Scotland or (2) descriptive, meaning red-haired (Old English)
18. Henderson - patronymic - 'son of Henry' (English/Norman/Germanic)
19. Patterson - patronymic - 'son of Patrick' (English/Latin)
20. Alexander - patronymic (Greek)
21. Hamilton - territorial, from Hambleton or Hambleton in England
22. Graham - territorial, from 'graeg-ham' meaning 'grey home' (Old English/Norman)
23. Wallace - descriptive, meaning 'Welsh' or 'foreign' (Celtic)
24. McDonald - patronymic - 'son of Donald' (Gaelic)
25. Marshall - occupational, meaning 'horse servant' (French)
26. Murray - territorial, from the province of Moray
27. Crawford - territorial, from the barony in Lanarkshire
28. Boyd - possibly territorial, from the Isle of Bute (Gaelic)
29. Kennedy - origin obscure (Irish)
30. Burns - territorial, from 'bourne' meaning 'stream' (English)
31. Gordon - probably territorial, from Gordon in Berwickshire
32. Shaw - (1) territorial, possibly from a place name meaning 'thicket' (English) or (2) an anglicisation of Sithig (Gaelic)
33. Robertson - patronymic, meaning 'son of Robert' (English/Norman/Germanic)
34. Ferguson - patronymic, meaning 'son of Fergus' (English/Gaelic)
35. Rose - see Ross
36. Duncan - descriptive, meaning 'brown warrior' (Gaelic)
37. Cunningham - territorial, from Cunningham in Ayrshire (English)
38. Armstrong - descriptive (English)
39. Elliott - occupational?, from Aelfwald (Old English)
40. Austin - (1) patronymic, from Augustine (Latin) or (2) used for Uisdean (Gaelic)
41. Carr/Kerr - territorial, meaning 'copse' (Old Norse)
42. Montgomery - territorial, from Sainte Foy de Montgomery, Lisieux, France (French)
43. Johnston(e) - patronymic - 'son of John' (English/Hebrew)
44. Morrison - patronymic - 'son of Maurice' (which means 'Moorish') (English/Latin)
45. Reid - descriptive, meaning 'red' (English)
46. Frazier/Fraser - occupational, from 'fraise' meaning 'strawberry' (French)
47. Douglas - descriptive, meaning 'dark stranger' (Gaelic)
48. Fleming - territorial, meaning a person from Flanders (English)
49. Davidson - patronymic, meaning 'son of David' (English/Hebrew)
50. McKinney/McKenna - patronymic, meaning 'son of Cionaodh' (Gaelic)

51. Craig - territorial, from 'crag' meaning 'rock' (English)
52. Fletcher - occupational (English)
53. McDaniel - patronymic, meaning 'son of Daniel' (Gaelic/Hebrew)
54. Ramsey - territorial, from Ramsey in Huntingdonshire, England. Usually spelled Ramsay in Scotland
55. Cummings/Cumming - territorial, from Comines near Lille in France
56. Stevenson/Stephenson - patronymic, meaning 'son of Stephen' (English/Norman/Greek)
57. Maxwell - territorial, from 'Maccus' weal', a pool in the River Tweed (Old English)
58. Lindsey/Lindsay - territorial, either from de Limesay near Rouen, France or from Lindsey in Lincolnshire, England
59. McBride - matronymic, meaning 'son of Bridget' (Gaelic/Irish)
60. McLaughlin/MacLachlan - patronymic, meaning 'son of Lachlan' (Gaelic)
61. Buchanan - territorial, from the district in Stirlingshire
62. Logan - territorial, from Logan in Ayrshire. might be related to 'lag' meaning 'hollow' (Gaelic)
63. McKenzie - patronymic, meaning 'son of Kenneth' (which means 'handsome' or 'born of fire') (Gaelic)
64. Burnett - patronymic, from Bernard (Old English/Germanic)
65. Nicholson - patronymic, meaning 'son of Nicholas' (English/Greek)
66. Monroe/Munro - territorial, meaning 'from the foot of the Rover Roe (in Derry, Ireland)' (Gaelic)
67. Calhoun/Colquhoun usually Colquhoun in Scotland - territorial, from the lands in Dunbartonshire
68. Bruce - territorial, from Brix in Normandy
69. Gilmore - occupational, meaning 'servant of Mary' (Gaelic)
70. McClaine/McLaine - in Scotland usually MacLean - patronymic meaning 'son of the servant of John' (Gaelic)
71. Keith - territorial, from the lands in East Lothian
72. McDowell - patronymic meaning 'son of Dougal' (Gaelic)
73. McLean See No 70 above
74. McCall - patronymic, meaning 'son of Cathal' (Gaelic)
75. McKee - variant of Mackay - patronymic meaning 'son of Aodh' (Gaelic)
76. Livingston(e) - territorial, from the lands in West Lothian
77. McIntosh - patronymic, meaning 'son of the chief' (Gaelic)
78. McCulloch/McCullough - patronymic, possibly meaning 'son of the boar' (Gaelic)
79. McKnight - variant of MacNaught - patronymic, meaning 'son of Nechtan' (Gaelic)
80. McMillan - patronymic meaning 'son of the bald or tonsured one' (Gaelic)
81. McIntyre - patronymic meaning 'son of the carpenter' (Gaelic)
82. Gillespie - occupational meaning 'servant of the bishop' (Gaelic)
83. McNeil/McNeal/McNeill -patronymic meaning 'son of Neil' (Gaelic)
84. McFarland/McFarlane -patronymic meaning 'son of Bartholomew' (which means 'son of the twin') (Gaelic/Hebrew)
85. Dunlap/Dunlop - territorial, from Dunlop in Ayrshire
86. McKay - see No 75 above
87. McCarty - not listed in Black - probably a patronymic meaning 'son of Arthur' (Irish?)
88. McPherson - patronymic, meaning 'son of the parson' (Gaelic/English)
89. Stuart - see No 12 above
90. McCray - Usually MacRae in Scotland - a patronymic meaning 'son of grace' or 'son of prosperity' (Gaelic)
91. McFadden - Usually MacFadyen in Scotland - patronymic, meaning 'son of little Pat(rick)' (Gaelic/Latin)
92. McLeod/McCloud - patronymic meaning 'son of Leod' (which means 'ugly') (Gaelic/Norse)
93. Forbes - territorial, from the lands in Aberdeenshire
94. Guthrie - territorial, from the barony in Angus
95. Rankin - patronymic meaning 'little Randolph' (English/Germanic)
96. Hanna/Hannah - possibly a patronymic meaning 'son of Senach' (Celtic)
97. Lockhart - patronymic, from the personal name Locard (Old French/Germanic)
98. Sinclair - territorial, from St Clare in Normandy
99. Kirkpatrick - territorial, meaning 'church of St Patrick' (English/Latin)
100. Dunbar - territorial, from the place name
101. McElroy - patronymic, meaning 'son of the red-haired lad' (Gaelic)
102. Leslie/Lesley - territorial, from the lands of Leslie, which are said to have been named after Laszlo, the servant of Queen Margaret (Hungarian). The spelling Lesley is almost unknown in Scotland except as a girl's given name.
103. Sterling/Stirling - territorial, from the town
104. McLellan/McClelland - patronymic, meaning 'son of the servant of (St) Fillan' (meaning 'wolf') Gaelic/Irish
105. Burrell/Birral - usually spelled Birrel(l) in Scotland - territorial, from Burrill in Yorkshire, England
106. Ritchie - patronymic, meaning 'little Richard' (which means 'rule hard') (Germanic)
107. McQueen - patronymic, meaning 'son of Sweyn' (which means 'pig') (Gaelic/Norse)
108. McKinley - patronymic, meaning 'son of Finlay' (which means 'fair hero') (Gaelic)
109. McLendon - not listed in Black - possibly a variant of MacLennan, meaning 'son of the servant of Finnan' (Gaelic)
110. McCain - Usually McCann in Scotland - patronymic meaning 'son of Annadh' (Gaelic)
111. McCord - patronymic, meaning 'son of Cuart' (Gaelic)

112. Carmichael - territorial, from the barony in Lanarkshire
113. McCauley/MacAulay - patronymic, meaning 'son of Amalgaidh' (Gaelic/Irish)
114. Pollock/Polk - territorial, from the lands in Renfrewshire
115. Irvin/Irvine/Irving - territorial, from places in Dumfries-shire and Ayrshire
116. McGraw - not listed in Black - probably an Irish variant of No 90
117. McCollum - usually MacCallum in Scotland - patronymic meaning 'son of the servant of Columba' (Gaelic/Latin)
118. Kilgore/Kilgour - territorial, from the place in Fife
119. Trotter - occupational, meaning a messenger (Old French)
120. Akins/Aiken/Eakins - usually Aitken in Scotland - patronymic, meaning 'little Adam' (English/Hebrew)
121. McRae - see no 90 above
122. McKenna - patronymic meaning 'son of Cionaodh' (Gaelic)
123. Drummond - territorial, from the barony in Perthshire, or Drymen in Stirlingshire
124. McNair - patronymic meaning (1) 'son of brown John' or (2) 'son of the heir' or (3) 'son of the smith' or (4) 'son of the stranger' (Gaelic)
125. Laird - occupational, meaning landowner (English)
126. Abernathy - usually Abernethy in Scotland - territorial, from the place in Perthshire
127. Napier - occupational, meaning the person who looked after the linen (French)
128. Weir - territorial, from various places named Vere in France
129. Christie - occupational, meaning a Christian
130. McCracken - patronymic, possibly related to No 79
131. Crenshaw - not listed in Black
132. Witherspoon/Wotherspoon - possibly territorial, meaning 'sheep pasture' (Old English)
133. Kincaid/Kincade - territorial, from the lands in Stirlingshire
134. MacBain/McBean - patronymic, meaning 'son of Bean' (which means life) (Gaelic)
135. Sherer/Shearer - occupational (English)
136. McKinnon - patronymic, meaning 'son of Finguaine' (which means 'fair born') (Gaelic/Irish)
137. Duff - descriptive, meaning 'dark' (Gaelic)
138. Nesbitt/Nisbet - territorial, from the barony in Berwickshire
139. McHugh - patronymic, meaning 'son of Hugh' (which means 'mind') (Gaelic/Germanic)
140. Bowie - descriptive, possibly meaning 'yellow' (Gaelic)
141. McGregor - patronymic, meaning 'son of Gregor' (Gaelic/Latin)
142. Snodgrass - territorial, from lands in Ayrshire
143. Kilpatrick - territorial, meaning 'chapel of St Patrick' (English/Latin) (see No 99)
144. Moffett - Usually Moffat in Scotland - territorial, from the town
145. McCrary - not listed in Black - perhaps a variant of No 121
146. McWhorter - Usually MacWhirter in Scotland - patronymic, meaning 'son of the harper' (Gaelic)
147. McDuffie - patronymic, meaning 'son of the black man of peace' (Gaelic)
148. McCurdy - Usually McKirdy in Scotland - patronymic, meaning 'son of the sea -ruler' (Gaelic/Norse)
149. McAdams - patronymic, meaning 'son of Adam' (Gaelic/Hebrew)
150. Chisholm - territorial, from the barony in Roxburghshire