

Your Polish surname and family coat of arms?

Have you ever wondered what your Polish last name means, how it came about and whether a coat of arms goes with it?



The formulation “Kowalski herbu Ślepowron” identified a Kowalski as belonging to the “Noble Clan of Ślepowron”. As shown above, most Polish coats of arms had clan-names that differed from their bearers' surnames.

What that means is fully explained in a custom-researched surname analysis you can order for your family. It will tell you what your last name means, how it originated, how many people use it, where they are from and whether they were entitled to stamp their documents and possessions with a coat of arms. If one is found, you will get a full-color image of the crest and an explanation of how it originated.

The research is carried out by a Polish-American graduate linguist (Master's degree in Polish/Slavic Studies from the University of Wisconsin), who has specialized in surname research for many years.

To order such a custom-researched analysis, please airmail a \$19 personal or bank check or money order (adding \$10 for each additional surname you wish to have researched) to:

Robert Strybel
ul. Kaniowska 24
01-529 Warsaw
POLAND

You will also get a useful genealogical contact chart which can help you track down your family records in Poland and possibly even turn up long-lost relations. Please contact research60@gmail.com for more information.

Does a coat of arms go with your surname?

What does your Polish last name mean?

Have you ever wondered what your Polish last name means? Many started out as nicknames to indicate who one's father was. Stasiak, Tomczyk and Janowicz are the Polish equivalents of Stanson, Thomson and Johnson. Other surnames indicated someone's native village: Wiśniewski came from Wiśniew (Cherrywood) and Wróblewski hailed from Wróblewo (Sparrowville).

Coats of arms accompany many Polish surnames. For instance, nobles of the Wróblewski family (pronounced: vroob-LEFF-ski) belonged to the Jastrzębiec (Hawkman) clan and identified themselves with its coat of arms. "Wróblewski herbu Jastrzębiec" means "Wróblewski of the Noble House of Jastrzębiec." This heraldic emblem is shared by more than 1,100 variously surnamed families. Polish noblemen often included the clan-name in their signature thus: *Stanisław Jastrzębiec-Wróblewski*.



*Wróblewski
herbu Jstrzębiec*

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Some Polish last names sound “fishy”

A large group of Polish last names were derived from the animal world including aquatic creatures, especially fish species. Many a Pole signs himself **Dorsz** (cod), **Flądra** (flounder), **Jesiotr** (sturgeon) **Karaś** (crucean), **Karp** (carp), **Leszcz** (bream), **Lin** (tench), Lipiueń (grayling), **Okoń, Okuń** (perch), **Płotka** (roach), **Pstrąg** (trout), **Sandacz** (walleye), **Sum** (catfish), **Szczuka, Szczupak** (pike), **Szprot** (sprat), **Śledź** (herring), **Ukleja** (bleak) and **Węgorz** (eel).

Whether or not your Polish last name is listed above, you can learn all about its meaning and origin, how many people use it, where they are from and whether a coat of arms goes with it. For a custom-research surname analysis please airmail a \$19 personal or bank check or money order (adding \$10 for each additional surname you wish to have researched) to:

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What's in a (Polish) name?

Occupational surnames

Everyone has heard about boy hero Harry Potter. His surname in England once identified someone who earned a living by making and selling clay pots, jugs, bowls and other vessels. The Polish equivalent would be Garncarz, a surname shared in today's Poland by nearly 1,000 people. Also derived from the same root are: Gancarz (nearly 3,300), Gancarczyk (about 1,500) and Garczarek (nearly 1,000). Here are a number of other familiar English occupational names and their Polish equivalents:

BAKER: Piekarz	FISHER: Rybak
CABINET-MAKER: Stolarz	GARDENER: Ogrodnik
CARPENTER: Cieśla (rough carpenter)	LATHE OPERATOR: Tokarz
CARTER: Woźnica	LOCKSMITH: Ślusarz
CARTWRIGHT: Stelmach	MILLER: Młynarz
CHURCH (sexton, sacristan, caretaker): Kościelny	SALTER: Solarz
COOK: Kucharz	SAWYER: Pilarz
	TAYLOR: Krawiec

Have you ever wondered about your Polish surnames – what they mean, how they came about, how many people now use them, where they live and whether a coat of arms goes with them?

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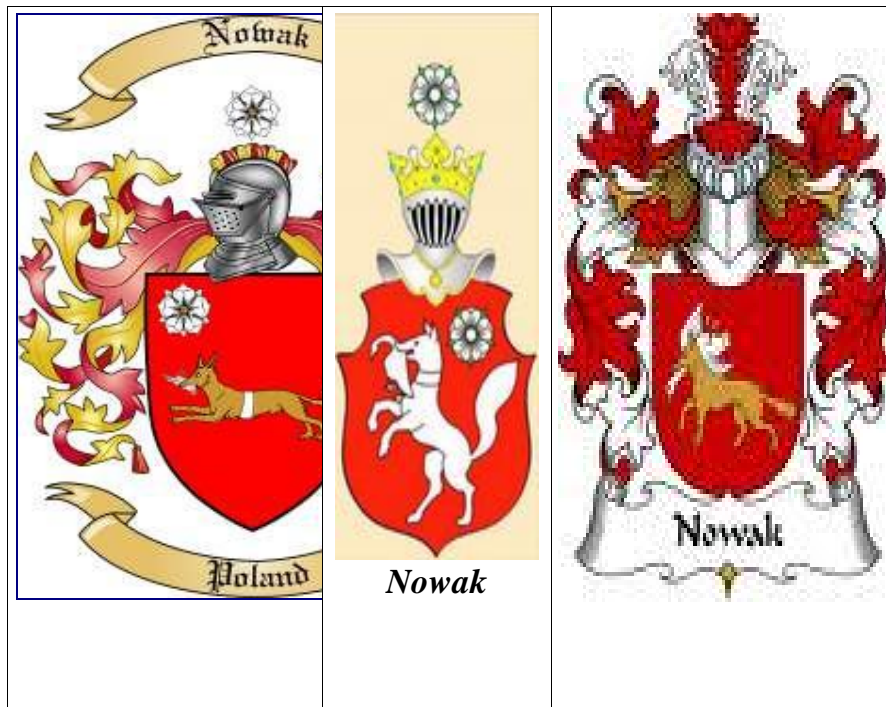
Included in the several-page report, researched by a graduate Polish-American linguist, is a useful genealogical contact sheet which can help you track down your family records in Poland and possibly even turn up long-lost relations.

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POLISH SURNAME CORNER

Your Polish last name means something!

Nowak, which started out as a nickname for “the new guy in town”, is Poland’s most popular last name, shared by more than 200,000 Poles and possibly another 50,000 across North America and around the globe. The next most common are Kowalski meaning the blacksmith's son (around 140,000 users), Wiśniewski – the guy from Wiśniewo or Cherryville (110,000) and Wójcik – the village mayor's boy (99,000).



Three different heraldic artists' depiction of the Nowak coat of arms which shows a fox holding a goose by the necks.

To find out how many people in Poland use your Polish surname, where they come from, how the name came about, what it means and whether a noble coat of arms goes with it, please airmail a \$19 check to:

Robert Strybel
ul. Kaniowska 24
01-529 Warsaw, Poland

You will also get at no extra charge a list of root-tracing contacts that can put you in touch with professional genealogists, genealogical groups and helpful Web sites, data bases, addresses and phone numbers. Speedy service is guaranteed, and the research is launched the same day an order is received.

Does a coat of arms go with your surname?

What does your Polish last name mean?

Have you ever wondered what your Polish last name means? Many started out as nicknames to indicate who one's father was. **Stasiak**, **Tomczyk** and **Janowicz** are the Polish equivalents of Stanson, Thomson and Johnson. Other surnames indicated someone's native village: **Wiśniewski** came from Wiśniewo (Cherrywood) and **Wróblewski** hailed from Wróblewo (Sparrowville). Still others indicated someone's occupation: **Piekarz** (baker), **Kowal** (blacksmith) and **Kołodziej** (wheelwright). And then there was **Nowak**, the new guy in town.

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NOTE: With over 200,000 users Nowak is Poland's most popular surname and there may be an additional 50,000 or so residing in North America and world-wide. The well-born Nowaks were entitled to use a coat of arms of the same name. It depicts a white fox holding a white goose by the neck, set against a red shield. Its origin and symbolism remain obscure, but the white rosette in the right upper corner of the shield, which is repeated in the crest (upper section) atop the customary crowned helmet, suggests some connection with the old and influential Poraj clan, whose symbol was the rosette. The Poraj coat of arms was known to have been brought to Poland from Bohemia by the brother of St Wojcicech (Adalbert) who, together with a group of Czech noblemen, was escorting the Princess Dubrava (Dąbrówka) as a wife for Poland's first historical ruler Mieszko I. Their marriage in 965 AD marked Poland's entry into the European family of Christian nations.

A POLISH-HERITAGE GIFT FOR A LOVED ONE?

A custom-researched surname analysis can make an interesting and unusual gift for your loved ones. The several-page report will tell them what their Polish last name means, how it came about, how many people use it, where they come from and whether a coat of arms goes with it. If one is found, it will be fully explained.

As part of the package, you will also get a useful genealogical contact chart which will put you in touch with organizations and professional genealogists who can help you track down your family records in Poland, photograph or videotape ancestral homesteads or graves and possibly even turn up long-lost relations.

Any Polish last name you indicate will be expertly researched by a graduate Polish-American linguist (MA from the University of Wisconsin in Polish/Slavic linguistics). The completed report can be emailed or airmailed as per the client's request.

If interested, kindly airmail a \$19 (personal or bank) check or money order (adding \$10 for each additional surname you wish to have researched) to:

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01-529 Warsaw, Poland

Whoever you order such a gift for will surely be in for a nice surprise when his or her surname analysis arrives by airmail or email direct from Warsaw! If you act now, the report will reach your chosen recipient in plenty of time for Mother's and/or Father's Day. For more information please contact: research60@gmail.com

What does your Polish last name mean?

To learn all about your Polish last name, what it means, how it came about, how many people use it, where they came from and whether a coat of arms goes with it, please airmail a \$19 check or money order (adding \$10 for each additional surname you wish to have researched) to:

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Do you know what your Polish last name means?

A unique gift of Polish heritage?

Every Polish last name means something and came into being for a specific reason, usually as a nickname. It may have identified someone as a Kowal (blacksmith), and Kowalczyk was his son. Stasiak was Stanley's boy, Gwizdała was the whistler and Ciemięga the clumsy oaf. Others indicated place of residence. Zaleski lived on the other side of the forest, and Brzeziński was from the village of Brzezina (Birchville).

Consider a custom-researched surname analysis as an interesting and unusual gift for a loved one (or yourself). It will explain how your Polish last name came into being, how many people use it, where they live and whether a coat of arms goes with it. If one is found, you will receive a color reproduction thereof as part of the package.

Also included is a genealogical contact chart (root-tracing websites, organizations, databases) listing professional genealogists qualified to track down family records, photograph or videotape ancestral homesteads and graves and possibly even turn up living long-lost relatives in the Old Country.

If interested, please airmail a \$19 check (personal or bank) or money order (adding \$10 for each additional surname you wish researched) to:

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What does your Polish last name mean?

If it is **Kowalczyk**, someone once called some distant ancestor of yours "the blacksmith's kid", and it stuck. **Jankowski** was "the man from Jankowo (Johnsville), **Rybak** was a fisherman, **Mazur** hailed from the forested Mazurian Lake District and **Baran** was stubborn as an old ram.

For a custom-researched analysis of the meaning and derivation of your Polish surname, how many people share it, where they live and whether the name is accompanied by a coat-of-arms, please airmail a \$19 check to:

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01-529 Warsaw, Poland

You will also receive a packet of helpful root-tracing contacts (genealogical sites, researchers, data bases, etc.) to facilitate your ancestral exploration.

FOR THE BIRDS!

A large group of Polish last names were derived from the names of common household objects, tools, crops, livestock and wildlife. Quite a few came from the names of different birds, including:

BOCIAN (stork); CZAPLA (heron); CZYŻYK (green finch, siskin); GAŚSIOR (gander); GOŁĄB (pigeon); JASKÓŁKA (swallow); KACZOR (drake); KAWKA (jackdaw); KOGUT (rooster); KRUK (raven); KUKUŁKA (cuckoo); ŁABĘDŹ (swan); RUDZIK (robin); PRZEPIÓRKA (quail); SIKORA (coal tit); SKOWRON (skylark); SOWA (owl); WRONA (crow); WRÓBEL (sparrow) and ZIĘBA (finch);

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What's in a (Polish) name?

Do you know what your Polish surname means?

By Robert Strybel, Polish/Polonian Affairs Writer

In a rather typical course of developments, after becoming adults most Americans of Polish and other ancestry are too busy starting careers, setting up families, educating their kids, buying summer homes, traveling, etc. to worry much about who they are and where they came from. Unfortunately, when they finally do take an interest in their family histories and genealogy, all too often there is no-one around in the family left to ask. By then, the older relatives, who might have known something, are usually long dead and buried.

The same holds true for surnames. Many Pol-Ams have gone through life without knowing, considering or caring what their surname means. As we move up into the third, fourth and fifth generation, the knowledge of the Polish language becomes exceedingly rare, hence many cannot even guess at what their surname is all about or how it might have originated.

Do you know what your surname means? Here is the meaning of a few popular Polish names you may have heard: **Baran** (ram, male sheep); **Grabarczyk** (the grave-digger's son); **Mazur** (an inhabitant of Poland's lake-studded north-woods Mazury region); **Michalak** (Mike's boy); **Olszewski** (the basic root is "olcha" [alderwood], but most likely a resident of the village of Olszewo); **Pawlak** (Paul's boy), **Pietrzak** (Pete's kid); **Stankiewicz** and **Stasiak** (Stanley's son); **Stępień** (someone marrying into money); **Szewczyk** (the shoemaker's son or helper); **Wróblewski** (resident of the village of Wróblewo); and **Zaleski** (someone living on the other side of the forest or in the village of Zalesie);

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Polonia's respellers: Dębkowski > Dembkoski

Robert Strybel, Polish/Polonian Affairs Writer

It is a known fact that some Polish immigrants changed their surnames after coming to America. Some were simply shortened, for instance from **Nowakowski** to **Nowak** or **Kołodziejski** to **Kołodziej**. Others were translated, and **Bednarz** became **Cooper** (barrel-maker), and **Jankowiak** turned into **Johnson**. Sometimes Polish surnames were changed into something English that sounded a bit like the original: **Wesoly** > **Wesley**. Today we will take a closer look at those Polish surnames which got phoneticized, i.e. spelled in a way to make them more pronounceable to the Anglo mainstream.

Some respelled surnames are actually pronounced the way they should be in Polish. A good example is changing **Kowal** to **Koval** or **Nowak** to **Novak**. This could mean dropping the "w" (and removing the "cow") from **Makowski** to create **Makoski** or removing the hardly audible "p" from **Przybylski** and respelling it **Shibilski**. Others include **Bogutski** (**Bogucki**), **Grohoski** (**Grochowski**), **Galsavage** (**Galasiewicz**), **Yablonski** (**Jabłoński**), **Voytovich** (**Wojtowicz**), **Shanoski** (**Sianowski**) and **Kuharski** (**Kucharski**). These phonetic modifications retain the names' general Slavic appearance and origin. Some respellings do not, for example: **Czarny** > **Charney**, or **Szczęsny** > **Chesney**. One Polish actress (who starred in the movie "With Fire and Sword") respelled her surname **Skorupka** into **Scorupco**, giving it an Italian ambience.

The Polish nasal vowels "ą" and "ę" add an "m" or "n" sound to syllables but this is lost on the non-Polish majority. Hence, the **Dębkowski** surname in the title might get Anglo-mangled into something like debb-COW-ski. By adding an "m" after the initial vowel and removing the "w" the name gets respelled into **Dembkoski** and everybody ends up pronouncing it the way it should be.

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