

1.2 - Names and Familiar Names

Česká jména – Czech first names

Many Czech names are similar to English names. For example, *Martin* and *Barbora* are common Czech names that have obvious English equivalents. Some names might look a little foreign at first, such as *Kateřina* or *Jan*, but these are equivalent to English *Catherine/Kathryn* and *John*.

Other names such as *Vojtěch* or *Anežka* may seem more foreign to the native English speaker. Many of these Czech names, however, also have English counterparts. *Vojtěch* translates to Adalbert (seriously, do you actually know anyone with this name in English?), while *Anežka* is the Czech equivalent of Agnes. Some names may be only slightly different than their English versions such as the Czech male name *Jan* for John, or the female name *Jana* for Jane. Obviously some Czech names are going to be more popular than their English counterparts and vice-versa.

Many Czech names are made up of Slavic roots that have meaning. The name *Jarmila* comes from the words for 'spring' (*jaro*) and 'to love' (*milovat*), while the name *Bohdan* comes from the words for 'God' (*bůh*) and 'to give' (*dát*). So *Jarmila* is one who loves the spring, and *Bohdan* is God-given.

Czech Familiar Names

Czech makes frequent use of familiar name forms (i.e. nicknames). Many of these names will simply be shorter forms of the first name. It is similar to English *Danny* for *Daniel* or *Drew* for *Andrew*. Some Czech nicknames will actually be longer than their original name such as the nickname *Jirka* for the Czech equivalent to George – *Jiří*, or *Hanka* as a nickname for *Hana*. In fact, some Czech nicknames don't look at all like the name from which they were derived such as the nickname *Pepa* for the Czech name *Josef/Jozef*.

See the list below for some common Czech names and their corresponding familiar forms in parentheses.

Common Men's Names	Common Women's Names
Jiří (Jirka)	Marie (Maruška)
Jan (Honza)	Jana (Janička)
Petr (Peťa)	Eva (Evka, Evička)
Josef (Pepa, Józka)	Hana (Hanka)
Pavel (Pavlík)	Anna (Anička)
Jaroslav (Jarda)	Lenka (Lenička)
Martin (Martínek)	Kateřina (Katka)
Tomáš (Tom)	Věra (Věrka, Věruška)
Miroslav (Milda)	Lucie (Lucka)
František (Franta)	Alena (Alenka)
Zdeněk (Zdena)	Petra (Pěťa)
Václav (Vašek)	Jaroslava (Jarka)
Michal (Míša)	Veronika (Verča, Verunka)
Karel (Kája)	Martina (Martinka)
Milan (Milánek)	Jitka (Jíťa)
Vladimír (Vláďa)	Tereza (Terezka)
Lukáš (Lukášek)	Ludmila (Ludmilka)
David (Davídek)	Helena (Helenka)
Jakub (Kuba)	Michaela (Míša)
Ladislav (Lad'a)	Zdeňka (Zdena)

For more information, see:

http://www.myczechrepublic.com/czech_culture/czech_name_days/dimm.html