

DOES IT REALLY NEED A NAME?

.....
THE TRUTH IN NAMING SERIES
VOLUME 0

.....
BY CAITLIN BARRETT

DOUBLEBIT

**BABIES NEED
NAMES**



Having a baby? Definitely name it. He or she will need a documented name (as in, on a birth certificate or social security card) to get important life things, like a driver license, a passport, a bank account, or a job.

A name becomes the most basic data about your tiny baby—something that sets her apart from all the other tiny babies who look exactly like her (just kidding; she totally has your eyes).

So name your baby. But, please, make it good.



Salvage



Preynce



Inkling



Barista



Trilogy



Spidre



Self Titled



Untitled



Bizkit



Exceptionelle



Archival



Hubris

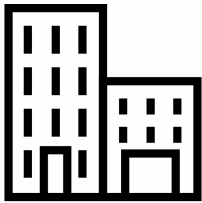
Names that make babies cry

**BUSINESSES
NEED NAMES**

If you've ever started a business, you've filled out endless, tedious forms—all of which start with a request for your name.

Without igniting past traumas, let's just remember those forms would have been more difficult if they didn't start with the victory of knowing your business's name.

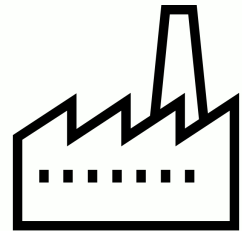
So, name your business. But, please, really *think* about it.



Standard Business Corps.



Enjurius Law



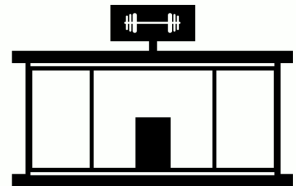
Uncertain Futures Energy
Plant



Torcher Day Spa



Beacon Dynamic
Synergies, Inc,
a Subsidiary of National Generics



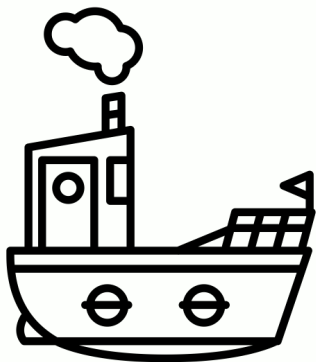
Swole Members Gym

**EVEN BOATS
NEED NAMES**

As your friend's rich dad once said, the best days of boat ownership are the day you buy it and the day you sell it. But it's more likely that the best day is when you come up with your boat's name.

The United States Coast Guard requires that when you apply for boat documentation, you include a name. It maxes you out at 33 characters, and you can't be obscene or reference words you'd use to ask for help on the open seas.

So, name your boat. But please, don't be too naughty.



A SHORT LIST OF BOAT NAMES TO PONDER—BUT NOT CHOOSE

- The Nip Slip
- Mayday Boner
- Aft Hole
- Seagasm
- Pirate Invasion
- Fiery Explosion
- In Need of Medical Assistance
- Sinking Feeling
- S.O.S. Stiffy
- OVER

**BUT YOU—DO
YOU NEED A
NAME?**

**“OF COURSE I
NEED A NAME!”**

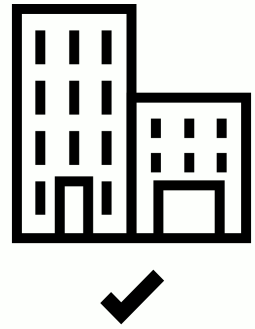
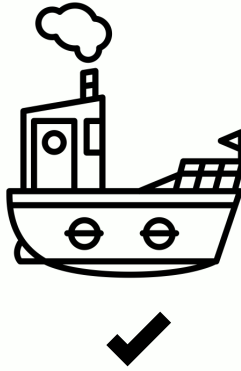
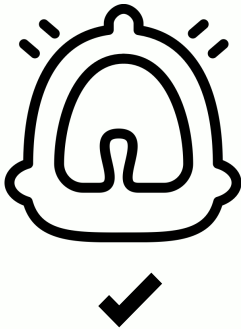
Do you?

Let's do a quiz:

Is the thing you're naming a baby, boat, or business?

Did you answer “yes”?

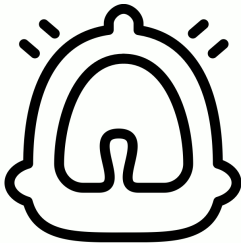
Then you’re in the clear. Move onto the subsequent volumes of this series for an insider’s look at creating the best possible names (and avoiding the worst).



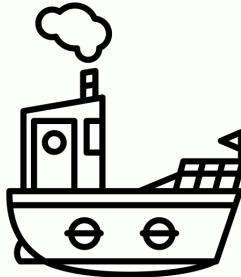
Did you answer “no”?

Then we have work to do. Because while it can seem really obvious that your product, technology, publication, compound, chemical resin, kitty cat treats, or soap pump needs a name, the answer is, honestly, “it depends.”

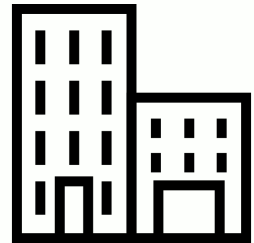
(You probably hate that. But, it gets clearer...)



X



X



X

**(PRETTY)
GOOD
REASONS TO
NAME
SOMETHING**

1. Everyday human language is insufficient to describe the majesty of what I have created.
2. I am reshaping the industry in which my thing sits, and I need a name to signal a huge change from the status quo.
3. One detail of my thing is so revolutionary that I need a distinct name to educate people about the importance of this difference.
4. Every single one of my competitors has this kind of thing, and each names it something distinctive (*though I'd ask whether they all use a similar descriptor, and could you use that to refer to your thing?*).
5. I need to name my book, movie, article, or song (*though I'd call that titling and that's a different conversation we should probably have*).
6. I need to name my grouping of things (*though I'd call that labeling and we can get coffee to catch up on that too*).

**BAD
REASONS TO
NAME
SOMETHING**

1. I want to hide the fact that I don't know what this is by dazzling people with a dazzling name.
2. I really like lawyers, paperwork, and paying fees to register, maintain, and protect my intellectual property.
3. Rikki in engineering spent a lot of time on it.
4. My father-in-law thinks it needs one.
5. My girlfriend thinks it needs one.
6. It's a thing inside a thing inside a thing inside a thing, all of which is located in a drop-down menu, and if anyone ever finds it, I want them to know how cool this thing is.

**15 THINGS TO
DO INSTEAD
OF NAMING IT**

1. Give it a simple, clear label (think “candle collection” or “caffeine supplement”)
2. Describe it in a sentence
3. Group it with similar things
4. Draw a picture of how it works
5. Draw a picture of its benefit
6. Draw a picture illustrating the dangers of what happens if you *don't* use it
7. Hire a mixologist to craft its signature cocktail (and, sure, you can go ahead and name that)
8. Pay a foley artist to create an expressive soundscape evocative of the experience
9. Channel it through a mantra
10. Interpretive dance
11. Sketch comedy
12. Close-up magic
13. Parade float
14. Loom weaving
15. Team cheer

**ONE FINAL
QUESTION:**

**DOES IT
REALLY NEED
A NAME?**

About the author

Caitlin Barrett likes to do creative things. Strategically.



Caitlin Barrett is a writer, namer, and brand strategist based in Brooklyn. As a partner in Doublebit Narrative, she spends all day thinking about words.

In her spare time, she lifts heavy things, restores antique axes, and tells jokes to herself on Twitter.

**For more in Truth in Naming,
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