

Tracing Our Roots: A Beginner's Guide to Discovering Your Family History

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Rooty Branches Genealogy Services

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Genealogy Websites

- Ancestry.com – subscription
 - Local libraries often have an Ancestry Library Edition – free to use while in the library
- FamilySearch.org – free, but must create an account
 - Search → Family Search Research Wiki
 - Guides to locality research to the county level
 - Guided Learning pages
- Cyndi's List (www.cyndislist.com) – a free directory of genealogy websites
- FindMyPast.com – subscription; mostly UK records; some US
- Newspapers.com – subscription
- Pennsylvania Newspaper Archive (panewsarchive.psu.edu)
 - Hosted by Penn State University
 - Free and searchable
- Fold3.com – Military records; subscription
- National Archives – www.archives.gov
 - Repository for federal records
 - Military records
 - Union Civil War Pension files
- AmericanAncestors.org – subscription; primarily New England, but has resources for all of U.S.
- WikiTree – free; be careful copying trees, but good for finding sources specific to your ancestor

Getting Started

- Start with what you know
 - Parents, grandparents, etc.
 - Dates, locations
- Fill in family group sheet and/or pedigree chart
- Research one person/family at a time
 - Find birth, marriage, death records
 - Search for census records
 - Search for newspaper articles/obituaries
 - Save record images

- Keep track of research in research log
- Research other sources
- Repeat above with the next family!

Forms – find free forms at www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Genealogy_Research_Forms

Genealogy Education

Family History Guide (all free) - <https://www.thefhguide.com/introduction.html>

- Learning Paths – by website: Ancestry, Family Search, My Heritage, Find My Past
 - Step-by-Step Instructions for navigating each website
- Research Skills – more advanced tutorials on the four websites
- Countries – research strategies by country

Family Search

- New to Genealogy: Beginners First Step
 - https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/New_to_Genealogy_-_Beginners_First_Step
- FamilySearch Research Wiki – by country; by state; by county
 - https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Main_Page

National Genealogical Society

- Free Resources: forms; links to other genealogy websites; free skills course
 - <https://www.ngsgenealogy.org/free-resources>
- Courses - <https://www.ngsgenealogy.org/genealogy-courses/>
 - Foundations in Family History
 - Advanced Skills Certificate Course
 - GenTech Toolbox (various technology and AI webinars)
 - Continuing Genealogical Studies
 - DNA
 - Military Records
 - Transcribing, Extracting & Abstracting Documents
 - Reading Old Handwriting

National Archives – repository for federal records

- Resources for Genealogists - <https://www.archives.gov/research/genealogy>
- NARA Videos on YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/c/USNationalArchives/search>

Pedigree Chart

1

(Name)

When born

Where

When married

Where

When died

Where

(Spouse)

2

(Father)

When born

Where

When married

Where

When died

Where

3

(Mother)

When born

Where

When died

Where

4

(Father of no. 2)

When born

Where

When married

Where

When died

Where

5

(Mother of no. 2)

When born

Where

When died

Where

6

(Father of no. 3)

When born

Where

When married

Where

When died

Where

7

(Mother of no. 3)

When born

Where

When died

Where

8

(Father of no. 4)

When born

Where

When married

When died

Where

9

(Mother of no. 4)

When born

Where

When died

Where

10

(Father of no. 5)

When born

Where

When married

When died

Where

11

(Mother of no. 5)

When born

Where

When died

Where

12

(Father of no. 6)

When born

Where

When married

When died

Where

13

(Mother of no. 6)

When born

Where

When died

Where

14

(Father of no. 7)

When born

Where

When married

When died

Where

15

(Mother of no. 7)

When born

Where

When died

Where

Research Record Sheet

Surname: _____

Locality: _____

Researcher: _____

Address: _____

Date: _____

Entry Date	Repository Call No.	Indexed Condition	Description of Source (Sufficient for Citation)	Purpose Name, period, etc.	Comments	Doc. No.
1						
2						
3						
4						
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