

# Genealogy Resources for Researching Your Family's Background

Researching your family's history is called the study of genealogy. Tracing ancestry was once much more difficult than it is today; online resources have made tracing ancestry comparatively easy. Before diving in, create an outline of your family tree by filling in as many blanks as you can with names. Then, you can work to add to your family history by interviewing family members and tracking down records. Organization of your genealogical project will help you manage the large amount of data.

## Where and How to Search

After conducting preliminary interviews of family members to learn background information, review official records of cities and states where family members have lived. Archived government census data will provide information, and you may also find details at public libraries. Strive to learn names, dates of births and deaths, and details about marriages and children. Check genealogy websites, as you may find that your relatives have already researched some portions of your family history.

Searching online for family members may require modifications to family names to find as much information as possible. Enter names into search engines surrounded by quotation marks. You might also alter the spelling of last names slightly, since often, surname spellings change or are incorrectly recorded over the years. Check military personnel archives, immigration records, and ship manifest lists also.

- [Tips for Researching Your Ancestors](#): A genealogy program on your computer can help you organize your information.
- [Catalog Searching Tips](#): The Library of Congress is an important resource for anyone researching family history.
- [Genealogy Tips](#): Although online research is an important component of genealogy, offline detective work is also helpful, as clues can be found in attics, basements, and closets.
- [Where to Write for Vital Records](#): Every state maintains vital records, which you can request after providing identifying information.
- [Tracing Native American Family Roots](#): Native American genealogy resources may be divided by tribe and can include names of enrolled members.
- [Establishing Indian Ancestry](#): Establishing American Indian ancestry involves providing genealogical documentation that proves descent from an ancestor who was a member of a federally recognized tribe.
- [How to Build a Family Tree](#): Tracing Your Ancestors: Family records will likely include papers connected to births, baptisms, graduations, marriages, military service, deaths, burial records, and obituaries.
- [JewishGen Unified Database Search](#): This database enables you to search for records of Jewish people using their surname and country of origin.

## Creating a Visual Family Tree

Complete a family tree using photos of each family member. Children often enjoy this activity as well,

so it's an ideal way to involve children in your research. You can also print genealogical worksheets designed for kids. While you conduct your research for family details, kids can be exploring similar information.

- [Tracing Family Traits Using a Genogram](#): A genogram is a pictorial graph that spans multiple generations, showing a clear diagram of names, dates, and locations.
- [Family Photos](#): Explore old family photos to learn about ancestors. Photography was vastly different in bygone generations, but you can look closely to glean information about people and how they may have lived.
- [Family Tree Worksheet](#): Print out this worksheet for children to complete as you work on your genealogy project.
- [My Family Tree](#): Basic printables provide blanks for children to fill in names of family members.
- [See Who Stands Behind You](#): This photo collage activity encourages you to find and compare old photos of ancestors with photos of you at the same age.
- [Place Your Ancestor in History](#): Use this worksheet to document details about a specific ancestor.
- [Family Tree](#): A family tree is a diagram that includes boxes for each family member and shows how the individuals connect to each other.
- [Genealogy for Kids](#): As kids learn about ancestors, they will usually understand more about themselves and their place in their family.

## Mapping a Family Tree

A family tree can be mapped out in many ways. Blank family tree templates are available online for downloading and printing. Some templates even include diagrams that enable you to outline relationships across multiple generations. As you add information to your family tree, document it with charts and logs.

- [Ancestral Chart](#): An ancestral chart includes a diagram of family members showing dates of birth, marriage, and death.
- [How to Use a Relationship Chart](#): A relationship chart diagrams relationships between individuals in a family with a common ancestor.
- [Our Family Tree](#): Use this family tree to document close and distant relatives in your family.
- [Pedigree Chart](#): Fill in the blanks of a pedigree chart to record your immediate ancestors.

## Additional Genealogy Resources

- [Immigration Records](#): Ship passenger arrival records provide lists of names of people who arrived in the United States during specific time periods.
- [Ultimate Beginner Guide to Genealogy](#): Genealogy can provide answers about family history, traditions, culture, and health.
- [Your Family Tree](#): Artifacts such as a family Bible can often hold many important details about family history, such as dates of marriages, births, and deaths.
- [Researching Individuals](#): Immigration records exist in a number of formats, including lists based on the date of arrival or the nationality of the arrivals.
- [Nationwide Gravesite Locator](#): Enter the name, date of birth, and date of death of a veteran to find their grave's location.

- [Put Your Family Tree on the Web](#): After researching your family history, you might wish to publish your family tree on the Internet.
- [Military Records and Information](#): Get information about how to request military records for veterans.
- [Nine Tips for Obtaining Missing Military Records and Awards for You or a Loved One](#): When you want to obtain service records, these tips can help you get the information you seek.
- [Requesting Military Personnel Records](#): You'll need specific information to request military records, including the veteran's full name, service number, and Social Security number.
- [Research a Veteran](#): Review your resources when you want to locate a deceased veteran from World War II.
- [Finding Ship Passenger Lists & Immigration Records 1820-1940s](#): Manifests were kept for ships that arrived in the United States between 1820 and the 1940s.
- [Passenger Ships to Baltimore 1820-33](#): This list includes passenger ships that arrived in Baltimore between 1820 and 1833.
- [Pilgrim Ship Lists: Early 1600s](#): Pilgrim ships arriving in the early 1600s include many more ships than just the Mayflower.
- [Castle Garden Search Tool](#): Use this search tool to find information about an ancestor arriving in the United States.
- [Where to Find Passenger Lists to Trace Your Immigrant Ancestors](#): Tracing historical ship journeys of ancestors can be an important source of information when conducting family research.
- [Searching for Ships on Microfilm in One Step](#): Ship lists contain names of passengers arriving at major ports, including Ellis Island, Baltimore, Boston, New Orleans, and Galveston.
- [Irish Passenger Lists](#): Irish passengers left a number of ports in the British Isles bound for America.
- [Passengers Arriving at the Port of New Orleans](#): Review this passenger list to see the names of the people arriving in this port in 1851.