

Unlocking the Secrets of Your Family Tree

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- ✓ What is Genealogy?
- ✓ Where Do I Begin?
- ✓ Verifying Facts
- ✓ Research, Research, Research!
- ✓ Organizing Your Data
- ✓ Tricks of the Trade
- ✓ Resources

Start with YOU:

- ❖ Start with YOU. Write down what you know about when and where were you born, raised, and the schools you attended.
- ❖ Did you receive any awards or medals? Who were your friends? What major events occurred during your lifetime? When and where were you married?
- ❖ What are your favorite memories about your parents and grandparents?
- ❖ If you have children, write down what you recall for them as well
- ❖ Now ask the same questions about your siblings and other close relatives. This info will help you trace your family back to subsequent generations
- ❖ Make 2 copies of any documents provided. Keep one with you and store another off-site

Verifying Facts:

- ❖ Verify the facts of your recollections with records you already have at home
- ❖ Obituaries, wedding invitations, birth announcements are great sources to verify information
- ❖ Is there a family bible that can verify dates for deceased relatives?
- ❖ Newspaper articles, yearbooks and school or church directories are useful resources as well
- ❖ Employment records and union cards
- ❖ Military service records
- ❖ Mortgages, deeds and property taxes

- ❖ Church records (baptisms, marriages etc.)
- ❖ Citizenship papers, passports and visas
- ❖ Miscellaneous records: library cards, autograph albums, greeting cards and letters

Looking for Clues:

- ❖ Photographs, even unidentified ones, can tell you a lot about your family.
- ❖ Be wary of family bibles where all of the hand-writing is in the same hand.
- ❖ Yearbook and class photos are a great way to identify family members.

Putting it Together:

- ❖ Organizing your records is vital to effectively tracing your family tree.
- ❖ Devise a system that works for you.
- ❖ Purchase a genealogy software program

Software Reviews Updated December 2019: <https://windowsreport.com/family-tree-software>

- ❖ Keep original documents, memorabilia, and negatives in a safe location.
- ❖ Keep a detailed log of where, when, and how you find information.
- ❖ CITE YOUR SOURCES!
- ❖ Re-evaluate your findings once a year.

Tricks and Tips:

- <https://archivesoutside.records.nsw.gov.au/useful-tips-for-reading-handwritten-documents>
- ❖ Try searching for ancestors under various spellings or soundex codes.
- ❖ Try another relative.
- ❖ Use free genealogy sites!
- ❖ Google is only as good as your search. Try www.yippy.com or www.bing.com
- ❖ Blank census sheets are available for every census year.
- ❖ Forms and worksheets are available online for free: www.familytreemagazine.com/freeforms
- ❖ Call the library or historical society in the town you are researching or visit their website.
- ❖ Don't underestimate the usefulness of books & microfilm.

Websites:

- ❖ www.afrigeneas.org
- ❖ Allen County Public Library www.genealogycenter.org
- ❖ Family Search www.familysearch.org
- ❖ Find-a-Grave www.findagrave.com
- ❖ Helm's Genealogy Toolbox www.genealogytoolbox.com
- ❖ Illinois State Archives www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/archives
- ❖ Illinois State Genealogical Society www.ilgensoc.org
- ❖ Internet Archives www.archive.org
- ❖ www.jewishgen.org/databases
- ❖ Library of Congress www.loc.gov
- ❖ www.linkpendium.com
- ❖ Newberry Library www.newberry.org/genealogy
- ❖ U.S. National Archives: www.archives.gov



Genealogy Books:

- ❖ Bettinger, Blaine. *Family Tree Guide to DNA testing and Genetic Genealogy*. Family Tree Books. Cincinnati, OH. 2019
- ❖ Crow, Elizabeth Powell. *Genealogy Online*. McGraw Hill. N.Y. 2015
- ❖ Eicholz, Alice. *Ancestry's Red Book: American State, County and Town Sourcebook*. Salt Lake City, UT. Ancestry Publishing. 1992.
- ❖ Helm, Matthew. *Genealogy for Dummies*. Wiley. Hoboken, N.J. 2017
- ❖ Hendrickson, Nancy. *The Unofficial Guide to Ancestry.com*. F+W Books. Cincinnati, OH. 2014.
- ❖ McCullough, Dana. *Unofficial Guide to Familysearch.org*. Family Tree Books. Cincinnati, OH. 2015
- ❖ Morgan, George. *How to Do Everything with Your Genealogy*. 3rd Edition. McGraw Hill. N. Y. 2015.
- ❖ Scott, Kerry. *How to Use Evernote for Genealogy*. Family Tree Books. Cincinnati, OH. 2015.
- ❖ Smith, Drew. *Organize Your Genealogy: strategies and solutions for every researcher*. Family Tree Books. Cincinnati, OH. 2016
- ❖ Szucs, Lou. *The Source: Guidebook of American Genealogy*. 3rd Edition. Ancestry Publishing. Provo, UT. 2006.