



Family History - A Concise Beginner's Overview
Fort Myers Regional Library
May 2026

This study guide is designed to provide a basic overview of the main types of records available for genealogical research. For additional information to supplement this study guide, please see our other beginner's study guide **[Beginning Genealogy Research Outline](#)**. In addition to a wide variety of study guides, we also have how-to books for beginning genealogists of all ages. Beginner's materials are shelved under the call number **929.1**, and are found in the following collections in the Lee County Library System:

1. Adult Non-Fiction
2. Juvenile Non-Fiction
3. Genealogy Reference

Books shelved in adult non-fiction and juvenile non-fiction can be checked out for four weeks. The study guide **[Beginning Genealogy Research Outline](#)** features a bibliography containing useful books for beginning genealogists. Those listed as genealogical reference are for in-house use only. Patrons may scan or photocopy from our reference materials. The fee for photocopies is \$.10 per page. We also permit patrons to save documents using flash drives or taking pictures of images using their smartphones.

Our study guides have no copyright restrictions. Patrons may reproduce them or use them in whatever manner they wish. The intent of these study guides is to serve as basic guidelines. They are not substitutes for taking the time to read a periodical article or a book written by a professional subject specialist in the field of genealogy. Encountering brick walls at one time or another in genealogy is normal. Taking the time to read a book or article written by genealogy professionals or attending seminars given by a subject specialist in genealogy is the best long-term investment you can make to put yourself in position for success.

Beginning Steps

To begin tracing your family, begin with yourself and work backwards through the generations, creating a timeline of major events that occurred during each person's lifetime, and recording the information on an ancestor chart. Names and dates should be recorded on ancestor charts and family group sheets. The biggest mistake some beginning genealogists make is starting

with a person (usually a famous person who shares their surname or has similar family traits or background) and working forward to the present.

Organization is the key to long-term success. Keep a research log of your work and consider placing your charts in a three-ring binder. Another option is investigating genealogical software programs that allow users to input their research information and the program automatically organizes the data. The following links will provide information on this topic.

American Ancestors. New England Historical Genealogical Society. ***Choosing a Genealogical Software Program***. 2025

<https://www.americanancestors.org/education/learning-resources/read/genealogical-software-programs>

Family Search Wiki. ***Windows Genealogy Software***. 2025

https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Windows_Genealogy_Software

Cume, Rick. Family Tree Magazine. ***Online Tree or Genealogy Software: Deciding Where to Keep Your Data***. 2024

<https://www.familytreemagazine.com/resources/online/online-tree-vs-genealogy-software/>

Even if you choose this route, it is wise to maintain a paper backup of all information and documents. Try to involve family members and be sure to interview your elderly relatives. The following items are a sampling of home sources that family members may have. A companion electronic study guide on the topic of ***Home Sources*** is available free upon request. Home source documents can provide important clues for research:

Award Certificates	Immigration/Naturalization Papers
Birth Certificates	Marriage Certificates
Correspondence	Military Enlistment Papers
Death Certificates	Photograph Albums
Diaries	School Records/Diplomas
Family Bibles	Scrapbooks

Your next step is researching records within your local community, state, and national resources that may pertain to the ancestor in question or his family. Consider joining a local genealogical society in the community where you reside. Experienced genealogists also recommend joining a society in each community where your ancestors resided. Many genealogical societies offer beginning genealogy courses as part of the benefits of membership. Another benefit is possible assistance in long-distance genealogical research that might save you a trip until you are sure there are enough records to justify making a trip to the community where your ancestors lived.

Locating Books on Your Family

Many beginners assume that at some point a book was written on their specific family. They assume finding information about their family will be as simple as searching for a biography.

The reality is that except for some very rare instances, research is seldom that easy, unless you find yourself related to royalty or a very powerful political family that has been able to retain their influence and power for centuries. Researchers may need to browse through a number of compiled genealogies, civil records, census records, and religious records in order to piece together this type of information. In terms of family-related genealogies, published and unpublished family history research can be located in any of the following locations:

1. Public Libraries
2. Genealogical Society Libraries
3. FamilySearch Library (Salt Lake City), FamilySearch Centers (Nationwide) and FamilySearch Library Affiliates (Such as the Fort Myers Regional Library)
4. Private Genealogical Collections
5. Family Association Research Facilities
6. Ethnic or Religious Research Facilities

When visiting a local library in communities where your ancestors resided, search the library catalog under the following headings:

1. Family Surname
2. County/City-Local History
3. Genealogy

To help prepare patrons for using the types of libraries or repositories that I have described above, I have compiled multiple study guides listed below. I can send you electronic copies free upon request.

1. ***Beyond the Usual Sources: Using Academic and Public Libraries, Archives, Repositories, Specialized Libraries, and Government Entities for Genealogical Research*** 2024
2. ***Genealogical Collection Research Guide - Fort Myers Regional Library June 2025***
3. ***Libraries and Genealogy Research 2024***

When preparing to correspond with libraries or other repositories, be sure to visit their website first to see if they have a genealogy or local history homepage. The homepage usually describes the collection and services offered. Many feature email contact information where queries can be submitted. An example of this would be the genealogy homepage for the Lee County Library System <https://www.leegov.com/library/services/genealogy>. If you plan to contact the library via written correspondence, always enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope, and limit your queries to no more than two specific requests at any single time. Many libraries limit written queries to one question at a time. When utilizing published genealogies, be cognizant of the fact that many will contain some inaccuracies.

Locating Accurate Local History Information

Public libraries that maintain collections of local city directories usually maintain a local history file or collection of books. Many libraries keep copies of old city directories for their town or county. Old telephone books were printed on very cheap paper and deteriorate rapidly. Unless the library was able to digitize them, it is unlikely hard copies have survived. Some libraries

may transfer materials to a local genealogical or historical society if space limits keeping them in-house. Local history information can also be found in the following sources that most libraries will own for the city and/or county within their service area:

1. Local History Books
2. Newspapers
3. School Yearbooks
4. Plat Maps
5. Church Histories
6. Local or County Gazetteers
7. Church Records/Histories
8. Cemetery Records/Inscriptions
9. Military Histories/Records of Local Regiments
10. Local History and/or Family Files

Other sources for local history information include local genealogical or historical societies, state archives, the FamilySearch Library in Salt Lake City, FamilySearch Centers located in all 50 states and worldwide, and the Library of Congress, that has the largest collection of U.S. City Directories. In an effort to educate patrons on the difference between a FamilySearch Library Affiliate versus a Family Search Center, I have compiled a study guide that discusses both the similarities and differences between the two entities. This study guide is available free upon request. Fort Myers Regional Library is a registered FamilySearch Library Affiliate. This status allows patrons using the FamilySearch website at our specific branch to have access to most non-copyrighted and restricted access records and images.

Locating Vital Records

Vital records consist of birth, marriage, divorce, and death records. All 50 states have been required to maintain these types of records since around 1900, although some started earlier. Enforcement of this requirement will vary, but for the most part, compliance was complete by 1920. Since vital records were usually created at or near the time of the event, they are considered valuable primary sources. Each county has an office that records vital statistics for all jurisdictions within the county. Copies of all records and certificates are forwarded to the appropriate state office. Most genealogical queries are directed towards the state office. Some county vital records offices are located in county courthouses, while others are merged in with the local health department. The most accurate and current source for obtaining access information for vital records is via the Internet at the following website:

<http://www.vitalrec.com>

Locating Church and Cemetery Records

Most local Catholic Church records are located at the main headquarters of the diocese. Protestant churches, such as Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Episcopalian, also have older records housed in a central location. However, Protestant churches, such as Baptist, Congregationalist, Pentecostal, and Assemblies of God, tend to be organized on a more independent congregational basis with no central clearinghouse. The first step in this type of

research is contacting the church if it still exists. If the church no longer exists, contact the largest church in the area. They will usually be able to provide a specific repository where older records have been deposited. Our companion study guide **Genealogical Research Using Church Records** provides specific details to assist you in beginning this process.

Sources for cemetery records include some or all of the following:

1. Cemetery Management Office
2. County Health Department
3. Local Public Library
4. Local Historical or Genealogical Society

Any of these sources may provide information on cemeteries that either no longer exist or have merged. They often have tombstone inscriptions, maps, plot information, and the names of funeral homes that handled final arrangements. Funeral homes can be excellent sources of information for genealogists seeking next-of-kin information.

Census Records and Genealogical Research

Census records are the best known and most popular records used by genealogists. Census records exist on the local, state, territorial, business, church, and federal levels. Federal censuses have been taken every decade since 1790 and normally provide the most detailed information of interest to genealogists. Federal census records from 1790-1950 are now available to the public. Our study guide on **Genealogical Research Using Census Data** provides detailed information on the various types of census data available for research purposes.

When beginning your research, look for the most recent indexed census that covers the time period and locality where your ancestor resided. You must know the state and county where your ancestor was living at the time the census was taken (there is no national index). Censuses taken in 1900 and later typically provide the most useful information.

Genealogists can search census data for decades later than 1950 but must request special forms. Access is granted under special circumstances. Genealogical research is not considered an acceptable special circumstance. Many states have printed alphabetical census indexes covering the period from 1790-1870.

For genealogical purposes, the population census can be divided into four groupings. Please note that 1890 is not included in this division sequence because most of it was destroyed by fire.

1790-1840. Censuses taken during this period are useful primarily for locating the residence of a family. Highlights from this period would include:

1. Only the head of the household is identified by name (usually a man)
2. Other information about the household is given in statistical format in columns, as in number of persons by age, sex, and race.
3. The 1820 census added the number of aliens (those individuals not yet naturalized), as

well as the numbers of persons employed in agriculture, commerce, and manufacturing

4. 1830 categories were added for deaf, dumb, and blind persons
5. 1840 categories were added for insane, idiotic, persons over age 20 who could not read or write, and name/age of Revolutionary War and military pensioners in the family; occupational categories were expanded to include the following:
 - a. Mining
 - b. Agriculture
 - c. Commerce
 - d. Manufacturing and trades
 - e. Navigation of the oceans
 - f. Navigation of the canals, lakes, and rivers
 - g. Learned professions and engineers

1850-1870. The genealogical content of information increased as government mandates resulted in the following highlights:

1. For the first time, the name of each person in the household was recorded together with age, sex, race, occupation, and place of birth
2. Value of real estate owned
3. Whether married or attended school within the past year
4. In 1860, the value of personal property owned was added
5. In 1870, the month of birth if the child was born within the past year was added, and also whether the father or mother were foreign born

1880. New categories, especially those pertaining to family relationships were added. Highlights included:

1. Relationship of each person in the household to the head of household
2. Birthplace of the father and mother for each individual listed
3. Marital status of each individual listed
4. Number of months unemployed
5. Disabled household members

1900-1940. New categories expanded the amount of personal information required for all listed household members. More questions were added to ascertain specific facts on immigrants to the United States. Some of the most pertinent were:

1. Month and birth year were given for each individual
2. Number of years married for each couple
3. For each woman, the number of children she had borne, and the number still living at home
4. Whether the family home was rented or owned
5. For foreign born, the year of immigration and whether naturalized
6. In 1910, additional questions were added concerning survivors from the Union and Confederate armies in the Civil War.
7. The 1920 census was the first to request data regarding the naturalization of foreign-born persons of both sexes and all ages. Previous censuses had only gathered the information for males twenty-one years of age and older.

1950 Census. The Census Bureau made special efforts to ensure that the 1950 census was as complete and accurate as possible by taking multiple steps:

1. Enumerators were given improved training, which included being given additional instruction in the use and availability of detailed enumeration district maps.
2. Conducted radio and newspaper advertising campaigns throughout the country.
3. Specific nights were set aside to conduct enumerations of persons in hotels, campgrounds, YMCAs, and other places frequented by travelers and transients.
4. Extra efforts were made to ensure all infants born from January to March 1950 were counted.
5. College students were enumerated where they lived while attending school, rather than where their parental homes were located.
6. Members of the Armed Forces who slept off post were counted where they slept rather than where they were stationed. Hence no military installations appear on the schedules.
7. Lodging houses, hotels, and similar places usually contained multiple dwelling units and multiple households. Enumerators were instructed that "Each group occupying separate living quarters that meet the *definition of a dwelling unit* should be assigned a separate serial number" while "roomers who rent sleeping quarters only should be listed with the members of the household's family." A dwelling unit was defined as "a group of rooms or a single room, occupied or intended for occupancy as separate living quarters, by a family or other group of persons living together or by a person living alone." In general, quarters that did "not have separate cooking equipment" or a separate entrance from the landlord's quarters were to be enumerated as part of the landlord's household.
8. A supplemental schedule, *Form P8, Indian Reservation Schedule*, was used to obtain additional information on Native Americans who resided on reservations. In addition to entering each person's name as it appeared on the regular schedule, *Form P1, 1950 Census of Population and Housing*, the enumerator recorded other name(s) by which that person was known, along with his or her tribe, clan, degree of Indian blood, ability to read, write, or speak English or any other language, and participation in any Native Indian ceremonies in 1949.

To protect the right of privacy of living individuals, access to population schedules is restricted for seventy-two years after the census is taken. This rule is why the 1950 census is the last one currently available without restrictions. Unless an exception is granted, these records are not available to researchers during that time. If you feel your situation warrants an exception, you must contact the following office:

Personal Service Branch, Bureau of the Census, P.O. Box 1545, Jeffersonville, IN 47131.

Individuals may request their own records (before they are publicly available) via the Census Bureau's Age Search Service by visiting the following links for guidelines and procedures.

https://www.census.gov/history/www/faqs/genealogy_faqs/how_do_i_request_census_records_that_are_not_available_from_the_national_archives.html

<https://www.census.gov/topics/population/genealogy/agesearch.html>

Individuals interested in requesting a search of their personal census records must complete a form BC-600 available at the following link

<https://www2.census.gov/about/policies/bc-600.pdf>

The Spanish version is available at the following link

<https://www2.census.gov/about/policies/bc-600sp.pdf>

Solicitud Para Busqueda De Registros Censales).

Research Using Military Records

There are four major types of military records that are useful to genealogists:

1. Military Service Records
2. Military Pension Records
3. Bounty Land Grants
4. Unit or Regimental Histories

Service, pension, and bounty land records are located at the National Archives. Records dated prior to the Civil War may also exist at some State Archives, since many units identified as federal may have actually been state units that served to supplement the federal army. If the unit was from a territory, the records would be on file at the state archives of the state from which the territory was created. State and local genealogical or historical societies may also have a wealth of information to supplement federal military records. Most of the information for Confederate soldiers can be found at the state archives of the units for which they served. The National Archives has a limited amount of information pertaining to Confederate veterans. Our study guide on **Military Records Research** provides detailed information on this subject.

Immigrant and Passenger List Information

In the process of emigrating from the old world to America, our ancestors generated many records. Passenger lists and immigration and naturalization records have been collected at a number of genealogical research centers. The largest collections of ship passenger lists are on file at the National Archives. The largest collections of immigration and naturalization records prior to 1930 are on file with the Family History Library in Salt Lake City. Prior to September 27, 1906, the naturalization process was primarily enforced on the local and state levels. From this date forward, enforcement became a federal responsibility. We have several study guides covering the varied circumstances pertaining to specific ship passenger lists, immigration records availability, and the naturalization process. We have multiple study guides on this topic available upon request. Please contact Bryan L. Mulcahy at bmulcahy@leegov.com for more information.

Obtaining Information from Libraries, Genealogical, and Historical Societies

Many public libraries have printed and Internet sources that will provide researchers with contact information for genealogical societies, family associations, and research institutions around the world. Libraries also have printed sources that can provide researchers with holdings for major research institutions. This holdings information can be useful for patrons who want to borrow items from other library collections. These services enable genealogists to plan research trips or prepare queries to send to libraries for research assistance. Prior to contacting or visiting libraries, the most efficient strategy is to check their website to see if they have a genealogy or local history collection. The website will provide information on their holdings, services, and research procedures. An example of this would be the genealogy homepage for the Lee County Library System:

<https://www.leegov.com/library/adults/genealogy>.

When sending letters to libraries or other research facilities, the following guidelines provide you with the best chance for a timely response:

1. Include a stamped, self-addressed business size (long #10) envelope for a response
2. Ask no more than three short and specific questions
3. Type rather than write your questions
4. Supply specific dates (day, month, year) when requesting a search of records or materials.
5. Keep a correspondence log detailing the date, name of institution, the questions, and a copy of the letter.

Keep in mind that many public libraries with genealogical collections have only one staff member assigned to the collection. Unless you can provide specific dates on your query, they may not be able to assist you. Some libraries depend on the local genealogical society to staff the genealogical collection. Be sure to also inquire about charges for research queries. Most libraries will answer brief queries free of charge, but for more detailed queries you may be referred to professional researchers who typically charge a fee for their work. It is your responsibility to inquire about these charges in advance.

Genealogical Source Overview and Checklist

This checklist is designed to assist genealogists in compiling information from a variety of sources. Check the sources you have acquired or have investigated for each family or individual. Every clue you can find using these sources will speed up your research and save time and money.

1. Home and Family Sources

Personal Records

- Scrapbooks
- Heirlooms
- Journals/Diaries
- Oral Histories
- Personal Histories
- Family Histories (Published or Folders)
- Personal Correspondence
- Photographs
- Funeral Cards
- Obituaries
- Medical Records
- Military Records
- Employment Records
- Social Security Card/Application Form/Receipts
- Labels/Tags on Trunks or Baggage
- Films, Slides, or Videos
- Tombstone Photos or Inscriptions
- Autograph Books

School Records

- Elementary
- Secondary
- Vocational/Trade
- College
- University
- Arts
- Private
- Ladies Finishing
- Correspondence Schools
- Yearbooks

Certificates

- Birth
- Military Discharge
- School Awards/Achievements
- Marriage
- Death
- Adoption
- Graduation
- GED
- Divorce
- Citizenship
- Manumission (Liberation or Emancipation)

Insurance Records

- Life Policies/Applications
- Fire Policies/Applications
- Accident Policies/Applications
- Health Policies/Applications
- Miscellaneous Policies

Religious Records

- Family Bibles
- Marriage
- Baptism/Christening
- Confirmation
- Religious Office
- Religious Achievement/Awards
- Missionary Activities
- Ministerial/Priest Papers
- Nunnery Documents

Business/Legal

- _____ Accounting Books/Ledgers
- _____ Bills
- _____ Receipts
- _____ Correspondence
- _____ Credit Applications
- _____ Citizenship Papers
- _____ Passports/Visas
- _____ Mortgage Records
- _____ Deeds
- _____ Property Titles
- _____ Rental/Lease Agreements
- _____ Bank Applications/Forms
- _____ Bank Statements
- _____ Wills
- _____ Probate Papers
- _____ Intestate Courts Papers
- _____ Legal Briefs
- _____ Adoption Papers
- _____ Court Orders

Non-Document Record Sources

- _____ Military Uniforms (insignia of organization, rank, service, ribbons, awards, etc.)
- _____ Dish and Glassware (location of manufacturer, production dates and insignia)
- _____ Furniture (manufacturer location and production dates)
- _____ Photographs/Portraits
- _____ Clothing
- _____ Quilts/Stitchery with Names
- _____ Jewelry
- _____ Flags, Swords, Guns, etc.

2. Sources of Research Done by Others**Personal Research**

- _____ Pedigree Charts
- _____ Family Group Sheets
- _____ Descendancy Charts
- _____ Books of Remembrance
- _____ Research Notes

Printed Resources

- _____ Family Histories
- _____ Biographies
- _____ Genealogies
- _____ Pedigrees
- _____ County/Local Histories
- _____ State/Local Histories
- _____ City Directories
- _____ Indexes

Periodicals

- Genealogies
- Historical Items
- Queries
- Source Extracts
- Directories
- Genealogical and Historical Society Publications

Family History Library Sources

- Temple Index Bureau
- Family History Library Catalog
- Family Registry
- International Genealogical Index
- Ancestral File
- Family Group Record Archive

3. Church Sources**Religious Events**

- Birth
- Baptism/Christening
- Circumcision
- Confirmation
- Communion
- Bar Mitzvah Records
- Ordination
- Primary or Secondary School
- Seminary
- Marriage
- Banns
- Divorce
- Annulment
- Death
- Burial
- Admissions
- Removals
- Disciplinary Proceedings
- Subscriptions
- Church membership/transfers

Church Records

- Minister's Records
- Mission Reports
- Church Minutes
- Contribution/Tithing Records
- Bishops' Transcripts
- Church/Congregational Histories
- Anniversary/Homecoming Events

4. Private Sources

Newspapers

- Indexes
- Births
- Marriages
- Deaths/Obituaries
- Anniversaries
- Advertisements
- Local News Events

Organizations

- Fraternal/Sororities
- Clubs
- Societies
- Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts

Mortuary Records

- Burial Records
- Death Notices
- Obituaries
- Church Funeral Programs
- Funeral Cards
- Registers

Historical Data Collections

- Daughters of the American Revolution
- United Daughters of the Confederacy
- Sons of the American Revolution
- Miscellaneous Patriotic Lineage Societies
- Oral Histories
- Personal Papers/Memoirs
- Indexes
- Correspondence/Diaries
- Surname Files
- Tombstone Inscriptions
- Biographies

Legal Notices

- Probate
- Auctions
- Courthouse/Sheriff Sales
- Divorces
- Bankruptcies
- Court Records
- Slave Records
- Lawyer Files

Institutional

- Charities
- Hospitals
- Convents (Nuns)
- Seminaries
- Libraries
- Genealogical/Historical Societies
- Missions
- Orphanages
- Reunion Registers
- Schools
- Colleges/Universities
- Mental Health/Behavioral
- Military
- Corporate Histories

Employment

- Indentures
- Apprenticeships
- Licenses
- Pensions
- Awards
- Personnel Files
- Accounts
- Retirement Data

5. Public Records

Censuses

- State Censuses (years will vary by state)
- Territorial Censuses (years will vary)
- Church censuses
- School Censuses
- Mortality Censuses
- Revolutionary War Veterans
- Union Army Veterans
- Agriculture Censuses
- U.S. Federal Census Index 1790
- U.S. Federal Census 1790
- U.S. Federal Census Index 1800
- U.S. Federal Census 1800
- U.S. Federal Census Index 1810
- U.S. Federal Census 1810
- U.S. Federal Census Index 1820
- U.S. Federal Census 1820
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- U.S. Federal Census Index 1930
- U.S. Federal Census 1930

- U.S. Federal Census Index 1940
- U.S. Federal Census 1940
- U.S. Federal Census Index 1950
- U.S. Federal Census 1950

Land Records

- Grantor Index
- Grantee Index
- Bounty Warrants
- Tract Books
- Plat Maps
- Mortgages
- Grants
- Patents
- Homestead Papers
- Surveys
- Indian Treaties

Court/Legal Records

- Dockets/Minutes
- Judgments
- Orders, Decrees
- Case Files
- Indexes
- Sheriff/Police Records
- Justice of the Peace
- Lawyer Briefs
- Jail Records
- Guardian and Ward
- Orphan Court Records
- Bankruptcy Records
- Certificates
- Licenses
- Chancery Court Records
- Civil/Criminal/Prison Records

Probate Records

- _____ Indexes
- _____ Wills
- _____ Administrations
- _____ Estate Records
- _____ Inventories
- _____ Bonds
- _____ Settlements
- _____ Packets
- _____ Petitions

Tax Records

- _____ Personal Property
- _____ Real Estate
- _____ School
- _____ Poor Rate
- _____ Tax Exemptions
- _____ Poll Tax (Voting)
- _____ Householder's Index

Miscellaneous Governmental Records

- _____ Birth Records
- _____ Marriage Records
- _____ Death Certificates
- _____ Centennial Celebrations
- _____ Native American Records
- _____ Social Security Records

Cemetery Records

- _____ Sexton Records
- _____ Indexes
- _____ Monuments
- _____ Plat Books/Deeds
- _____ Tombstones
- _____ Memorials

Military Records

- _____ Service Record Index
- _____ Pension Index
- _____ Service Records
- _____ Unit Correspondence
- _____ Pension Files
- _____ Bounty Land Grant Awards
- _____ Discharge Papers
- _____ Muster Rolls
- _____ Regimental Histories
- _____ Military Campaigns
- _____ Desertion Records
- _____ Burials
- _____ Dependents or Personnel Born Abroad
- _____ Admiralty Court Records

Immigrant Records

- _____ Emigration (leaving the "Old World")
- _____ Passenger Lists
- _____ Passports
- _____ Vaccination Certificates
- _____ Alien Registration
- _____ Change of Name
- _____ Oaths of Allegiance
- _____ Register of Voters
- _____ Citizenship Papers
- _____ Naturalization Papers
- _____ Immigrant Aid Societies
- _____ Customs Records
- _____ Ship Logbooks
- _____ Border Crossings

Newspapers

- _____ Obituaries
- _____ Biographical Articles
- _____ News Articles

Histories

- _____ State
- _____ County
- _____ Local
- _____ Business
- _____ Biographies
- _____ Church
- _____ Occupational/Guild
- _____ Organizational
- _____ Society
- _____ Almanacs

Periodicals

- _____ Genealogical Societies
- _____ Historical Societies
- _____ Military Organizations
- _____ Military History Societies
- _____ State/Local News
- _____ Family Organizations
- _____ Surname Societies
- _____ Local Heritage
- _____ Heraldic Societies

Short List of Suggested Internet Sources

Ancestry Support – Ancestry Learning Center – ***Tips for Beginning Family History Research.*** 2021

<https://support.ancestry.com/s/article/Tips-for-Beginning-Family-History-Research>

Family Search Wiki – ***New to Genealogy – Beginners First Steps.*** 2025

https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/New_to_Genealogy_-_Beginners_First_Step

Family Tree Magazine. ***101 Best Genealogy Websites 2025.*** 2025

<https://familytreemagazine.com/best-genealogy-websites/>

National Archives – ***Resources for Genealogists – Start Your Genealogy Research.*** 2025

<https://www.archives.gov/research/genealogy/start-research>

<https://www.archives.gov/research/genealogy>

National Genealogical Society – ***Nine Tips to Start Your Family History.*** 2025

<https://www.ngsgenealogy.org/free-resources/tips-family-history/>

Crow, Amy Johnson. ***Beginning Genealogy: How to Get Started the Right Way.*** 2016

<https://www.familysearch.org/blog/en/beginning-genealogy-started/>

Lisson, Lisa – ***Genealogy for Beginners- Start Finding Your Ancestors.*** 2025

<https://lialisson.com/genealogy-for-beginners/>

McDermott, Marc. ***Genealogy for Beginners – The Ultimate Beginners Guide to Genealogy.***

2024 <https://www.genealogyexplained.com/basics/start-genealogy-research/>

You Tube Recordings

Cowan, Christa. Ancestry.com – ***Genealogy 101: Back to Basics.*** 2012 - 30 minutes
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ct2bq6M7fNk>

Knox, Constance. ***Learn Genealogy Research (How to Research Your Family Tree) (Series).***
 2018 – 7 minutes <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x1KdouKVKww>

----- . ***Family Search.Org; 5 Tips For Free Genealogy Research.*** 2020 15 minutes
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