

Records Checklist

BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT

- ☐ apprentice and indenture records
- ☐ company newsletters
- ☐ doctors' and midwives' journals
- ☐ insurance records
- ☐ merchants' account books
- ☐ patents
- ☐ professional licenses
- ☐ railroad, mining and factory records
- ☐ records of professional organizations
- ☐ Social Security applications (SSS)

CEMETERY AND FUNERAL HOME

- ☐ burial records
- ☐ grave-relocation records
- ☐ tombstone inscriptions

CENSUSES

- ☐ agriculture schedules (1850–1880)
- ☐ American Indian
- ☐ Civil War veterans schedules (1890)
- ☐ defective, dependent and delinquent (DDD) schedules (1880)
- ☐ federal censuses (1790–1940)
- ☐ manufacturing/industry schedules (1810–1820, 1850–1880)
- ☐ mortality schedules (1850–1880)
- ☐ school censuses
- ☐ slave schedules (1850, 1860)
- ☐ social statistics schedules (1850–1880)
- ☐ state/territorial and local censuses

CHURCH

- ☐ baptism and christening records
- ☐ confirmation records
- ☐ congregational histories
- ☐ marriage banns
- ☐ meeting minutes
- ☐ membership, admission and removal records
- ☐ ministers' journals

COURT

- ☐ adoption records
- ☐ bastardy cases
- ☐ coroners' files
- ☐ criminal records
- ☐ custody papers
- ☐ estate inventories
- ☐ guardianship papers
- ☐ insanity/commitment orders
- ☐ licenses and permits
- ☐ marriage bonds, licenses and certificates
- ☐ military discharges
- ☐ minute books
- ☐ name changes
- ☐ naturalizations
- ☐ property foreclosures
- ☐ voter registrations
- ☐ wills
- ☐ wolf-scalp bounties

DIRECTORIES

- ☐ biographical
- ☐ city
- ☐ occupational/professional
- ☐ telephone

HOME SOURCES

- ☐ baby books
- ☐ baptism and confirmation certificates
- ☐ birth certificates

- ☐ checkbooks and bank statements
- ☐ death records
- ☐ diaries and journals
- ☐ family Bibles
- ☐ funeral/memorial cards
- ☐ heirlooms and artifacts
- ☐ letters and postcards
- ☐ medical records
- ☐ photographs
- ☐ prayer cards
- ☐ recipe books
- ☐ school report cards
- ☐ scrapbooks
- ☐ wedding albums
- ☐ wills
- ☐ yearbooks

IMMIGRATION

- ☐ alien registration cards
- ☐ citizenship papers
- ☐ passenger lists
- ☐ passports and passport applications

INSTITUTIONAL

- ☐ almshouses
- ☐ fraternal associations
- ☐ hospitals
- ☐ orphanages
- ☐ police registers
- ☐ prisons
- ☐ schools
- ☐ work-farms

LAND AND PROPERTY

- ☐ deeds
- ☐ grants and patents
- ☐ homestead records
- ☐ mortgages and leases
- ☐ plat maps
- ☐ surveys
- ☐ tax rolls
- ☐ warrants

MILITARY

- ☐ draft records
- ☐ pension applications
- ☐ records of relocation and internment camps
- ☐ service records

NEWSPAPERS

- ☐ birth announcements
- ☐ classified advertisements
- ☐ engagement, marriage and anniversary announcements
- ☐ ethnic newspapers
- ☐ family reunion announcements
- ☐ immigrant ship notices
- ☐ gossip and advice columns
- ☐ legal notices
- ☐ local news
- ☐ obituaries/death notices
- ☐ runaway notices (slaves, indentured servants, wives)
- ☐ unclaimed-mail notices

PUBLISHED SOURCES

- ☐ compiled genealogies
- ☐ genealogical periodicals
- ☐ local histories
- ☐ record abstracts and transcriptions

VITAL

- ☐ amended birth certificates
- ☐ birth certificates
- ☐ delayed birth certificates
- ☐ death certificates
- ☐ marriage licenses and certificates
- ☐ stillbirth certificates
- ☐ divorce/annulment decrees

Interview Questions

1. Who were/are the oldest members of your family?
2. Do you know their whole names? Birthdates?
3. Did anyone who wasn't related to you live with you when you were a child?
4. Where did you grow up?
5. For how long did your family live in the area(s)?
6. Did other family members live in the area? If so, who?
7. Did you live on a farm? If so, what kind of crops did you grow?
8. Did you keep livestock or other animals?
9. Did you have any pets?
10. What was your house or apartment like?
11. What kinds of amenities did your home have? (indoor plumbing, electricity or gas, phone, television)
12. What was your neighborhood like?
13. Where did you go to school? What was your favorite subject in school?
14. Who were your friends when you were growing up?
15. Can you tell me about some close friends of the family?
16. Can you describe the personalities of your family members?
17. Did your family have any traditions?
18. Can you remember any stories that were told to you as a child (fictional, folklore, or real life)?
19. What inventions or developments changed your life, and how?
20. What were your parents' occupations?
21. Where did your parents work?
22. Did you work? Where?
23. Did anyone in your family serve in the military?
24. What were your family's favorite meals? Are there any special family recipes?
25. When did you move away from home?
26. Have you ever been married? If so, to whom? When?
27. Where did you meet your husband/wife/partner?
28. Do you have any children? If so, how many?



Family Pedigree

b	_____
m	_____
d	_____

b	_____
m	_____
d	_____

b	_____
m	_____
d	_____

b	_____
m	_____
d	_____

b	_____
m	_____
d	_____

b	_____
m	_____
d	_____

b	_____
m	_____
d	_____

b	_____
m	_____
d	_____

b	_____
p	_____
m	_____
d	_____
p	_____

b	_____
p	_____
m	_____
d	_____
p	_____

b	_____
p	_____
m	_____
d	_____
p	_____

b	_____
p	_____
m	_____
d	_____
p	_____

b	_____
p	_____
m	_____
d	_____
p	_____

b	_____
p	_____
m	_____
d	_____
p	_____

b	_____
p	_____

Key

b = birth d = death
m = marriage p = place

Making a Family Tree

The decision to start a family tree will take you on an interesting journey back through time. As a time traveler, your journey begins with you! However tempting it might be to try to prove a link to someone far in the past, always work backwards from yourself when creating your family tree.

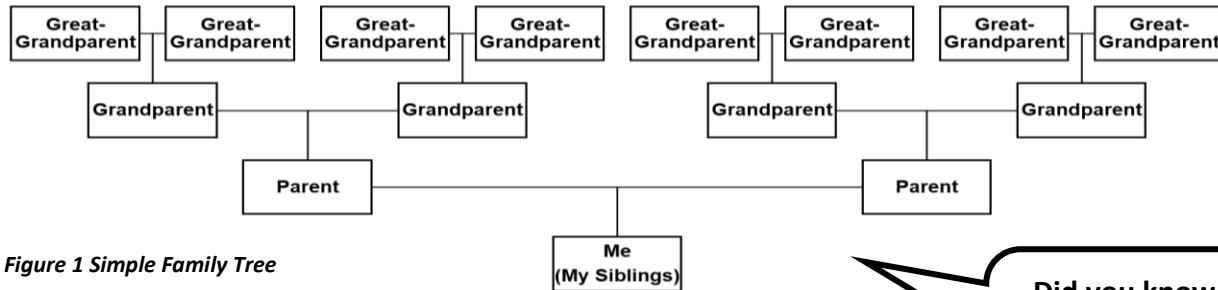


Figure 1 Simple Family Tree

Personal knowledge can often form the first limbs of your family tree. Begin at home with your parents; make a simple chart or list, beginning with you, your parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents.

Did you know that the study of ones family is called GENEALOGY!

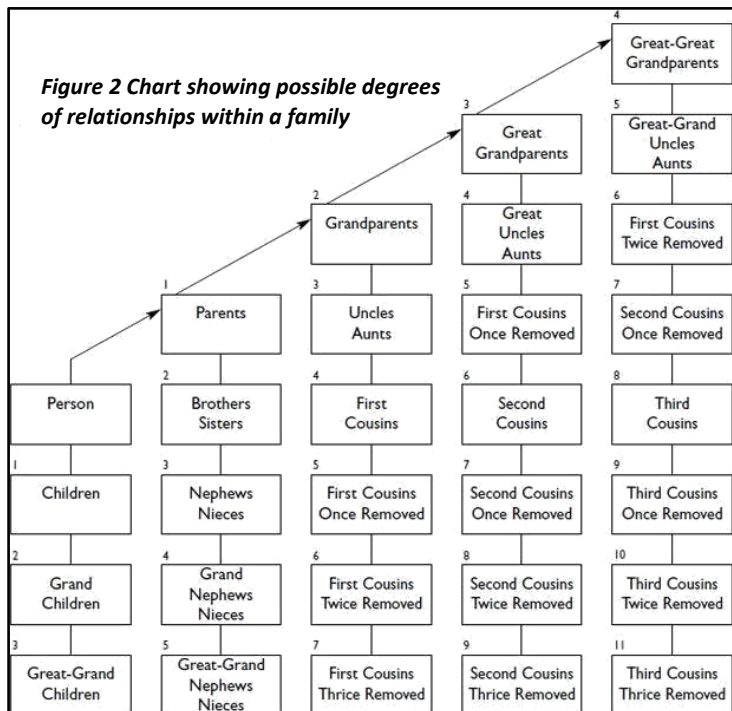
The following types of records and documents can be useful in your search for information:

- birth, baptismal, graduation, marriage, military, and occupational records
- death certificates, burial records, and obituaries
- yearbooks, newspaper articles, family letters, social activity mementos, sports awards, and other documents that might provide names, dates, and locations
- religious records, old letters, photographs

Once you have filled in the chart with the most immediate of your relatives you can begin to add in aunts, uncles, cousins, great-aunt, great-uncles, second cousins, and on and on...

Finding information on your extended family can prove a little more difficult, but luckily, there are fantastic resources out there to help you in your search. First, ask family members what information they have. With some extra clues, you can then start looking in other places.

Today the internet is a terrific place to find information with sites like Ancestry.com (but make sure you have your parents' permission to search online). Many old newspapers and vital records about births, deaths and marriages can be accessed online as well.



Your local Archive may also be able to help. Archives are treasure boxes full of records and documents that can help you as you fill in your family tree. Your local Archivist can often help you locate new records or suggest new directions to take your search.

Once you start connecting with your ancestors and your family's history, you will never want to stop. Happy hunting!