

START YOUR FAMILY HISTORY

[Click here](#) and view the examples of some famous people, then follow the step by step process outlined below.

STEP 1

Fill out a [Pedigree Chart](#) with everything you know about your ancestors. Start with yourself in position one.

STEP 2

Note any missing data on the pedigree chart from step 1. Communicate with parents, siblings, grandparents and other relatives, including your oldest living relative, to obtain whatever additional information they have regarding your family line. Ask about copies of **BIRTH, MARRIAGE** and **DEATH CERTIFICATES**, as well as journals, letters, photos and other records available. They may know of others who have information about your family. Add the information you have gathered to the pedigree chart and use [Family Group Sheets](#) to organize families.

STEP 3

Search available records beginning with the easiest first. Go to [FamilySearch](#) and enter the name of the individual and other requested information and click on “Search”. By clicking on “Advanced search”, you can enter more details which will reduce the number of names that appear.

STEP 4

1. Search the online census, both federal and state:
 - [Ancestry.com](#) This is a subscription site, however it is free at the Mesa Family History Center.
 - [FamilySearch](#) This site is free over the internet.

- [Heritage Quest](#) This site is also free at the Mesa Family History Center.
2. Search the social security death indexes.
 - [Roots web](#) This site is part of ancestry and is free.
 - [Ancestry.com](#) In addition to the Rootsweb social security index, Ancestry has an index and is free at the Mesa Family History Center.
 - [FamilySearch.org](#) This site is free online.
 3. Search [Google](#) with the name of the individual you are looking for. Enter the name in quotes to refine the search.
 4. Search military draft records on [Ancestry.com](#)

STEP 5

Go to [FamilySearch Catalog](#) and do a place search.
Click on the records you want to search.

Vital records may include:

- Births
- Marriages
- Deaths

Church records may also provide information about:

- Births
- Christenings
- Baptisms
- Marriages
- Deaths

You may also go to [Pro-Genealogists](#) to look for vital records in the places your ancestor lived.

STEP 6

Make a record of your research on a [Research Log](#).

Various software programs are available to record and organize your genealogy information:

- Personal Ancestral File (PAF) can be downloaded free from [Family Search](#). Links to other software programs can also be found on the [Family History Products](#) page. These include:
- Roots Magic
- Ancestral Quest
- Legacy
- FamilyInsight

STEP 7

Search for land records under a [place search](#) as shown in step 5.

Look for immigration records:

- [CastleGarden.org](#) (between 1820-1892)
- [EllisIsland.org](#) (between 1892-1924)
- The Ancestry website has more extensive information, including passenger lists. The Ancestry site is free at the Mesa Family History Center.

Military records – Popular search sites include Ancestry.com, Fold3.com, and FamilySearch.org.

NEXT STEP

Other resources for research on your family can be found in the [FamilySearch Wiki](#).

MISSIONARIES AT THE MESA FAMILY HISTORY CENTER ARE ALSO AVAILABLE TO HELP YOU GET STARTED.