

# Family History – In the Beginning

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**Step 1** Always start with yourself and work backwards in time. Another way to think of it is to **Start with the known and work to the unknown!**

1. Get a notebook or binder to stay organized. Use the available forms, a **Pedigree Chart**, a **Family Group Sheet**, and a **Research Log** . Use one log per person or family.
2. Forms at: [www.byub.org/ancestors/charts/](http://www.byub.org/ancestors/charts/), [www.rootsweb.com](http://www.rootsweb.com), [www.familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Research\\_Forms](http://www.familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Research_Forms)

**3.** Begin with a **Pedigree Chart**. Use yourself as the main person, on the first line . Then add parents and grandparents fill in all the information you know. This will trace your ancestral lines. It also allows you to see what information is missing.

4. Next fill in a **Family Group Sheet** for each marriage listed on the pedigree chart. Put the sheets in a notebook or enter them into your computer program.
5. You can download FREE versions of **Ancestral Quest** at [www.ancquest.com](http://www.ancquest.com), **Roots Magic** at [www.rootsmagic.com](http://www.rootsmagic.com) and **Legacy Family Tree** at [www.legacyfamilytree.com](http://www.legacyfamilytree.com)

5. Gather Documents you may have that have information about a **Person, Place, Date or Event** Look for birth, death, marriage certificates, obituaries, funeral cards, newspaper clippings and family Bibles.
6. Call or e-mail relatives and family friends to fill in some of the missing information. Begin keeping a **research log** as you locate new information.

**Step 2** 1- Using the internet, go to [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org) or [www.usgenweb.com](http://www.usgenweb.com) as well as [www.rootsweb.com](http://www.rootsweb.com) . These genealogy sites, have Family Tree's which have been submitted by users. At [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org) , you can also look for records for **FREE**.

**2-NAMES:** Use the complete name of a person and begin with the given name. For example: Mary Ellen JONES, or Thomas Robert SMITH. For a woman, always use their **maiden name**.

**3-DATES:** They are written as **10 Aug 1850**. This will help avoid confusion. If it were written 8/10/50, it could be read as October 8, or August 10. The year is always written using all four digits!

**4- PLACES:** These are always written using the smallest location to the largest location. Begin with a town or city, follow it with the county or parish, state or province, then country.

Example: Irvine, Orange, California, United States.

Use a comma to indicate a part of locality that is unknown.

Example: Irvine, , California, United States.

**Step 3** Decide how you will keep track of all the information.

1. Research notebook. A three ring binder or file folders
2. File folders – Alphabetical by husband's surname
3. Keep notes on your forms, Pedigree charts, Family Group Sheets
4. Use a software program. **3 FREE** programs for beginners.

**ANCESTRAL QUEST** [www.ancquest.com](http://www.ancquest.com)

**ROOTS MAGIC** [www.rootsmagic.com](http://www.rootsmagic.com)

**LEGACY** <http://www.legacyfamilytree.com>

**Step 4** Family History is done through records. Records are found by location first then date. Go to some of the websites that are free such as: **Family Search** [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org) Click on the search icon to begin searching for ancestors. An online family tree is also available. Click **Family Tree** instead of the search tab to access this function.

**Family Tree (at FamilySearch.org)**- First, set up an account. There is **NO FEE**. This will enable you to sign in and go directly to your tree. You can find ancestors, upload photo's , stories, documents and sound files. You will also be able to enter genealogy, attach sources, and collaborate with others.

**Find a Grave** [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com) **and Billion Graves**

[www.billiongraves.com](http://www.billiongraves.com) list cemeteries and internments for many areas.

**Bureau of Land Management** [www.glorerecords.blm.gov](http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov)

is a great resource for land documents.

**Mocavo.com** is a search engine that searches many websites.

**Roots Web** [www.rootsweb.com](http://www.rootsweb.com) has many user submitted genealogies that may provide some help identifying family.

**Step 5** Go to a Family History Center, Public Library or National Archives.

1. A **Family History Center near you can be located** by going to [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org) click **Help**, click **In-Person Help** Enter your city and state in the search box. A map will show locations.
2. Conduct a **census search** for your relative. Try to find them on every census that they were alive. A census has a wealth of information. Each year the government asks some different questions!
3. Look for **vital records** at state and county levels.
4. Search Books, microfilm, fiche and CD's **always by locality. Use the Family History Library Catalog** at [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org) and click **search**, then **Catalog**. **To use family search WIKI**, click **search** then **Wiki** (also located on [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)) then enter desired search item in search box. **US Gen Web** [www.usgenweb.com](http://www.usgenweb.com) and [worldgenweb.com](http://worldgenweb.com) also have a great supply of information by locality.
5. These paid subscription sites you can be accessed at Family History Centers.

Ancestry.com, fold3,  
World Vital Records Find My Past,  
Godfrey Memorial Library, Alexander Street Press – Civil War

Explanations of the services these sites offer can be found:

[ocfamilyhistory.org](http://ocfamilyhistory.org) Click-**Resources** (at top), then **subscription services**.

Many other **pay sites are available FREE!** at a Family History Center near

you.

6. Look for these additional records:

Cemetery records

Tax records

Immigration records and Naturalization records

Military records

Land and Property records

Probate records and Wills

City Directories

Compiled Family Histories

Newspapers for Obituaries, birth, death or marriage notices.

The records held by the **Salt Lake Family History Library**, in Salt Lake City, can be found at [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org) . They have many records specific to the locality your ancestor may have lived in. These can be ordered online and viewed at a local Family History Library.

**REMEMBER HELPS:** Find information in the census:

Find the family in every census your ancestor could have lived in.

If you have difficulty locating the main ancestor, use family member names (wife, children)

Use your research log and record all information

Print a copy of the document and attach it to your Log or save it as a digital file.

Keep your genealogy digital files organized.

## **Would you like to help get records onto the internet?**

At [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org), Click on the **Indexing** icon, you can register to help **index records**.

You can do indexing at any time you choose as often or as little as you choose. You can send it back and choose another record. The process is simple. You are given a record. You type what you see on that record in the form provided for you.

**It can be fun!** Maybe you will run into one of your ancestors!

Feel free to email me with questions that may come up.

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