



Beginner's Genealogy on the Internet

March 2014

This pathfinder will be useful for beginners who would like to start a family history search using the Internet. On a cautionary note, remember that the Internet is merely a vehicle to help you begin the process. It is not the only resource you should use, but is a wonderful road map to help you start your ancestry search. Some resources are free, others require subscriptions.

For an introduction to the topic, see:

- *First Steps in Genealogy: a Beginner's Guide to Researching Your Family History*, by Desmond Walls Allen (1998) ISBN 1558704892

Key Resources at a Glance:

- *Evidence Explained: Citing History Sources from Artifacts to Cyberspace* (2nd ed.) by Elizabeth Shown Mills (2009) ISBN 0806318066
- Cyndi's List of Genealogy Sites on the Internet Beginners www.cyndislist.com/beginner.htm
- Free Forms for Download
<http://www.ancestry.com/download/Charts#ancchart>
http://helpdesk.rootsweb.com/get_started/charts_forms.html
http://genealogy.about.com/od/free_charts/Free_Genealogy_Charts_Forms_Family_Tree_Chart.htm
- Calculate Family Relationships
<https://web.archive.org/web/20071004083144/http://www.familytreemagazine.com/forms/research/relationship.pdf>

Resources

Books

- *Ancestors* by Jim Willard (1997) ISBN 0395854105
- *Discover Your Family History Online: A Step-by-Step Guide to Starting Your Genealogy Search* by Nancy Hendrickson (2012) ISBN 1440318506
- *Everything Guide to Online Genealogy* (2nd ed.) by Kimberly Powell (2011) ISBN 1440511683
- *Family Tree Problem Solver* (Rev. ed) by Marsha Hoffman Rising (2011) ISBN 1440311935
- *The Genealogist's Companion and Sourcebook* (2nd ed.) by Emily Anne Croom (2003) ISBN 1558706518
- *Mastering Genealogical Proof* by Thomas Jones (2013) ISBN 1935815075
- *Unpuzzling Your Past. The Best-Selling Basic Guide to Genealogy* (4th ed.) by Emily Anne Croom (2010) ISBN 0806318546
- *Who Do You Think You Are: Be a Family History Detective* by Dan Waddell (2011) ISBN 0763655473 *NOTE: Aimed at kids, but helpful.

Search Aids

Search Terms

(Use for computer searches)

- Genealogy
- Internet Genealogy

Subject Headings

(Use in card catalogs and print indexes)

- Genealogy-Data Processing
- Genealogy-Computer Network Resources
- Genealogy

Call Number

- 929.1; 929.4 (Dewey Decimal)
- 025.02-025.06929 (Library of Congress)

Indexes and Abstracts

- EBSCOhost
- First Search
- Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature

Library catalogs

- Your local library catalog
- SILO - State-wide catalog
- World Cat - World-wide Catalog

- *Who Do You Think You Are?: The Essential Guide to Tracing Your Family History* by Megan Smolenyak (2010) ISBN 0143118919

Journals

- *Family Chronicle*
- *Family Tree Magazine*

Legal and Citation Links

- [*Genealogical Proof Standard*](#)
- [*Legal Genealogist*](#)

Podcasts

- *Family Tree* <http://www.familytreemagazine.com/Info/Podcasts>
- *Genebloggers* <http://www.blogtalkradio.com/genebloggers>
- *Genealogy Gems* <https://itunes.apple.com/podcast/genealogy-gems-podcast-lisa/id250987403?mt=2>

Web Pages and Web Portals

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United States Vital Records Information
<u>vitalrec.com/index.html</u> • US Gen Web Project
<u>http://usgenweb.org/</u> • IAGen Web Project
<u>iagenweb.org/</u> • Ellis Island Records
<u>www.ellislandrecords.org</u> • Castle Garden Records
<u>http://www.castlegarden.org/</u> • The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Family Search
<u>www.familysearch.org</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ancestry.com
<u>www.ancestry.com</u> • Rootsweb.com
<u>www.rootsweb.ancestry.com</u> • Fold3 (Military Records)
<u>http://www.fold3.com</u> • National Archives for Genealogists
<u>http://www.archives.gov/research/genealogy/</u> • Library of Congress for Genealogists
<u>http://www.loc.gov/rr/genealogy/</u> • On The Trail of Our Ancestors
<u>www.ristenbatt.com/genealogy</u>
especially the Genealogy for Beginners |
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Genealogy is easier with connections. Search “genealogy” on whatever social media platforms you use from Facebook to YouTube. The results and connections made can be very helpful.

Organizations and Special Collections

- Iowa Genealogical Society (Check with your state’s Genealogical Society & both state and local historical societies where your family lived, plus any ethnic heritage national museums – for example the National Czech and Slovak Museum or the Vesterheim that apply)
628 E. Grand Avenue
Des Moines, IA 50309
515-276-0287
www.iowagenealogy.org
e-mail address: igs@iowagenealogy.org
- Godfrey Memorial Library
134 Newfield St.
Middletown, CT 06457
Tel: (860) 346-4375 · Fax: (860) 347-9874
www.godfrey.org
e-mail address: Sharon@godfrey.org (Reference Librarian)

Thanks to Char Kimball, Urbandale Public Library (Urbandale, IA) who did the original version of this pathfinder.

Updated Feb. 22, 2014 by Sarah S. Uthoff of <http://www.trundlebedtales.com> with book recommendations from Kerry Scott of <http://www.cluewagon.com> and some other resource additions from Kathy Bopp (Cedar Rapids, IA).