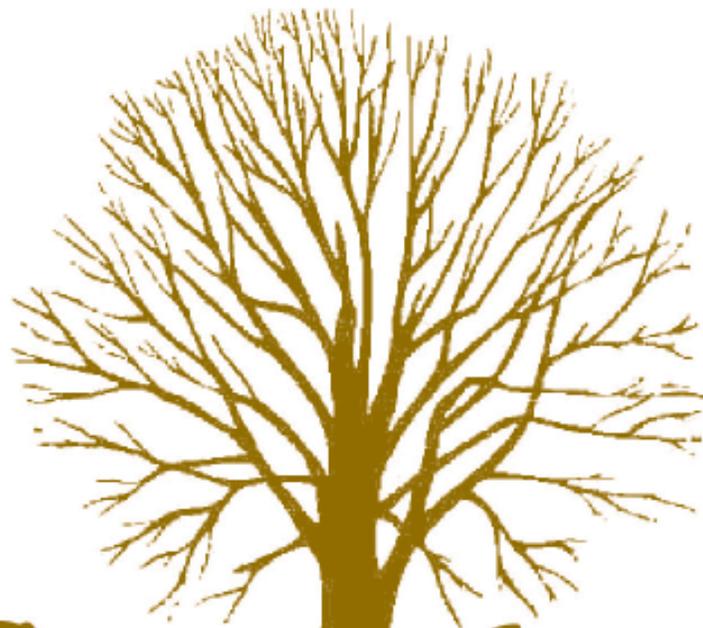


# Beginner's



**Ge-ne al-o-gy**

# Research Kit

*Compliments of:*



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# BEGINNER'S GENEALOGY RESEARCH KIT



**Genealogy** (ge-ne-al-o-gy) is the study of families and the tracing of their lineages and history. Genealogists use oral traditions, historical records, genetic analysis, and other records to obtain information about a family and to demonstrate kinship and pedigrees of its members. The results are often displayed in charts or written as narratives.

The pursuit of family history tends to be shaped by several motivations, including the desire to carve out a place for one's family in the larger historical picture, a sense of responsibility to preserve the past for future generations, and a sense of self-satisfaction in accurate storytelling.

## STARTING YOUR SEARCH ...

**1. Always Begin with Yourself.** The most important first step in beginning genealogical research is to start with yourself and work back in time. Never skip generations! Collecting information such as birth, marriage and death dates along with the places where those events occurred can be very important.

**2. Surnames.** Your surname is very important to you (for women, this is called their "maiden name") but keep in mind that it may not have always been the name you use today. Name changes may have occurred in the past and/or variant spellings might have been used. One of the biggest mistakes beginners make is limiting themselves to the current spelling of a name. You must be open to alternate spellings of your surname, i.e. Smith may be found as Smith, Smithe, Smyth, Smythe, etc. The family may have spelled their name one way consistently for a hundred years but that doesn't mean that a ship's clerk, census taker or town clerk spelled it that way. Remember a good education was not considered as important by in our grandparent's time as it is now.

**3. Research & Documentation.** Good record keeping and documenting your sources is extremely important. If done properly, this will assure you better results than being poorly organized. If possible, it is good to have your four generation chart as complete as possible before actually beginning searching through census records, history books and other records. It is also essential that you document the source of information, so your work is accurate and you do not duplicate your efforts. This will also keep your information organized for others in the future.

**4. Involve Family Members.** When beginning your research, remember that living relatives can sometimes be your best source of information. You can find valuable information in items such as family bibles, letters, scrapbooks, military papers and even on the back of old family photographs. Ask your relatives for permission to photocopy some of these items, but assure them that you will pay for the copying and return them as soon as you are finished. If possible, interview older family members and record these interviews.

**5. Check for Existing Research.** The ongoing popularity of genealogy has resulted in the printing of thousands of family histories. While some of these works are very well done, others may be poorly or undocumented. Be very, very careful in your research and investigate any works you locate for source information. In any case, they are worth consulting and may provide valuable information about your family ... however, don't accept or merge into your family tree (database) without researching each source for yourself.

**6. Education.** Those who are new to genealogy may find it helpful to join a genealogy society/group. Take genealogy classes or attend a workshop to further your education. Avoiding others' mistakes and being knowledgeable of their successes can help you in your own research. Read all that you can. Get a good book on beginning genealogy and then expand your knowledge by reading more specific works on a particular geographic area or ethnic group as it pertains to your ancestry.

**7. Exploring the Internet.** On-line research is a great place to gather information and leads. Remember, your family tree is not on the internet unless you or some member of your family put it there. If you find members of your family on someone else's tree, consider it only a "lead" and **not** a fact. Internet research is best focused on sites providing information on the resources of archives, libraries and historical societies. You should consult state and county records where your ancestors lived to see what records may have been put on-line for the area.

**8. You Must Travel at Times.** The Internet has opened up so many more records than were never available before it is not the ONLY place to find records ... think of it as the "tip of the iceberg". You may have to travel from time to time to places that may never put their information on the Internet. These could be records in small towns, churches, cemeteries, or courthouses. You may need to either physically go to those places, contact them by letter or e-mail or hire someone locally to research for you.

## **USE PAPER AND COMPUTER CHARTS ALONG YOUR WAY!**

You may want to considering the purchase a software program for genealogy for your computer. Most of these programs will help you organize your family information as you gather it. Whether you choose to use a software program or create charts on paper by hand there are still two basic charts that you need be familiar with. If you decide to use a software program, research those programs available and choose the one that best fit your needs.

A ***FOUR-GENERATION ANCESTOR CHART*** can be simple or very ornate, depending on what you decide to use. The information tho, will be the same. You begin with yourself, your parents, your grandparents, and your great-grandparents entering names, dates and places of birth, marriage, and death for each person.

When you have completed the basic information on a Four-Generation Chart you will want to add more specific information on each family, so you fill in a ***FAMILY GROUP CHART*** for each family. This is where you will add more specific information which may include information such as military service, places of residence, other marriages, and children of the couple.

## **FINDING AND USING GENEALOGY RESOURCES IN YOUR SEARCH**

Genealogy is often described as a huge jigsaw puzzle or that you are a detective trying to solve a case. Both are true. You gather bits of information piece by piece. When the pieces start to fit together, a picture begins to emerge. By carefully planning your research, you can find more information to fill in the blanks.

As stated before, when you do genealogical research ... begin with yourself and work backwards. It's the same when deciding where to research ... you move backwards from the local area, theN county, theN state, and then on to governmental records. When you have identified your immigrant ancestors then you are ready to search in their homelands.

Always try to find three items (or sources) that document the same information. If you find two items that differ on name, date, or place, continue trying to find collaborating information. The more sources you find that give the same information the better, but sometimes it is impossible, so document that you have tried all you know how to do and this is your theory to the best of your knowledge.

The following are examples of the types of information you might find as you do your genealogical searches:

**Home Search** – some of the records you might find in your own home or immediate family might contain the following:

- Vital Records – Birth Records, Marriage/Divorce Records, Wedding/Anniversary Announcements, Death Records
- Family Records
- Personal Papers
- Household Items

- Media (photos, videos, movies, etc.)
- Religious and/or School Records
- Employment or Military Service Records
- Land and Property Ownership Records
- Civil and Legal Records
- Passports and/or Citizenship Papers
- Community and Volunteer Groups Records

**Oral History** – After your “home search” you may want to begin interviewing family members for more information. They may be able to provide you with much invaluable information.

**Census Records** – Contrary to what has been said before, census records are so valuable in finding basic family information that they really should be consulted early in your research. The U.S. government started taking a census every ten years beginning in 1790. The 1850 census was the first to list every person in the household by name. Many states took their own census between the federal census and most of those are available to the public. Note: very few records from 1890 census remain after a fire destroyed most of them.

**Church Records** – Church records may be found in the church that your family attended or they may have been sent to a larger facility in the state or the national church headquarters. If you locate the church records of your ancestor you might find following: membership records; birth, baptism, confirmation or communion, marriage, death or cemetery records.

**City, Town, and Village Records** – You can contact the proper authorities in any city/town/village in the United States for help. Always call ahead to be sure you won’t be disappointed by limited hours or days closed. Ask what records are available on-site and what might be stored at an off-site location. If they are off-site they will need time to secure them for you. Don’t expect to find every record you need located there.

**County Records** – After you check local records, your next place to research is county records. Get an old plat map or atlas or check on-line for where your ancestors lived but remember that old county boundaries change! Your ancestors may have lived in several different counties without ever moving. And always remember when you visit court houses, etc. that genealogy is not why they are there ... be polite!

**State Records** – Lastly, check state records in the state archives.

**United States Records** – Research moves to the national level after checking local, county, and state records. Much can be done at the nearest branch of the National Archives or by mail, using the proper forms, with the NARA in Washington, DC. You might find the following records: military records and/or pensions, bounty land warrant records, information on American Indian records, merchant seamen, government employees, Congress records, passenger arrival information and immigration or passport records.

**Social Media** – Research can also be accomplished now via social media such as Facebook. There are many genealogy sites, groups and family associations on Facebook. Check it out!

**Subscription Sites** – Most of the genealogy (pay) sites have a free trial period to “lure” you in. Just remember that you must cancel before your trial period is up or your credit card will be charged! AND did you know? Ancestry.com has a “Library Edition” that is available for **FREE** at most all Michigan library locations.

The following pages include a Four-Generation Chart, (two-sided) Family Group Chart, Home Search Checklist and a list of **FREE** Genealogy websites you will want check out. You may want to make copies for your personal research.



***BEST OF LUCK IN YOUR RESEARCH!***



# FOUR GENERATION ANCESTOR CHART

Number 1 on this chart is the same as Number \_\_\_\_\_ on Chart Number \_\_\_\_\_

Chart Number \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. YOUR FATHER

Date Born  
Where Born  
Date Married  
Where Married  
Date Died  
Where Died

## 4. YOUR GRANDFATHER

Date Born  
Where Born  
Date Married  
Where Married  
Date Died  
Where Died

## 5. YOUR GRANDMOTHER

Date Born  
Where Born  
Date Died  
Where Died

## 1. YOU

Date Born  
Where Born  
Date Married  
Where Married  
Date Died  
Where Died

## 6. YOUR GRANDFATHER

Date Born  
Where Born  
Date Married  
Where Married  
Date Died  
Where Died

## 7. YOUR GRANDMOTHER

Date Born  
Where Born  
Date Died  
Where Died

## 3. YOUR MOTHER

Date Born  
Where Born  
Date Died  
Where Died

## 8. YOUR GREAT-GRANDFATHER'S NAME

Date Born  
Where Born  
Date Married  
Where Married  
Date Died  
Where Died

## 9. YOUR GREAT-GRANDMOTHER'S NAME

Date Born  
Where Born  
Date Died  
Where Died

## 10. YOUR GREAT-GRANDFATHER'S NAME

Date Born  
Where Born  
Date Married  
Where Married  
Date Died  
Where Died

## 11. YOUR GREAT-GRANDMOTHER'S NAME

Date Born  
Where Born  
Date Died  
Where Died

## 12. YOUR GREAT-GRANDFATHER'S NAME

Date Born  
Where Born  
Date Married  
Where Married  
Date Died  
Where Died

## 13. YOUR GREAT-GRANDMOTHER'S NAME

Date Born  
Where Born  
Date Died  
Where Died

## 14. YOUR GREAT-GRANDFATHER'S NAME

Date Born  
Where Born  
Date Married  
Where Married  
Date Died  
Where Died

## 15. YOUR GREAT-GRANDMOTHER'S NAME

Date Born  
Where Born  
Date Died  
Where Died

Name of Complier: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# FAMILY GROUP SHEET

Husband's Name (first/middle/last): \_\_\_\_\_

Born: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Christened/Baptized: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Married: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Died: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Religion: \_\_\_\_\_ Buried Date/Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Military Service: \_\_\_\_\_

Father's Name (first/middle/last): \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Name (first/middle/maiden): \_\_\_\_\_

Other Spouse(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Wife's Name (first/middle/maiden): \_\_\_\_\_

Born: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Christened/Baptized: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Died: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Religion: \_\_\_\_\_ Buried Date/Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Father's Name (first/middle/last): \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Name (first/middle/maiden): \_\_\_\_\_

Other Spouse(s): \_\_\_\_\_

FULL NAME OF CHILD	MONTH/DAY/YEAR	CITY, STATE or PROVINCE, COUNTRY
<b>M/F</b> <b>1</b>	Born	
	Married	
Spouse's Name	Died	
	Buried	
<b>M/F</b> <b>2</b>	Born	
	Married	
Spouse's Name	Died	
	Buried	
<b>M/F</b> <b>3</b>	Born	
	Married	
Spouse's Name	Died	
	Buried	
<b>M/F</b> <b>4</b>	Born	
	Married	
Spouse's Name	Died	
	Buried	
<b>M/F</b> <b>5</b>	Born	
	Married	
Spouse's Name	Died	
	Buried	
<b>M/F</b> <b>6</b>	Born	
	Married	
Spouse's Name	Died	
	Buried	

FULL NAME OF CHILD	MONTH/DAY/YEAR	CITY, STATE or PROVINCE, COUNTRY
M/F <b>7</b> Spouse's Name	Born	
	Married	
	Died	
	Buried	
M/F <b>8</b> Spouse's Name	Born	
	Married	
	Died	
	Buried	
M/F <b>9</b> Spouse's Name	Born	
	Married	
	Died	
	Buried	
M/F <b>10</b> Spouse's Name	Born	
	Married	
	Died	
	Buried	
M/F <b>11</b> Spouse's Name	Born	
	Married	
	Died	
	Buried	
M/F <b>12</b> Spouse's Name	Born	
	Married	
	Died	
	Buried	
M/F <b>13</b> Spouse's Name	Born	
	Married	
	Died	
	Buried	
M/F <b>14</b> Spouse's Name	Born	
	Married	
	Died	
	Buried	
M/F <b>15</b> Spouse's Name	Born	
	Married	
	Died	
	Buried	
M/F <b>16</b> Spouse's Name	Born	
	Married	
	Died	
	Buried	
M/F <b>17</b> Spouse's Name	Born	
	Married	
	Died	
	Buried	
M/F <b>18</b> Spouse's Name	Born	
	Married	
	Died	
	Buried	

Sources and/or Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



# Family & Home Search Information Source Checklist



## ... Birth

- Birth Certificate
- Birth Announcement
- Baby Book
- Adoption Record/Registry

## ... Marriage/Divorce

- Engagement Announcement
- Marriage Banns / Bonds
- Marriage License
- Marriage Certificate
- Wedding / Anniversary Announcement(s)
- Wedding Guest Book
- Annulment Papers
- Divorce Papers

## ... Death/Cemetery

- Obituary
- Death Certificate
- Funeral Book
- Memorial Card
- Funeral Program
- Burial Records
- Tombstone Photos (FAG)

## ... Religious Activity

- Baptism/Christening Record
- Confirmation Record
- Church Minutes / History
- Membership Book / List

## ... County Indexes

- Birth
- Marriage
- Death

## ... State Indexes

- Birth
- Marriage
- Death

## ... Military Service

- Discharge Records (DD214)
- Selective Service / Draft Card
- Pension / Disability Records
- National Guard Records
- Citations / Medals / Ribbons
- Insignias / Uniform
- Firearms / Sword
- Muster-in / -out Rolls
- Paymaster Rolls
- Desertions / Prisoners / Death Lists
- Battle Reports
- Veteran Admin. Files
- Service Organization Files
- NARA Records
- WWII Interment Records

## ... Federal Census Records

### CENSUS INDEX

- 1790
- 1800
- 1810
- 1820
- 1830
- 1840
- 1850
- 1860
- 1870
- 1880
- 1900
- 1910
- 1920
- 1930
- 1940

### SLAVE SCHEDULE

- 1850
- 1860

### MORTALITY SCHEDULE

- 1850
- 1860
- 1870
- 1880

### VETERANS SCHEDULE

- 1890

## ... Licenses

- Business / Professional
- Drivers License

## ... School

- Report Cards / Transcripts
- Awards / Trophies
- Graduation / Diplomas
- Graduation Programs
- Yearbooks
- Class Photographs
- Class Reunion information

## ... Every Day Life

- Journal / Diary / Biography
- Photo Albums / Scrapbooks
- Newspaper Clippings
- Letters from family

## ... Employment

- Social Security Card
- Apprenticeship Records
- Citations / Achievement
- Disability / Pension Records
- Retirement Records
- Income Tax Records
- Union Card / Records

## ... Land & Property Ownership Records

- Deeds
- Land Grants / Surveys
- Homesteads
- Mortgages / Leases
- Land Ownership Atlas
- Property Tax Notices
- Abstracts of Title
- Estate Records

## ... Civil & Legal Activity

- Will
- Bonds
- Summons / Subpoena
- Guardian Papers
- Orphan's Court Records
- Contracts
- Probate / Estate Records
- Testate / Intestate Papers
- Bankruptcies / Judgements
- Arrest Records
- Criminal Convictions
- Property Tax Lists
- School Tax Lists
- Coroner / Inquest Records
- Justice of Peace Records
- Prison / Executions / Stays
- Federal Pardon Case Files
- Foreclosures
- Voter Registrations
- Legal Name Changes
- Lunacy Hearing
- Indentures
- Estate Inventory / Appraisal

## ... Family

- Bible
- Lineages / Genealogies
- Oral Histories
- Family History Books
- Family Newsletters

## ... Household Items

- Engraved Items
- Dishes / Silverware
- Stitched Sampler
- Tapestries / Quilts
- Heirlooms

## ... Immigration / Citizenship Papers

- Ship Passenger Lists
- Arrival / Departure Notice
- Detention Records
- Oaths of Allegiance
- Declarations of Intent

## Naturalization Papers

- Alien Registrations
- Deportment Papers

## Visa / Passport

## ... Directories

- Phone Books
- City Directories
- County / Rural Directories
- Trade / Business Directories
- US Public Records (Ancestry)

## ... State & Misc. Records

- Agriculture Censuses
- State Military Censuses
- Social Security Death Index

## ... Misc. Government and Institutions

- Hospital / Medical Records
- Nursing Home Records
- State / Private Hospitals
- Historical Societies
- Genealogical Societies
- Local History Museums

## ... Library Sources

- DAR/SAR Library Indexes
- Library of Congress Indexes
- Ft. Wayne PerSI
- Indexed Genealogies
- Historical Articles
- Local/County/State History

## ... Computer Databases

- Ancestry\* (\$)
- Family Search (free)
- Find A Grave (FAG) (free)
- US GenWeb (free)
- GenealogyBank (\$)
- Fold3 (Military site) (\$)
- Heritage Quest (Libraries)

*\*(Library Edition available at most Michigan libraries.)*





## FREE GENEALOGY WEBSITES TO BEGIN YOUR SEARCH

### **FAMILY SEARCH – [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)**

The Website of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS). The #1 free site for genealogical research. One of the best places to start when you begin your research.

### **FIND-A-GRAVE – [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com)**

*Find A Grave* is a free resource for finding the final resting places of famous folks, friends and family members. With millions of names, it's an invaluable tool for trying to locate where family members are buried. You might find photos, obits, parents, siblings and other information on a loved one.

### **SEEKING MICHIGAN – <http://seekingmichigan.org/>**

The Archives of Michigan offers researchers a combination of original source records, published histories and indexes, and free access to several online subscription databases. Especially great for death certificates - 1900-1952.

### **PERPETUAL CALENDAR – <http://www.timeanddate.com/calendar/index.html?>**

*Perpetual Calendar* is a calendar valid for many years, usually designed to allow the calculation of the day of the week for a given date in the future or the past, very helpful for genealogy work.

### **DATE AND TIME CALCULATOR – <http://www.timeanddate.com/date/dateadd.html?>**

The *Date Calculator* calculates the duration between 2 dates. Adds or subtracts days, weeks, months and years from a given date. Especially handy to figure a date of birth or date of death with other known information.

### **ROOTSWEB – <http://lists.rootsweb.ancestry.com/index/index.html>**

Subscribe (free) to genealogy mailing lists on the website. Contact others researching your family.

### **WORLD GENWEB & US GENWEB PROJECT – [www.worldgenweb.org](http://www.worldgenweb.org) OR [www.usgenweb.org](http://www.usgenweb.org)**

World GenWeb - Both run by volunteers. Look up by country and region or by US state and county.

### **GOOGLE.COM – [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)**

This search engine has a lot of information and you can search for variations of your ancestor's name. To narrow results, try adding a locality or spouse or child.

### **CENSUS RECORDS & CENSUS MAPS – <http://www.us-census.org/inventory> OR <http://www.us-census.org/states/map.htm>**

Online inventory of transcribed census records from states and counties and U.S. Federal Census Maps from 1790-1930.

### **DAUGHTERS AMERICAN REVOLUTION (DAR) – [www.dar.org/library/online\\_research.cfm](http://www.dar.org/library/online_research.cfm)**

Lineage-based membership organization for women who are descended from a person who served during the Revolution.

### **MICHIGAN MARRIAGE INDEX – <http://www.mifamilyhistory.org/dibeaindex/>**

The Dibeans have diligently worked on collecting an index of marriages for Michigan over the years.

### **OBITUARIES – <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~obitl/ovlist.html>**

Obituary lookup volunteers - state/country index.

### **NEWSPAPERS – <http://www.onlinenewspapers.com/>**

For the most popular USA newspapers, world newspapers or online magazines.

### **BOOKS & NEWSPAPERS - <http://books.google.com/> OR <https://news.google.com/newspapers>**

Google books and newspapers online. Search and preview millions of books from libraries and publishers worldwide, also search hundreds of newspapers for family articles.

### **IMMIGRATION – <http://www.immigrantships.net>**

Includes sites to research emigration, immigration and naturalization, 100+ passenger list sites, ethnic research, libraries and archives, passenger ship types, descriptions, images, and additional worldwide maritime information available.

### **ELLIS ISLAND & CASTLE GARDEN – <http://www.libertyellisfoundation.org/> OR <http://www.castlegarden.org/>**

Ellis Island has information on over 22 million immigrants, crew and other passengers who came through the Port of New York between 1892 and 1924. Castle Garden offers access to information on 11 million immigrants from 1820 through 1892.

### **WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL – <http://www.wwiimemorial.com/default.asp?>**

Search the registry of the Memorial in Washington, D.C. for names of loved ones who served in WWII.

### **NATIONAL ARCHIVES – [www.nationalarchives.gov](http://www.nationalarchives.gov)**

Information from NARA about management and preservation of historical records.