

START YOUR RESEARCH AT

Clayton Library Center for Genealogical Research

PART OF THE HOUSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM

FIRST STEPS

STEP 1



GATHER WHAT YOU HAVE:

- Search for documents at home.
- Ask family for any research or documents they may have.

STEP 2



ORGANIZE:

- Identify your vital information (birth, death and marriage). Then identify vital information for your parents, grandparents and other generations in your family.
- Fill out a pedigree chart.

STEP 3



DECIDE WHAT YOU WANT TO KNOW:

- Who are you researching?
- What do you want to know about them?
- Where and when are you researching?

Once you have completed these three steps, you can then review various sources that can help you learn more about your family history!

SOURCES



GOVERNMENT

Official government records are an excellent source for genealogy research. Some useful government records are listed below.

- Birth Records
- Marriage Records
- Divorce Records
- Death Records
- Tax Records
- Property Records
- Court Records

CENSUS

Since 1790, the United States provides a census of its population every ten years and this information can provide additional assistance in your research.

- Names of Other Household Members
- Ages and Birthplaces
- Residence or Occupation
- Immigration and Citizenship Details
- Marriage Information
- Military Service

FAMILY DOCUMENTS

Family or personal papers may include records that can span multiple generations. Ask your family if they have any of the documents listed below.

- Letters
- Legal Documents
- Photographs
- Memorabilia
- School Records
- Written Accounts

INTERVIEW FAMILY



Interviewing your family is a great way to learn more about your family. Here is a list of some possible questions. A recording device is useful so that you don't miss important information.

- Were you named after anyone?
- What were your parents' names?
- What do you remember about your childhood home?
- What did your home look like?
- In which room did most family activities take place?
- What was your neighborhood like?
- What did you do for fun when you were growing up?
- Tell me about your parents.
- What kind of people were your ancestors?
- What do you remember most about them?
- Was anyone in our family famous or notorious?
- What do you remember about the family stories?
- How did the family earn money?
- Who worked?

WEBSITES

The websites listed below provide additional genealogy information.

WWW.FAMILYSEARCH.ORG

The largest genealogy library in the WORLD offers name searches, digital records, online books and more!

WWW.GENEABLOGGERSTRIBE.COM

This web ring of genealogists and family historians features a genealogy "blog roll" with over 3,000 family history related blogs.

WWW.CYNDISLIST.COM

Don't know where to look? Try Cyndi's List; a directory to genealogy based internet sites. This family history directory has hundreds of categories to choose from!

WWW.FACEBOOK.COM

Believe it or not, Facebook can help you find family, in addition to friends! Search "genealogy" and click on "find all pages named genealogy"; find one applicable to you and join a group. You might find someone working on the same family!

Clayton Library Center for Genealogical Research | 5300 Caroline St., 77004 | 832-393-2600

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Linking YOU to the World
www.houstonlibrary.org



- Begin with what you know.
- Fill out the chart as completely as you can.
- Estimate dates and places, if necessary.
- If you do not have enough information, you may want to talk to a relative.

PEDIGREE CHART

Chart No. _____

Person Number 1 on this chart is the same as No. _____
On chart No. _____

1	Born: Place: Marr: Place: Died: Place: Spouse:	2	Born: Place: Marr: Place: Died: Place:	3	Born: Place: Died: Place:	4	Born: Place: Marr: Place: Died: Place:	5	Born: Place: Died: Place:	6	Born: Place: Marr: Place: Died: Place:	7	Born: Place: Died: Place:	8	Born: Place: Marr: Place: Died:	16	
																17	
9	Born: Place: Died: Place:	10	Born: Place: Marr: Place: Died: Place:	11	Born: Place: Died: Place:	12	Born: Place: Marr: Place: Died: Place:	13	Born: Place: Died: Place:	14	Born: Place: Marr: Place: Died: Place:	15	Born: Place: Died: Place:	16	17	18	
																19	
17	Born: Place: Marr: Place: Died: Place:	18	Born: Place: Marr: Place: Died: Place:	19	Born: Place: Died: Place:	20	Born: Place: Marr: Place: Died: Place:	21	Born: Place: Died: Place:	22	Born: Place: Died: Place:	23	Born: Place: Died: Place:	24	25	26	
																27	
25	Born: Place: Marr: Place: Died: Place:	26	Born: Place: Marr: Place: Died: Place:	27	Born: Place: Died: Place:	28	Born: Place: Marr: Place: Died: Place:	29	Born: Place: Died: Place:	30	Born: Place: Died: Place:	31	Born: Place: Died: Place:	32	33	34	
																35	

Clayton Library



Center for Genealogical Research

CLAYTON LIBRARY
Center For Genealogical Research
5300 Caroline St.
832-393-2600





Getting Started Source Checklist

Clayton Library Center for Genealogical Research

5300 Caroline St., 77004 | 832-393-2600

Beginning a family history research project can seem overwhelming. Where to look? What to look for? Use this checklist as a starting point to understand what documents can help you find the answer to your family history research questions. Not every family will have every document listed, but many of these sources can be found for your family.

Family Records

- ☐ Address books
- ☐ Citizenship papers
- ☐ Club/Organization memberships
- ☐ Death announcements
- ☐ Draft cards
- ☐ Family bibles
- ☐ Family correspondence
- ☐ Family interviews
- ☐ Heirlooms & artifacts
- ☐ Journals/Diaries
- ☐ Legal papers
- ☐ Letters & postcards
- ☐ Memoirs
- ☐ Memorial cards
- ☐ Newspaper clippings
- ☐ Oral traditions
- ☐ Personal knowledge
- ☐ Photographs
- ☐ Scrapbooks
- ☐ Telegrams
- ☐ Wedding announcements
- ☐ Wedding books/albums

Certificates/Vital Records

- ☐ Adoption
- ☐ Baptism
- ☐ Birth

Certificates/Vital Records (cont'd)

- ☐ Confirmation
- ☐ Death
- ☐ Social Security application SS-5

Marriage Records

- ☐ Annulments
- ☐ Applications
- ☐ Banns
- ☐ Bonds
- ☐ Divorce decrees
- ☐ Licenses
- ☐ Returns

Cemetery & Funeral Home Records

- ☐ Funeral programs, books, & cards
- ☐ Funeral home records
- ☐ Monument & tombstone inscriptions

Immigration Records

- ☐ Alien registration cards
- ☐ Border crossings
- ☐ Change of name
- ☐ Citizenship papers
- ☐ Declaration of intentions
- ☐ Deportations
- ☐ Emigration list
- ☐ Immigrant aid societies

Immigration Records (cont'd)

- ☐ Naturalization certificate
- ☐ Oaths of allegiance
- ☐ Passenger lists
- ☐ Passport
- ☐ Passport applications
- ☐ Petition to naturalize
- ☐ Register of seaman
- ☐ Visas

Court Records

- ☐ Adoption records
- ☐ Civil records
- ☐ Military discharges
- ☐ Name changes
- ☐ Sheriff's records
- ☐ Sheriff sales
- ☐ Voter registration

Church & Temple Records

- ☐ Admission
- ☐ Baptism or Christening records
- ☐ Bar/Bat Mitzvah
- ☐ Burial records
- ☐ Church archives
- ☐ Church histories
- ☐ Deaths
- ☐ Marriages
- ☐ Meeting minutes

Getting Started Source Checklist (cont'd)

Church & Temple Records (cont'd)

- ☐ Minister's journals
- ☐ Minutes
- ☐ Ordination
- ☐ Removal records
- ☐ Seminary records
- ☐ Transfer
- ☐ Vestry records

Institutional Records

- ☐ Hospitals
- ☐ Police/jails
- ☐ Prisons
- ☐ State schools
- ☐ Work-farms

Military Records

- ☐ Draft records
- ☐ Enlistment records
- ☐ Military records
- ☐ Pension files/applications
- ☐ Selective Service Board
- ☐ Service records
- ☐ Vets, Admin. Records
- ☐ Veterans organizations
- ☐ Veteran records

Probate Records

- ☐ Administrations
- ☐ Estate records

Probate Records (cont'd)

- ☐ Guardianships
- ☐ Settlements

Employment Records

- ☐ Employment records
- ☐ Account books
- ☐ Apprenticeships
- ☐ Indentures
- ☐ Licenses
- ☐ Pensions
- ☐ Personnel files
- ☐ Railroad, mining & factory records
- ☐ Union cards
- ☐ Work associations

Newspapers

- ☐ Indexes
- ☐ Anniversary notices
- ☐ Biographies
- ☐ Births
- ☐ Convictions
- ☐ Death notices
- ☐ Engagements
- ☐ Ethnic newspapers
- ☐ Family reunion announcements
- ☐ Family stories
- ☐ Forced sales

Newspapers (cont'd)

- ☐ Gossip & advice columns
- ☐ Historical vignettes
- ☐ Legal notices
- ☐ Local news
- ☐ Marriages
- ☐ Milestones
- ☐ Obituaries
- ☐ Sheriff sales
- ☐ Ship arrivals
- ☐ Ship departures

Memberships

- ☐ Fraternal organizations
- ☐ Fraternities/Sororities
- ☐ Lineage societies
- ☐ Professional organizations
- ☐ Veterans organizations
- ☐ Work associations

Compiled & Printed Sources

- ☐ Biographies
- ☐ County & local histories
- ☐ Family group sheets
- ☐ Family histories/Genealogies
- ☐ Lineage society publications
- ☐ Prepared pedigrees
- ☐ Record abstracts & transcriptions