

Genealogy 101

By Auriette Hahn Lindsey

- Begin with yourself.
Record full legal name, nicknames, name changes, life events
- Add family members. Include the same information to create a starting point for research.
- Talk to your relatives.
Get their details and ask what they remember. Start collecting photos and documents.
- Begin your research.
Fill in the blanks for known relatives and begin finding “lost” ancestors.

Research Sources

Vital Records: Birth, Marriage (and Divorces), Deaths

1. Birth records are held by the state, provide date and location of birth, usually provide parents' names.
2. Marriages are recorded by the county. Records provide couples' names, date and location of marriage, and perhaps witnesses' names.
3. Death records provide name, location, and date of death. They may list cemetery or funeral home. They usually provide the name of the informant.

Analyze Your Sources

- Primary records were recorded at the time of the event. Records that are made after the event are secondary sources. A death record is primary for information about the death but usually secondary for birthdate and parents' names.
- Original records is the actual document, such as a marriage license. A derivative record is created from the original records, such as an index listing all marriages in a certain year.
- A source that answers your question with precise and accurate details is direct evidence. A birth certificate provides direct evidence of the birthdate. A census record that gives the person's age provides indirect evidence that they were born in a certain year.

Additional Sources

- Federal and State Censuses
- Land Ownership
- Military Service and Pension
- Wills and Probate
- Church and School
- Immigration and Naturalization

Where to Find the Records

FamilySearch	Find My Past
Ancestry	State Archives
MyHeritage - https://www.myheritage.com/	University Archives
West Florida Genealogy Library	Fold3
National Archives	Bureau of Land Management
Geneanet - https://en.geneanet.org/	Historic Newspapers

Getting Started with DNA

Autosomal (atDNA)

- Inherited from Both Parents
- Accurate to About 6 Generations
- Provides Ethnicity Estimates

Y DNA

- Passed from Father to Son
- Remains Identical for Centuries
- Paternal Line Research

Mitochondrial (mtDNA)

- Passed from Mother to Children
- Accurate for 50 Generations
- Maternal Line Research

DNA Testing Companies

- [Family Tree DNA](#)
- Ancestry
- MyHeritage
- [23andMe](#)
- [Living DNA](#)

Third Party Tools

- [DNA Painter](#)
- GEDmatch - <https://www.gedmatch.com/>

DNA Best Practices

1. Use Your Birth Name
2. Build a Tree & Attach DNA to the Correct Profile
3. Respond to Inquiries
4. Keep an Open Mind