



Starting Out

Free Information Forms and Charts

We have many resources that will help the budding genealogist or family historian get started on the right track.

Genealogy v's Family History

Genealogy is the charting of a family's descent through a chronological record of births, marriage and deaths; in short it is the bones of your research. It consists of a record of names, dates, places and relationships through which one can compile a pedigree chart of a family tree.

In the process of your research you will amass a lot of other information.

This is the stuff of **Family History**, which will fill out the lives of the people you are researching, and the conditions under which they lived. This is what puts the flesh on the bones of your research. It changes your ancestors from a set of facts into real-life, interesting individuals.

You should file away any information you discover no matter how unimportant it may seem at the time. Later it may prove to be the piece of information you need, to fill in part of your jigsaw.

Ground Rules

1. To start with write everything in pencil. Not only does this make it easier to correct mistakes but in libraries and record offices you will only be allowed to use a pencil.
2. Always work from the known to the unknown. Start with yourself and work back to your parents, grandparents and so on. A systematic approach brings best results and saves time in the long run.
3. Prove each step as you go. Unless you do this you may finish up following a line of descent that is not yours and waste a lot of time.
4. Be methodical. Keep a record of all sources of information. When you make a duplicate of a permanent record make sure you include a reference to the source.
5. Set up a filing system that makes it easy to store your data and to retrieve it. There is no "right way" for this, only one that is "best" for you. It will depend on your needs and the facilities you have at your disposal. It is a good idea to have a separate working, and storage file.
6. Store your original documents, photographs, etc, in a safe place where they will not deteriorate. Acid free albums, acid free glue and copy safe plastic envelopes should be used. Never use sticky tape! If you want copies for working or display purposes, the best course of action is to make one photocopy and then use that as your "master" copy.

Starter pack

To help you get started we have provided a number of information sheets, and forms and charts in PDF format that you can download.

These sheets will assist you on your journey.

Information Sheets



[Starting your family history research 34.01 KB](#)

 [STEPPS - Hints for researching your family history 22.04 KB](#)

Information Sources

In conjunction with the above documents, our [Information Sources](#) page will help you in getting started.

Birth Death and Marriage Certificate information

Tables in the information page below outline what you can expect to find on birth, marriage and death certificates in Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. An associated table shows the current price of those certificates.

[Australia, New Zealand & United Kingdom BMD Certificate Information](#)

[Australia, New Zealand & United Kingdom BMD Certificate Prices](#)

Outback Graves

During your research, especially in Western Australia, you may come across an ancestor who was interred in an outback grave. This information page will give you some tips on what you can do to look after an outback or lonely grave, there is also a pdf download available on the page:

[Outback or Lonely Graves](#)

Forms and Charts

There are two forms for recording basic research data.

Pedigree chart - This charts the direct line of descent of a family. You should start by entering all of the data you know alongside the headings on the chart. Remember to write everything in pencil. Also record all dates in full i.e. 11 Jan 1885. This avoids ambiguity with American or European dates, as they reverse the position of the day and the month. i.e. Jan 11 1885..

 [Pedigree chart](#)

Family Group Sheet - This records all the basic data on a family group (father, mother and children). When filling in this form, follow the same procedure as with the pedigree chart.

 [Family group sheet](#)

Genealogy Relationships - Working out your genealogy relationships can be a bit of a task at times, so here is a page showing a reference chart you can use:

[Genealogy Relationship Chart](#)