

How To Research Your Ancestors For A Family Tree

Genealogy has become a popular pastime. Searching for ancestors can be fun and an interesting way to learn about history. While looking for your ancestors you will learn about the time and place in which they lived. How politics, wars, and economics affected their lives. It will give you history on a more personal level.

The easiest way to start your search is to interview your living relatives. Often there is one elder aunt, uncle, or grandparent that knows a lot of information about the family. The first questions to ask are dates of births, deaths, and marriages. In any family search this type of information is the most commonly found; these events that have been recorded somewhere outside the family and will have public records. Full names are also essential. There could be fifty men named John Jones born in New York City, in 1906. Therefore you have to be very specific on which one you are looking for.

Learning about your family and where they came from can answer questions you may have about family traditions that have been passed through the family. Maybe your whole life you wondered why grandma baked braided sweet bread only at Christmas. Then you learn through your search it is an old German tradition that started several hundreds years ago. It is something she grew up with and has always done without really knowing why. And now you can tell her how it started.

The Internet has opened a whole new world for genealogy buffs. Old archive records have been made available on many different websites. It may take some time and a lot of searching for the correct information, but a lot of it is out there. When doing this type of search it is better to start with a living person, like a grandparent, then move backward through history. You should never start with an event or name and try to link it to yourself. This can be very difficult and frustrating, usually leading to misinformation. When doing your family tree you should try to keep it as factual as possible even if you find information you don't like.

Another new source of information is with your own DNA. It is now possible to test your DNA to find out your families origins. This information can give you a global overview of your genetic makeup telling you what percentage of your DNA is shared with different ethnicities. For more tribal societies like Africans and Native Americans, DNA can confirm what tribe you are most likely to have come from. These results are not always 100% accurate, they can tell which group you are predominately from, but because of population migrations there can be many different ethnic markers in one persons DNA.

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