

Beginning your Family History

Be Smart, Be efficient, save Time

Save Time - Get Organized

Find one place for all your genealogy -

Make **physical** files, folders or boxes...**one for each family** name

(For all books, photo albums, journals, letters, certificates, etc

Make **computer** files for any information you have on your computer

(letters, pictures, family stories, contact information,, e-mails, etc.)

Desk or drawer: For supplies--paper, pens, paper clips stapler, etc.

Gather information from family members (Be sure to talk to older folks).

Use standard genealogical forms(or a personal database) to record the information you find

Pedigree chart (your map)

Family Group Sheets (to record family information)

Research Log - your plan

Reasons to use a Research Log:

Document research and facts

Place to keep personal notes and information

Don't need to remember (facts, dates, earlier searches, etc.)

Avoid duplication of efforts

KEEPS YOU ORGANIZED AND FOCUSED

(NOTE: Blank gen forms available at [Mesafhc.org/forms & aids](http://Mesafhc.org/forms& aids))

Be Efficient - Use technology

Computer or paper ?

Paper - paper & sticky notes everywhere...no order, easy to lose

Computer -- everything in one place...easy to find, easy to update.

Use a Personal Database

Reasons to use a personal database:

- Enter information once, view several ways

- Need a place to keep your incomplete and unverified information, questionable sources, personal notes ,etc.

- May be personal things you don't want on internet

- Easy access to info on your computer -anytime – any place (no internet needed)

- Can make quick notes to help you remember what you are doing and help you stay organized

- Easily change or correct new information as you find it.

- Private-no one can see your information (unless you give them a copy)

- Some posted (internet) trees can be changed by others

- Basic (all you need) FREE simple programs available

Most popular personal database programs:

Roots Magic

Ancestral Quest

Legacy Family Tree

NOTE: Download all w/free basic programs -- completely adequate to begin

Be Smart - Use the internet to see what's already there

Good places to start finding information:

FamilySearch.org

Ancestry.com

FindaGrave.com (need specific dates) and Findagrave.index

Google (search for both names & places)

When you have several sure sources and you feel the information is correct post it to the internet.

Reasons to post your family tree on the internet

- Make public - Other people can see it
- Others can contact you with additional information
- Websites will search their records and tell you about possible information for your ancestors
- You might find new relatives and/or friends

How to Post your tree to the Internet – several options

1. Using your **pedigree chart** - Enter one name at a time
2. Using your **Personal Database** program, export a Gedcom file. (Save file on desktop). Open internet tree program. Import your Gedcom

(NOTE: Many internet tree programs extend your tree with information they have, or give you hints about family members automatically)

General Information:

Start with the last known information you have

Don't completely trust all that you have heard (or that you see on the internet)

Remember many people have the same names - relatives and not relatives

Census records are a good place to begin but may have incorrect information – Find all years

Remember you only can find deceased persons (w/few exceptions)

ALWAYS KEEP A BACK-UP COPY OF YOUR GENEALOGY INFORMATION

Get help from:

FamilySearch.org/Get Help/wiki

MesaFamilyHistory center.org

