

## Getting Started or Re-motivated

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Start with your home records to begin the search. Then expand to your extended family. Collect the **names**, the **dates**, the **places** AND the **medical information**. Start collecting the **stories** as well and get copies of photos if you can (you can use a digital camera or a hand held scanner). Write down where you got the information! (You won't remember after a while.)

Your family's stories are what make them real to you and your family.

Start at home, then branch out to close relatives—aunts, uncles, grandparents, cousins—to see what they have about the family. Ask to verify what they say with documents. Photocopy, scan or digitally reproduce them if allowed.

birth certificates	marriage certificates	death certificates
wedding announcements	obituaries	birth announcements
family Bibles	scrapbooks	photograph albums
military discharge papers	graduation announcements	diaries/journals
diplomas	draft cards	newspaper clippings
organization memorabilia	year books/annuals	baby books

Collect & use the right tools. Not all are necessary immediately, but will become necessary as time goes on.

### 1. Tools:

pedigree charts*	family group sheets*	file folders*
notebooks for taking notes*	black pens*	pencils*
binder* atlas*	long (legal) envelopes & stamps*	filing cabinet/apple box
computer	internet access*	genealogy computer program
camera (digital if possible)	film <b>or</b> extra memory cards	cemetery kit
tape recorder/video camera	scanner (hand held)	yellow markers*

\* essential items

### 2. Rules to live by:

#### **Always document your sources!**

Use day, month, year format, spelling out month rather than numbers, writing out complete year. (ie. 16 Jan 2016)

Use **only** maiden names for women.

Capitalize surnames (unless your genealogy program does it for you...saves confusion with given name/surnames like John James, Parker, Lyman, etc.)

Know whether your data is from primary or secondary sources.

One bird doesn't prove spring: try to find more than one source to verify secondary information.

Know the difference between direct and indirect evidence...and look for the best. (Document all of it.)

**Always** back up your material.

Be realistic in your expectations. Some lines are not easy, some aren't going to fall into your lap.

In other words, this is not going to be just a six week project if you want to go very far.

You are not likely to be able to trace your ancestry directly back to Noah, much less Adam.

Genealogy is not always free and not everything is on-line.

Genealogy is work, but fun.

Family history is addictive. There is always another generation clamoring to be found.

Get organized from the beginning while you have very little collected material, it will be easier to stay organized.

Understand that over 5,000 medical conditions run in families and some can be life-threatening. Tracking a family tree & documenting what medical problems family members had can help you and your doctor.

### 3. Tricks for more effective family history:

Start at the beginning: YOU and work back. Don't start with some name in the distant past & try to prove a connection just because family says you're descended from them. Sometimes family legends get stretched.

Do one family group sheet for each couple on your pedigree chart.

Do one family group sheet for each “other” marriage of each individual on your pedigree chart.  
Research entire family groups, not just pedigree lines. Sometimes researching siblings will unlock the next step.  
Be prepared to do collateral research or “cluster research” or “neighborhood research.”  
Don’t get hung up on spelling...especially when you get closer to the immigrant ancestor.  
Be aware of nicknames, and that some families use the nickname form for the given name.  
Don’t get hung up on exact spellings. Spelling wasn’t as important as it is now.  
SHARE your research with others.  
Do locally what others cannot do for themselves so that someone at a distance will do something for you that you cannot do for yourself: “Cast your bread upon the waters; it will come back buttered.” Skip Ross  
Volunteer: Random acts of genealogy kindness, Genealogy Society, Library.  
Respect the privacy of others & do not post living people’s data on the web.  
Document your sources. ALWAYS. (even the family stories)  
Take time for continuing education (books, tapes, seminars/workshops, webinars).  
Write down the stories. (Document their sources as well.)  
Learn some history for the time and place your ancestor lived (clues & insights into the family).  
Network: on-line, family reunions, genealogy meetings, snail mail or email.  
**Always** try to verify information that you find in books, on the web, or from family sources with original source material.

Some suggested reference material (check out or use at the library)

**The Handy Book for Genealogists** Everton publishers (copy the pages for geographic areas you’re working in)

Organizing Your Family History Search by Sharon DeBartolo Carmack

A Genealogist’s Guide to Discovering Your Female Ancestors by Sharon DeBartolo Carmack

Uncovering Your Ancestry through Family Photographs by Maureen Taylor

The Genealogist’s Companion & Sourcebook by Emily Croom

The Red Book by Ancestry

Map Guide to American Migration Routes 1735-1815 by William Dollarhide

The Census Book by William Dollarhide (comes with a CD for printing out forms, or can be found on ancestry.com)

**Got an Omaha Public Library card** (or belong to a reciprocal library?) Use \*\*My Heritage Online at home; Go to

<http://www.omahalibrary.org/>. Then to: Resources – Genealogy - My Heritage. You will need to get your Omaha public library card & type in the number. **Ancestry Plus** is also available, but only available at the library. Also listed there is the Historic Omaha newspapers which is the Omaha World Herald on line for the years of 1887 to 1983.

\*\*The library is getting a new website program and My Heritage isn’t working at the moment. So go to

[www.nebraskaaccess.gov](http://www.nebraskaaccess.gov) On the Right hand side you will find a box “databases available” click on it. Click on My Heritage and it will ask for your driver license.

W. Dale Clark branch is now an authorized Family History Center. Films can be ordered on interlibrary loan from Salt Lake.

Greater Omaha Genealogical Society **We are in the process of changing locations. We are at the community engagement Center on the UNO Campus, but after June we will be back at Josie Harper. See our website for the map of the UNO campus.**

Meetings 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday except July & December (August location varies) 6:30 PM, Josie Harper Methodist Nursing College at 87<sup>th</sup> & Burt - \$20.00 year for one person, \$25.00 per year for two at the same address **(note class attendee special)**

**Be sure to check our website for which place to go. [www.gogsmembers.com](http://www.gogsmembers.com)**

Computer Genealogy Programs for free:

[www.rootsmagic.com](http://www.rootsmagic.com)

[www.legacyfamilytree.com](http://www.legacyfamilytree.com)

[www.ancestralquest.com](http://www.ancestralquest.com)

You can download the basic programs for free. Play with each of them to find the best fit for you. A lot of the extra reports won’t be available on the free version.

But you will be able to print the basic pedigree charts and family group records.

(GO-PAF meeting 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of month 7 PM at LDS Church 110 & Martha—not a church group, but a genealogy support group. Visitors are always welcome, & they adjourn to Don & Millie’s afterwards.)

**Need ideas on how to search for something** check out the wiki pages on familysearch.org. They have lots of valuable information in doing research for most everything and ethnic groups. [genealogy.about.com](http://genealogy.about.com) and even the pay sites have free tutorials.

Some of our websites to do research on:

[www.gogsmembers.com](http://www.gogsmembers.com)

[www.OmahaMarriages.wordpress.com](http://www.OmahaMarriages.wordpress.com)

[www.MilestoneAnniversaries.worpress.com](http://www.MilestoneAnniversaries.worpress.com)

[www.OmahaObits.wordpress.com](http://www.OmahaObits.wordpress.com)

[www.ButlerMarriages.wordpress.com](http://www.ButlerMarriages.wordpress.com)

[www.ColfaxMarriages.wordpress.com](http://www.ColfaxMarriages.wordpress.com)

[www.DodgeMarriages.wordpress.com](http://www.DodgeMarriages.wordpress.com)

[www.KeyaPahaMarriages.wordpress.com](http://www.KeyaPahaMarriages.wordpress.com)

[www.SarpyMarriages.wordpress.com](http://www.SarpyMarriages.wordpress.com)

[www.ThurstonMarriages.wordpress.com](http://www.ThurstonMarriages.wordpress.com)

[www.VetsBuriedInFL.wordpress.com](http://www.VetsBuriedInFL.wordpress.com)

[www.OmahBirths.wordpress.com](http://www.OmahBirths.wordpress.com)

[www.OmahaAreaDivorces.wordpress.com](http://www.OmahaAreaDivorces.wordpress.com)

[www.BrownMarriages.wordpress.com](http://www.BrownMarriages.wordpress.com)

[www.CassMarriages.wordpress.com](http://www.CassMarriages.wordpress.com)

[www.CumingCoMarriages.wordpress.com](http://www.CumingCoMarriages.wordpress.com)

[www.HallCoMarriages.wordpress.com](http://www.HallCoMarriages.wordpress.com)

[www.RockMarriages.wordpress.com](http://www.RockMarriages.wordpress.com)

[www.SaundersCoMarriages.wordpress.com](http://www.SaundersCoMarriages.wordpress.com)

[www.WayneMarriages.wordpress.com](http://www.WayneMarriages.wordpress.com)

[www.milestonebirthdays.wordpress.com](http://www.milestonebirthdays.wordpress.com)

Not ready to download a free Genealogy program? Here are a few sources to print out the forms that you will need.

<http://www.ancestry.com/download/charts>

<http://www.cyndislist.com/charts/printable-charts-and-forms/>

[https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Research\\_Forms](https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Research_Forms)

Here are a few of my favorite websites: (all free)

[www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)

[www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com)

[www.billiongraves.com](http://www.billiongraves.com)

[www.cyndislist.com](http://www.cyndislist.com) (links to lots of different stuff)

[www.archive.org](http://www.archive.org) (old books)

[www.chroniclingamerica.loc.gov](http://www.chroniclingamerica.loc.gov) (old newspapers)

[www.rootsweb.ancestry.com](http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com) (family trees and lists)

[books.google.com](http://books.google.com) (digitized books)

[translate.google.com](http://translate.google.com) (language translations)

[www.jewishgen.org](http://www.jewishgen.org)

[archives.gov/research/genealogy/start-research](http://archives.gov/research/genealogy/start-research)

[www.usgenweb.org](http://www.usgenweb.org) County and state resources and databases

Genealogy Search engine:

[www.genealogyintime.com](http://www.genealogyintime.com)

**Friday Genealogy Work Groups** located in the computer labs at:

The **first** Friday of the month we will be at the Millard Library from 10:00 to noon. 13214 Westwood Lane

The **second** Friday of the month we will be at the Abrahams Library from 10:00 to noon. 5111 N. 90<sup>th</sup> Street

Also check out the calendar on the library's website for more free classes.

**Here are a few new sites to check out:**

**Atlas of Historical County boundaries:** [publications.newberry.org/ahcbp](http://publications.newberry.org/ahcbp) County boundaries have changed over time. This site has an interactive map which lets you enter specific dates and see the county boundaries at the time.

**General Land Office Records:** [www.glorerecords.blm.gov](http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov)

Family Tree Magazine has a free monthly newsletter with tips and articles. [Familytreemagazine.com](http://Familytreemagazine.com)

If you have any questions, trouble finding something, or need more ideas on where to look. Feel free to call Merrily at 402.706.1453 or email at [genclass@aol.com](mailto:genclass@aol.com). If you need me to look up something, please make sure I have their names and any dates that you may have. There are a lot of "grandma's" in Omaha.