

Genealogy 101: Introduction to Genealogy Websites

Familysearch.org [Free]

FamilySearch is a nonprofit organization and website offering genealogical records, education, and software. It is operated by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) and is part of the Church's Family History Department. You will need to create an account for this service to access records. You may want to research proxy baptisms and determine if creating your family tree on this website is right for you.

This is ideal for Marriage Records, Birth & Death Records, & Church records. It does include Federal and State Census records.

Ancestry.com [Subscription/ free access possible]

In addition to fully indexed federal and state census records of all US census years that are available, Ancestry contains thousands of other databases. This includes immigration records (passenger lists and naturalization forms), banking records (such as wills, probates, and land records), vital records including birth & deaths certificates, baptisms, marriages and divorce, city directories, and even court and criminal records. They have a long relationship with *newspapers.com* (which allows you to easily locate and add obituaries), *Fold3* (military records), as well as *Findagrave.com*. This is not to mention their collection of user curated family trees, general reference encyclopedias as well family almanacs.

Maximize your subscription!

- Create a family tree if you intend on getting a subscription to have records recommended to you.
- Access Ancestry Library Edition at Lake Oswego Library, Oregon City Library, or Wilsonville library. This is also accessible at the Genealogical Forum of Oregon.
- Download records to your computer so you will always have access.
- You do not need a continuous subscription. Set a calendar reminder to cancel your subscription when you're not using it.

Newspapers.com [Subscription]

Newspapers.com™ is great for obituaries. Occasionally you will find birth and marriage announcements, as well as probate claims. There is a 7-day free trial, though many newspapers are behind "Publisher Extra."

Maximize your subscription!

- You can use newspapers.com directly or bundle your subscription with Ancestry (same price).
- If you are using Ancestry.com without Newspapers.com, bookmark all Newspapers.com records so that you can quickly review the records when you have access to the resource.
- Download records as a PDF. This will include bibliographic information including the newspaper name, date of publication, and page number.

Fold3.com [Subscription]

Specializes in providing access to military records, including the stories, photos, and personal documents of the men and women who've served. This will be particularly important resource if you are ever interested in joining the Sons or Daughters of the American Revolution a lineage-based membership service organizations for those directly descended form a patriot of the American Revolutionary War.

Books.google.com [Free, limitations apply]

An unlikely source for historical information. It is a search engine and online library that indexes and allows users to search the full text of digitized books and magazines.

This is great for accessing family and county histories, and I find the most success with items written before 1930 (conveniently the extent of copyright law for unidentified authors). Even if you can't preview a book, there may be other ways to get the book, including through our free Interlibrary Loan Service.

Other resources mentioned:

Genealogical Forum of Oregon – GFO.org. Ford Building, 2505 SE 11th Ave suite b-18, Portland, OR 97202. Check website for up-to-date hours and classes. (Non-member fee, they have had free days in the past)

Findagrave- Findagrave.com. Search or browse cemeteries and grave records for every-day and famous people from around the world. (Free access)

HeritageQuest- This unique collection of genealogical material features the ability to search most Federal Census page images, indexed by name. The database also contains PERSI, the genealogy periodical index, Revolutionary War Pension records, and thousands of fully-downloadable digitized genealogy books. (Wilsonville Public Library & Multnomah County Library System)