

# Adjusting to the New Version of [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org) (8 December 2010)

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# What Changes Were Made

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## Reasons for the Changes

The updated version of the FamilySearch website gives you a richer family history experience by putting all FamilySearch content, services, and products on the same site.

You can enjoy these benefits on the updated FamilySearch website:

- More scanned documents and indexes that are published more frequently.
- An improved search experience that looks through more content and gives more accurate results.
- A thriving genealogical community where you can give and receive help.
- One user name and password for all FamilySearch products and services.
- Responsive, reliable, and scalable hardware and software on which the site can grow and improve.

## Where to Find Features That Were on the Previous Version of the FamilySearch Website

The new version of the FamilySearch website still contains most of the resources that you used on the previous site. How you find them has changed.

The following table lists tasks that were commonly done on the previous version of the FamilySearch website. It also explains how to do them in the new site.

<b>What You Could Do on the previous Version of the FamilySearch Website</b>	<b>How to Do the Same Task on the Current Version of the FamilySearch Website</b>
<p>Search Ancestral File and the Pedigree Resource File</p> <p><b>Note:</b> Records from the Pedigree Resource File have not yet been added to the website. Until it is available, scroll to the bottom of screen, and click <b>Use the previous version of FamilySearch.org</b>. Then click <b>Advanced Search</b>.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.  Click <b>FAMILYSEARCH (FamilySearch Home)</b>.</li> <li>2. Click <b>Trees</b>.</li> <li>3. Enter the individual that you want to find.</li> </ol> <p><b>Note:</b> The search results indicate whether a record came from Ancestral File or the Pedigree Resource File.</p>

<b>What You Could Do on the previous Version of the FamilySearch Website</b>	<b>How to Do the Same Task on the Current Version of the FamilySearch Website</b>
<p>Search these databases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1880 U.S. census</li> <li>• 1881 British census</li> </ul>	<p>The British censuses are currently not available. Until they are, use the previous version of the FamilySearch website.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Scroll to the bottom of screen, and click <b>Use the previous version of FamilySearch.org</b>.</li> <li>2. Click <b>Advanced Search</b>.</li> </ol>
<p>Search the 1881 Canadian census</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.  Click <b>FAMILYSEARCH (FamilySearch Home)</b>.</li> <li>2. Under “Browse by location,” click the link <b>USA, Canada, and Mexico</b>.</li> <li>3. On the left side of the screen, click <b>Canada</b>.</li> <li>4. Find the census that you want, and search for the individual.</li> </ol> <p><b>Tip:</b> If the list of available records has too many items for you to find the censuses, you do not see it, click <b>Census &amp; Lists</b>. You may need to scroll to see this link.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> The new version of the FamilySearch website contains many more censuses than the previous one.</p>
<p>Search the International Genealogical Index (IGI).</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.  Click <b>FAMILYSEARCH (FamilySearch Home)</b>.</li> <li>2. Click <b>Historical Records</b>.</li> <li>3. Enter the individual that you want to find.</li> </ol> <p><b>Note:</b> The International Genealogical Index no longer exists as a searchable database. The Historical Records feature lets you search the transcribed records of birth, marriage, and death that were previously published in the index. The patron-submitted records are temporarily unavailable. You can no longer search by batch number.</p> <p>You can still search the index on the previous version of the site:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Scroll to the bottom of screen, and click <b>Use the previous version of FamilySearch.org</b>.</li> <li>2. Click <b>Advanced Search</b>.</li> </ol>
<p>Search the U.S. Social Security Death Index.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> The Social Security Death Index will be added to the website on or shortly after 10 December 2010.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.  Click <b>FAMILYSEARCH (FamilySearch Home)</b>.</li> <li>2. Under “Browse by location,” click <b>USA, Canada, and Mexico</b>.</li> <li>3. On the left side of the screen, click <b>United States</b>.</li> </ol>

<b>What You Could Do on the previous Version of the FamilySearch Website</b>	<b>How to Do the Same Task on the Current Version of the FamilySearch Website</b>
	<p>4. In the Category filters, click <b>Birth, Marriage, and Death</b>.</p> <p>5. In your search results, click <b>U.S. Social Security Death Index</b>.</p> <p>Until the index is added to www.familysearch.org, you can still search it on the previous version of the site:</p> <p>1. Scroll to the bottom of screen, and click <b>Use the previous version of FamilySearch.org</b>.</p> <p>2. Click <b>Advanced Search</b>.</p>
Search the Vital Records Index for Mexico and Scandinavia.	<p>1.  Click <b>FAMILYSEARCH (FamilySearch Home)</b>.</p> <p>2. Under "Browse by location," click the link for the appropriate area of the world.</p> <p>3. On the left side of the screen, click the appropriate place filters for Mexico or Scandinavia.</p> <p>4. In the Category filters, click <b>Birth, Marriage, and Death</b>.</p> <p>5. In your search results, click the collection of vital records that you want.</p>
Use the Record Search Pilot.	<p>1.  Click <b>FAMILYSEARCH (FamilySearch Home)</b>.</p> <p>2. Click <b>Historical Records</b>.</p> <p>3. Enter the individual that you want to find.</p>
Search Historical Books.	<p>You cannot currently search the historical books directly. Instead, find the book in the Family History Library Catalog:</p> <p>1.  Click <b>FAMILYSEARCH (FamilySearch Home)</b>.</p> <p>2. Click <b>Library Catalog</b>.</p> <p>3. Search for the book that you want.</p>
Search Family History Library Catalog.	<p>1.  Click <b>FAMILYSEARCH (FamilySearch Home)</b>.</p> <p>2. Click <b>Library Catalog</b>.</p>
Find help with family history research or take	<p>1. Click <b>Learn</b>.</p> <p>2. To search articles, enter what you want to find in the Search box, and click <b>Search</b>.</p>

<b>What You Could Do on the previous Version of the FamilySearch Website</b>	<b>How to Do the Same Task on the Current Version of the FamilySearch Website</b>
online family history classes.	<b>Note:</b> Beneath the search box are links where you can find research courses and activities that you can do to get started with family history.
Obtain information about the Family History Library	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Click <b>FamilySearch Centers</b>.</li> <li>2. Scroll to the bottom of the screen, and click <b>The Family History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah</b></li> </ol>
See the schedule of classes offered at the Family History Library.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Scroll to the bottom of screen, and click <b>Use the previous version of FamilySearch.org</b>.</li> <li>2. Click <b>Library</b>, and select <b>Education</b>.</li> <li>3. Click <b>Family History Library Monthly Class Schedules</b>.</li> </ol>
Participate in FamilySearch Indexing.	Click <b>Give Back</b> .
Get help using the website.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Click <b>Help</b>, which is located in the upper-right corner.</li> <li>2. Select the type of help that you want: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To search for an answer to your question, enter your question, and click <b>Search</b>.</li> <li>• To find a nearby family history center or find out who your family history consultant is, click <b>Personal Assistance</b>.</li> <li>• To send a question or problem to FamilySearch Support, click <b>Contact Support</b>.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
Find a nearby family history center.	Click <b>FamilySearch Centers</b> . The option to find a family history center is toward the center of this page.
Sign in.	<p>If you registered on the previous version of the FamilySearch website, you may need to register again. To begin, click <b>Sign in</b>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you use one of the following websites, you do not need to register again. Enter the same user name and password that you use on these sites, and click <b>Sign In</b>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The new FamilySearch (new.familysearch.org)</li> <li>- FamilySearch indexing (indexing.familysearch.org)</li> <li>- FamilySearch Research Wiki (wiki.familysearch.org)</li> <li>- The Church's stake and ward websites (https://secure.lds.org/units)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• If you do not participate in one of these sites, click <b>Register</b>, and register again. We apologize for the inconvenience.</li> </ul>

## How the International Genealogical Index (IGI) Changed

The International Genealogical Index no longer exists as a searchable database. You can no longer search for its records by batch number.

The International Genealogical Index was a computer file that listed several hundred million names of deceased persons from throughout the world. It was available on compact disc and on previous versions of the FamilySearch website.

The International Genealogical Index had two basic types of records. Some are available on the updated FamilySearch website. Some are not.

**Note:** You can still use the International Genealogical on the previous version of the FamilySearch website. Scroll to the bottom of screen, and click **Use the previous version of FamilySearch.org**. Then click **Advanced Search**.

### *Original Records of Birth, Marriage, and Death*

Original records of birth, marriage, and death were transcribed and added to the International Genealogical Index. These records have high value for family history research because the information came from original records, and that original source information is still available. These records are now part of the FamilySearch website's collection of historical records. You can find them listed under the original titles of the collections from which they were indexed instead of being listed as coming from the International Genealogical Index.

### *Patron-Submitted Records*

Patrons submitted records that were added to the International Genealogical Index. These records lack sources, so their value for family history research is limited. These records are temporarily not available for searching.

## How Ancestral File Changed

Ancestral File is a computer file containing names and often other vital information (such as date and place of birth, marriage, or death) of millions of individuals who have lived throughout the world. Ancestral File was first published on compact disc. It was later published on the FamilySearch website.

In the newest version of the FamilySearch website, the following changes were made to Ancestral File:

- You can currently view only an individual's record. You cannot display pedigrees or family group records. These features will be added in the future.
- You cannot download the information as a GEDCOM file.
- When Ancestral File was first published on the FamilySearch website, people who may have still been alive were shown where they belonged in a family, but only the word "Living" was displayed. Ancestral File no longer displays any information about people who may still be alive.

**Note:** You can use the old version of Ancestral File on the previous version of the site. Scroll to the bottom of screen, and click **Use the previous version of FamilySearch.org**. Then click **Advanced Search**.

## How the Pedigree Resource File Changed

The Pedigree Resource File is a computer file that contains names; family relationships; and birth, marriage, and death information for millions of people. The Pedigree Resource File was originally published on compact disc. It will soon be available again on [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org). I

When the Pedigree Resource File is added to the FamilySearch website, the information will appear as it was originally submitted and is not merged with information submitted by others. The following changes will also be made:

- The FamilySearch website will contain all submissions made as of the date when the new version of the website is released. New submissions will temporarily be suspended but will resume soon.
- You will be able to view only an individual's record. You will not be able to display pedigrees or family group records. These features will be added in the future.
- You will not be able to download the information as a GEDCOM file.
- The data will be shown as individual submissions. Submissions by the same contributor are not combined.
- Sources and notes will be displayed.
- Multimedia links will not be displayed.

**Note:** Until the Pedigree Resource File is available on [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org), use the previous version of the site. Scroll to the bottom of screen, and click **Use the previous version of FamilySearch.org**. Then click **Advanced Search**.

## How the Family History Library Catalog Changed

The Family History Library Catalog describes the records available at the Family History Library.

The catalog provides a guide to family histories; birth, marriage, and death records; census records; church registers; and many other records that may contain genealogical information. These records may be in a book, on microfiche or microfilm, or online. Most microfilm and microfiche records can be sent to Family History Centers. The catalog is available on the Internet.

The new version of the catalog has these changes:

- If an item that is described in the catalog is available online, the catalog entry contains a link to where you can see it online. This includes both records and scanned books.
- The catalog uses many of the the same search feature as the rest of the FamilySearch website. This gives you the ability to narrow searches and filter search results by record type, date, place, and so forth.
- The catalog is updated online. A compact disc version is available, but it is several years old and will not be updated.

## Features That Are No Longer Available

A few features that were on the previous version of the FamilySearch website are not available on the current site.

You can still use these features on the previous version of FamilySearch website. To get there, scroll to the bottom of the screen, and click **Use the previous version of FamilySearch.org**.

### ***International Genealogical Index***

The International Genealogical Index no longer exists as a searchable database. You can still find the records that were transcribed from original records of birth, marriage, and death by searching in the Historical Records collections. You can no longer search by batch number. The patron-submitted records are temporarily unavailable.

### ***Pedigree Resource File and Ancestral File***

These databases are available on the new version of the FamilySearch website, but they work differently:

- You cannot upload a GEDCOM file for inclusion in the Pedigree Resource File. This feature is planned for a future update.
- You can no longer download GEDCOM files.
- You can no longer display information from the International Genealogical Index, Ancestral File, or Pedigree Resource File on a pedigree or family group record. This feature will be added in the future.
- Information about living people, including their place within a family, is not displayed.

**Note:** Pedigree Resource File is not yet available on the FamilySearch website. To search it, use the previous version of the site.

### ***Social Security Death Index***

The Social Security Death Index will be added to the site on or shortly after 10 December 2010.

### ***British 1881 and 1851 Censuses***

The British censuses are not yet available on the FamilySearch website.

### ***Family History Library Catalog***

The Family History Library Catalog is now published only online. You can still purchase the catalog on compact disc, but it is several years old and will not be reissued.

### ***Historical Books***

You can no longer search Historical Books directly. Instead, find the book in the Family History Library Catalog. If the book was scanned during the Historical Books project, its catalog entry contains a link that you can click to see the scanned book online.

### ***Instructions on Doing Family History Research***

You can no longer download and print publications about how to do family history research. The information from these publications has been transferred and updated in the FamilySearch Research Wiki.

Information from the Research Guidance and glossary features is also in the research wiki.

### ***Other Features***

- If you used the Advanced Search feature on the previous version of the FamilySearch website, you could search family history websites. These websites contained information useful for family history. The site owners were not affiliated with FamilySearch.

The current FamilySearch website does not search this same set of websites. Use a search engine such as Google to search for other family history sites.

- The site currently does not provide information about genealogical institutes, university and home study courses on family history, online genealogical presentations, and upcoming genealogical conferences. Much of this information will be available in future updates of the site.

# Performing Common Tasks

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You can do many of the same things on the improved FamilySearch website that you could in the previous version.

This section of the guide contains step-by-step instructions for the most commonly performed tasks on the FamilySearch website.

## Searching the Entire Collection of Historical Records

When you search in historical records, you enter some information about an ancestor. The website then finds records of births, marriages, deaths, censuses, and other events that might contain information about him or her.

For some records, you can see both the index and a digital image of the record itself. For other records, you might be able to see only the index.

If images are hosted on another website, you can see the index on the FamilySearch website. To see the image, go to the owner's website. You may need to pay a small fee to see, save, or print a record on another site.



1. If you are not on the Home page, click  (**FamilySearch Home**).
2. If Historical Records is not currently selected, click **Historical Records**.
3. Enter information about the individual that you want to find.

**Tip:** Create a broad search that finds many records. After you look at the results, refine your search or use the filters to focus in on exactly what you want.

4. (Optional) To see more search fields, click **Advanced Search**.  
To hide these fields, click **Basic Search**.

5. Click **Search**.

Collections that have a camera (📷) include images. Collections without a camera have only the index.

A list of records that matches your search appears. The records that match your search most closely are near the top of the list. A line divides the close matches from the rest of the results.

6. Scan your search results for records of interest to you.
  - a. To display more information from the index without leaving your search results, click ▼.  
This icon is located at the far right side of each record in your search results.
  - b. (Optional) If you do not see the record that you want, refine your search results:

- In the Search fields, enter more information about the individual that you want to find. For example, add a date or place. The Search fields are located in the top left corner of the screen.
  - To narrow your search results to a specific type of record, click a record type or other filter. The filters are located beneath the search fields. You may need to scroll down to see them. The number that is next to the filter name indicates how many of your search results are in that record type.
  - To start a completely new search, clear the information from the search fields, and enter your new search.
- c. (Optional) To see if the system also found records from trees that match your search, scroll to the bottom of your search results. Click a link to see a tree record. Records in trees have been submitted by other researchers. Currently, only records from Ancestral File are available in trees. Records from the Pedigree Resource File will soon be added.
7. When you find a record of interest, click the individual's name to see the complete details.  
If the FamilySearch website has an image of the record, the complete details shows a picture of an image. If the record contains restrictions on its use or is owned by another organization, you see a note that explains the issue.
8. Decide what you want to do next:
- To print the complete details, click **Print**, located in the upper right corner of the screen.
  - To view the image, click the image or **View image**.
- Tip:** Even if the complete details screen contains the information you are looking for, view the image if there is one. Viewing the image provides these additional benefits:
- The index may contain errors. Seeing the image lets you make sure that you have the correct information.
  - The image may contain more information.
  - Seeing the image can help make the individual seem more real.
- To save a copy of the image in .jpg format, click **Save image**.
  - To see if the collection of which this image is a part contains other records of interest to you, click **Search Collection**.
  - To learn about the collection, click **About This Collection**.
  - If a family member has an index entry, his or her name is a link. Click it to see to see that individual's record.

**Tip:** Only a very small percentage of our collection has been indexed and made available on the FamilySearch website. Most of our records are available on microfilm only. To see if we have a microfilm of interest to you, search our Library Catalog.

## Searching a Specific Collection of Historical Records

If you want to search a specific collection of records, you can find that collection and then search it.

1. If you are not on the Home page, click  **(FamilySearch Home)**.

2. If Historical Records is not currently selected, click **Historical Records**.
3. Beneath the search fields, click the area of the world where the records were created. To see a list of all of the online collections, click **All Record Collections**. An alphabetic list of the available collections appears. This list shows you what is available and how you can search it:
  - If you see a camera (📷) next to the collection name, you can see images of the records in the collection.
  - If the Records column on the right side of the list shows a number, then the collection has been indexed. You can use the search feature to find specific individuals in the collection.
  - If the Records column contains the words “Browse Images,” the collection has not been indexed. You can see the images online, but you cannot search them. Instead, you use “waypoints” to go directly to the section of the collection that most likely contains the individual that you are looking for. You might need to look at each image in that section to find what you need.

**Note:** Waypoints are like bookmarks or chapters within a collection of records. Waypoints are placed where a collection logically divides. For example, a marriage register that is organized by date contains waypoints that mark pages where the records of a specific month or year starts. Census records are organized by place. The waypoints let you see the part of the census for that place.
4. Find the collection that you want to search. You can use several methods to find the collection:
  - Scroll down the list of collections, and find the one that you want.
  - In the Search field, enter words that might be in the collection’s title. For example, enter a place, record type, or year. The Search field is located in the top left corner of the screen. Your search results automatically narrow to only those collections that match what you entered.
  - Click a filter to see only records that match the filter. The filters are located on the left side of the screen, beneath the Search fields.
  - To see only records for which images are available online, click **Show only collections with images**. This option is located along the left side of the screen, beneath the filters. You may need to scroll down to see it.
5. Click the name of the collection that you want. A description of the collection appears. If the collection has been indexed, the screen contains fields that you can use to search the collection. If the collection has not been indexed, the screen contains a link that you can use to browse the images.
6. If the collection has not been indexed, click the **Browse through...** link to see the images. Then click the waypoint links to go to the section of the collection that you want.
7. If the collection has been indexed, search the collection to find the record you want:
  - a. Enter information about the individual that you want to find.
  - b. (Optional) To see more search fields, click **Advanced Search**. To hide these fields, click **Basic Search**.
  - c. Click **Search**. A list of records that matches your search appears. The records that match your search most closely are near the top of the list. a line divides the close matches from the rest of the results.
  - d. To display more information from the index without leaving your search results, click ▾.

This icon is located at the far right side of each record in your search results.

- e. (Optional) If you do not see the record that you want, refine your search results:
  - In the Search fields, enter more information about the individual that you want to find. For example, add a date or place. The Search fields are located in the top left corner of the screen.
  - To narrow your search results to a specific type of record, click a record type or other filter. The filters are located beneath the search fields. You may need to scroll down to see them. The number that is next to the filter name indicates how many of your search results are in that record type.
  - To start a completely new search, clear the information from the search fields, and enter your new search.
8. When you find a record of interest, click the individual's name to see the complete details.

If the FamilySearch website has an image of the record, the complete details shows a picture of an image. If the record contains restrictions on its use or is owned by another organization, you see a note that explains the issue.
9. Decide what you want to do next:
  - To print the complete details, click **Print**, located in the upper right corner of the screen.
  - To view the image, click the image or **View image**.

**Tip:** Even if the complete details screen contains the information you are looking for, view the image if there is one. Viewing the image provides these additional benefits:

    - The index may contain errors. Seeing the image lets you make sure that you have the correct information.
    - The image may contain more information.
    - Seeing the image can help make the individual seem more real.
  - To save a copy of the image in .jpg format, click **Save image**.
  - To see if the collection of which this image is a part contains other records of interest to you, click **Search Collection**.
  - To learn about the collection, click **About This Collection**.
  - If a family member has an index entry, his or her name is a link. Click it to see to see that individual's record.

**Tip:** Only a very small percentage of our collection has been indexed and made available on the FamilySearch website. Most of our records are available on microfilm only. To see if we have a microfilm of interest to you, search our Library Catalog.

## Options and Tips for Searching Historical Records

If you understand the way the options on the search screen work, you have a better chance of finding the historical records that you need.

You do not need to enter information in all fields. You may get better search results if you leave some fields blank.

**Options for the Basic Search**

<b>Option</b>	<b>Instructions</b>	<b>Tips</b>
<b>First Names</b>	Enter the first and middle names of the individual.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try adding or omitting middle names.</li> <li>• Try nicknames.</li> <li>• Try spelling variations.</li> <li>• If the individual moved to a new country, try spelling the name as it is spelled in the old country and in the new one.</li> <li>• Try using wildcards. (Enter * to replace zero or more characters. Enter ? to replace one character.)</li> </ul>
<b>Last Name</b>	Enter the last name of the individual.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try spelling and language variations.</li> <li>• Look for women using both a maiden name and married name.</li> <li>• Try using wildcards. (Enter * to replace zero or more characters. Enter ? to replace one character.)</li> </ul>
<b>Place</b>	Enter a place where the individual lived.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try searching at a more or less specific place level. For example, if you searched for a town, try the county or district instead.</li> <li>• Try using wildcards. (Enter * to replace zero or more characters. Enter ? to replace one character.)</li> </ul>
<b>From Year and To Year</b>	Enter the range of years when the individual lived in that place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase or decrease the year range.</li> <li>• If the individual has a less common name, try searching with no years.</li> <li>• Try either a beginning year or end year.</li> </ul>
<b>Advanced Search</b>	Click this link to see the more search options.	

**Options for the Advanced Search**

<b>Option</b>	<b>Instructions</b>	<b>Tips</b>
<b>Check boxes</b> in name and place fields.	Click the check box of each field for which you want to perform an exact search.	If you use this option and do not find what you need, try your search again without it. Repeat the search even if you think you know exact names and places.
<b>Event</b>	Specify that you want to search for birth, marriage, death, or residence.	<p>These options find similar events to the one specified.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>Birth</b> option finds births and christenings.</li> </ul>

Option	Instructions	Tips
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The <b>Marriage</b> finds all records related to marriages, such as marriage banns.</li> <li>The Death option finds death, burial, and cremation.</li> </ul>
<b>Place</b>	Enter the place where the event happened.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Try searching at a more or less specific place level. For example, if you searched for a town, try the county or district instead.</li> <li>Try using wildcards. (Enter * to replace zero or more characters. Enter ? to replace one character.)</li> </ul>
<b>Year</b>	Enter the event year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase or decrease the year range.</li> <li>If the individual has a less common name, try searching with no years.</li> </ul>
+/- <b>Note:</b> This option appears after you select an event.	Select a range of years.	<p>If you do not find what you want, increase the year range, even if you think you know an exact year. The information that you have may not match the record.</p> <p>To do an exact search, select <b>0</b>.</p>
<b>Relationship</b>	Include the name of a spouse or parents in your search.	Try the same tips as for the first and last names of the individual.
Names of the father, mother, and spouse	Enter the first, middle, and last names of the father, mother, or spouse.	Use the same tips as for the individual's first and names.
<b>Basic Search</b>	Click this link to see fewer search options.	
<b>Match all terms exactly</b>	Click this option to have the system find only records that match everything you entered exactly.	

## Searching for Ancestors in Trees

When you search in trees, you enter some information about an ancestor. The website then finds published family trees that may contain him or her.

The information in these trees was previously published in the following databases, which were also on the classic version of the FamilySearch website:

Ancestral File

Records from the Pedigree Resource File will be added soon.

**Note:** You can still search the Pedigree Resource File on classic version of the FamilySearch website. Scroll to the bottom of the screen, click **Use the previous version of FamilySearch.org**, and click **Advanced Search**.



1. If you are not on the Home page, click **FamilySearch Home**.
2. If Trees is not currently selected, click **Trees**.
3. Enter information about the individual that you want to find.

**Tip:** Create a broad search that finds many records. After you look at the results, refine your search or use the filters to focus in on exactly what you want.

4. (Optional) To see more search fields, click **Advanced Search**.  
To hide these fields, click **Basic Search**.
5. Click **Search**.

Collections that have a camera (📷) include images. Collections without a camera have only the index.

A list of records that matches your search appears. The records that match your search most closely are near the top of the list. A line divides the close matches from the rest of the results.

6. Scan your search results for records of interest to you.
7. (Optional) If you do not see the record that you want, refine your search results:
  - In the Search fields, enter more information about the individual that you want to find. For example, add a date or place. The Search field is located in the top left corner of the screen. Your search results automatically narrow to only those records that match what you entered.

**Tip:** To see more search fields, click **Advanced Search**. To hide these fields, click **Basic Search**.

  - To start a completely new search, clear the information from the search fields, and enter your new search.
8. (Optional) To see if the system also found records from historical records that match your search, scroll to the bottom of your search results. Click a link to see the record.
9. When you find a record of interest, click the individual's name to see all of the available information.  
The individual's details appear.

## Options and Tips for Searching Trees

If you understand the way the options on the search screen work, you have a better chance of finding a family tree that contains your ancestry.

You do not need to enter information in all fields. You may get better search results if you leave some fields blank.

Family trees have been compiled from records, personal knowledge, and other sources. They may contain errors and estimated information. Be sure to try a wide variety of searches if you do not find what you are looking for.

**Options for the Basic Search**

<b>Option</b>	<b>Instructions</b>	<b>Tips</b>
<b>First Names</b>	Enter the first and middle names of the individual.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try adding or omitting middle names.</li> <li>• Try nicknames.</li> <li>• Try spelling variations.</li> <li>• If the individual moved to a new country, try spelling the name as it is spelled in the old country and in the new one.</li> <li>• Try using wildcards. (Enter * to replace zero or more characters. Enter ? to replace one character.)</li> </ul>
<b>Last Name</b>	Enter the last name of the individual.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try spelling and language variations.</li> <li>• Look for women using both a maiden name and married name.</li> <li>• Try using wildcards. (Enter * to replace zero or more characters. Enter ? to replace one character.)</li> </ul>
Birth year and death year	Enter the year.  In addition to records from the year you enter, your search results include records from one year earlier and one year later.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Click the <b>Advanced Search</b> link, and either increase the year range or click the <b>Exact</b> option.</li> <li>• If the individual has a less common name, try searching with no year.</li> </ul>
Place of birth and death	Enter the place where the individual was born or died.	<p>Try searching at a more or less specific place level. For example, if you searched for a town, try the county or district instead.</p> <p>Try using wildcards. (Enter * to replace zero or more characters. Enter ? to replace one character.)</p>
Name of the father, mother, and spouse	Enter the first, middle, and last names of the father, mother, or spouse.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the same tips as for the individual's name.</li> <li>• Try searching for parents only. This type of search may pull up a list of possible siblings.</li> <li>• Try searching the spouse's name only.</li> </ul>
<b>Marriage Year</b>	Enter the couple's marriage year. Unless you specify a range, the search is exact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you know when a couple's first child was born, estimate that the couple married about one year earlier.</li> <li>• Use a year range.</li> </ul>

Option	Instructions	Tips
<b>Marriage Place</b>	Enter the place where the couple was married.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Try the search tips for birth and death places.</li> <li>If you do not know where the couple married, try the place where the bride lived. Then try again with the place where the groom lived.</li> </ul>
<b>Advanced Search</b>	Click this link to use exact search and to specify year ranges.	

### *Options for the Advanced Search*

Option	Instructions	Tips
<b>Clear form</b>	Click this link to delete all of the information for this search.	Click this link when you are ready to try a new search.
<b>Match all terms exactly</b>	Click this option to have the system find only records that match everything you entered exactly.	If you use this option and do not find what you need, try your search again without it. Repeat your search even if you think you know exact names, dates, and places.
<b>Exact</b>	Click the exact option for each field in which you want the system to search exactly what you enter.	Use the same tips as <b>Match all terms exactly</b> .
<b>+/-</b>	Select a range of years.	By default, the system searches for $\pm 1$ year. If you do not find what you want, increase the year range, even if you think you know an exact year. The information that you have may not match the record.  To do an exact search, select <b>0</b> .

## Using the Library Catalog to Find Records That Are Not Online

To find out whether anything in the FamilySearch collection can help your research, search the library's catalog.

Searching the library catalog is much the same as searching for historical records or trees. Instead of records about individuals or families, your search results describe other types of records that might contain the information that you need.



1. If you are not on the Home page, click **FamilySearch Home**.
2. If the catalog search options are not already open, click **Library Catalog**.
3. Click the **Search** drop-down list, and click the type of search that you want to do.
  - If you know a place where information about your ancestor might have been recorded, such as a birthplace, click **Place**.
  - If you know the last name of an ancestor, click **Last name**.  
**Tip:** This search is especially useful for finding family histories.
  - If you know a year or range of years when a record might have been created, click **Year range**.
  - If you know all or some of the words in the title of the item that you want to find, click **Title**.
  - If you know the name of the individual or organization that created the record or wrote a book, click **Author**.
  - If you want to see what the library has about a certain subject, click **Subject**. The subjects used are from the United States Library of Congress.
  - If you know a book's call number, click **Call number**.
  - If you know the number of a microfilm, click **Film number**.
  - If you want to enter a few keywords and see what the library has, click **Entire catalog (beta)**.
4. Enter your search terms:

**Tip:** You can use wildcards in every search except the film number search. Enter \* to replace zero or more characters. Enter ? to replace one character.

<b>Type of Search</b>	<b>What to Enter</b>
<b>Place</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Enter as much of the place-name as you know.</li> <li>2. From the drop-down list, select the place that you want.</li> </ol> <p>Try your search with several places. Records about your ancestor may have been kept by many civil and religious institutions. So if you do not find the records listed in the city or county, try searching the state, province, district, or country.</p>
<b>Last name</b>	Enter the last name.
<b>Year range</b>	Enter the earliest and latest year. For example, enter the years of your ancestor's lifespan.
<b>Title</b>	Enter as many of the words from the title as you know.
<b>Author</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In the First and Middle Name(s) field, enter the author's first and middle name. If the author is an organization, leave this field blank.</li> <li>2. In the Last or Corporate Name field, enter the author's last name. Or enter the name of the organization that created a set of records.</li> </ol> <p>If the item has more than one author, you can search for one at a time. Use the Entire catalog search if you want to enter the names of multiple authors' as keywords in one search.</p>

<b>Type of Search</b>	<b>What to Enter</b>
<b>Subject</b>	<p>Enter the subject.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Type more words to get more specific results. Type fewer words for a broader search.</li> <li>• You can enter the words of the subject in any order.</li> <li>• You do not need to enter hyphens between the levels of the subject headings.</li> </ul>
<b>Call number</b>	<p>Enter all or part of the call number. You do not need to worry about capitalization.</p> <p>To find items that are located near each other on the library's shelves, type at least the first 8 characters of the call number.</p> <p>To include the first and second lines of the call number in your search, type a space between the lines.</p>
<b>Film number</b>	Enter the complete microfilm number.
<b>Entire catalog (beta)</b>	<p>Type one or more words that describe the entries you want to find. You do not need to include words such as "a," "of," and "in."</p> <p><b>Tip:</b> Type as many specific or less common keywords as you can. For example, if you want to find entries about the Wilson family who married into the Kitzmiller family and lived in Maryland, you obtain better results if you type <b>wilson kitzmiller maryland</b> than if you type <b>wilson</b>.</p>

5. Click **Search**.

A list of search results appears.

- If you conducted a place search, the results show the types of records that are available for that place. The number indicates how many catalog entries are in that record type.
- If you conducted another type of search, you see a list of matching catalog entries.

6. If you conducted a place search, click the record type that you want  
The catalog entries opens beneath that record type. You can open as many categories as you want.

7. If you did not find what you want, try one of these strategies:

- To refine your search, add or delete items in the search fields, which are located in the upper left side of the search results. Then click **Search**.
- To filter your search, click a filter. The available filters are located beneath the search fields, along the left side of the screen. The number that is next to the filter name indicates how many of your search results are in that record type.

**Note:** Filters are not available when you do a place search.

- To conduct a different type of catalog search, simply empty the fields in the upper-left corner. Select the search type, enter your search terms, and click **Search**. You do not need to return to the home page unless you want to search Historical Records or Trees.
- If the system finds more results than fits on the screen, numbered links appear at the bottom of the list. Click these numbers to see each page of search results.

8. To see a catalog entry, click it.

To print a catalog entry, click the **Print** button, which is located in the upper-right corner of the screen.

**Tip:** Many books and records are available for use online. If FamilySearch International or Brigham Young University has scanned an item in the library's collection, the catalog entry contains a link that lets you view the item online. This link is located in a box on the left side of the catalog entry.

## Downloading and Ordering Family History Products

At the FamilySearch Store, you can download and order products that can help with your family history research.

Currently, the store has only one item: a video of a family history celebration. You must use the previous site to download Personal Ancestral File and the other items that are available there.

- To download the celebration video, scroll to the bottom of the screen, and click **Store**.
- To download Personal Ancestral File (PAF) or other items, scroll to the bottom of a screen, and click **Use the previous version of FamilySearch.org**.
  - The links to download Personal Ancestral File and other products are located in the lower-right corner of the previous FamilySearch.org website.
  - To download documents about how to do family history research, click **Research Helps**, and find the document that you want.

## Learning How to Do Family History

The FamilySearch website provides several tools that can help you learn how to do family history research.

1. Click **Learn**.

The Learning Resources screen contains a search field that you can use to search the Research Wiki. Beneath that field are links to the Research Wiki, online courses, and other resources that can help you learn to do family history.

2. Select the type of content that you want:

- To search for articles about doing family history research, enter what you want to find, and click **Search**. Or click **Research Wiki**.

**Note:** The previous version of the FamilySearch website contained a research guidance system and many PDF documents that explained how to do different types of research. This content has been moved to the Research Wiki, where it has been updated and enhanced.

- To see a list of online classes, click **Research Courses**.
- To see activities that you can do to begin your family history, click **Get Started**.