

Getting Started in Genealogy

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Ever wondered who is in your family and how to find the information. Genealogy is not just for older people; it is for anyone interested in their family history.

This document will hopefully help you to get the information you need. Don't worry about a genealogy program at first this is something you can look at when you have a lot of information and want to keep it altogether in one place. I will give some tips on genealogy programs later in this document.

1. So where is the best place to start?

Well, the best place is to start with yourself, after all you know all about yourself.

2. So, what questions do you need the answers to?

When I started out (admittedly I was an adult and many years ago) the following helped me. I set up index cards with headings as shown in the table below, one for each person in my family. This was before I got a genealogy program. I ended up with over 100 index cards after I had collected information from my parents and my grandmothers.

Note - You could set up a note book in the same way rather than have lots of index cards.

You will probably think that is an awful lot of information, yes it is but if you have the information listed like this it will be easier to go back and complete it as you get the information.

I also colour coded my families. Although I had my dad's last name I gave myself a green colour as I come from two families – I colour coded my mum's family - red and my dad's family – blue. This made it easier for me when I was researching a particular family, I could pull out the appropriate coloured cards and work my way through the information.

Note – you can choose any colours you like.

Who	Me, Brother, Sister, Mum, Dad, Grandad, Grandma, etc
Surname (Last name)	What was their last name at birth?
First name	What is their first name?
Other names	Do they have any other names?
Birth date (day month year)	When were they born?
Birth place	Where were they born?

Baptism/Christening date (day month year)	Were they baptised/christened?
Baptism/Christening place	Where were they baptised/christened?
Marriage date (day month year)	When did they get married?
Marriage place	Where did they get married?
Partner/spouse name	What is their partner/spouse name?
Death date (day month year)	When did they die?
Death place	Where did they die?
Funeral date (day month year)	When was their funeral?
Funeral place	Where was their funeral?
Mum's name	What is their mum's name?
Dad's name	What is their dad's name?
Siblings (Brothers and Sisters)	Do they have any brothers and sisters?
Children	Do they have any children?

So, my card started to look like this -

Who	Me
Surname (Last name)	Watts
First name	Elizabeth
Other names	Anne
Birth date (day month year)	10 March 1962
Birth place	Ilford Essex
Baptism/Christening date (day month year)	
Baptism/Christening place	
Marriage date (day month year)	
Marriage place	
Partner/spouse name	
Death date (day month year)	
Death place	
Funeral date (day month year)	
Funeral place	
Mum's name	Barbara E Flaherty
Dad's name	John R Watts
Siblings (Brothers and Sisters)	Andrew J
Children	

3. Where to get this information?

After you have collected all the information you can about yourself you will need to speak to your mum and dad about your brothers/sisters if you have any. Your mum and dad will fill in any missing information about you and then they will be able to tell you about themselves and any Aunt's and Uncle's you may have. Also, if your grandparents are dead they may be able to give you information about them. However, if you are lucky enough to have living grandparents speak to them and get the information you need.

4. Where else can I get information?

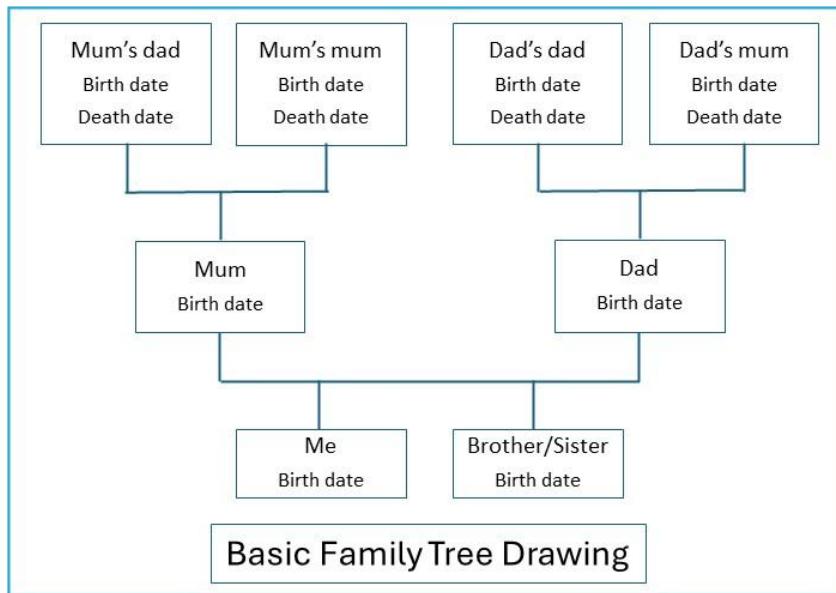
Find out if there are any documents such as birth certificate, baptism/christening certificate, marriage certificate, or death certificate in your family. Ask to see them and jot down the information contained within, sometimes you find that there are other members of the family listed (usually as witnesses).

There are many resources on line for finding your ancestors, in the UK I use - Find my past, Ancestry, and Scotland's People. Always take a note of where you found your information – this is called a source. This makes it easier if you need to double check your information.

Note - Please remember to always check your information.

5. How do I show all the information I have?

The following is a quick and easy way to draw your family tree –



The minimum Information to include in drawing is name and surname, birth date, and death date. Remember that each generation going back in history will double.

6. Genealogy programs and other resources

There are many good genealogy programs for sale. However, it would be best if you could try before you buy, many programs have trial versions. Once you have found a program you like enter the information and watch your family tree grow.

There are also many books that help you in your exploration of your family tree.

7. Finally

You will never complete your family tree there will always be someone to add or a “brick wall” to break , this is when you can’t find the information you need on a family member. **Don’t give up.** I had a family member who I didn’t know the father of and then after 40 years I found a document that listed his name, which helped me complete my family member’s “card” but this then led to a whole new family being added to my tree.

Enjoy researching your family tree you never know who you might find!