

Tracking Aboriginal Ancestors

How do I Start My Family Tree?

1. Write down what you already know about your family.

- Start with yourself: name, birth date and place, marriage, children ...
Use a date sheet, and simply 'fill in the blanks'.
- Fill in what you know about your family: mother, father, your brothers and sisters
Put in dates and places if you know them, or your 'best guess'
- Make a similar list for your aunts and uncles, and their children
- If you know anything about your grandparents, add that information.

First names and guesses are fine at this stage.

2. What is missing?

- Highlight or circle incomplete information
- Decide what information you want to look for first - you may want to start with getting more information about a certain person, or 'my mom's relatives'
- Where are you likely to find the information you want?
- Which ancestor do you MOST want to start with?

3. Organize all the information and materials

- A 3-ring binder works great, and keeps things together
- Use dividers for different generations
- You can use colors for maternal and paternal lines
- Find a system that works for you
- Make copies: NEVER work with originals
- File originals in a safe place
- Scan photos and store originals in a safe place

4. What information already exists and might be easy to find?

- Talk to people who might know: family, others from your community, Elders • Gather all the records that you and others might already have (pictures, certificates, records, school report cards, letters, etc..)
- Record sources: where you found the information (type of information, where it was kept or located) Use the form to keep track, so you or others can find the info again

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5. Decide which ancestor you want to start with, and begin your research

- Are any family members in the Register of BC Indians 1980
- lots of free information is available on-line
 - www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/aboriginal-heritage/genealogy.aspx
Library & archives Canada site
 - Census records: where were they living?
www.automatedgenealogy.com - Vital statistics: birth, baptism, marriage, death in Provincial Archives - Cemeteries where there may be a headstone; take a picture!
 - Band offices
 - Community newspapers, newsletters, posters
 - School records or annuals

6. Keep adding to what you know

- Check out websites, facebook postings
- Talk to people at gatherings, events, ask questions
- Share your information with others
- Post some of your scanned pictures; ask for help to identify people and dates • Local history books sometimes have information about families
- Keep your records up-to-date - on the computer, in your binder, in secure files • One step at a time - have fun!

Records worth tracking

Genealogists use a wide variety of records in their research. To effectively conduct genealogical research, it is important to understand how the records were created, what information is included in them, and how and where to access them.

Records that are used in genealogy research include:

- Vital records
 - Birth records
 - Death records
 - Marriage and divorce records

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- Adoption records
 - Biographies and biographical profiles (e.g. *Who's Who*)
 - Census records
 - Cemeteries: headstones, funeral home records
 - Church records
 - Baptism or christening
 - Confirmation
 - Bar or bat mitzvah
 - Marriage
 - Funeral or death
 - Membership
 - City directories and telephone directories
 - Coroner's reports
 - Court records
 - Criminal records
 - Civil records
 - Diaries, personal letters and family Bibles
 - Emigration, immigration and naturalization records
 - Organizations; Hereditary & lineage organization , e.g. Daughters of the American Revolution records, aboriginal veterans
 - Land and property records, deeds
 - Medical records
 - Military and conscription records
 - Newspaper articles
 - Obituaries
 - Occupational records & union memberships
 - Oral histories
 - Passports
 - Photographs
 - Poorhouse, workhouse, almshouse, and asylum records
 - School and alumni association records
 - Ship passenger lists
 - Social Security (within the US) and pension records
 - Tax records
 - Voter registration records
 - Wills and probate records
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