

## CHAPTER 1

**3-Easy Steps**

**Follow These 3-Easy Steps to Begin Building Your Family Tree and Connect to Your Ancestors**

# STEP 1 - Identify Your Ancestors Using Your Family



The success of tracing your family roots and stories increases when families work together. Family members will often have information to share, or they may be willing to help you look for information. Your relatives may remember important events and dates that have not been recorded. They may have family heirlooms, records, mementos, photographs, and other valuable items. They may have interesting family stories to tell, and they can sometimes direct you to others who knew your ancestors or to other relatives you may not know.

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**Suggested Activities**

- Purchase family history software to help you if you haven't already and learn the basics (*see Chapter 4: Family History Software*).
- Start writing down what you know about your family.
- Print out a blank *pedigree form* and *family group sheet* from the Internet to make it easier.
- Call relatives to find out if someone has already compiled a family history or other records that might contain the information you're looking for. Ask them to e-mail a GEDCOM file of their information. This is a great head start.
- Look around your house for documents that might provide new information or verify the information you already have. Keep copies of everything you find in your search. It may not seem important now, but it will in the future.



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# STEP 2 - Add New Branches to Your Family Tree Using the Internet



Computers, technology, and the Internet have revolutionized the way we do family history and genealogy today. We can search farther and faster than ever before, and we can record everything we find with just a few keystrokes. Computers allow us to discover, store, access, and share family history information with speed and convenience.

The Internet is an excellent and powerful tool for you to gather your family history information and share it with others. It's made up of millions of sites which are just files stored on computers around the world. Each site can contain any number of associated pages – each of which has a unique electronic address, i.e. *about.com*. It's estimated that more than two million separate web sites are devoted to genealogy / family history.

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### Suggested Activities

1. Enter all of the family information you've gathered—including info from your relatives—into your family history program; learn the basics of your software program.
2. Search for your ancestors using existing family tree web sites described herein, and discover the wealth of information available.
3. Import any new information into your family history database.

## CHAPTER 3

**3-Easy Steps**

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# STEP 3 - Connect With the Lives of Your Ancestors

**DISCOVER YOUR FAMILY HERITAGE, STORIES, AND PHOTOS**



Family history is more than just names and dates. You should learn more about who your ancestors really were, where they lived, and what they did. You should try to gain information and an understanding of each of your ancestors if possible. Finding your roots and stories helps you gain a sense of belonging, and an understanding of who you are and where you come from.

The Internet is the perfect tool for opening a window to the past and connecting with the lives and stories of your ancestors. Discover more than you ever imagined about the lives of your ancestors that made you who you are today.

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**Suggested Activities**

1. Consider ways your family can best honor and pay tribute to your ancestors and inspire your children to know them.
2. Establish a new tradition in your family for honoring your ancestors which can be perpetuated from generation-to-generation.
3. Create a timeline of one or more of your ancestors lives combined with historical events to get to know the times in which they lived.
4. Visit the cemetery and gravesite of an ancestor(s) to better connect with them.