

[Important Websites for Jewish Genealogy](#)

There are two "must peruse" websites for initiating original research in the Jewish genealogy. There are a lot of excellent resources well documents found on both **Family Search.Org** and **The Family History Guide**.

From a single URL cited below on **FamilySearch**, you will find a comprehensive overview of resources for Jewish genealogy that covers the gamut of resources and research tools that you could ever have imagined all from one extended screen display. It is a remarkable guide to Jewish ancestry, history, and genealogy with birth records, marriage records, death records, census records, military records and much more. The URL is https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Jewish_Genealogy The headings are specifically cited below along with their links that you can search quickly

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Jewish Genealogy

Genealogy

The term genealogy is used in this article and in the FamilySearch Catalog to describe a variety of records containing compiled family information. These records are often gathered by individuals, other researchers, societies, or archives. They may include pedigree charts, correspondence, ancestor lists, research exchange files, record abstracts, and collections of original or copied documents. Genealogies can be a time-saving source of information, but they must be carefully evaluated for accuracy.



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Major Collections and Databases[\[edit source\]](#)

The Family History Library has several sources that contain previous research or can lead you to others who are interested in sharing family information. These sources include:

- International Genealogical Index, which lists the names of deceased individuals from all over the world. This index includes names extracted from birth and marriage records and from submissions of private individuals. While it may include only limited information on Jewish families, it is certainly worth searching.

Ancestral File. This file, part of FamilySearch and on the FamilySearch.org Internet site, contains family history information linked in family groups and pedigrees that has been contributed by patrons since 1979. Although it contains the names of millions of people, few are of Jewish descent. Ancestral File allows you to print pedigree charts, family group records, details about the submitters, and individual summary sheets for any person in the file. It was closed in 2004 and was replaced by the Pedigree Resource File. The data, however, is still available online and on CD-ROM at many Family History Centers. Notes and sources are not included online or in the CD-ROMs.

Vital Records Index British Isles, and Vital Records Index North America. These two sets of CD-ROM indexes contain information from millions of birth, christening, and marriage records for the British Isles (1538–1888) and the United States and Canada (1631–1888). Both indexes can be purchased from the Distribution Center (see "Introduction" for the address). However, most data in these two sets has since been posted at familysearch.org,

Pedigree Resource File. This CD-ROM database contains nearly 200 million names in lineage-linked pedigrees that have been submitted by researchers. These pedigrees contain unedited notes and sources. Charts and reports can be printed from the data. The set also includes a master index to the names. It can be purchased from the Distribution Center (see "Introduction" for the address).

These databases are found at most Family History Centers. Except for the full data notes and sources in the Pedigree Resource File, they can also be found on the Internet at: <http://www.familysearch.org/> . The series now consists of 125 CDs and 17 DVDs. The DVDs contain the data equivalent of 85 of the CDs.

Family Histories[\[edit source\]](#)

Some Jewish families have produced histories or newsletters that include genealogical information, biographies, photographs, and other excellent information. These usually contain several generations of the family. An example is:

Freedman, Chaim. Eliyahu's Branches: the Descendants of the Vilna Gaon (of Blessed and Saintly Memory) and His Family. Teaneck, NJ: Avotaynu, 1997. (FHL book 947.5/V1 D2f.)

The Family History Library has many published Jewish family histories contributed by Jewish genealogists throughout the world. To find family histories in the Library, look for the family name in the Surname Search of the FamilySearch Catalog. Also consult bibliographies of Jewish genealogies such as:

Zubatsky, David S. and Irwin M. Berent. *Sourcebook for Jewish Genealogies and Family Histories*. Teaneck, N.J.: Avotaynu, 1996. (FHL book 296 Z81s.)

Genealogical information on Jews in a given community has also been compiled. The following are examples of compiled genealogies for Jews:

Stern, Malcolm H. *First American Jewish Families, 600 Genealogies 1654–1988*. 3rd ed. Baltimore: Ottenheimer Publishers, Inc., 1991. (FHL book 973 F2frs.) This book contains alphabetically arranged pedigrees of prominent Jewish families whose ancestors settled in the United States before 1840.

Cavignac, Jean. *Dictionnaire du Judaïsme Bordelais aux XVIIIe et XIXe Siècles: Biographies, Généalogies, Professions, Institutions* (Dictionary of Judaism in Bordeaux in the 18th and 19th centuries: Biographies Genealogies, Professions, Institutions). Bordeaux: Archives départementales, 1987. (FHL book 944.71/B1 F2c.)

Willigsecker, Alain. *Chroniques blithariennes: La communauté israélite de Grosbliedersstoff aux 18ème et 19ème siècles* (Blitharian Chronicles: the Jewish Community of Grosbriedstroff in the 18th and 19th Centuries). Forbach: Cercle Généalogique de Moselle-Est, 1994. (FHL book 944.3825/G2 D2w.)

Genealogical Collections[\[edit source\]](#)

Genealogical collections include published and unpublished family histories and lineages as well as the research files of prominent genealogists. A major Jewish genealogical collection is:

- [Israel Genealogy Research Association](#) "The Israel Genealogy Research Association [IGRA] has set as one of its primary aims the preparation of databases based upon various records, mainly found in Israel, for as wide an audience as possible. The large amount of archives located in Israel dealing with communities in Israel and Jewish communities outside of Israel have records in a variety of languages but mostly in Hebrew and English. Our data come from Archives as well as publications which are on open shelves in libraries."
- Mordy, I. [Collection of Jewish Records](#). (FHL film 0994068 item 11 contains notes on the use of the indexes; 1279240–1279250 contain the indexes). Microfilm copy of original records held by Isobel Mordy in England. It includes compiled pedigrees of Jews and three indexes to the pedigrees by name, date, and locality. The name index is arranged alphabetically and gives pedigree reference numbers.
- The Internet has information about genealogical collections, such as the American Jewish Historical Society's online catalog of their manuscript collection. Their holdings include personal manuscripts that contain genealogy collections of specific individuals or families. Access their catalog at: [JewishGen](#)

There are also collections of genealogical materials about non-Jewish people that include information about individual Jews. Several family papers and unpublished genealogical collections are at local libraries and archives in the United States. Many of these collections are listed in:

- National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections (NUCMC). Annual. Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1959–. (FHL book 016.091 N21.)

- An index to 200,000 names in the collections is found in:
Index to Personal Names in the National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections, 1959–1984. 2 vols. Alexandria, Va.: Chadwyck-Healey, 1988. (FHL book 016.091 N21 Index 1959–1984.)

Genealogical Indexes[\[edit source\]](#)

Indexes are excellent tools for genealogists. Many organizations and individuals compile indexes to various genealogies and records, including ones by name or place. If an index applies to your research, it can save you many hours of searching. The Family History Library has some of these indexes. The following are some examples:

Kaminkow, Marion J. *Genealogies in the Library of Congress: A Bibliography*. 2 vols. 2 supplements, 1972–76, 1976–86. Baltimore: Magna Charta Book, 1972. (FHL book 016.9291 K128c.) The Complement lists genealogies at 45 other libraries. The newest supplement is:

Genealogies Cataloged in the Library of Congress since 1986. Washington, D.C.: Cataloging Distribution Service, Library of Congress, 1992. (FHL book 016.9291 L616g.)

Research Coordination[\[edit source\]](#)

Many organizations, such as family history societies, publish directories listing the research interests of individuals. These directories are excellent tools for finding others researching the same family lines who may have information about your family. The following is one major example:

Johnson, Keith A., and Malcolm R. Sainty. *Genealogical Research Directory*. Sydney: Genealogical Research Directory Editors, 1996. (FHL book 929.1025 G286grd.) Search all editions since it is published yearly and specific family names may appear in only one edition.

Thousands of Jews worldwide are researching their family histories. The Jewish Genealogical Society created a database of surnames and towns that are being researched by genealogists. You can write to these individuals to coordinate your research efforts and find out what they have already learned. This published database is:

Jewish Genealogical Society. *Jewish Genealogical Family Finder*. New York, New York, 1992–. (FHL book 940 F2 [1992]; microfiche 6334925 [1998].)

An Internet version, called the JewishGen Family Finder, contains tens of thousands more entries. It is located at:

- [JewishGen Family Finder](#) (JGFF) is a database of ancestral towns and surnames currently being researched by Jewish genealogists worldwide.

Other Internet sites that help bring together people working on the same family lines include:

- [Family Search.org](#)
- [Rootsweb](#)
- [Genealogy Forum](#)
- [Jewish Genealogy Surname Project - FaceBook](#)

The Family History Library has many of the sources discussed in this section. Check for these records in the FamilySearch Catalog.

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The Family History Guide

The Family History Guide, <https://thefhguide.com/project-9-jewish.html>, provides a more sequential process of learning consisting of outstanding step-by-step “how to” research tutorials for Jewish genealogy that is organized into six levels offerings in a rather clear and concise format. I particularly like its infrastructure of topics for each level of tutorials.

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