

Genealogy Basics

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RESOURCES

- www.nwigs.org Northwest Indiana Genealogical Society (NWIGS) website
- nwigsweb@gmail.com Northwest Indiana Genealogical Society email
- www.thefhguide.com The Family History Guide website (FREE)
- www.familysearch.org Family Search website (FREE)
- www.ancestry.com Ancestry's website (\$)
- www.myheritage.com My Heritage website (\$)
- www.ngsgenealogy.org Four generation Pedigree Chart and Family Group Sheet
- www.freefamilytreetemplates.com Family Tree
- <https://catalog.pcpls.org/genealogy> Valparaiso Public Library Genealogy Center
- www.lcpl.in.org/genealogy-2509 Lake County Public Library Genealogy Room
- www.facebook.com Facebook Genealogy Groups

Step 1: Decide What You Want to Find Out

- Make a research goal to stay focused.
- Avoid BSOs and rabbit trails!
- Work from the known to the unknown.
- Start with yourself and work backwards.

Step 2: Explore What You Already Have

- Fill out the Four Generation Pedigree Charts and Family Group Sheets.
- Talk to family members and gather photos, documents and stories.
- Surnames should be in all CAPITALS with first names in lower case. ie: SMITH, John
- Write in PENCIL because until you know for sure, anything can change.

Step 3: Start Researching

- Documentation is the proof.
- Census Records (Familysearch.org, Ancestry.com, MyHeritage.com)
- Watch for alternate surname and first name spellings, additional information and more.
- FAN Club: Friends, Associates, Neighbors.
- View the image online if available.
- Resources: See Above List

Step 4: Organize and Share What You've Found

- 3-ring binders or manilla file folders.
- Software: Family Tree Maker, RootsMagic, Legacy Family Tree or Historian.
- Paid genealogy subscription sites: Ancestry.com, MyHeritage.com.
- Back up regularly including the GEDCOM files.
- Create a Facebook page for your family history.

Step 5: Return to Step 1

1. There's always something new to discover!