

INTERNET GENEALOGY FOR BEGINNERS

Cass County Public Library – Genealogy Branch

COMMON DATABASES

Ancestry Library Edition

www.casscolibrary.org/genealogy/databases

Free access from a library computer or wifi, in any CCPL branch

- For free, library access, you MUST use the link provided on the library website (link to our databases page located above)
 - Over 6 billion records
 - Over 10,000 record collections
 - Domestic and international records (and foreign-language records)
 - User-contributed family trees
- Patrons can view, print, and save a copy of any digitized record or image in the database
- **BUT:** You cannot create personal family tree or participate in message boards when using *Library Edition*

HeritageQuest

www.casscolibrary.org/genealogy/databases

Free access from CCPL branch computer and wifi – can also be accessed from home with a library card

- For free, library access, you MUST use the link provided on the library website (link to our databases page located above)
 - When accessing from home, after clicking the *HeritageQuest* link, you will be asked to enter your CCPL library card
- 4.4 billion records, domestic and international
- Looks and the search forms functions like Ancestry
 - When accessing from home, after clicking the link, you will be asked to enter your CCPL library card

FamilySearch

www.familysearch.org

Free access when logged into a personal account, which is free to create

- Can be accessed from anywhere
- Over 6 billion records, domestic and international
- Over 2 billion digitized records from microfilm
- Over 350,000 digitized genealogy and history books
- Good alternative to Ancestry (many of the same/similar record collections)
- Connected to the LDS Church & Family History Library

Chronicling America

<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov>

Ongoing Library of Congress U.S. newspaper digitization project

- *Digitized Newspapers, 1789-1963*
 - Over 15 million scanned pages
 - Over 3,000 newspaper titles
 - Not comprehensive, but always expanding
 - Users can view, download, and print copies of digital images
- *U.S. Newspaper Directory, 1690-Present*
 - Catalog of 156,162 newspaper titles and institutions where they are held in microfilm or physical copies

Find a Grave

www.findagrave.com

International cemetery and burial record database

- Over 180 million records
- Based on volunteers and user-contribution
 - Information may be inaccurate or incomplete
 - Some individual memorials
- Can search without creating a personal account, but it is needed for contributing/requesting information

Missouri Digital Heritage

www.sos.mo.gov/mdh

Digital database of various records from repositories across the state of Missouri

- Over 9 million records
- Contributors include State Archives, State Historical Society, county historical societies, libraries, etc.
- Try Google searching for similar digital databases for other states

Record Collections Include:

- Death Certificates, 1910-1968 (as of 2018)
- County Plat Books & Histories
- Birth and Death Records Pre-1910
- Missouri Census Schedules from 1830-1940
- Missouri Soldier's Database: War of 1812 – WWI
- Missouri State Penitentiary Records

Accessing Midwest Genealogy Center Databases

www.mymcpl.org/research-and-learning

Cass County residents get Mid-Continent Public Library cards for free

- You will be prompted to enter your Mid-Continent library card number when accessing from home
- These databases include:
 - Fold3
 - America's GenealogyBank
 - Kansas City Star Archives
 - Newspapers Library Edition
 - Irish Newspaper Archives
 - America's Obituaries & Death Notices, 1980-Present

General Search Tips for Online Databases

- *Use wildcards (*) for spelling variations to cast a wider net*
 - Your results will include those with all the letters typed in the order in which you typed them, but will fill in the blanks where the asterisks are
 - An asterisk can represent multiple letters
 - Especially helpful for names that aren't spelled phonetically or for immigrant ancestors
 - *e.g.* When searching for the surname Farnlocher, try entering F*rnln*r for results that include Farnlocher, Farnlockner, Fornlocher, Farnloker, etc.
 - *e.g.* When searching for Jameson, try entering Jam*s*n for results that include Jamison, Jamesin, Jamesen, etc.
- *Experiment with the search form options*
 - *Remember:* the more information you enter into the search form, the more specific your search – meaning you will receive fewer results
 - It may be beneficial to try a general search to begin with, (just a name and location) and then add filters to narrow your results
 - Combine different fields or leave certain fields blank when searching to see how it changes the results

- *e.g.* Leave the first name blank and search with a last name and location OR enter the name, birth date, a location, and a spouse's name (often helpful when searching for Census records)
- *Try browsing if searching isn't effective*
 - You can also browse their record collection by title – use the *Card Catalog* feature on Ancestry or the *Browse All Published Collections* link at the bottom of FamilySearch's Search page
- *Navigating undigitized and/or unindexed record collections*
 - Some databases may have records that are digitized, but not indexed (and therefore cannot be searched and must be browsed with the viewer), or the collection may be indexed but not digitized
 - This can be time consuming, but might pay off
- *Check record collection descriptions*
 - Reading through the record collection description or summary will provide context on the records
 - *e.g.* For a collection of state records, the description will often mention if certain counties are not included
 - The description often includes a source citation – with this you can determine which institution provided the records or information and therefore locate the physical copies, if necessary

USING GOOGLE FOR GENEALOGY

Google Search Tips

- Be specific with your search query
- Utilize search *operators* with your keywords:
 - Use quotation marks (“keyword” or “key phrase with multiple words”) to search for exact phrases, keywords, or unique spelling variations of surnames
 - *e.g.* SEARCH: “Bad Tölz-Wolfratshausen” Germany marriages; SEARCH: Wolverhampton, England “Titchener”
 - Use the minus sign (-keyword) to omit specific words
 - *e.g.* SEARCH: Barry family Co. Cork, -Cloyne
 - Get website specific results with site:www.website.com
 - *e.g.* SEARCH: site:www.irishgenealogy.ie property records
 - Search within a range of years by adding [YEAR]..[YEAR]
 - *e.g.* SEARCH: Smith County, Tennessee marriage records 1923..1925
- If information/a record is online, Google has likely indexed it and it can be searched for with two exceptions:
 - The record was just put online – Google doesn't index in real-time and may take a few days to show up in searches
 - The record is hidden behind a firewall and will not show up in Google search results – *e.g. those on subscription websites like Ancestry*

Google Tools for Genealogy

- Google Translate
- Google Maps
- Google News Archive
- Google Image
- Google Books

Google Translate

<https://translate.google.com>

- Quick access: type “Google Translate” into a Google search

- Can translate from/to over 100 languages
- Use with records written in a foreign language
- Works best with specific words or short phrases
- Accuracy varies, some translations are “verified” (you will see a grey checkmark next to the translated word)
- Can “detect” the language of the text entered when you don’t know
- Translates entire websites, documents, images, speech

Google Maps

3-Part Tutorial: www.rootstech.org/blog/google-and-maps-for-genealogists-tracking-where-youve-been

- Requires a Google account (Gmail account works)
- Create custom maps with unique location markers
- Track locations of ancestors, living cousins, burial locations, life events, etc.
- Add photos and notes to location markers
- Shareable with others

Google News Archive

<https://news.google.com/newspapers>

- Tens of thousands of digitized newspaper issues from across the world
- Coverage is not comprehensive
- Keyword searches within the images, but not perfect

Google Images

<https://images.google.com>

- Searching *for* images using keywords and *with* images to find their source or additional information
- You can use the same keywords and operators you would use in a regular Google search (as outline above under “Google Search Tips”)
- You can also upload images to search for websites where the image is located online
 - May help identify the subjects of the photo or provide context

Google Books

<https://books.google.com>

- Advanced search form tends to be more effective
- Search based on level of digital access – select a filter that shows only the results that are available to view online
- Keyword search within billions of pages of text
- Find historical maps in published books
- Helps locate print or e-book copies of un-digitized books

DIGITIZED BOOKS

Where to Find Digital Books

- Google Books (search with keywords or titles, as described above)
- WorldCat (www.worldcat.org)
 - International catalog, including access to digitized books
 - Libraries pay to have their collections cataloged, so institutions with limited funding may not have their books online
- Library E-books
 - Libby & Overdrive
- Digital book databases

- Internet Archive/Open Library (<https://archive.org> / <https://openlibrary.org>)
- FamilySearch Digital Library (www.familysearch.org/library/books)
- Missouri Digital Heritage [books and newspapers] (www.sos.mo.gov/mdh/mediatypes)
- You can typically download PDF files of the entire book or download/print individual pages from these databases

Book Availability

There are several reasons why a book may not be digitized

- The books that get digitized are those in the public domain
 - Copyright protections affect what material can be digitized
- Many do not get digitized due to expense
 - Many institutions and book repositories require grant funding to complete digitization projects
- Specific viewing license agreements may make some books unavailable even when digitized
 - Books on FamilySearch have an *Access Level*, and those that are *Protected* cannot be viewed online

USING SOCIAL MEDIA FOR GENEALOGY

Connecting with Others

- Join genealogy groups on Facebook
 - Use Facebook’s built-in messenger to contact people privately
 - Use Facebook’s search function to locate groups, institutions, historical societies, etc.,
 - *e.g. SEARCH: Genealogy help OR Cass County Historical Society*
 - Examples of Facebook groups: “(Genealogy) I need your Help;” “Missouri Genealogy;” “Genetic Genealogy Tips & Techniques “
- Interact on message boards
 - Ancestry
 - RootsWeb
 - Genealogy.com Gen Forum (www.genealogy.com/forum)
 - Cyndi’s List (www.cyndislist.com/queries/general)
- RootsWeb/GenWeb
 -
- Communal Family Tree Projects
- FamilySearch
- WikiTree

Visit the library’s locations page (www.casscolibrary.org/locations) for CCPL Genealogy’s location, contact information, and hours of operation.

Information regarding our digital collections, access to online databases, submitting inquiries, and more, can be found on Cass County Public Library’s Genealogy Resources page, located here: www.casscolibrary.org/genealogy

Send Research Inquiries to:
askgenealogy@casscolibrary.org

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