

Genealogy Basics: Getting Started

Webcast episode 1



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Genealogy Basics Webcast Series

- 1. Getting Started**
- 2. No-Cost Kansas Resources**
- 3. More Free Resources**
- 4. DNA and Online Family Trees**
- 5. Preserving Family Treasures**

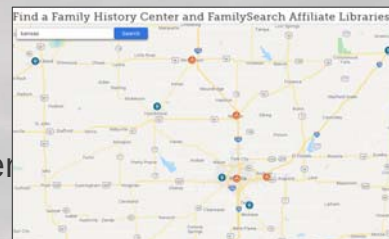


Know Your Collection

- Have a couple of recent how-to books (Dewey classification 929)
- KEEP LOCAL HISTORY
 - City & county history, old city & county directories
 - Family histories
 - Church & school records
 - Local maps
 - Other?
- If you have microfilm, ALL staff need to know how to use the reader
 - If it doesn't save digital copies or print, users can zoom in and take pictures of onscreen display

Know Your Local Resources

- Be prepared to refer patrons to:
 - Local historical society
 - Local genealogy society
 - Local experts
 - Consider asking them to present
- Nearby Family History Center?
<https://www.familysearch.org/help/fhcenters/locations/centerlocator?c=kansas>
- Remember – **not everything is online!**



Learn About Online Resources

- ✦ Take some time to familiarize yourself with at least a few sites
- ✦ Bookmark, link or make a list of a few sites for easy referral
 - Kansas sources (episode 2)
 - Other free online sources (episode 3)
- ✦ Sites with collections of links
 - Geographic/ethnic
 - Topical (military, religious, professional, etc.)

Encourage Beginners

- ✦ Start with what they know and work back in time
- ✦ Not only find, but **evaluate & compare information**
 - Official documentation is most reliable
 - 'User added' information may be incorrect, so fact check!
- ✦ Learn search strategies
 - Try different (mis)spellings of names
 - Broaden searches, filter results
- ✦ Record info AND its source and date found
- ✦ Organize!

Genealogy Proof Standard

The five 'GPS' principles used by professionals (informally stated here) provide a 'roadmap' for beginning genealogists, too!

- ✦ Make as wide a **search** as possible for sources that could help establish the identity, event or relationship under investigation.
- ✦ Accurately **record the source** citation and/or the provider of the information.
- ✦ **Analyze and correlate** the collected information - evaluating the quality of sources and the reliability of information within them.
- ✦ **Resolve** any conflicting, contradictory evidence with a reasoned argument.
- ✦ State your **conclusion** convincingly (more than a "balance of probability").

Where to Start

- ✦ Begin with the family you know
- ✦ Research official (and unofficial) documentation
- ✦ Use paper and computer to track your finds

Start With You – and Relatives

- ✦ Write down what *you* know
- ✦ Ask relatives – interview in person if possible
 - Contact them ahead of time
 - Record (audio or video) with permission
 - Take notes!
 - Use questions to help get started
- ✦ Especially ask for:
 - Maiden names, relationships
 - Dates and locations
 - Military service, professions, etc.
- ✦ Stories can be the best!



While you're at it...

- ✦ Ask to see family photographs and heirlooms
- ✦ Take pictures of pictures
 - Photograph pictures straight on, avoid glare
 - Get identifications for as many people as possible
 - Ask about places and events in the photos
- ✦ Ask about and photograph other items
 - Who originally owned the item(s)?
 - What is its story and why was it kept?

Vital Statistics

- ✦ BMD – Birth, Marriage, Death
 - These pieces of information (with date and location) are the target minimum for each person
 - Some data is available online, but not all!
 - Most reliable sources are legal documents or certificates
- ✦ Work back from yourself, generation by generation
- ✦ Try to find multiple sources for verification
 - Obituaries and cemetery records & headstones
- ✦ Expect to run across some variations!

US Census information

- ✦ Access free through State Library of Kansas
- ✦ Every 10 years from 1790 – 1940 (*1950 will be released in 2022*)
- ✦ Beginning in 1850, names of all household residents were included, not just head of household
- ✦ Almost all 1890 records were lost due to fire
- ✦ Blank census forms are handy for knowing what information was gathered for each census

Genealogy Forms

- Useful for making sure to gather all pertinent information
- Download free from various sites
- Save as pdf files, print as needed for patron use
- Basic forms include ancestry chart, family group chart and research logs, but there are many others

Genealogy Forms

<https://www.ancestry.com/download/charts#researchcal>

Charts and Forms

Download these charts and forms to organize your research.

Charts & Forms Census Forms

<https://www.archives.gov/research/genealogy/charts-forms>

Resources for Genealogists
Home > Research Our Records > Resources for Genealogists > Charts and Forms

Getting Started
[Start Your Genealogy Research](#)
[Genealogy Tutorial \(Powerpoint\)](#)
[Genealogy Research Topics](#)
[Charts and Forms](#)

Genealogy Guides
[Genealogy Resources](#)
[Reference Reports](#)
[Genealogy Research Using Military Records](#)
[Preserving Family Records](#)

Tools for Genealogists
[Online Research Tools](#)

Charts and Forms
Use these blank forms to record your research results. Click on the title to view or print a PDF version of each. Looking for fun ways to engage kids in finding family history? See also [Genealogy Activities for Kids!](#)

Charts

- [Ancestral Chart](#)
- [Family Group Sheet](#)
- [Modern Genealogy Tree](#)
- [Traditional Tree](#)

Federal Census Forms

- [1790](#)

Genealogy Forms

Timeline for Thomas J[onathan] Moore family group

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
YY	MM	DD	Name	Event/Location	Source								
1858			Thomas J Moore	B in MO (late July/August?); est. DOB from census	1860 Census								
1860	8	28	Thomas J Moore	Age 2; Benton Twp, Newton Co. MO	1860 Census								
1865	?		Alfred Moore	Death [between 1860-1870?]									
1870	7	20	Thomas J Moore	Age 13; Benton Twp, Newton Co. MO, HOH Lucretia Moore	1870 Census								
1880	?		Thomas/Mary	Marriage									
1880	6	12	Thomas J Moore	Age 20; Benton Twp, HOH Samuel Moore; Lucretia & wife Mary A, age 15	1880 Census								
1884	4	18	2nd Child born-Female	Franklin twp; Mother Mary A (maiden name "Spivy", b. IL) age 19/father age 23	MO birth records onlineDB								
1894	2	24	Lucretia Moore	Death; buried in Macedonia Cemetery, Stella MO	headstone								
1900	6	8	[Thomas?] John Moore	w Mary A, Samuel, Aney (b. 04/1884), Noley, Cora, David, Charles, Dewey	1900 Census								
1910	4	30	Thomas J Moore	age 51; wife, 6 children, 1 grandson/Elk Horn twp McDonald Co MO; John W. Spiva (Mary's brother?) family next farm	1910 Census								
1915	?		Thomas J Moore	Death [between 1910 & 1920?] Children living w/ Annie Moser in 1920	1920 Census								

Genealogy Software

When choosing free or purchased software, consider:

- 🌳 Support and recent updates
- 🌳 Allows for data export in standard GEDCOM format
- 🌳 Creates/prints reports
- 🌳 User can add photos and/or documents
- 🌳 Connects with online service (if desired)
- 🌳 Price (monthly or annual subscription)

GEDCOM format

- GEDCOM is an acronym for GENEALOGICAL DATA COMMUNICATION
- Standard, non-proprietary file format used for transferring data
 - The concept is the same as using MARC files for bibliographic data download/import
- Use for migrating from one program to another, or to share data with another family member
- May also be used as a data backup

Genealogy Software

RootsMagic Essentials (free version) is used in this demonstration.



Best Practices

- Research notes are the working documents
- The 'family tree' is the display version
- Work to find documentation for every piece of data you add to your tree
- If you decide to add data to the family tree without full documentation, use notation to indicate uncertainty:
 - ca. (circa or about)
 - aft (after)
 - bef (before)
 - ? (indicate unknown or questionable information)
- Whatever you decide, be consistent

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Questions? Contact me!

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**SOUTH CENTRAL KANSAS
LIBRARY SYSTEM**

<https://sckls.info>