

SOME HELPFUL HINTS FOR USING SEARCH ENGINES

1. Some sites use Boolean Logic in searching (the use of 'AND' or 'OR' or 'NEAR' may affect what the search finds). For a discussion of how to use boolean searches see: <http://www.ancestry.com/library/view/news/articles/1416.asp> .
2. Some sites have advanced search pages. Hit the advanced button and take a look to see if it will help your search.
3. Grouping search terms makes a difference. James Johnson Smith is not the same as "James Johnson Smith". The first search will return pages that have these words anywhere in them. The second search will return only pages that have the words James Johnson Smith next to each other in this order. For foreign characters try it both ways wit and without the diacritical mark: Mörlunda or Morlunda. Sometimes the use of a plural will change the search, i.e. "Lynchburg, VA marriage" versus "Lynchburg, VA marriages".
4. Remember, most search engines search on "EXACTLY" what you type in. They are not intelligent. The exception to this is that some search sites like Rootsweb or FamilySeach.com also use a SOUNDEX approach to searching. But you must know the difference when your using them.

DATABASE SEARCH SITES – COMMERCIAL

Commercial sites will charge for their services. The prices and content will vary from site to site. Most sites offer various subscription terms from month to one year.

Ancestry.com has several sections tht include free and pay sections. The free areas are the World Family Tree (similar to Rootsweb WorldConnect), Social Security Death Records, Phone and Address Listings. Their current plans are found at the following site:

<http://www.ancestry.com> and clicking on subscribe in the upper right hand corner. The current rates range from \$12.95 to \$29.95 per month depending on the services you desire and the package you buy

(NOTE: Internet access along with free access to Ancestry.com is available at the Family History Center.)

Genealogy.com has many free and paid areas. The current rates range from \$69.99 to \$199.99 depending on the services you desire. Their Passenger Lists, are very good.

Genealogylibrary.com is also part of genealogy.com. The monthly fee is \$9.99 and yearly \$49.99. Genealogy Library is a growing collection of U.S. – focused family histories and other historically significant texts. Currently containing over 100 million records spanning five centuries. This searchable, printable collection adds new, compelling resources every month to help you add depth to your family story. It is fully indexed and linked to images.

Heritage Quest is another good site with special sourcing options. You can access it free through the Family History Center or through **Mel** (see below).

Kindredkonnections.com also has free and fee based information. They say that they have connections to over 1 billion names. This is a pedigree linked database search site. The cost is \$15.00 per month or \$100.00 for a year.

The Godfrey Memorial Library (www.godfrey.org) site includes lots of resources including gazetteers, maps, Mayflower, Military, Native American, prison, and vital records by state. There are also Newspapers/Journals including a PERSI Index, Newspaper Archive Elite (EBSCO) that includes over 27,000,000 scanned and indexed newspaper images from around the country with some images back to 1753. NOTE: This site works best with a high speed connection. Everyone is welcome to register for a Godfrey Scholar Library Card. Call, mail, or register online. The annual fee is \$35. Godfrey resources are available through the Family History Center at no charge.

Newenglandancestors.com also has free and fee based services. There are over 2,200 databases that may be searched if you are a Research Member which costs \$75.00 per year. Benefits are primarily to those with New England Ancestry. Visit the site to see what's available and other membership levels.

NON-COMMERCIAL SITES

Cyndi's List – www.cyndislist.com is one of the most popular genealogy resources online. This site has over 264,000 links. The links are to a wide variety of other genealogical sites, arranged by location and by types of records. There is also a book in the Family History Center called "Cyndi's List" which contains over 40,000 links.

Family Search – www.familysearch.org is a site of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This is a popular research site. It has the ability to search the IGI (International Genealogical Index), Ancestral File, Pedigree Resource File, and much more. The 1880 U.S. Census and the 1881 British and Canadian Censuses are also searchable here. PAF 5.2 and other older versions are available free and can be downloaded in several languages. The Family History Library Catalog may be researched online. You can also find the locations of Family History Centers and order Research Outlines, word lists, etc. Many databases on CD are available for purchase including the 1880 U.S. Census, the 1881 British Census, the Scandinavian Vital Records Index, the 1881 Canadian Census and much more. The Church is also working on digitizing all of their 2,000,000+ films in Granite Mountain and will make them available online in the next few years. In addition to the standard Family Search site, you will probably want to try the new Family Search pilot site with some helpful new features at <http://pilot.familysearch.org/recordsearch/start.html#start>

The Michigan eLibrary (MeL) – (<http://www.mel.org>) site is operated by the State of Michigan and the Library of Michigan. It provides a gateway to genealogical resources and is particularly useful for Michigan research. You can sign on using your library card number or Michigan drivers license number. This is also a way to access the Heritage Quest site.

The New York Public Library Digital Gallery – <http://digitalgallery.nypl.org/nypldigital/index.cfm> is now available online. The site includes a full index of items available. NYPL Digital Gallery provides access to over 363,000 images digitized from primary sources and printed rarities in the collections of the New York Public Library, including rare illuminated manuscripts, historical maps, vintage posters, rare prints and photographs, illustrated books, printed ephemera, and more.

Ellis Island – <http://ellisland.org/search/index.asp>? provides the premier research site for ship records into the Port of New York. It covers the period from 1892 through 1924. You need to sign up when you want to access the site with a user name and password. There is no charge but you do need this to get past the basic search area. Most of the results are linked to actual images of the ship manifests. Be sure to check this out. There is a site that is done by a private source that uses and gets you into the Ellis Island site but it is much easier to use and gives you more item choices. On this site you are able to use partial first and last name, gender, years of arrival, ship names and countries of origin in your search requests. Be sure to try the search engine developed by Dr. Stephen Morse at: <http://jewishgen.org/databases/eidb/ellis.html>. Dr. Morse has other databases at <http://stevemorse.org>. Visit this site and see all of the different options it has to offer. You will be amazed.

Castle Garden – www.castlegarden.org offers free access to an extraordinary database of information on 10 million immigrants from 1830 through 1892, the year Ellis Island opened. Over 73 million Americans can trace their ancestors to this early immigration period. This is an ongoing project. Digital images are not yet totally available and some manifests are not yet completed. Dr. Steve Morse (see above) has already developed a better search engine for the site.

Roots Web – www.rootsweb.com is an invaluable resource to names and places all over the world. As of March 2005 there were nearly 29,000 genealogy mailing lists available thru rootsweb.com. These include counties, states, countries, surnames and many subjects of genealogical interest. Check out all the lists available at <http://lists.rootsweb.com/>. This tells you how to subscribe and unsubscribe also. You can also just search the archives without subscribing. Roots web also has the best Social Security search available. There are many, many resources available through Roots Web – its worth exploring.

The following are good surname boards - www.genforum.com and www.myfamily.com. Genforum is the best for looking for individual county and state information. Select a State and County and look at the resources for that area. The information on the county site depends on the dedication and hard work of the county coordinator and volunteers. There is an incredible amount of information on these sites. For instance, the Orleans County, New York site has all the cemeteries in the county read and indexed and linked to the cemetery page. The Kent County, MI site (<http://resources.rootsweb.ancestry.com/USA/MI/Kent>) is a good example of county information available and is extremely useful and searchable. Be sure to use the search engine on all USGenWeb sites under 'Search this Site'. You can enter a single word such as a surname or a combination of words. This search will take you to just links on that site with your selection. The World Gen Web project is available at: <http://worldgenweb.org>.

OTHER RESOURCES

Gazetteers and maps-

United States – <http://geonames.usgs.gov/pls/gnispublic/>

<http://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/gazetteer> from 2000 census

Canadian geographical names - <http://geonames.nrcan.gc.ca/>

Genealogical Research Using the Internet
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Worldwide directories of towns and cities – <http://www.fallingrain.com/world/>
Index to Polish-German and German-Polish towns - <http://www.atnotes.com/other/gerpol.html>
Ireland - <http://www.seanruad.com/>
Scotland - <http://www.geo.ed.ac.uk/scotgaz/>
Old European Maps - <http://www.feehfs.org/maps/indexmap.html>
Sweden <http://www.sna.se/gazetteer.html>
Great Britain <http://www.multimap.co.uk/>
Google Maps – <http://maps.google.com> (nearly worldwide coverage)
Also get Google Earth – its free!

Telephone directories -

USA www.anywho.com
www.switchboard.com
International <http://www.infobel.com/teldir/>
Canada <http://canada411.sympatico.ca/>
Sweden <http://www.privatpersoner.gulasidorna.se/>

Date and death calculators, etc

Perpetual calendar - <http://www.wiskit.com/calendar.html>
Currency converter <http://www.xe.com/ucc/>
Soundex converter - <http://searches.rootsweb.com/cgi-bin/Genea/soundex.sh>
World Time Zones - <http://www.worldtimeserver.com/>
10,000 year calendar <http://www.calendarhome.com/tyc/>
Birth Date Calculator - <http://web2.airmail.net/bhende19/b-date.htm>
Age at death calculator - <http://www.taubman.org.uk/datecalc/index.html>
Inflation Calculator <http://www.westegg.com/inflation/>

Miscellaneous Sites

Library of Congress – www.loc.gov
National Archives – www.nara.gov
Library Servers Worldwide – <http://lists.webjunction.org/libweb/>
Genealogy Tool Box – www.genealogytoolbox.com
Vital Records Information – United States – www.vitalrec.com
Allen County Public Library (Fort Wayne, IN) – www.acpl.lib.in.us
Genealogy Blog – <http://genealogyblog.com>
Find a Person – www.josephculligan.com
Notable Women Ancestors – www.rootsweb.com/~nwa/
Urban Legends Reference Pages – www.scambusters.org/legends.html
The USGW tombstone project is at: www.rootsweb.com/~cemetery/
Illinois Statewide Marriage Index, 1763-1900: - www.sos.state.il.us/departments/archives/marriage.html
The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall Page – www.thewall-usa.com
American Battle Monuments Commissions web pages – www.abmc.gov
Find Newspapers Worldwide – <http://newslink.org>
Dog tags found in Vietnam – www.founddogtags.com