

Beginners Guide

CREATING YOUR FAMILY TREE



7 top tips to get you started

1. Talk to your family

Start with what you know. Families can be an amazing resource of information, so interview your relatives and jot down any details on your ancestors including location, spouses, siblings, children, occupation, education, religion and local parish. You never know - maybe someone in your family has started your family tree before you.

2. Create a paper trail

Documents are key! Gather anything you can, from birth certificates to death certificates and marriage documents - it all adds up. Start building a scrapbook and keep everything, from photographs and mementos. You'll become your own family detective.

3. Start researching

Once you have gathered what you know, research far and wide. Don't get hung up on specifics just yet, especially if your family name is a common one. Just gather as much information as you can before starting.

4. Stay organised

Having lots of paper documents can get complicated, especially if you have a big family. Organisation is key to ensure you don't get lost in your own paper trail.

5. Check the census

National censuses generally started around the 1820s, and obviously became more detailed during the 20th century. Did your relatives emigrate during the famine? Luckily some records began before this mass migration, so if your relatives were part of this movement, there's a chance you can trace them online.

6. Read the newspapers

Birth, marriage, death announcements were frequently published in local papers, so if you have any missing links, you might find the answers here. Archives of newspapers can be searched online, making your search that little bit easier.

7. Keep going!

You might hit a wall along the way, but keep focused. Your hard work and research will pay off and you never know the strange or fascinating family tale you may uncover!

20 questions to quiz your relatives about your Family History

1. How did your family come to live there?
2. Were there other family members in the area? Who?
3. Have any family members or ancestors ever lived abroad?
4. What world events had the most impact on you while you were growing up? Did any of them personally affect your family?
5. Were your family religious? What church, if any, did they attend?
6. Who was the oldest relative you remember as a child? What do you remember about them?
7. What do you know about your family surname?
8. What stories have come down to you about your parents? Grandparents? More distant ancestors?
9. Describe the personalities of your family members.
10. Are there any physical characteristics that run in your family?
11. Do you have any old family traditions?
12. What family memory stands out the most for you?
13. Is there a naming tradition in your family, such as always giving the firstborn son the name of his paternal grandfather?
14. Did your family or ancestors excel in a particular profession?
15. Are there any stories about famous or infamous relatives in your family?
16. Have any recipes been passed down to you from family members?
17. Are there any special heirlooms, photos, bibles or other memorabilia that have been passed down in your family?
18. What did your family enjoy doing together?
19. How were holidays (birthdays, Christmas, etc.) celebrated in your family? Did your family have special traditions?
20. Was anyone in your family ever mentioned in the newspaper?

My Family Tree

Grandfather
Name
Date born

Grandmother
Name
Date born

Grandfather
Name
Date born

Grandmother
Name
Date born

Father
Name
Date born

Mother
Name
Date born

Brothers
Name
Date born

You
Name
Date born

Sisters
Name
Date born

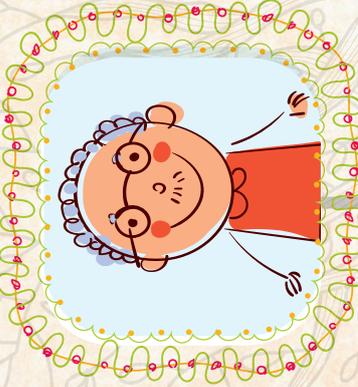
Name
Date born

Children
Name
Date born

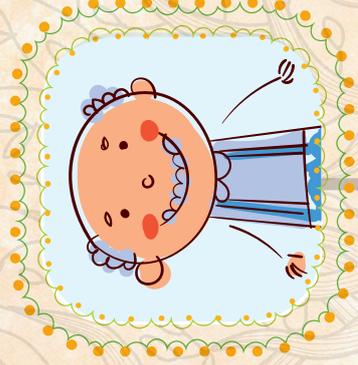
Family Tree



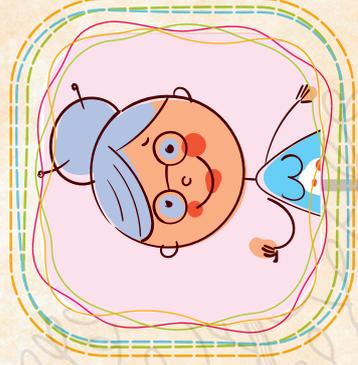
Paternal
grandmother



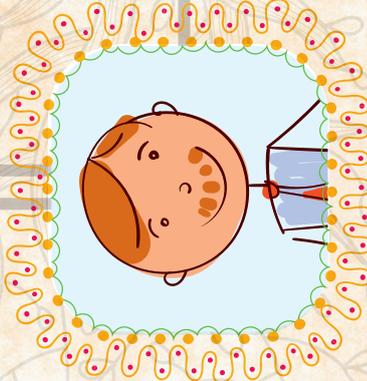
Paternal
grandfather



Maternal
grandfather



Maternal
grandmother



My Dad



My Mom



it's me

Place photos of your family over the pictures above to create your own family tree!

Resources to help you with your genealogy research

There are so many archives and databases out there to help you unearth new discoveries in your Irish family history. Discover where that family name really comes from, or learn about an infamous relative that you never knew existed. With a wealth of information at your fingertips it can get a little overwhelming, so we have picked out some of the best resources available to help get you started.

National Library of Ireland

Every year thousands of people visit the National Library of Ireland (NLI) to carry out family research. The NLI's free Genealogy Advisory Service is an ideal starting point for those beginning family history research as well as more experienced researchers. A wealth of information is available, from parish records and photographs to online archives and free on-site access to Findmypast and other such sites. The Library also regularly offers talks and workshops on family history research, as part of its ongoing events programme.

Kildare Street, Dublin 2
www.nli.ie/

National Archives

The National Archives preserves and provides documents relating to all parts of Ireland and provide essential material for people seeking to understand the fascinating political, economic and social forces that have shaped our nation. The archives also enable individuals to engage in the more personal exploration of their own origins through research of their family history. The National Archives has recently made genealogical resources available free of charge online at www.genealogy.nationalarchives.ie/ and for those who wish to visit the National Archives Reading Room on Bishop Street in person, a free Genealogy Advisory Service is available onsite.

Bishop Street, Dublin 8
www.nationalarchives.ie

The Irish Family History Centre

Researching your family's origins is a very personal journey and one that generally requires some assistance to get started and to keep moving in the right direction. Visitors arriving at the Irish Family History Centre have varying degrees of knowledge, from experts who have hit a brick wall, to absolute beginners who know only that a great-grandparent came from Ireland. Visitors can begin their exploration using the touchscreen information panels or use the computer workstations and start researching with the collection of records on Findmypast. With a team of family history and genealogy experts on duty seven days a week, you'll be in great hands to start your ancestry search.

CHQ Building, Dublin 1
www.irishfamilyhistorycentre.com

Public Record Office of Northern Ireland

The Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) is the official repository for public records in Northern Ireland. It is empowered to take records created by Government Departments, local councils, non-Departmental public bodies and accept privately-deposited archives. This wide remit has resulted in PRONI developing into a one-stop shop for archives in Northern Ireland. Visitors can consult church records, Board of Guardian indoor relief registers, school registers, big estate collections, testamentary papers and archives relating to political parties at the same location. Access is free but visitors need to produce proof of identity, such as a passport or driving licence. Key collections have been digitised and are also accessible online.

Titanic Boulevard, Belfast
<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/proni>

Did you know?

- 22 US presidents have Irish roots
- Rihanna has Irish ancestors! Her Irish surname, Fenty, inspired the name for her makeup line
- Three members of the Beatles – John Lennon, Paul McCartney, and George Harrison – all come from families of Irish descent
- Physicist John Tyndall, originally from Carlow, discovered why the sky is blue
- The first female veterinary surgeon in UK and Ireland was Aleen Cust from Tipperary

Discover these stories and more at EPIC The Irish Emigration Museum

