

ONE MONTH
QUICKSTART TO
FAMILY HISTORY

OR HOW TO RESTART STALLED RESEARCH.

DAY 1

- Write down your goals
 - Remember the 5 “W’s”
 - Who
 - What
 - When
 - Where
 - Why
- Two types of goals
 - Long Term
 - Short Term

DAY 2

- Think about how to organize your research.
 - Take inventory of and write down what you will need.
 - File Folders
 - Binders
 - Acid Free sheet protectors
 - Go shopping at a local office supply store or your favorite online source.

DAY 3

- Check your computer
 - Do you have enough RAM (memory)?
 - Do you have enough hard disc space?
 - Do you have external drives for backups?
 - Do you have the necessary software
 - Genealogical Software such as P.A.F.
 - Word processing
 - Database
 - Spread Sheet
 - PDF reader & writer

DAY 3 (CONTINUED)

- Spreadsheet
- Free Software
 - Open Office
 - Mozilla.org and Thunderbird for email & calendar
- Scanner the higher resolution you can scan the better (you may consider a new multi-function printer / scanner / fax)
- Printer
- Digital camera too many choices and styles for here. Find something you are comfortable with.
 - For tips go to Eastman Genealogy on Line

DAY 4

- If you haven't done so it's time to evaluate and purchase Genealogical software.
- Personal Ancestral File (PAF) is a free download from <http://www.familysearch.org>
- When possible download a trial before spending money on software. At times a program sounds friendly to use and then turns out otherwise.

DAY 5

- Create or update your Pedigree Chart (Ancestral Chart). This will act as your road map in your research.
- Create or update your Family Group Sheet. This gives the details of each family unit.
- Your genealogy software should be able to print these or you can download them at <http://www.familysearch.org>.

DAY 6

- Start a research log / journal for sources you plan to check. This will help to stay organized.
- You can create this using your word processor.
- The basic form should include:
 - Date
 - Source of records
 - Objective
 - Reasoning
 - Name variations checked
 - Results

DAY 7

- Family History begins with your family.
 - Ask family members for information.
 - Do they have documents to back up their claims?
 - Don't limit yourself to parents and grandparents.
 - Uncles, aunts, cousins and more distant relatives may all have valuable information.

DAY 8

- Find out what resources are available at your local public or university / college library.
- Check out Library Spot to find local libraries and what they may have.
- Once you have selected a library plan a visit to acquaint yourself with them and their policies.

DAY 9

- Study the Research Outlines at <http://www.familysearch.org>.
- Download and print the outlines that pertain to your family history.
- Search the FHL Catalog for records available on microfilm or microfiche.

DAY 10

- Check out Family Search Labs at:

- <http://labs.familysearch.org>

Here you will find the Record Search, the Labs Blog and a Research Wiki.

- Your LDS Account Login will be required
- Available records are:
 - Census • Military • Migration • Land & Property • Vital Records
- You'll want to bookmark this site and return often.

DAY 11

- Check out the free trials at some paid genealogical websites.
 - <http://www.ancestry.com> (free at local FHC)
 - <http://www.footnote.com> (free at local FHC)
 - <http://www.findmypast.com>
 - <http://www.genealogy.com>
 - <http://www.genealogybank.com>
 - <http://www.worldvitalrecords.com>
- Remember to cancel before end of trial if you don't think it is worth the financial commitment.

DAY 12

- Explore what's available at [Ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com)
- Explore what's available at [Genealogy.com](https://www.genealogy.com)

Both sites have searchable US Census records.

Ancestry also has passenger arrivals at major US ports up to about 1950

DAY 13

- Take a look at the resources available at Footnote.com (at FHC for free)
 - This database provides access to digitized copies of important genealogical resources not available elsewhere on line usch as naturalization records, Revolutionary and Civil War records.

DAY 14

- Investigate Genealogy Bank's 27 million plus obituaries appearing in American newspapers from 1977 to the present.
- Also check out their Historical Books collection (1800s) offers access to a variety of published family and local histories.

DAY 15

- Browse the ever-growing collections at WorldVitalRecords.com

This site offers access to a wide variety of genealogical records from around the world including birth, marriage, historic newspapers. A free version of the US Social Security Death Index is also available here.

DAY 16

- Surf over to findmypast.com with their millions of family history records online.

This website makes it easy to research your UK ancestry and create your family tree.

Don't overlook its database of passengers leaving UK from 1890 to 1960, which includes 24 million passenger names.

DAY 17

- Spend some time browsing the website for the US National Archives
- Available records include WWII enlistment records, Native American census rolls and many other records.
- Records can be ordered for online or on microfilm or microfiche.
- Use their handy checklist for easy reference.

DAY 18

- Search for the National Archives of other countries: <http://www.archiefnet.nl> This is a search device for websites by archival services at home and abroad. Archivenet is being updated on a daily basis since 1995.

DAY 19

- Check for Genealogical Podcasts:
 - iTunes (240 titles though not all really deal with genealogy)
 - Podcast Alley: <http://www.podcastalley.com> (29 titles)

While iTunes is the easiest way to listen, Podcastalley has some not found on iTunes. Some are active and some have not had new episodes for some time.

DAY 20

- Check the International Coalition on Newspapers at <http://icon.crl.edu> this resource is for newspapers outside the United States
- Create a timeline for each ancestor or consider purchasing a program to create it. Progeny Genealogy is one source.

DAY 21

Check some of the specialty websites such as:

- <http://www.ellisisland.org>
- <http://www.genline.com>
- <http://www.genserv.com>
 - This is one of the original Genealogical Research websites. You can upload your gedcom and search for others searching common ancestors.

-

DAY 22

- Explore genealogy message boards and consider posting some queries of your own.

Check Cyndi's List or Linkependium to find surname or locality specific boards

DAY 23

- Consider joining a mailing list that will help keep you in touch with like minded researchers.

Subscribe to applicable lists for surnames or localities at [Ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com)

DAY 24

- Today is a good day to do Google!

Search on various spellings of your ancestor's name and their place of origin.

- Other places to search are:

www.genealogy-search-help.com

www.gensource.com/ifoundit

DAY 25

- Organize that shoebox full of family photographs.

Sort them properly and store them away from heat and light.

If you have a scanner, begin scanning a batch at a time.

Digitally photograph any other objects you may have.

DAY 26

- Begin to sketch a profile of a favorite ancestor or begin to compile your personal history.

www.personalhistorian.com or

www.lifejournal.com can help simplify this task.

DAY 27

- Print copies of your family group sheets and pedigree charts.

File them in binders and make notes of missing information.

DAY 28

- Evaluate your progress so far.
- What have you discovered?
- What are your lingering questions?
- What are your brickwalls?

DAY 29

- Begin a blog, website or wiki to share what you have with other interested individuals.

Free accounts are available at:

www.blogger.com

www.wordpress.com

www.livejournal.com

www.blogspot.com

DAY 30

- Your genealogical journey doesn't end here!

Signup to take an online class. GenGlass, National Genealogical Society, Genealogical Studies all have regular online classes.

To find what events are going on check out GenealogyBlog.