

# Fundamentals of Family History

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## *Growing Your Own Family Tree!*

### 1. **Begin with a portable filing system**

- Use **color coded, alphabetical, or surname filing** systems. (Surname filing is my preference.)
- Supply each file with a **research outline** and a **master list** for each individual whom you research in-depth.

### 2. **Assemble records and ask relatives for information.**

- Gather birth certificates
- Death certificates
- Church Records
- Letters
- Census Records
- Histories
- Photos
- Maps
- Military Records

### 3. **Accurately document records!**

- Recording ordinances to prevent duplication.
- With [new.familysearch.org](http://new.familysearch.org), carefully merge duplicate individuals. Consult other family member if you have questions about doing this.

Use PAF Insight--soon be “Family Insight” with the [new.familysearch.org](http://new.familysearch.org)

- Revising places names. Make certain you update you places names. Records obtain from Ancestral File often have postal code abbreviations for States—spell out CA, as California, and add “United States,” when using the [new.familysearch.org](http://new.familysearch.org). If you are still using TempleReady at your local family history center, use “USA”!

4. When you are ready to do research--Consider these valuable books, which are usually available at family history centers.

- *“The Source”*
- *“Ancestry’s Redbook”*
- *“The Handybook for Genealogist:”*
- And any “how-to” guides
- Check out [familysearch.org](http://familysearch.org), and [lds.org](http://lds.org)

From [lds.org](http://lds.org)  $\implies$  to *Family History and Temples*  $\implies$  to *Family History Basics*  $\implies$  to *How to Start Your Family History*  $\implies$  to *Resources*

5. When using sources for documentation, remember: not all documents are created equal; some are more reliable than others!

#### ■ **Primary Sources**

Primary Records are records created at the time of an event. Vital records like birth, marriage or death certificates and wills are good examples of: Primary Sources Records

#### ■ **Secondary Sources**

Secondary records are records that are produced after an event: Some journal accounts, diaries, censuses, pedigree charts, family group sheets, and personal letters are examples.

#### 6. **Census Records**

- **Census taking began in 1790**, and recorded only the male head of household by name. The number of males and females in a household was also calculated. This was done **every 10 years**; and released, to the public (72) years after it is taken.

- **In 1850 US Federal Census** began recording all members of the household who were present, with **birth place, age, gender, relationship, and parents' birth place.**

When using the Census as a primary source record:

Two to three censuses of the same family, from subsequent years, may equal a primary record.

**7. Label photos:**

A photo without a name or label will be useless to future generations.

**8. Date and label newspaper clippings.**

**9. Always “note” the source of your documents**

List all websites as well as call number from books, films, and microfiche.

**10. Keep maps of your ancestor's geographic locations**

**11. Consider compiling your records into individual histories.**

**12. Share this information with your ward members if you are a ward family history consultant.**

Divide the ward into a section of names, and begin to call and visit individuals and families in your stewardship, **under the direction of you High Priest Group Leadership.**

- Invite ward member to the family history center when you are on shift.
- Offer to accompany them to other shifts.
- Work with families during family home evening, if you are an empty nesters.

**Inform ward member about the BYU Idaho Family History Conference held every April and October.**