

Hints, Techniques and Strategies

Nine best records for finding female ancestors <http://www.familytreemagazine.com/article/bestrecords-for-finding-female-ancestors>

Three ways to unravel the mysteries of women in your family tree: <https://familysearch.org/blog/en/3-ways-unravel-mysteries-women-family-tree/>

Five tips for finding female ancestors: <http://www.barbsnow.net/Female.htm>

Searching for female ancestors, a selected bibliography from Library of Congress: https://www.loc.gov/rr/genealogy/bib_guid/female.pdf

Overcoming difficulties of finding female ancestors: <https://ancestralfindings.com/how-to-overcome-the-difficulties-of-finding-female-ancestors/>

Finding maiden names: <https://www.genealogy.com/articles/research/00000516.html>

Top ten resources for finding maiden names: <https://www.thoughtco.com/top-sources-for-locating-maiden-names-1422659>

Best websites for tracing women:

[https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Best_Websites_for_Tracing_Women_\(National_Institute\)](https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Best_Websites_for_Tracing_Women_(National_Institute))

Ever wonder why it's so hard to trace female ancestry? <https://www.familysearch.org/en/blog/ever-wonder-why-its-so-hard-to-trace-your-female-ancestry>

Where to look for female ancestors: <https://www.familysearch.org/en/blog/where-to-look-to-find-your-female-ancestors>

Websites to explore

Local libraries and historical societies may have marriage records databases. To find US libraries websites: <http://www.lib-web.org/>

Digital libraries: <https://openlibrary.org/>; Digital Public Library of America: <https://dp.la/>

Resources for female ancestors from Cyndi's List: <http://www.cyndislist.com/female/general/>

Find-a-grave (can also search by maiden name) <https://www.findagrave.com/>

Researching your family tree, links to marriage and other vital records and beyond (explore entire site): <http://www.learnwebskills.com/family/vitalrecords1.htm>

LDS (Mormon) site, US and international records: <https://familysearch.org/> For catalog search <https://www.familysearch.org/catalog/search> -Catalog records are browsable, not searchable; start with place name (county and state only)

Family and county histories: <http://www.learnwebskills.com/family/countyhistories1.htm>

Out-of-copyright, county, biography, and family history books, also city directories <http://archive.org>

Genealogy information for U.S. states and counties; resources vary: <http://usgenweb.org/>

Genealogy around the world: <https://www.worldgenweb.org/108-aboutwggw/1-welcome-to-the-worldgenweb-project>

Links to limited collections, including specific location marriage records:

<https://accessgenealogy.com/genealogy-databases#content>

Links to photos, letters, diaries, artifacts, etc. document history of women in US:

18th & 19th century nicknames: <https://ctstatelibrary.org/access-services/nicknames/> See also <https://www.familytreemagazine.com/female-ancestors/your-female-ancestors-nicknames/>

Behind the name, etymology and history of first names: <https://www.behindthename.com/>

Voice of women genealogy site: <http://www.bellaonline.com/site/Genealogy>

Women and naturalization, ca. 1802–1940:

<https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/1998/summer/women-and-naturalization-1.html>

Check state, regional, and county/city genealogical and/or historical society webpages which may offer online resources or have resources available for purchase. Such organizations may also offer assistance in your searches.

City Directories

City directories: <https://www.loc.gov/search/?in=&q=city+directory&new=true>

Digital Public Library of America: <https://dp.la/search?q=city+directories>

Extensive collection of city directories: <http://www.donslist.net/PGHLookups/Dir1Win.shtml>

City directories by state: <https://sites.google.com/site/onlinedirectorysite/Home/usa>; also

<https://www.theancestorhunt.com/directories.html>

Newspapers

Newspapers and obituaries, also yearbooks, church records, birth, marriage, and death records and more: <http://www.theancestorhunt.com/>

Cyndi's List links to newspapers: <https://www.cyndislist.com/newspapers/> Also search by location, then newspapers

Library of Congress--newspapers (includes listing of where to find microfilm/hard copies of newspapers): <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/>

US small town newspapers) <https://www.accessgenealogy.com/america/small-town-newspapers.htm>

Google archives: old newspapers https://news.google.com/news/advanced_news_search

Australian newspapers and gazettes: <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/> Historic newspapers around the world: <https://www.thoughtco.com/historic-newspapers-online-1422221>

US historical newspapers by state: <https://www.thoughtco.com/us-historical-newspapers-online-by-state-1422215>

Online newspapers by state <http://genealogysstar.blogspot.com/2014/07/online-digital-newspaper-collections-by.html>

Many states have statewide newspaper projects (often through a university library). The following states have a central online repository: AZ, CA, CO, CT, FL, GA, IL, IN, KS, KY, ME, NY, NC, OH, OR, SC, TX, UT, VA, WA, and WY. City, county and university libraries may be a source for newspapers (sometimes digitized and online).

Marriage Records

How to find US Marriage records: https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/How_to_Find_United_States_Marriage_Records

Types of marriage records to explore: <https://www.thoughtco.com/marriage-records-types-4077752>

BMD records by state: <https://www.theancestorhunt.com/bmd-links.html>

Free online marriage indices: <https://www.thoughtco.com/top-free-online-marriage-indexes-databases-1422164>

FreeBMD: Civil Registration index of births, marriages and deaths for England and Wales

<https://www.freebmd.org.uk/>

Records from 450 Polish towns, including marriage records. Many linked to digitized images. Marriage records less than 80 years old are not included. <https://www.jri-poland.org/>

Reclaim the records, link to marriages: <https://www.reclaimtherecords.org/record-type/marriage-records/>

Some cities/states have their own online database, do a google search to find. (Sampling below)

West Virginia: http://www.wvculture.org/vrr/va_mcsearch.aspx

Las Vegas, Nevada: <https://recorder.co.clark.nv.us/RecorderEcommerce/>

Illinois: <https://www.ilsos.gov/isavital/marriagesrch.jsp>

New York (select counties): <https://italiangen.org/marriages>

Minnesota: <https://www.moms.mn.gov/>

Western states marriage record index (AZ, CA, CO, ID, MT, NM, NV, OR, UT, WA, and WY)

<http://abish.byui.edu/specialCollections/westernstates/search.cfm>

Divorce Records

Divorce records are public records, generally kept at the county level (varies from state to state); but not readily available online

Can you really get divorce records for free? <https://www.divorcestatistics.info/can-you-really-get-free-divorce-records.html#more-279>

Divorce records by state: <https://www.theancestorhunt.com/divorce-records.html>

Women and Immigration/Naturalization

Tracing women using immigration and naturalization records: [https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Tracing_Women_Using_Immigration_and_Naturalization_Records_\(National_Institute\)](https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Tracing_Women_Using_Immigration_and_Naturalization_Records_(National_Institute))

That time when women lost citizenship when marrying foreigners: <https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2017/03/17/520517665/that-time-american-women-lost-their-citizenship-because-they-married-foreigners>

Women and naturalization timeline: https://familytreemagazine.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/FINAL-womens_naturalization_timeline2.pdf?x91401

Naturalization and immigration records, common problems: <https://libguides.mnhs.org/naturalization/s4>

Special Terms in Researching Women

- *Administratrix*: woman assigned by court to administer intestate case (no valid will)
- *Bondmaid*: female slave or indentured servant
- *Concubine*: woman who lives with a man to whom she is not married.
- *Consort*: companion; term for when woman predeceased husband
- *Dowager*: a widow with a title or rank (the queen dowager) or property from her husband
- *Dower*: legal provision for woman's support and that of children after husband's death; typically one-third of husband's property; also known as "widow's thirds"
- *Dowry*: property bride brings to marriage
- *Executrix*: woman named in a will to distribute estate
- *Goodwife*: the wife or household mistress
- *Goody*: a woman or housewife, especially an older woman
- *Grass widow*: woman whose husband deserted her; also used to refer to woman who has illegitimate children or a discarded common-law wife
- *Now wife*: in a will, refers to the current wife (implying there was a previous wife)
- *Relict*: a widow
- *Spinster*: an unmarried woman regarded as beyond the age of marriage
- *Testatrix*: a woman who leaves a valid will