

## GENEALOGY: FREE OR FEE?

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Have a strategy for your research so you pay *only* for what you need:

1. Who are you researching?
  - **Direct line** is a priority for obtaining records.
  - **Brick walls** may be a priority for obtaining records.
2. What records/info do you have? Take inventory!
  - Birth, marriage, death records
  - Naturalization
  - Military
  - Other records (obits, wedding announcements, etc.)
3. What do you need?
  - Do you need an actual record (for lineage society or gen proof)?
  - Do you just need the information?
  - **Unique/first-hand** documents are a priority
4. What are your constraints?
  - Money
  - Distance
  - Time

Start with the “usual sites” (free or available free via libraries & Family History Centers):

- Familysearch.org
- Ancestry.com
- HeritageQuest

Go beyond the usual sites:

- Linkpendium ([www.linkpendium.com](http://www.linkpendium.com))
- US GenWeb ([www.usgenweb.org](http://www.usgenweb.org))
- Historical and genealogical societies
- Ask the historian
- Ask the librarian
- Message boards (for ideas and connections)
- Facebook genealogy groups (ideas and connections)
- Random Acts of Genealogical Kindness ([www.raogk.org](http://www.raogk.org))
- Reclaim the Records ([www.reclaimtherecords.org](http://www.reclaimtherecords.org))

Free newspaper sites (just a selection to get you started):

- Fulton History ([www.fultonhistory.com](http://www.fultonhistory.com))
- Chronicling America (<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/>)
- Other newspaper links (such as [www.library.illinois.edu/hpnl/newspapers/historical.php](http://www.library.illinois.edu/hpnl/newspapers/historical.php) and Wikipedia listings)