

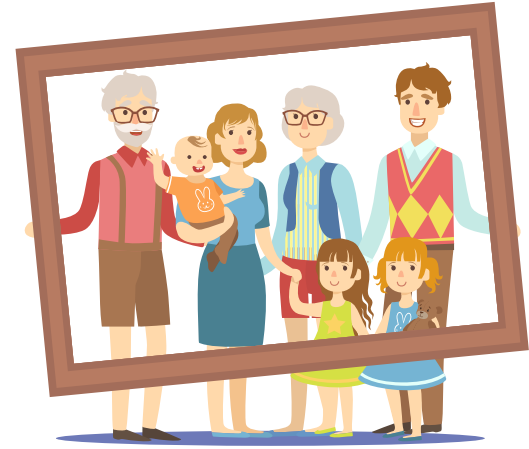
Family History - First Steps

AGI Genealogy Basics Series

Begin with What You Know

Your journey into family history starts with YOU. Before delving into historical records, gather what you already know about your family

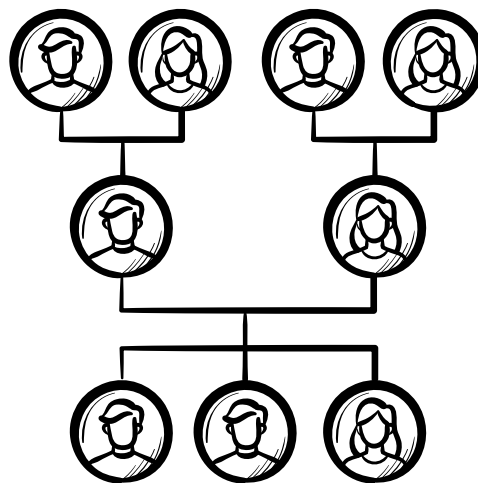
- Write down your own full name, date and place of birth
- Record your parents' full names, including your mother's maiden name
- Note your parents' dates and places of birth, marriage, and (if applicable) death
- Include your siblings' details
- Add your grandparents' information if you know it
- Write down as much or as little you know about your family history



Draw Your Family Tree

Creating a basic family tree helps organise your knowledge and identify gaps

- Start with yourself at the bottom of the page
- Draw lines connecting you to your parents above
- Add your grandparents on the next level up
- Include birth names, dates, and locations where possible
- Leave spaces blank rather than guessing—these become your research goals



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Interview Family Members

Your relatives are invaluable sources of information

- Begin with your oldest living relatives, as their memories span the most generations
- Remember people often know more than they think — the key is asking the right questions
- Schedule proper time for conversations
- Record the conversations (with permission) or take notes
- Bring photographs to spark memories and stories
- Ask about family traditions, where they lived, went to school, their occupations
- Enquire about family heirlooms and their history
- Family stories may contain clues even if details aren't entirely accurate



Document Everything

Proper documentation is crucial for reliable family history

- Note the source of every piece of information
- Make copies or photographs of documents and photos
- Name images with date, location and names
- Keep a research log noting what you've searched and what you've found
- Document negative searches too—knowing where information isn't can be helpful



Next Steps

Once you've gathered initial information

- Explore online genealogy resources
- Plan visits to record offices, libraries and archives
- Hire an accredited genealogist to help you fill in your gaps - find our members here: www.accreditedgenealogists.ie



*Family history research is a journey, not a race.
Take time to verify information and enjoy the
process of discovery and connecting.*

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