

Tracing Your Ancestors: BEGINNER'S GUIDE

From the Publishers of Family Chronicle, Internet Genealogy & History Magazine

10 First Steps to Researching Your Ancestors!

**A Dozen
Websites
You Should
Know!**

Create a Timeline!

**Census Records &
How to Use Them**

**Vital Records:
Why You Should
Seek Them!**

**Genealogy Software
Overview, and
More!**

**Who's In
Those
Family
Photos?**

**Planting Your
Family Tree Online!**

**Storytelling &
Interview Tips**

**Finding Family in
Online Newspapers**



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ONLINE FAMILY TREES

Planting Your Family Tree Online: Knowing the Basics!

Tony Bandy explores some options for growing your family tree online

ONE OF THE FIRST THINGS WE learn as family researchers is the importance of keeping our data both safe and easily accessible. In today's world of fast Internet and easily downloaded genealogy software, you might think this is an easy thing to accomplish. However, this is not always the case. We've all had examples where our devices don't work with the particular version of our software or viruses corrupt our data, forcing us to painfully re-enter our ancestor's information by hand or backup file.

Given this, one suggestion that's becoming more and more popular is a model where **ALL** of our data is stored completely online, accessed only by a web browser or compatible software program. This is somewhat of a radical shift in thinking, and not everyone is comfortable with this approach. What do you think? Let's look at this a bit further.

All Online?

Accessible from most any computing device, safe from local disasters, safe from computer corruption and perhaps accidental deletion, Internet (or cloud-based) storage of your family history is becoming more popular. With free or low-cost subscriptions, you can directly edit, research and work on your genealogical projects as needed, from anywhere you might be located.

However, choosing this option will require planning and thought. You will need to decide on a service, factor in possible subscription costs, and examine your own research requirements. While I can't help examine your own research methodologies, I can share with you the information I have found on security as well as some of the different types of service options that are out there.

Security!

Let's discuss security first. Security of your data should be a primary component of any plan going forward, particularly with regards to online services. The key here is **YOU!** Any company that you want to trust with your data should be investigated. To help, I've put together a checklist of some common questions that you can use. These include:

- * Where and how is your data to be stored?
- * Is your family data encrypted or at least password protected?
- * What are the site's Terms of Service (TOS)?
- * Do you have control over who accesses your data?
- * How easy is it to import your data? Export your data?

While this list is by no means complete, use it as a building block for your own questions.