

Ancestry.com Tips & Tricks

Search

- Where to begin your search: <http://search.ancestry.com/search/>
 - New search homepage features
 - i. Recent searches
 - ii. Recently browsed
 - iii. Map below search form
 - iv. Explore our collections
 - What data should you collect and use in a search?
 - Names, dates, places, relationships
 - Global form – basic and advanced
 - Collection filters
 - i. More control over types of data collections
 - ii. More control over the country where collections originate
 - Name filters
 - i. Once we have the entire group of records that matched your query on any field, we then assign points to the record based on how many well the record matched what you typed in and how well it matched. For example, an exact match is going to receive more points than a match that is just an initial.
 - ii. When you specify name filters, we only pull records from the lists you specify.
 - iii. We then order the results based on the points that we calculate and present you with the list.
 - Place filters
 - i. Give more control of query and results
 - ii. Make existing search strategies faster and more efficient
 - iii. Maximize consistency in experience and flows
 - iv. Reduce perceived irrelevant results
 - How to use wildcards effectively
 - i. You can put a wildcard first, such as *son or ?atthew to catch all of those crazy spellings and variations that our ancestors came up with.
 - ii. Either the first or last character must be a non-wildcard character. For example, Han* and *son are okay, but not *anso*
 - iii. Names must contain at least three non-wildcard characters. For example, Ha*n is okay, but not Ha*
 - iv. We allow you to use two wildcards in your name searches: the * (asterisk or star) and the ? (question mark).
 - v. The * matches zero or more characters. So if you type in Ann*, this will match names such as Ann, Anne, Anna, or Annabelle.

- vi. The ? matches one and only one character. So if you type in Ann?, this will match names such as Anne or Anna but not Ann or Annabelle. If you use Ann?* you will match Anne, Anna or Annabelle, because you must match at least one character after the nn.
 - Family member container
 - Life event container
- Place pages: Map on <http://search.ancestry.com/search/>
 - Navigating
 - i. By Country, By State, By County
 - Searching is available on top right
 - Collections, History, Resource tabs have additional tips and resources
- Data collection pages
 - Search by single collections, global search doesn't work well for everything
 - Browsing – when you can't find it via search, browsing might reveal more.
- Where you can learn more
 - Write for vital records
 - i. <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w.htm>
 - Write to Social Security Administration for copies of original social security application:
 - i. Send \$27 and provide the following information: full name, state of birth, and date of birth to:
Social Security Administration
OEO FOIA Workgroup
300 N. Green Street
P.O. Box 33022
Baltimore, Maryland 21290-3022

Ancestry Links

- Our blog: <http://blogs.ancestry.com>
- Card catalog: <http://search.ancestrystage.com/search/CardCatalog.aspx>
- Ancestry wiki: <http://www.ancestry.com/wiki/>
- Interactive image viewer FAQ: <http://www.ancestry.com/cs/legal/LearnMoreOverview>
- 1940 US Federal Census page: <http://www.ancestry.com/1940>

Support and FAQ: http://ancestry.custhelp.com/cgi-bin/ancestry.cfg/php/enduser/sab_results.php?p_sid=omfZGJp&prop16=5

How do I add a Source from the Family tab in Family Tree Maker 2010?

1. Go to the **Family** tab on the People workspace.
2. In the editing panel, click the **New source citation** button to the right of the field for which you want to add a source. Then choose **Add New Source Citation** from the drop-down list. The Add Source Citation window opens. Continue with "Creating a Source from a Template" or "Creating a Source Using the Basic Format".

Does Ancestry.com have WWI Registration records?

Yes! More than 24 million registration card images are available in *WWI Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918*. To quickly locate this collection, click on “Search” from the Ancestry.com toolbar, then select “Military”.

The WWI and WWII Draft Registration Cards are featured collections on the Military category page.

Tips for searching military records on Ancestry.com sites:

Use the Search tips on the Military page and the articles in the Learning Center to learn more about a particular conflict.

Ancestry.com contains military documents such as the records of the *U.S. National Homes for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, 1866-1938*, and also contains indexes to military documents, such as *Civil War Pension Index: General Index to Pension Files, 1861-1934*. When you find an index reference, try to locate the original file it references, such as the military pension.

It's a good idea to search from the collection home page, which may offer search fields that are unique to that collection. For example, you can search by ship name in the *U.S. World War II Navy Muster Rolls, 1938-1949*. **It's also important to check collection home pages, since some military collections have not been indexed for searching and can only be accessed by browsing.** The collection *War of 1812 Pension Application Files Index, 1812-1815* is an important example. Searches on Ancestry.com will not find names in this collection, which must be browsed alphabetically.

Fold3 (an Ancestry.com site) is focused on military records, many in full document images. Have a Civil War ancestor who served in the Navy? You're in luck – the full *Case Files of Approved Pension Applications of Civil War and Later Navy Veterans (Navy Survivors' Certificates), 1861-1910*, some numbering hundreds of pages, are on the web at Fold3. Check out the available collections at <http://www.fold3.com>

What happens during a census year for those in the military?

The counting of military personnel varied by census year. The excellent paper by the U.S. Department of Commerce entitled “**Americans in Overseas U.S. Censuses [Technical Paper 62]**” is a good source of information on how military service personnel were enumerated in specific census years:

<http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/overseas/techn62-1.pdf>

1. **1840:** This census included a statistical count of individuals serving on naval vessels at sea, who were not enumerated in the main count. In addition, those receiving military pensions (including dependents) were listed on a second census page, providing an indication of prior military service.
2. **1860:** No separate mention of military personnel.
3. **1870:** Navy personnel were enumerated at their places of residence.
4. **1900:** Army personnel serving in the U.S. were included in the U.S. schedules where they were stationed. Military personnel stationed at overseas U.S. bases and on naval vessels were counted on separate census schedules. These census records appear on rolls 1838-1842 of the 1900 census.

Can trees be divided?

While trees can be split using Family Tree Maker, this option isn't available on Ancestry.com. However, there are some workaround options, which are listed below.

Split your tree using Family Tree Maker and then re-upload to Ancestry.com

If you have Family Tree Maker, you can download your tree from Ancestry.com, split the file, and then re-upload the new file to Ancestry.com.

The process for downloading and splitting your tree varies from version to version of Family Tree Maker. Please see the Ancestry.com Learning Center to learn about the version you use.

Duplicate your tree using a GEDCOM, then delete unneeded individuals

You can download a copy of your tree and upload it back to Ancestry.com, creating a near duplicate of your tree. You can then delete the individuals you don't want in this new tree.

Note: GEDCOM files are **text-only**. This means that any photos or stories attached to the original tree on Ancestry.com **will not be included** in the GEDCOM. Vital information, notes, and sources are usually retained by a file in GEDCOM format after conversion.

Give tips for bringing up the panorama and historic photo images for a particular town

Some great resources for images include:

- The *U.S. Historical Postcards collection* contains images of many towns. Search the Card Catalog for "postcards", or select this collection from the "Pictures and Maps" collections on the right side of the Ancestry.com search page, then enter the name of the place you want.
- Search for the word "panoramic" in the Ancestry.com Card Catalog, then select the collection *U.S. Panoramic Photos, 1850-1991*. Enter the location you want in the "Any event" field.
- From the Browse by Location section at the bottom of the Search page, select a state, then view the available resources for the appropriate county. Books and biographical resources about county histories often contain early photographs or drawings of towns. An example for Santa Clara County is *Pen pictures from the garden of the world, or, Santa Clara County, California*.
- Check the collection *Library of Congress Photo Collection, 1940-2000* (available from the from "Pictures and Maps" page) for early drawings and photographs of many U.S. locations.