

22 Steps in Researching Your Family Tree

'Discovering Your Past Blog Series'

Step 7 – Strategies & Tips

Finding Ancestors in Census Records, Military Documents, and Ship's Passenger Lists

Strategies List:

1. Start with what you know: Begin by gathering as much information as possible about your ancestors from family records, photographs, and oral histories.
2. Narrow your search: Determine the time period and location where your ancestor lived to help focus your research.
3. Utilize online databases: Use online genealogy databases such as Ancestry.com, FamilySearch.org, and Findmypast to search for census records, military documents, and ship's passenger lists.
4. Visit local archives and libraries: Local archives and libraries often have collections of historical records that can provide additional information about your ancestors.
5. Network with other researchers: Join genealogy forums and social media groups to connect with other researchers who may have information about your ancestors.
6. Consider hiring a professional researcher: If you have hit a dead end in your research, consider hiring a professional researcher who can help guide you through the process.

Important Tips:

1. Keep track of your sources: Keep detailed notes of the sources you use and the information you find to help avoid duplication of effort and ensure accuracy.
2. Be flexible: Be open to the possibility that your research may uncover unexpected information or that your assumptions may be incorrect.

3. Be persistent: Genealogy research can be time-consuming and frustrating, but don't give up. Keep digging and you may find the answers you are looking for.
4. Verify information: Don't take any piece of information at face value. Verify all information with multiple sources to ensure accuracy.
5. Learn about historical context: Understanding the historical context of the time and place where your ancestors lived can provide important context for your research.
6. Use a variety of search terms: Don't rely solely on exact spellings of names or locations. Try using alternative spellings and variations to uncover more information.