

GOOGLING FOR GRANDMA

How does Google Work?

- * Google bot scans websites and saves words, phrases , and discovers pages by harvesting links from the web and following them.
- * Indexes that information into its powerful indexing system...
- * So any entry into the search bar is then searched across the internet by using that powerful indexing system

Google Proverbs for Genealogy

A. The Google genealogist takes full advantage of technology and the internet to preserve and provide family history.

Google is so powerful it can feel like you only need to type in a couple of words into that search bar and get your questions answered!

Because there's *so much* information online, googling your ancestors can bring you a lot of results, but not necessarily the ones you need.

By tweaking your search strategy, you'll increase the chances of finding a website that actually helps you – without waiting through 200 pages of search results.

B. 6 tips for how to use Google for genealogy research

- 1) Set a research goal. Is it a person, place, book or image etc.
- 2) List what makes search unique.

Time and place. When and where did person live and for what time Period.

- 3) Did the person have an unusual first , middle, or last name?
- 4) Who was their spouse?

5) What did they do for work?

6) What type of thing are you looking for? Church records? photos?

**Obituaries, passenger lists, etc. etc ... think about what words are
More likely to be in that website.**

c. Google Search Operators can Improve accuracy and efficiency by narrowing results to relevant sites, names, dates and Document types.

Into that rectangular search bar are typed your keywords or phrases that once submitted to the search engine(e.g google, bing ,Yahoo etc) that in turn looks for that specific content within websites.

A website is a collection of related web pages and content that are grouped under a common domain name and accessible through the internet using a web browser. E.g chrome which uses AI chatbot Gemini, and Microsoft Edge which uses The AI chatbot Copilot. Websites are designed to inform or display content (like articles,news, or information)

Regardless of the Website requested , It will contain content that is organized and made accessible to visitors globally but only to read, watch, or browse on that website.

However a web app is highly interactive and allows users to perform tasks, input data, or use tools,like (creating documents, sending messages, or managing calendars etc).

Examples: Gmail, Google Docs, Google Keep, Google earth, Google Mail, Google photoscan, google alert etc

The Internet: What it is:

- The internet is the physical network of computers, cables, routers, satellites, servers, and data centre devices all connected together.
- It is the global infrastructure that allows any device to communicate with another
- Without the internet, nothing online would work.
- So ... the internet is the transportation system

The World Wide Web: What it is: (the content that travels on top of the internet)

- . It is a collection of websites, web pages, images, videos online stores, and search engines (Google, Bing, Yahoo, DuckDuckGo etc) that you access using a web browsers (Google chrome, Apple Safari, microsoft edge etc)
- . For AI integration: Google uses Gemini, Microsoft uses Copilot, and apple safari uses Siri
- . Google dominates the global search engine market at 90 % or more

Google Search Tips and Key Search Operators for Genealogy

Tip #1. - Every Word Counts: choose a key word or words to include in your search

Name - last name, first name, reverse order with a comma, middle name, bill vs william etc

Place - Country, province, county, town, city, parish

Topic - deaths at sea, military records, adoptions,

Event - court martial, obituary, birth, marriage, death Characteristic - Polish, male

Occupation - minister, farmer, doctor, Teacher

Time period

Sometimes the words in your query may not appear on the websites. Google may replace some words with synonyms **and even correct spelling**

Tip #2 -Use Double Quotations when you want an **exact** match. **Google Search is not case sensitive j and typically ignores punctuation**

“Rother Saskatchewan” “rother saskatchewan”... returns same results

“Cemetery Nipawin” versus “Nipawin Cemetery” could produce different results

Looking for surname Powers "powers" **OR** "steven powers" **OR** "powers, steven"

Annette Marie Walker birth may produce 6.3 million results

“Annette Marie Walker” birth may produce less than 1000 results

Try different versions “Walker, Annette Marie” “Walker, Annette” “Annette Marie Walker”

“Annette Walker” 1895 Nipawin Saskatchewan

Tip #3 - the minus sign is used to revolve unwanted words or phrases from search results

Use a minus sign "-" immediately before words or sites that you do NOT want to include .

“Example “Bertha” “Nipawin” -Manitoba

Example “lincoln” -president -ancestry.com

First do you search and examine the results for things that have nothing to do with your query to see what you don’t want and **modify** .

What if the surname is a common noun?

Church, street, day, park, or fox etc.

Brings up many web pages of unwanted information

Try adding the word **family** or **surname** or **born** as those words would likely appear on a genealogy page about that family.

Try adding specifics to your query by adding a **location** or a **first name**.

Add the keyword **Genealogy**

Tip #4 -Eliminate false results by using minus sign -

Fox -animal -news will eliminate all web pages having animal and news.

USE ADVANCED GOOGLE searches TO HELP ELIMINATE THE BOOLEAN SEARCHES

Tip #5 - allintitle search

. Will search for word(s) in the title of the web page.

May capture additional pages that surname search may miss.

Allintitle:fox genealogy

Allintitle:google search operators

Allintitle:"Henry Rother" genealogy shows pages whose titles include Henry Rother and genealogy

Tip #6 boolean operators OR must be upper case

- Minus sign instead of not

() Parentheses for grouping

"OR" used for multiple locations if you're not exactly sure where the family lived

Rother family (Saskatchewan OR Manitoba) **note** Brackets () are used as grouping symbols to control search. It will focus google to search those terms together before applying other rules

"Best running shoes" (men OR women) this search finds "best running shoes" only on pages that also mention "men" or "women"

(Rother or Rotter or Roether) Saskatchewan **AND** after) is not needed as google assumes it!

Tip #7- Search for a range of years. Use 2 dots between the dates.

All results will contain a year that falls within the range specified

Ship passenger list 1890..1900 Quebec

Rother Obituary 1890..1997

“John Smith ” Pennsylvania 1901...1980

Tip #8- Too much of a good thing

Too many words in query ...may give low results or none if all the query words don't appear on the page

Not enough words ...try searching for **surname** only or **First name** only

Add a nickname, middle name, abbreviated first name (Henry could be HY maybe Heinrich)

Try searching with location and without location

Run multiple versions of your query

Tip #9- Spelling Counts.... (?) Question Mark Wildcard

If Google thinks you have spelled a word incorrectly, it will give you the search results for the word it thinks you want.

Google **does not** do Soundex searches (words that sound alike but not spelled alike)

Smith and Smyth are not a match.

Elizabeth and Elisabeth are not a match

Google search query can be : Sm?th Eli?abeth **Sm?th**

will return Smith, Smyth, Smooth, Smath etc

B?ll will return Ball, Bell, Bill etc.

Tip #10- Watch those abbreviations

Google will search for both a keyword and its abbreviations

AB in the search query would give **both Alberta and AB**

“Jobs in AB” Google understands you are likely referring to the Canadian province **Alberta**

Tip #11 - Wildcard Searches

Google will search for middle names by using an asterix * in the place for the middle name. "John * smith" will get you John Allen Smith or John B. Smith but not John Smith.

A query for John*... may return John,Johnson,johnsen, johnathan, johns etc.

Tip #12 - Singular or Plural

Stemming technology will look for both singular and plural items at the same time

"Ottawa church" will also give you "Ottawa churches"

"Running shoes" includes pages that contain "run shoes" "runner shoes" "shoes for runners" "best shoes to run in"

"powers" will only give you pages with the word powers not power

Tip #13- Foreign Languages

Google will do translations for you

You can copy and paste words or phrases and images (German Birth Certificate) into Google translate to understand what is being said

Tip #14 Google can be directed to search only in certain countries or places using the site: operator

"Rother" site:.de google will search only websites that end with .de (German Domains)

"Rother" site:.ca .ca (Canadian Domains)

site:familysearch.org "Rother" "Nipawin" 1910..1950

Use Google Germany or Google France to look for genealogy for a specific country, put in the Country code at the end of Google, e.g. Google.uk for English research

Google Do's

1. Because of AI ... Gemini , copilot, safari allows you to now phrase your query as a question .

Use **specific keywords** you think will be on the page. [Where can I find saskatchewan genealogy records?](#)

B. The **Google genealogist** is **always improving search experience by trying new things.**

Other free Google Features For Genealogy

GOOGLE ALERTS a free service that notifies you via email about new content matching a search query, you previously made... be it a specific news topic, your name, a product or competitor

Google Images - Try searching for a photo of your ancestor using Google images.

Google Preferences -To customize and manage e.g changing how many results appear on a page or set the search preferences for a certain country or place

Google Alerts - Google Alerts will monitor the web for interesting new content. It will email you when a new webpage with your search criteria appears on the internet.

Google Scholar: search for very specialized content, like a bio of a little known minister , or a history of a little town

Google **Books** - Research a name, a place or a topic google books will keyword search within billions of pages of text in published books from around the world. Some of these books are digitized and available to read in full on the site e.g Google Books Watrous Saskatchewan

Google **Calculator** - Can perform anything from simple to extremely complex mathematical functions.

Google **Photos** - Use this as a photo tool to build a video, album, collage, slide show about your ancestor. (editing, rotating, etc)

Google **Earth google** allows one to explore anywhere in the World in 3 D but not in real time -You can actually look at the place your ancestor lived or worked or went to church or cemetery buried at and see what it looks like now.

Google **Maps** provides navigation advice in everyday situations in real time (also provides a 3 D image)

(Go Wide then Narrow) by using Precision Focused Investigations

By combining google operators thoughtfully - starting with **exact phrases**, applying **wildcards** for uncertain spellings and restricting searches to **relevant sites** - you can reduce noise and locate ancestral records faster. Setting up alerts ensures continually receive updates as new digitized records become available.

Begin my story is an excellent web site that worthwhile exploring

How to Use the Google Wildcard Operators in Ancestry Research

When you get to the search bar Just type in google

Press ctrl + left click on item below

<https://beginmystory.com/>