



# HOW TO GET READY FOR YOUR FAMILY HISTORY CHART: A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

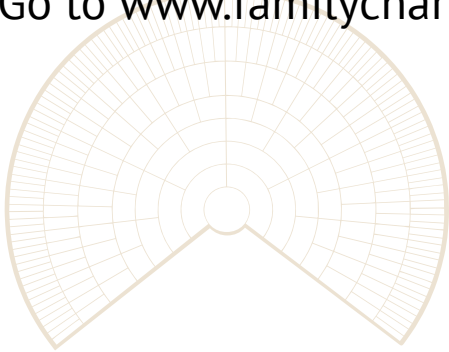
# HOW TO GET READY FOR YOUR FAMILY HISTORY CHART



## 1 Explore Inspiring Chart Designs

Browse our online gallery to see what your family history chart could look like. You can eventually choose one of these designs or we can create a customized chart for your family. Don't worry about selecting a final design yet. Just let the designs inspire your project!

Go to [www.familychartmasters.com/gallery](http://www.familychartmasters.com/gallery) and get inspired today!



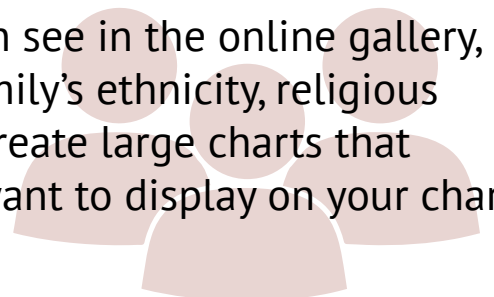
## 2 Choose Your Subject

Flesh out any stories you want to share.

Some chart designs allow you to include your favorite family history anecdotes. Maybe you'd like to highlight the experiences of an immigrant ancestor, or share the "how we met" story of a couple in honor of their wedding or anniversary. As you may have noticed during step #1, these stories look best on a chart when they are concise.

Decide who is the starting person or couple for your chart, and whether to show their ancestors or descendants (or both). For example, perhaps you'd like to create a chart showing all the descendants of your great-grandparents for your next family reunion. Or maybe you want to display four generations of the ancestors of a newborn child.

As you can see in the online gallery, some people create charts that celebrate their family's ethnicity, religious background or military service, too. We can even create large charts that encompass everyone in your file. So who do you want to display on your chart?



# 3

## Choose a Family Tree File Type

Choose an electronic format for building a family tree. Your favorite genealogy website may be a good option, such as Ancestry.com, FamilySearch, or MyHeritage. You might prefer to use software made just for genealogy, such as Family Tree Maker, RootsMagic, Legacy Family Tree, or Ancestral Quest. (We can even use files from software you might already have that is no longer sold, such as The Master Genealogist or Personal Ancestral File.)

# 4

## Start Entering Information in Your Tree

### Tips For Entering Data

- Use a person's full name at birth, including a woman's maiden surname. Add a nickname by putting the name in quotes after the given name.
- Enter complete dates and specific places of birth, marriage and death.
- Don't worry about putting photos in your family tree file. You can send us photos later, separately, if your chart design calls for them.
- You can add stories in your chart by putting the information into the notes section of your file or just compile them into a word document or email to send us separately.

Follow your tree platform's instructions to start entering whatever details you already know about each family member. You'll be asked for such things as each person's date and place of birth, marriage and death. Expand your tree by adding the names and details for each person's parents, children, siblings, and/or spouse. Focus most on entering information about the branch of the family that will be on your chart. However, it's fine to enter other information that won't be on the chart, too.

# 5

## Ask Your Relatives For Help

There will likely be details you don't know. Ask relatives who might know the answers! Perhaps someone has already constructed your family tree and could send you a family tree file or tell you what you want to know. You might have to ask multiple people. Maybe your cousin knows details about his parents, and your great-aunt about her siblings.

# 6

## Search Major Genealogy Websites

Head for a favorite genealogy website to help you fill in remaining blanks. (FamilySearch is free; others may require paid or trial subscriptions.) Search their collections of historical records for the names and types of information you seek. For example, death dates and places you might find in obituaries, gravestone images, or death certificates.

Other people's online trees on genealogy websites may include some of these details. Look for trees with many familiar names and places, to be sure they're yours. See what old records are attached to the tree as evidence for that date, name or place you're interested in. (You can trust the information more when you see where they got it.)

# 7

## Send in Your File For a Free Consultation

Once your tree file has all the information you want to include, send it to us for a free expert consultation. Our consultation page offers tips for how to export your tree file from FamilySearch, Ancestry or MyHeritage. You can send us the actual data file from your software, or you can export your file as a .GED (also known as a "gedcom" file; usually created with the 'export' button under your file menu).

Our expert designers will get in touch with you and offer all the support you need to turn your tree into a beautiful, heirloom custom chart.

What if I need help?

If you need help finding the details for your family tree, we can recommend researchers to assist you.

# Ready?

## Upload your files for a free consultation!

[www.familychartmasters.com/consult](http://www.familychartmasters.com/consult)

### Gather Pictures

Many chart designs incorporate your favorite photos of individuals, couples and even families. Gather your pictures and create electronic copies of them by digitally scanning them. If you need photos of specific people, ask relatives and search for them in online family trees. If you find photos online, get permission of the person who uploaded them before using them. We can help you crop photos, if needed.