

## Family and services

Beginner's guide to



# Your family

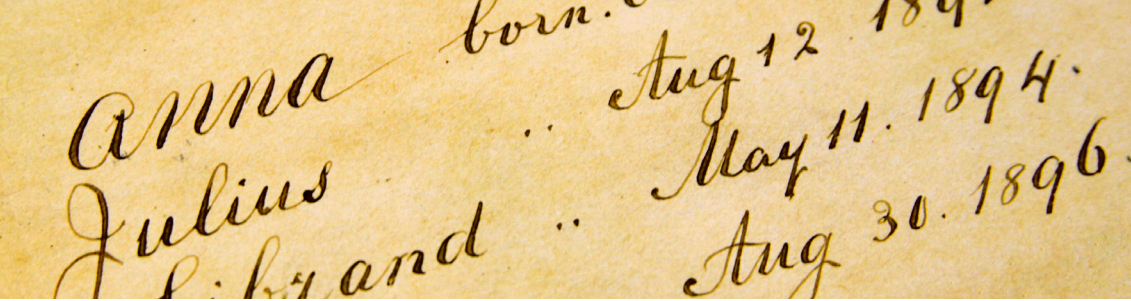
## 5.3 Genealogy

This activity will help you use the Internet to trace your family history.

### What will I learn?

- Where you can research your family history
- Which free sites can give you information
- How you can use paid-for sites in your search

-  Use this document with the glossary
-  A helper should take you through this guide



## How do I do it?

**Be safe! If you're using this hand-out on a shared or public computer, remember to:**

- **Log on using a 'strong password': one that includes upper and lower case letters, numbers, and isn't something that someone else could guess.**
- **Never share or write down your password.**
- **Log out when you're finished.**

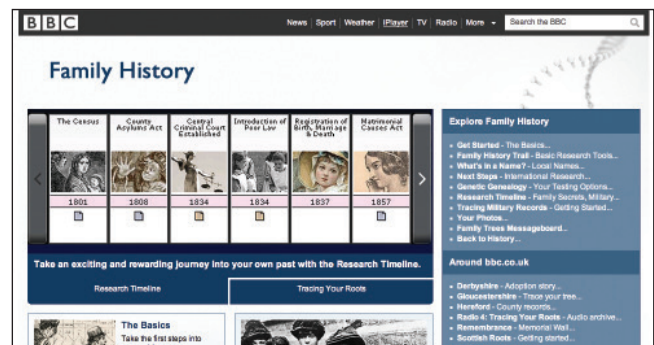
**The web links referred to throughout this document can be found in the Useful Links section at the end.**

Where can I find out how to research my family history?

1. Researching your family's past can be fun and rewarding. You can trace your ancestors and discover things you never knew.
2. Start by writing down what you know, and ask your family what they know. The Internet can provide vital help: lots of sites, both free and paid-for, can help you fill in the gaps and reach back into the past.
3. To learn about the basics, go to the British Genealogy web link and click on 'Beginners':
  - Read this quick guide to getting started.

4. For a more detailed introduction, go to the BBC family history web link and click on 'Get started':

- Explore the overview and basic guide web links.
- Make sure you look at the page on 'To Pay or Not To Pay?' This is quite a long web page, so you can come back to it again in your own time. It will help you make the right choice if you decide to use paid-for sites in your search – see below.



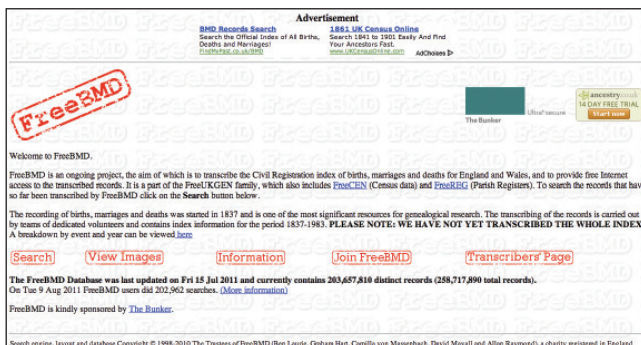
BBC web page: family history

What free sites can give me information?

5. There are lots of free sites that can help you get started. These usually don't hold as much information as paid-for sites, but they are a good place to get started. Use these free sources of information first, before you think about paying.
6. Go to the FreeBMD (Births, Marriages and Deaths) web link. This is a free database of birth, death and marriage records in England and Wales (there are also links for Scotland and Northern Ireland). The instructions

below won't apply, but you can find similar information):

- Click on 'Search' and look at the different fields that you can fill in. This can be as simple as a surname, or it can be a combination of as many search fields as you want, like a date range, district or county.
- The BBC family history web link has a list of other free sites for you to use, or you can find more using a search engine.



FreeBMD web page

7. There are also online forums for people tracing their family tree:

- Go back to the British Genealogy web link and click on the 'Forum' link to explore one.
- There are other forums you can use. Search for 'genealogy forum', 'family history' forum' and see what your search engine can find.

8. Search engines can help you find out more about each person's background, location and life, bringing your family history to life:

- See if you can find historic photos of where they lived and worked.
- Find out more about events that shaped their lives.
- Organise what you find using bookmarks, folders and documents on your computer.

How can I use paid-for sites in my search?

9. Paid-for sites can often provide much more information. They can also offer other services, such as letting you build and share your family tree online.
10. Go to the Genes Reunited web link. You can get started for free but for more options, you need to pay:
  - There are various charging options and these are described on the Genes Reunited home page.
  - The home page also includes information on the types of records Genes Reunited has access to.
  - Find the 'Terms and conditions' link at the very bottom of the web page and scroll down to read the guide to your cancellation rights.



## My learning checklist

- I know where to find help when I am tracing my family history.
- I can use a search facility to find records of people from my past.
- I can be safe when registering for a site or forum (see the Top tips if you're not sure).
- I can find free family history sites using a search engine.
- I can explore a paid-for site to find out what it can offer, and how much it costs.

## Top tips

- Spend time finding out all you can before you start searching on the Internet. Another family member may also be interested in family history. They might have a family tree you can use to get started on your own.
- Remember to find out what a site can offer before signing up. Make sure you have read and understood the terms and conditions.
- Remember not to share personal information on forums. Beginner guide Using social networks can help you.

## Where next?

- Plan a budget for tracing your family tree. Use subscription information on some paid-for sites to help you calculate how much you might spend.
- Plan how you will use your computer skills to save and organise what you discover. Family tree websites can provide information in lots of different forms. Think about how you can use folders and documents to present your family tree and all that you discover.

Write down any notes that will help you:

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## Useful Links

You may want to use these links in your session:

**BBC family history:**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/familyhistory>

**British Genealogy:**

<http://www.british-genealogy.com>

**FreeBMD:**

<http://www.freebmd.org.uk>

**ScotlandsPeople:**

<http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk>

**NI Genealogy:**

<https://www.emeraldancestors.com/>

**Census records:**

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/records/census-records.htm>

**Genes Reunited:**

<http://www.genesreunited.co.uk>

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