

# Jewish Genealogy Research Essentials Presentations Part 1

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## Getting Started

- Choose and use family tree software
  - Decide on YOUR criteria and wish list for selection
  - Research best genealogy software and online programs like: [http://genealogy-software-review.toptenreviews.com/ppc-index.html?cmpid=507352&s\\_kwcid=TC|17114|genbox%20family%20history||Sp|7400173106](http://genealogy-software-review.toptenreviews.com/ppc-index.html?cmpid=507352&s_kwcid=TC|17114|genbox%20family%20history||Sp|7400173106) or [http://genealogy.about.com/od/software\\_reviews/Genealogy\\_Software\\_Reviews\\_Ratings\\_Comparisons.htm](http://genealogy.about.com/od/software_reviews/Genealogy_Software_Reviews_Ratings_Comparisons.htm)
- Write what YOU know about your family members
  - Record full names, birth, marriage, and death dates and places, and spouses' full names
- Call your relatives with basic/easy research questions
  - Full names, birth/marriage/death dates and places of their immediate family members
- Gather documents and pictures
  - Marriage, Birth, and Death Certificates, Wills, Naturalization Papers, Diaries, letters, etc.
- Evaluate the documents/sources
  - Primary source
    - i. Generated at time or immediately after event and for a specific purpose
  - Secondary source
    - i. Generated after event or for an alternative purposes
  - ALWAYS evaluate accuracy of information and resources
- Cite Your Sources: Document sources of information collected
- Organize your materials: Folders, Notebooks, Portable Research "kit"
- Develop research logs

## Interviewing Relatives

- Pace your interviews
  - Record the Interviewee; don't judge or disagree; ask clarifying questions; let them talk
- Tools for interviewing
  - Telephone and/or SKYPE, Tape recorders, video, lap top, camera, paper and pencil
- Basics First
  - Put them at ease; then request Full Names, Birth/Marriage/Death Dates and Places, Occupations, Religious/Synagogue Affiliation
- More questions
  - Hebrew/Yiddish names, info on Aunts, Uncles and Cousins, immigration-dates, ports, and steamship name, town/city emigrated from and why, cities lived in and dates, burial dates and sites, community service organizations, hobbies
  - Ask for any documents or family memorabilia or pictures, etc.
- Stories Next
  - Memories about family members, holiday and life cycle celebrations
  - Ask open-ended questions and clarifying questions to get more information
  - Suggested Resources: *TIPS FOR INTERVIEWERS* from Willa K. Baum, <http://bancroft.berkeley.edu/ROHO/resources/rohotips.html>

20 QUESTIONS TO ASK THE IMPORTANT WOMEN IN YOUR LIFE  
<http://www.jwa.org/discover/inyourlife/20questions/twentyquestions.html>

**Tips on Jewish Names:** Spellings vary; misspellings are common; translated/shortened names

### Typical Ashkenazi Naming Tradition

- New Born named after deceased ancestor like baby's departed grandparent
- Children had Hebrew names, given names, Yiddish/nick names, and/or Americanized names
- First born male maybe called "Alter" (means "old" in Yiddish)

### Typical Sephardic Naming Tradition

- First born son named after paternal grandfather and first born daughter named after paternal grandmother; second boy named after maternal grandfather; second girl named after maternal grandmother; next child named after paternal uncle or aunt, next child after maternal uncle or aunt
- A deceased grandparent or sibling takes precedence over typical naming tradition
- Children have Hebrew names, Ladino/nick names, and/or Americanized names
- First born maybe called "Bohor" for boys and "Behora" for girls (means "first born" in Ladino)

### Jewish Names Search Sites and Resources

- *JEWISH GIVEN NAMES* Handout by Warren Blatt: [http://www.jgsws.org/Handouts/5-7-2007\\_GivenNames\\_handout.pdf](http://www.jgsws.org/Handouts/5-7-2007_GivenNames_handout.pdf)
  - Provides given names listed in Russian, Polish and Hebrew
- *The Origins and Meanings of Ashkenazic Last Names* Article posted by Bennett Muraskin
- <http://jewishcurrents.org/the-origins-and-meanings-of-ashkenazic-last-names-12849>
  - Provides given names listed in Russian, Polish and Hebrew
- Search *SEPHARDIC NAMES TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH From 21 Languages*: [http://www.sephardim.com/html/translated\\_names\\_b.html](http://www.sephardim.com/html/translated_names_b.html)
- Use *SEPHARDIC NAMES SEARCH ENGINE*: <http://www.sephardim.com/search.shtml>
- *SephardicGen Resources Consolidated Index Sephardic Surnames*: <http://www.sephardicgen.com/databases/indexSrchFrm.html>
  - Search over 130,000 names from different databases
  - Provides option to search "Sounds like" (American Soundex) and "is phonetically" (Morse-Beider's new phonetic matching for Sephardic names)
- *Avotaynu Consolidated Jewish Surname Index (CJSI)*: <http://www.avotaynu.com/csi/csi-home.htm>
  - Search 699,084 primarily Jewish surnames accessed from 42 different databases
  - Sequenced phonetically (not alphabetically) so surname spelling variants that sound the same are grouped together
- *How Jews Got Their Last Names in Europe in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries*, Auditory Lecture by Marlene Schiffman during the Association of Jewish Libraries 2010 Conference: <http://www.jewishlibraries.org/main/Resources/Podcast/tabid/89/ID/1098/How-Jews-Got-Their-Last-Names-in-Europe-in-the-18th-and-19th-Centuries.aspx>
  - Focusing primarily on France, Germany, Polish and Russian governments

### Research

- **The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) Offers:** <http://www.archives.gov/research/genealogy/index.html>
  - Permanent repository of historical records for US government which has Two WA DC facilities, 14 regional archives & 12 Presidential Libraries and is free to the public

(<http://www.archives.gov/locations/index.html> provides address to regional archives , etc.

- Digitized, Online Original Records
- 35 Million Still Pictures and Posters, 18 Million Aerial Photos, 5 Million Maps, etc.
- US Federal Census from 1790-1940 (USA Census not made public for 72 years)
- Microfilmed City Directories
  - Similar to telephone books but privately printed without phone numbers since early 1800's
  - Contain alphabetical lists of the names of the heads of households, their addresses, and occupational information
- Naturalization Papers covered by regional branch (offer indexes for other states too)
  - Declaration of Intention/First Papers: intention to become citizen
  - Petition for Naturalization/Final Papers: formal application
  - Certificate for Naturalization: proof of naturalization given to citizen
  - Naturalization papers filed after September 26, 1906 were standardized
  - September 22, 1922, passed the Married Women's Act; "law finally gave each woman a nationality of her own... Prior to this, if a US-born woman married a man who was foreign-born, she lost her citizenship. If he was later naturalized, she then regained it, since women and children before this time were granted citizenship with their husband/father." (M.L. Smith)
- Some State Census AND International Census
  - Canada and Great Britain census become public after 100 years so 1911 census is available
- US Passenger Arrival Manifests and Indexes
  - Manifests are written records of people immigrating from foreign ports into US ports
  - Records maintained since 1820 and available on microfilm
  - Usually provide name, age, country of origin prior to 1905
  - After 1905 arrival date based on port of entry, also provides place of last residence, birthplace, passenger's destination, name of US relative going to join, occupation
  - After the requirement of visas in 1924, passengers were required to have travel documents and/or proof of birth, age, etc.
- Important NARA Online Finding Aids for Databases and Records of Digitized Documents, Photos, Maps and Electronic files on NARA website which are available for free downloads and research – <http://www.archives.gov/research/start/online-tools.html>,
- Online Public Access (OPA) – New online portal to all of the data and digitized records from ARC, also all the web pages from Archives.gov and from Presidential Libraries, some AAD and over 1 million electronic records from Electronic Records Archives (ERA) with results grouped into categories <http://www.archives.gov/research/search/>
- Search Tips for OPA and Discover Locations of Archival Materials – <http://www.archives.gov/research/search/help/search-tips.html>
- Microfilm Catalog – 3,400 numbered microfilm publications - Order reproductions at [https://eservices.archives.gov/orderonline/start.swe?SWECmd=GotoView&\\_sn=Fv1g-Pp50lyMPOZ7IDwo68dzlnERrG78ITP.r-9wK.I\\_&SWEView=GPEA+Microfilm+Landing+Page+View+MIF&SWEHo=eservices.archives.gov&SWETS=1350797634&SWEScreen=GPEA+Microfilm+MIF](https://eservices.archives.gov/orderonline/start.swe?SWECmd=GotoView&_sn=Fv1g-Pp50lyMPOZ7IDwo68dzlnERrG78ITP.r-9wK.I_&SWEView=GPEA+Microfilm+Landing+Page+View+MIF&SWEHo=eservices.archives.gov&SWETS=1350797634&SWEScreen=GPEA+Microfilm+MIF)
- Federal Records Guide – high level including executive, judicial, and legislative branches. <http://www.archives.gov/research/guide-fed-records/>
- Archival Records Database (ARC) – national holdings, use key words, person, etc. <http://www.archives.gov/research/arc/> which retires August 15, 2013 so use this OPA URL <http://www.archives.gov/research/search/>

- Access to Archival Databases (AAD) – search electronic holdings by person, date, etc. <http://aad.archives.gov/aad/>
  - Resources for Genealogists – <http://www.archives.gov/research/genealogy/>
    - Most NARA branches offer free [www.Ancestry.com](http://www.Ancestry.com), [www.heritagequestonline.com](http://www.heritagequestonline.com) and [www.fold3.com/](http://www.fold3.com/) (Footnote) access
  - All Regional NARA have volunteers to help you with your research
  - Print copies of documents for a nominal fee (so take change)
  - Request research for 1-4 family members at a time for a fee
- **Old Newspapers** serve as “diaries of local communities and their inhabitants”
    - Death Notices and Obituaries
    - Marriage, Birth, B’nai Mitzvah announcements
    - Articles about or written by family members
    - Find in libraries on microfilm or library online databases, or local newspaper archives
    - Databases and newspaper archives like Library Of Congress [www.loc.gov/rr/news/](http://www.loc.gov/rr/news/)
    - Find online for a fee OR free at many libraries and National Archives Branches
      - ProQuest® <http://www.proquest.com> then enter “Genealogy” and “Go” in Products & Services
      - HeritageQuest™ <http://www.heritagequestonline.com/hgoweb/library/do/index>
      - Ancestry.com or Ancestry Library Edition <http://www.ancestry.com>
  - **Join Genealogical Societies**
    - Your Local, State or National Jewish and Secular Genealogical Societies
    - Special Interest Groups (SIGs)
    - Offer educational programs, private libraries, research and translation assistance

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