

Genealogy Research Overview: Week 1

1. 2 building blocks

- a. Pedigree Charts:
 - i. Free: http://genealogy.about.com/library/free_charts/pedigree.pdf
 - ii. Pay: http://www.misbach.org/pdfcharts/pedigree_chart.pdf
- b. Family Group Sheets:
<http://genealogy.about.com/gi/dynamic/offsite.htm?zi=1/XJ/Ya&sdn=genealogy&zu=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ancestry.com%2Fsave%2Fcharts%2Fancchart.htm>

2. 3 “W” questions

- a. **Who** produced us?
- b. **When** did that occur?
- c. **Where** did that happen?

3. 4 basic types of archival records

- a. Census records
- b. Probate records
- c. Property records
- d. Vital Records
 - i. Death
 - ii. Marriage
 - iii. Birth

4. 6 circles of genealogical information

- a. Your knowledge
- b. Knowledgeable relatives
- c. Family documents
- d. Free Internet websites
- e. Paid Internet websites
- f. Public document repositories

5. 10 Commandments on Dr. Dave’s list

10. When you are stuck, **widen your net**. Now is the time to ignore # 6 below and follow the chickens: siblings, in-laws, neighbors, witnesses to legal documents, fellow church members, business associates.

9. **Don’t ignore the ladies**. Often their lines are more challenging to trace because maiden names (or other married names) may be difficult to unearth.

8. Look for records where they would have been recorded when they were created. **Location, location, location!** Location in place, location in time, location in record repositories of the governing body at the time of originating time and place.

7. **Plan your search strategy.** This will help you prioritize you time online or on visits to records repositories such as libraries, courthouses, cemeteries, etc. Plan research trips by working online to identify those things of interest that are likely to be contained in the repositories you visit.

6. **Find a focus** ancestor and research that person as far as you can go. Don't follow every chicken that runs across the road.

5. **Organize** your data on pedigree charts and family group sheets as you go—better yet in a genealogy program on a computer. These building blocks really work to keep you focused and on track.

4. **Believe everything and believe nothing** you are told or see in print. There are elements of truth in most oral traditions so don't totally discard them. Paper and web pages will record nonsense any fool writes down. Look for primary sources whenever possible—eyewitnesses and documents recorded at the time of the event. However, even primary sources are sometimes incorrect. Collect multiple sources and weigh them against each other. Use common sense.

3. **Record where you found it** and/or who told you.

2. **Interview living members of your family** and examine any paper you or they have laying around including letters, diaries, scrapbooks, bankbooks, Bibles, photographs and loose papers. Record interviews if possible. It's hard to take in every nuance and clue the first time through. Temporarily borrow any papers and pictures you come across and run to the nearest Kinko's or come with your own portable scanner or copier. Sometimes a good digital camera will do the trick. Ask if they know of anyone else researching your family.

1. **Start with what you know** (yourself) and **build to what you don't know**—step by step. **Don't skip steps!!**

6. Cousin Chart: <http://genealogy.about.com/library/nrelationshipchart.htm>

7. Getting Started on Your Family Tree:
http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/trail/familyhistory/family_trees/research_family_tree_01.shtml

8. Plus copyright: <http://www.copyright.gov/circs/circ01.pdf>

9. Creative Commons: <http://creativecommons.org/about/licenses/>