

Family History

Births, Deaths and Marriages: Australia, New Zealand, England & Wales

Guidelines for birth, death and marriage research

Start from yourself and work backwards. Your own full birth certificate will lead to information on your parents. From their certificates, you can find information on earlier generations.

Major birth, death and marriage indexes available at State Library of Queensland and online					
Place	Births	Deaths	Marriages	Integrated Indexes	Civil Registration
Qld	1829-1926	1829-1996	1839-1951	1829-1914	Mar 1856
Queensland Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages historical index https://www.familyhistory.bdm.qld.gov.au/					
NSW	1788-1926	1788-1996	1788-1976	1788-1945 (births to 1918)	Mar 1856
NSW Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages Historical Indexes (From yesterday's date 100, 30 & 50 years ago) https://www.nsw.gov.au/family-and-relationships/family-history-search					
Vic	1836-1926	1836-1996	1836-1966	1836-1920	July 1853
Victorian Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages Historical Index (From today's date 100, 30 & 60 years ago) https://www.bdm.vic.gov.au/research-and-family-history/search-your-family-history					
Tas	1803-1933	1803-1939	1803-1930	1803-1930 (births to 1919)	December 1838
Libraries Tasmania Names index https://librariestas.ent.sirsidynix.net.au/client/en_AU/names/?					
SA	1842-1928	1842-1972	1842-1937	None	July 1842
Genealogy SA (Online dates Births to 1928, Deaths to 1994, Marriages to 1950) https://www.genealogysa.org.au/resources/online-database-search					
WA	1829-1924*	1829-1994	1829-1965	1841-1905	Sept 1841
WA Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages Historical Online Indexes https://www.wa.gov.au/organisation/departments-of-justice/online-index-search-tool					
NT	1870-1918	1870-1913	1870-1913	None	August 1870
ACT	-	1930-1995	1930-1950	-	-
ACT Births, Deaths and Marriages – Access Canberra https://services.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/s/public-registers [Public registers < 'H' < Historic...]					
NZ	1840-1990	1848-1990	1840-1990	None	1848 approx.
NZ Births, Deaths and Marriages Online Historical Records Search https://www.bdmhistoricalrecords.dia.govt.nz/search/					
England & Wales	1837-2001	1837-2000	1837-2001	None	July 1837
General Register Office https://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/certificates/login.asp [births and deaths only]					

* For 1829-1840 consult "Access to Ancestors" MFPAM 929.3941 1990 C2, ask at level 3 desk.

NOTE:

- Check **New South Wales records** for **Victoria pre 1851** and **Queensland pre 1859**
- Many of the birth, death and marriage indexes are available on CD-ROM, microfiche and online. Check One Search catalogue or CD-ROM information booklet for more information.
- Index and certificate information varies among the States. For details, ask at the family history desk or consult Graham Jaunay's website <https://www.jaunay.com/bdm.html>
- Search ancestryLibrary edition or FindMyPast, both available at State Library, to find English and Welsh civil records to 2001. See also *Info Guide : England and Wales: birth, death and marriage indexes*

Other useful indexes:

- The *International Genealogical Index* (IGI) compiled by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints is available on microfiche, and online <https://www.familysearch.org>. It contains millions of baptismal and marriage entries from civil and church registers world-wide. The website is free but you will need to create an account to view your search results.
- State Library holds some parish registers for New South Wales, Queensland, Tasmania and Western Australia, as well as British, North America, Western Europe and Scandinavia indexes on microfilm, microfiche and CD-ROM. Ask at level 3 desk.

Helpful hints

- **Use primary source material** such as birth, death and marriage certificates. The indexes alone are not enough. Certificates provide information for further research. This can include place of birth, parents' names, address, length of spent time in the colony, occupation, religion and details of other family members.
- **Be aware of different spelling of names:** A person might spell their name many ways for different reasons. Names were often misheard, so misspelt.
- **Ages:** It was easier for people to be 'flexible' about their age, based on the situation of the time, so it was not always accurate.
- **Find records in Australia:** Start here before searching overseas, it is easier and cheaper.
- **Check what others are researching:** Look at items such as the "Genealogical Research Directory" (FAMHIS 929.1072), an international register of family historians.
- **Cross-check information** through resources such as church records, monumental inscriptions and other cemetery records; undertakers' records, probate records and indexes to newspaper birth, death and marriage records.
- **Maintain records of your sources.** Use a research log as this is useful for checking information and finding errors. Always record the details of records you have checked – you may need them again! Samples are available on the internet, from societies, and in handbooks.
- **Prepare family group sheets and descendant charts** to record relationships other than the direct line. Find these on the internet, from societies, and in handbooks.
- **Find out more about the lives of your family** in their historical, geographical, social and occupational contexts. Directories, newspapers, maps, gazetteers, electoral rolls, government and local records are valuable sources of information. Check the family history Research Guides for more details about these resources.

Need further information?

(07) 3840 7810 | slq.qld.gov.au/ask

© State Library of Queensland, 2025. Last updated January 2026



This guide is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC-BY-4.0) licence. You are free to copy, communicate and adapt this work, so long as you attribute State Library of Queensland. For more information see creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/