

GETTING STARTED IN GENEALOGY FOR DENSHO'S FINDING YOUR NIKKEI ROOTS SERIES

Before beginning your family history there are a number of steps you can take to prepare yourself for doing genealogical research. These tips will help you work from the ground up and keep you from becoming overwhelmed with the process.

THINK IT THROUGH

- Get organized. Set your goals. What is it you want to know?
- How will you share your research? A book? Make a film? Host a family reunion?
- Decide if your project will be digital, paper, or both.
- Consider how you will keep track of your findings. A notebook? A software program?
- Think about how you want to store all of the information you collect.
- Think about how you want to label all of those items.



Fujii and Mori Families Collection (ddr-densho-321-752)

START THE PROCESS

- Begin with yourself and work backwards in time.
- As you gather information, look for the story, the intersections of people, place, and time.
- Don't limit yourself to researching only direct ancestors (parents, grandparents, etc.).
- Write down what you already know.
- Try to extract as much data as possible from every item, every document.
- Complete your pedigree chart and family group sheets.
 - Names should be first, middle, surname. Identify women by their maiden names.
 - Dates should be written day-month-year (01 January 2020).
 - U.S. locations should be written town-county-state, or for Japan, town-region-prefecture.
 - Spelling can be unpredictable, but you should be consistent.
- Interview your elders. Share the pedigree charts and family group sheets.
- Gather your family memorabilia (letters, passports, photos, etc.) and ask the elders if they have family heirlooms to talk about and to preserve.

Compiled by Linda Harms Okazaki. All URLs valid as of 7 Aug 2020.



DENSHO
densho.org

ONLINE RESOURCES

Ancestry (<https://www.ancestry.com/>) - Subscription site with extensive access to genealogical data, digitized records, family tree resources, and DNA services.

Cyndi's List (<https://www.cyndislist.com>) - Free resource that is a good starting point for family history, guiding you with a comprehensive list of online genealogical research sites.

Densho (<https://densho.org/>) - Oral histories, digitized primary sources, and educational resources related to the Japanese American incarceration.

Family Search (<https://www.familysearch.org>) - Free site with extensive access to genealogical data, digitized records, family tree resources, and an extremely valuable resource wiki.

National Archives (<https://www.archives.gov/>) - Home to all the historical records of the U.S. government. Essential resource for research into the Japanese American incarceration, immigration, and military records.

Library of Congress (<https://loc.gov/>) - The library of the U.S.; an important resource for historical research purposes. Home to *Chronicling America*, digitized newspapers from 1789-1963.

Japan Wikipedia (<https://ja.m.wikipedia.org>) - Japan's Wikipedia.

Jisho (<https://jisho.org/>) - A powerful Japanese-English dictionary.

FACEBOOK GROUPS

The following are Facebook groups dedicated to Nikkei research:

- Africa, Asia, and Pacific Genealogy Research Community
- Genealogy for Asian Canadians
- Japanese American Roots
- Nikkei Genealogical Society

TIPS & TRICKS

Free Pedigree Charts and Family Group templates can be found here:

(<http://www.ancestry.com/cs/charts-and-forms>)

Check your local public library, local genealogical society, and local family history center.

Resource: Smith, Drew. *Organize Your Genealogy*. Cincinnati, OH: Family Tree Books, 2016.

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