

Comparing the Genealogy Giants:

Ancestry, FamilySearch, Findmypast and MyHeritage



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Why you should know about all of these sites (even if you use one most often):

- Each offers unique content and tools.
- All keep adding new records, tools and user-submitted data.
- No single website has everything you'll need or want over time.
- Free access options are available, with access to most features of these sites!

Site statistics at-a-glance

	Ancestry	FamilySearch	Findmypast	MyHeritage
Est. historical records in billions (B)*	About 10 B⁺	7.1 B indexed names; 3.1 B record images; 453,000+ digital books	9 B	9.6 billion
Names in trees*	13 billion (in 100 million individual trees)	1.2 billion (community tree, 5.2 million contributors)	Not searchable	3.5 billion (in 46 million trees)
DNA profiles*	15 million from over 30 global markets	None	Partnership with Living DNA (no totals yet)	2.5 million
Annual subscription	£100 - £200 (based on 6mo subscription) or Pay-As-You-Go	Free	£72 - £156	£109 - £249 USD (1 st year discounts available)
Geographic record strengths	Australia/NZ, U.K., Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Mexico, Sweden, U.S.	Global, special strengths in U.S., U.K., Continental Europe, Eastern Europe, Mexico, Central/South America, Ghana, China	England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, US/Canada, Australia/New Zealand	Scandinavia, England, Germany, Israel, U.S., Netherlands
Site operates in these languages	English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Swedish	Chinese, English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish	English	42 languages total: See full list: https://tinyurl.com/MHlanguages
Free mobile app	Android, iOS	Android, iOS	Android, iOS	Android, iOS

*All figures approximate August 2019. Figures not adjusted for various ways of defining and counting records.

⁺Ancestry reports total records only (with DNA, trees, etc.) Sources: [www.ancestry.com/corporate/about-ancestry/company-facts](#), [media.familysearch.org/company-facts](#), [www.findmypast.com/content/company-information](#), and <https://about.myheritage.com>. Additional data obtained from company representatives.

What do all the sites have in common at the top membership levels?

- Ability to search indexed and unindexed historical records
- Core historical record collections for its priority regions
- Family tree building tools
- Automated record hinting if you have a tree on the site

Site highlights

	Ancestry.com	FamilySearch.org	Findmypast.com	MyHeritage.com
Featured historical records for England	City directories, Electoral and parish registers	BMD indexes, electoral and parish registers	Parish records, incl Catholic; military; social/criminal; newspapers	Smaller collections of parish records
Tree style	Individual	One global tree	Individual trees	Individual
Access to other user-submitted trees	Public or private settings available	Public access: any descendant may edit	Not searchable yet	Public or private settings available
DNA*	Ethnicity, Genetic Communities, DNA matching tools, ThruLines	N/A	Via Living DNA: 21 British Isles ethnicity regions; FMP record overlay tool; no DNA matching yet	Ethnicity, DNA matching tools, chromosome browser, Auto-clusters, Theory of Family Relativity
Downsides?	Relatively expensive	Content dispersed across site; need to learn about all record portals.	Tech tools not as strong. DNA experience still evolving.	Relatively expensive; not as strong for records in some regions.

*Ancestry subscription required to use all features; see <https://tinyurl.com/AncestryDNAsubscription>. Some DNA tools require separate fee at MyHeritage if you upload your DNA rather than test there.

Comparison: England Electoral Registers

Ancestry	FamilySearch	Findmypast	MyHeritage
London, 1832-1965, 180M	London, 1847-1913, 18M	England & Wales, 1920-1932, 107M	Norfolk, 1844-1952, 5M
UK, 2003-2010, 65M	Kent, 1570-1907, 5M	England & Wales, 1832-1932, 6M	
West Yorkshire, 1840-1962, 47M	Norfolk, 1832-1915, 5M	Norfolk, 1832-1915 (5M)	
Surrey, 1832-1962 (37M)	Cheshire, 1842-1900, 5M	Cheshire, (no dates), 4M	
Bedfordshire, 1832-1986, 18M		Hampshire, Portsmouth, 1835-1873, 200k	
Gloucestershire, 1832-1974, 12M		Leicestershire, 1836-1970, 115k	
Newcastle upon Tyne, 1741-1974, 10M		Devon, Plymouth, West Devon, 1780-1973, 32k	
Liverpool, 1832-1970, 8M		Somerset, 1832-1914, 32k	
Midlands, 1832-1955, 6M		Manchester, 1832-1900, 23k	
UK, 1538-1893, 5M			
Norfolk, 1832-1915, 5M			
Sutton, Surrey, 1931-1970, 4M			
Bexley, Kent, 1734-1965 (4M)			
Berkshire, 1840-1965 (3M)			
Cambridgeshire, 1722-1966 (2M)			
Dorset, 1839-1922 (2M)			
UK, absent voters, 1918-1925, 1939 (150k)			
North Nottinghamshire, 1885 (9k)			

Online collections (1900s or before), mid-August 2019. Rounded record #s in M (millions) or k (thousands).

Comparison: European Newspapers

Ancestry	FamilySearch	Findmypast	MyHeritage
Netherlands, Announcements Index, 1795-1945, 5M UK/Ireland, Obituary Index, 2004-Current, 5M Belfast, BMD Notices, 1738-1923, 726k England, Andrews Newspaper Index Cards, 1790-1976, 335k Ireland Police Gazettes, 1861-1893, 151k UK Police Gazettes, 1812-1902, 1921-1927, 117k The Times (London), 56k Other small collections	British Newspaper Archive, Family Notices, 6M British Newspaper Archive, Obituaries, 2M	British Newspapers, ca1700-ca2019, 340M Irish Newspapers, ca1700-ca2019, 85 M	Netherlands, 1659-1947, 5M Jewish Chronicle, 214k

Tip: Search online catalogs of each site to see which records they have for your ancestral places, and whether these are index-only, image-only or indexed images.

Library Editions

Institutional subscription versions of Ancestry, Findmypast and MyHeritage:

- Family History Centers around the world (<https://familysearch.org/locations/>). Call ahead to be sure they have access to the FamilySearch portal.
- Some public libraries subscribe to Ancestry, Findmypast or MyHeritage Library Editions. Library Editions may not provide certain tools (tree-building, member messaging) or databases.

How to keep track of your “master family tree” across multiple websites

See tips at <https://lusalouisecooke.com/2019/04/24/master-family-tree/>

Get Help: Site tutorials and genealogy research skills

Ancestry

- Getting started on the site: support.ancestry.com/s/gettingstarted
- Community and Message Boards for common topics of interest: www.ancestry.com/cs/community
- Blog (for expert tips and highlights of historical events) blogs.ancestry.com/ancestry
- YouTube channel with educational videos: www.youtube.com/user/AncestryCom
- Ancestry Academy online classes—requires an additional subscription: www.ancestry.com/academy

FamilySearch

- Learning Center: at the top right, roll over Get Help, then click Getting Started (if you’re a beginner) or Learning Center (to learn about specific topics). For the latter, enter a topic and hit Search. If you click on Lessons, you’ll see video tutorials relating to that topic.
- FamilySearch Wiki: More than 85,000 articles on genealogical research skills and record-finding for 244 countries (familysearch.org/wiki). For beginners: on the Wiki

homepage, scroll down and click New to Genealogy for introduction to the principles of research.

Findmypast

- Help: From top of home page, click Help. You'll see options for top how-to articles on using the site, beginning research tips and articles about using specific records.
- Findmypast blog: Includes free how-to guides and webinars (blog.findmypast.com).

MyHeritage

- Blog includes categories for webinars, hints and tips, DNA, historical records, history (blog.myheritage.com)
- Help Center: Scroll to bottom of any page, click Help. You'll find tutorials on using the site.

Additional resource for comparing genealogy giants:

[Genealogy Giants: Comparing the 4 Major Websites:](http://www.genealogygems.com)

- What you can do with a free guest account on each site
- Basic survey of historical record content for 30+ countries
- Trees: how they differ, access and privacy options
- Backup: How to back up/export your tree on each site
- DNA: Deeper comparison of AncestryDNA and MyHeritage DNA
- Excellent summary of pros and cons for using each site
- Detailed subscription cost comparison
- Available at www.genealogygems.com

GENEALOGY GIANTS: Comparing the 4 Major Websites

By Sunny Morton
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Which website should I choose?

It's one of the most asked questions in genealogy, and the question is never answered. We compare Ancestry, FamilySearch, Findmypast, and MyHeritage to help you make the best choice for your research on a budget.

Why learn about all 4 websites?

1. There are unique records and records on each website.
2. There are unique and unique ways of searching on each site. Some will only be available on the site.
3. Some websites have unique records that you can't find elsewhere.
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About the Genealogy Giants

Ancestry is a subscription-based website that offers a wide range of historical records and DNA testing. FamilySearch is a free website that offers a wide range of historical records and DNA testing. Findmypast is a subscription-based website that offers a wide range of historical records and DNA testing. MyHeritage is a subscription-based website that offers a wide range of historical records and DNA testing.

Genealogy Giants By the Numbers

Features	Ancestry	FamilySearch	Findmypast	MyHeritage
Search	Advanced search with filters	Basic search with filters	Advanced search with filters	Advanced search with filters
Records	100+ countries	100+ countries	100+ countries	100+ countries
Trees	Collaborative trees	Collaborative trees	Collaborative trees	Collaborative trees
DNA	Autosomal DNA	Autosomal DNA	Autosomal DNA	Autosomal DNA
Subscription	Subscription-based	Free	Subscription-based	Subscription-based