

The Pedigree Chart

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The second major chart in genealogy is the Pedigree Chart. The Pedigree Chart in genealogy traces your direct bloodline backwards. The term "pedigree" means a list of ancestor. The Pedigree Chart in genealogy is sometimes referred to as an ancestor chart or a family tree chart.

The Pedigree Chart keeps your genealogy research focused. You can sometimes get distracted with dozens and often hundreds of names. There will be brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, cousins, in-laws, out-laws, and friends of the family. The Pedigree Chart filters all of these relatives and ancestors and shows direct blood lineages to distant ancestors.

The Pedigree Chart looks like a reversed basketball tournament seeding bracket. It includes spaces for your name, your parents' names, and all of their parents' names (i.e. grandparents, great-grandparents, great-great-grandparents, etc). The Pedigree Chart does not include any of your brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles or cousins. They were recorded on Family Group Sheets.

Begin by filling out the identifying information in the upper left corner of the page. Since this is your first Pedigree Chart fill in the blanks so they read, "Person no. 1 on this chart is no. 1 on chart no. 1. Then write in your name, the day's date, and Chart #1.

You will use names, dates, and places from your Family Group Sheets to fill out the Pedigree Chart. Since you are the first link in your family history, the Pedigree Chart begins with you. Record your first, middle and last name in position number 1 on the line on the left side of the chart. Record your father's name in position number 2 on the line above of your name. His father's name (your grandfather) is listed above and to his right. This is continued in the same order until all the fathers' names are recorded above and to the right of their children. If there are names you do not know leave the line blank.

In a similar fashion, record your mother's name in position number 3 on the line below your name, and below your father's name. Remember to only record women's maiden names. Record her mother's name (your grandmother) in position number 7, below and to the right of your mother's name. This continues in the same order until all the mothers are recorded below and to the right of their children and below their husbands' names. Then record your grandfather's name and his line.

Now record the dates and places of birth, marriage and death. Remember to use military style dates (27 May 1970) and include the name of the county, in parenthesis, after the city. As in the Family Group Sheets, whatever information you don't know, leave the space blank.

After you complete the four generations, the fifth and subsequent generations are recorded on

another Pedigree Chart. These are linked by numbering the charts. The first Pedigree Chart is number one and the second is number two. The first chart is referenced on the second chart. Blank spaces and gaps immediately tell you what information is missing. That's where your research should focus.