Google Tools for Genealogy

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The Google You Know

For many genealogists, Google is a search engine; you type your search words and *voila!* links appear to other websites. But there are more components in the Google family of applications and websites that can be used to amplify your research. Let's take a closer look at not only these often-neglected parts of Google, and we'll also discuss improving your search strategies when using the Google search engine.

The Google You May Not Know

Google is more than just a search engine. However, due to its popularity and domination of the market, most Internet users only use Google Web Search and don't venture to the other Google application. A complete list of Google products can be found at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Google_products .

Google Web Search

The most popular search engine, Google Web Search can be used to search for websites that may contain information on your ancestors or your research topics.

- **Advanced Web Search**: Allows you to narrow search results by specific words, dates, and even websites.

- **Google Cache**: Every search result contains a link labeled "cache." Click this to see what the previous version of the website looked like. This is also useful when a website is down: click cache to see the snapshot of the site taken by Google.

Books, Journals, Magazines

- **Google Books**: Did you know that you can search the text of almost 130 million books . . . over 4 billion digital pages? Many of the titles are in the public domain (copyright free) and the entire book can be accessed. Search Google Books for surnames, locations and other topics involving your genealogy.

- **Google Scholar**: Similar to Google Books but the results are limited to scholarly journals. While you may not find specific ancestors unless they were historically significant, Google Scholar is good for researching topics such as sociology and the forces which caused our ancestors to migrate to new lands.

Photographs

- **Google Images**: A search engine to find photographs tagged with labels such as location, name of subject, etc. Use to locate ancestor photos posted on other sites, as well as historical location photos for your family history stories.

- **Google Photos:** Free storage for digital family photos plus **Google PhotoScan** app will scan and organize photos for you.

Office Productivity

- **Google Drive**: A free, web-based version of programs such as Microsoft Office or Open Office. Use Google Drive (formerly Google Docs) to write your research reports, create spreadsheets to track your research data, or even create forms for family members to fill out online and gather information.

- **Google Calendar**: A free calendar to track various dates. Can be embedded into blogs and websites. Some genealogists use it to trace family and ancestor birth dates, death dates, etc. and incorporate into family history documents.

- **Google Input Tools:** Available as a web tool and an app, Google Input Tools helps you type uncommon characters such as accents, symbols and diacritical marks that can then be transferred to other typed media such as documents.

- **Google Keep:** Similar to the popular Evernote program, Google Keep is a note-taking service available in web format as well as app format. Tools included allow the user to take notes, capture web content, images, create lists and more.

- **Google Mail**: A free email account similar to Hotmail or Yahoo Mail. Use this to set up an email account specifically for your genealogy research.

- **Google Sites**: Build simple websites for an easy-to-use web presence. Post your genealogy research or other information about family history.

Collaboration & Social Media

- **Google Drive**: Described above, one of the best features of Google Drive is the ability to share documents with other users and collaborate on research.

- **Google Groups**: A message forum similar to Ancestry message boards. Search for surnames and other information on various genealogy-related groups or create your own group to post queries.

- **Google Sites**: Described above, also offers collaboration. Use to allow other family members to contribute to a family history website.

Transcription

- **Google Translate**: A free translation service that allows you to enter text and translate to and from a variety of languages. Also Google Translate is integrated with the web browswer Google Chrome: you will see a prompt to translate a page in a foreign language to English, etc. Use Google Translate to understand the meaning of foreign words and phrases.

- **Google Drive**: A little know feature is the ability to convert a PDF or even text on a picture to searchable text.

News

- **Google Alerts**: Want to know when there was a new item on the Internet related to one of your surnames or your genealogy research? Google Alerts is a free content monitoring service that emails you when new items appear.

- **Google Newspaper Archives**: Covers about 25,000 historical newspapers and archived items from Google News (older than 30 days). New York Times articles from 1851 – 1923 are available for free.

Geography

- **Google Earth:** Similar to Google Maps, except that Google Earth presents a 3-D representation of almost any location on earth. A standalone program installed on your computer, you can easily see city streets as well as rural landscapes based on GPS locations.

- **Google Maps**: Provides free maps of locations around the globe. Use this to track where your ancestors lived. You can even create your own personalized maps with pinned stories and photos about your ancestors. Also map out directions to archives and repositories for your research trips.

Links

Google
https://www.google.com

Google Advanced Web Search
https://www.google.com/advanced_search

Google Alerts
https://www.google.com/alerts

Google Books
https://books.google.com

Google Calendar
https://calendar.google.com

Google Drive
https://drive.google.com

Google Earth
https://www.google.com/earth/)

Google Groups
https://groups.google.com

Google Help
https://www.google.com/support/

Google Images
https://www.google.com/imghp

Google Input Tools
https://www.google.com/inputtools

Google Keep
https://keep.google.com

Google Mail
https://mail.google.com

Google Maps
https://maps.google.com

Google Newspapers
https://news.google.com/newspapers

Google PhotoScan
https://www.google.com/photos/scan/

Google Photos
https://www.google.com/photos/

Google Scholar
https://scholar.google.com

Google Sites
https://sites.google.com

Google Translate
https://translate.google.com