

A Dozen Ways to Jumpstart Your Research

Juliana Szucs, juliana@ancestry.com



We all need a little inspiration from time to time. What do you do when your research is in a rut? Juliana has a dozen ways for you to get it back on track.

1. Focus Your Search

- Focus on one family at a time
- Follow through with the records you find

2. Inventory Your Ancestor

- Make a list of all the records you've found for an ancestor
- Identify records that are missing and go directly after them

3. Connect with Others

- Search Member Trees
- DNA Testing
- Social media

4. Search Wide

- Sidestep to siblings
- Your ancestor's FAN club (Friends, Associates, Neighbors)
- Keep track of similarly named people

5. Know what's Out There

- Online and offline
- Create research guides for ancestral locations

6. Know the Records

- Learn why records were created, how they are arranged, and how to employ details in searches.

7. Immerse Yourself in the Times and Places

- Historical newspapers, local histories, websites, maps, and books can all provide valuable insights into your ancestors' lives and provide ideas for new avenues of research.

8. Take Your Records Out to Play

- Blank forms can be found in the Support Center. Create templates for early censuses.
- Create timelines, profiles, spreadsheets, anything that helps you organize facts and look at them in ways that make sense.

	1870	1880	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940
marriage says Jess b. 1872; Malinda b 1875			Beat 1, Madison	Beat 1, Madison			
Jesse Jackson			May 1873	1875	1868		
Malinda			Nov 1876		Fannie		
John			Aug 1894	1892			
Jamima (Malinda 1900)			Jun 1897	1894			
Annie (Infant 1900)			Feb 1900	1897			
Mandy				1902			
Jessie				1904	1905		
Malinda				1909	1909		

9. Review and Write

- Start with an outline and fill in later.
- Brainstorm on paper—capture your theories and write out thought trail.
- Keep a to-do list handy, ideas will begin flowing.

10. Join a Society

- Societies offer the chance to network with people who share your passion.
- Periodicals can alert you to unique collections and techniques for that place or ethnic group.
- Some organizations have members-only sections and deals on research help.
- You're supporting preservation efforts and making yourself countable.
- Meetings and webinars offer educational opportunities.

11. Unplug and Get Out of the House

- Support your local library. Visit cemeteries, courthouses, archives, and other local repositories.

12. Learn Something New

- Educational opportunities abound at conferences, institutes, long-distance education and through websites like Ancestry Academy