GFO Indigenous Ancestors Genealogy Guide: United States and Canada

Contents
Beginning Your Research
Tribal Enrollment2
Online How-to Guides2
GFO Bibliography
How-to3
American Revolution4
Apache4
Athabascan4
California4
Canada4
Cathlamet5
Cherokee5
Creek7
Chinook7
Choctaw7
Civil War8
Crow
DNA8
Indian Wars8
General/Multi-Region/Multi-Tribal10
History
Iroquois11
Kalapuya11
Kiowa
Lumbee
Maps-Atlases

Nez Percé	12
Oregon and Washington	12
Palouse [Yakama Nation]	14
Seminole	
Tlingit	15
Treaties	15
Winnebago	16

Beginning Your Research

Researching indigenous ancestors begins with the most recent generations. Start with what you know and what your living relatives can share. Make notes of names, both English and tribal names, dates, and locations. Research the history of the tribes in that location. Many of the records you may find for the areas that are now the United States and Canada were made by their respective governments for specific purposes— examine reasons that records may have been created (e.g., reservation censuses, Indian schools and asylums, Indian land heirship records, etc.). Finally, consult a how-to guide for indigenous research to create a solid research plan.

Tribal Enrollment

Tribal enrollment regulations vary for each tribe, but genealogical documentation is the primary method for proving lineage. DNA tests are generally not accepted. Visit the websites for individual tribes to learn more.

Online How-to Guides

Access Genealogy, "Native American History and Genealogy"- This web site contains historical guides, information on treaties and Indian "schools," and links to free U.S. Indian census rolls 1885–1940 and free databases that are specific to indigenous research in the United States.

Bureau of Indian Affairs, "<u>Genealogy</u>"- Contains a PDF "Guide to Tracing Your American Indian Ancestry," a tribal leaders directory, and a list of federally recognized tribes. [Note that there are active tribes in the U.S. that have not been federally recognized, such as <u>The Chinook Indian Nation</u> in Oregon and Washington.]

FamilyTree Magazine, "Native American Genealogy" - Provides a downloadable eBook of several articles from *FamilyTree Magazine*, published between 2004 and 2016). Also includes links to online articles, record sets, digital books, and more.

Library and Archives Canada, "Indigenous Genealogy,"- Describes the research process for indigenous ancestors, specifically covering the records at this repository and providing details to expand research through other books and web sites

National Indian Law Library, "<u>Tracing Native American Family Roots</u>"- This annotated bibliography of primarily online sites is divided into several categories, covering both native research and traditional genealogical research.

Royal BC Museum, "<u>Family History (Genealogy</u>)"-Detailed PDF guides on researching First Nations ancestors in British Columbia

Witcher, Curt B., and George J. Nixon, "<u>Overview of Native American Research</u>"- This article, which originally appeared in *The Source: A Guidebook to American Genealogy*, provides a thorough explanation of initial steps and goals for indigenous research.

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