

Explore Millions of Norwegian Historical Records

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Purpose

The presentation offers an overview of Norwegian historical archives, focusing on their application in genealogical research. It will address key topics crucial for tracing Norwegian lineage, including the use of various digital archives, libraries, databases, and DNA resources, with specific reference to resources provided by the National Archives, the National Library, MyHeritage, and the Genealogy Society of Norway. Additionally, the presentation will include how to use online forums for research assistance.

By the end of this presentation, participants will be able to:

- Find information about genealogical research in Norway.
- Access and navigate Norwegian historical records available through the National Archives of Norway and National Library of Norway.
- Use digital tools and databases such as MyHeritage and the Genealogy Society of Norway's Gravestone database.
- Find the most effective autosomal DNA and genetic genealogy tools to improve traditional genealogical research methods.
- Find online forums for genealogical support and collaboration.

Introduction to Norwegian Genealogy and Historical Records

There is a lot of information about how to find your Norwegian ancestors online.

- Start Tracing Your Ancestry in Norway (The National Archives of Norway)
<https://www.arkivverket.no/en>
- How to find your Norwegian ancestors (Genealogy Society of Norway)
<https://slektogdata.no/nb/start-med-slektsforskning/how-find-your-norwegian-ancestors>
- FamilySearch Wiki, Norway Genealogy (FamilySearch)
https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Norway_Genealogy

Norwegian Naming Conventions

Before 1923, Norwegian naming conventions primarily followed a patronymic system where children's surnames were derived from their father's first name, adding "sen/son" for sons or "datter/dotter" for daughters (e.g., Olsen, Olsdatter). Names varied by region and were often inconsistently spelled, complicating genealogical research and necessitating diverse search techniques in historical records.

Legacy Family Tree Webinars: Which Hans Jensen is Mine? Navigating Patronymics in Scandinavian research, by Jenny Hansen

<https://familytreewebinars.com/webinar/which-hans-jensen-is-mine-navigating-patronymics-in-scandinavian-research/>

Introduction to the National Archives of Norway and its Digital Archives platform

www.DigitalArkivet.no and <https://www.arkivverket.no/en>

Main family history sources

- Parish records (1623-1924).
<https://www.arkivverket.no/en/find-your-ancestors/parish-registers>
- Censuses (1801-1920).
<https://www.arkivverket.no/en/find-your-ancestors/public-Censuses>
- Emigration records (1867-1930).

Digitalarkivet provides a wide range of emigration records that document the movement of people from Norway to other countries, especially during the large waves of emigration in the 19th and early 20th centuries. They were often created by police authorities in major ports like Oslo, Bergen, Trondheim, and Stavanger.

All Norwegian parish records, census records and emigration records are included and available for free. Easy access to original records and indexed records.

Online detailed person search form

<https://www.digitalarkivet.no/en/>

Fill in the desired fields in the search form. Remember, you don't need to complete every field! The fields function as follows:

Period: Specify the time frame (years) for the sources you want to search for individuals. If no period is entered, the search will cover all time periods available in the Digital Archive. Note that the "To" field will automatically match the year entered in the "From" field.

Category: Indicate the types of sources you want to search in, such as censuses, church records, or emigration documents. You can choose one or multiple source categories in a single search. If no category is specified, the search will include all available categories in the Digital Archive.

Geography: Limit the search to sources from a specific geographical area, down to the municipality level. Multiple areas and/or municipalities can be selected in the same search. Note that the geographical divisions are based on the 1947 municipalities and counties.

Personal Information: Enter the known details about the person you are searching for. It is often advisable to specify a range for the Birth Year and to start with minimal information to avoid getting no results.

Event Information: If searching for a person related to a specific event, enter the relevant details here.

Related Person: To search for two people at the same time, add a related person in this field. This is only possible if both individuals are listed in the same event, such as a marriage or baptism.

The symbols * (asterisk) and ~ (tilde) can be used as special characters to refine searches for people in all fields:

Asterisk (*): This symbol is used when you know the specific letters a name starts with. It can be useful if you are unsure of the spelling of a name or if you want to search for variations of a name.

Example: If you search for "Joh*", you will get results like "Johannes," "Johann," "Johanna," "John," etc.

Tilde (~ or ~1): This symbol performs a "fuzzy search," where the results may include names that are close in spelling or have minor variations. It allows for up to **two letters** to be different between the search term and the results found. The search can be limited to one letter to be different by "~1". It is particularly useful if you want to include names that may have been misspelled or have phonetic variations.

Example: Searching for "Olsen~" will include similar names such as "Olson," "Olesen," "Olsøn," etc.

Navigating the National Library of Norway

<https://www.nb.no/search?viewability=ALL>

The National Library of Norway offers a comprehensive digital collection of books, newspapers, magazines, images, and other historical materials available for online search. To search the National Library's collections, visit the website nb.no and use the search bar on the homepage. You can search for specific books, authors, or topics, or use advanced search features for more specific results. Many of the digitized materials can be read directly online, but some require access from the library or logging in. The service provides users with a unique opportunity to explore Norway's rich cultural heritage and history through digitally accessible sources.

Farm and family history books (Bygdebøker).

Bygdebøker play an important role in Norway as local history books that document the history, culture, and genealogy of a specific village or municipality. These books often contain detailed information about farms, families, and settlements, as well as insights into local traditions, economy, and social life throughout the ages.

Bygdebøker are valuable resources for genealogy, local history, and cultural studies and are used by researchers, locals, and genealogists to gain insight into local conditions and family histories. They are often written by local historians or committees, based on thorough archival work and interviews, and are considered important sources for preserving Norwegian local history.

The Norwegian Genealogy Society list of digitized bygdebøker

https://www.genealogi.no/wiki/index.php/Liste_over_digitaliserte_bygdeb%C3%B8ker

Yes, when searching in the National Library's digital collections, it can be helpful to use special search symbols and operators to refine your searches. Here are some useful search symbols and tips:

Quotation Marks (" "): Used to search for an exact phrase. For example, "**Hans Christian Andersen**" will yield results containing that exact phrase.

Combination of quotation marks (" ") and tilde (~): A combination of quotation marks (" ") and a tilde (~) can be used to search for words that are close to each other in a text, but not necessarily in the exact order. This is often called a **proximity search** and provides more flexibility when searching for phrases where the words may be spread within a certain distance from each other. **This is a very useful tool for genealogy research.**

How to Use Quotation Marks and Tilde:

- Use quotation marks around the search terms, followed by a tilde and a number indicating the maximum number of words that can separate them.
- For example, the search "**Hans Christian Andersen**"~5 will find results where the words "Hans," "Christian," and "Andersen" are within five words of each other, regardless of order.

This method is particularly useful when looking for sentences or concepts that are often used together but are not necessarily directly adjacent in the text. It provides more precise results than a regular search, but more flexibility than an exact search.

Asterisk (*): Used as a wildcard to replace one or more characters in a keyword. For example, "norge*" will find "Norge", "norges", "norske", etc.

Minus (-): Used to exclude words from the search. For example, "Andersen -Hans" will provide results about Andersen but exclude those containing "Hans."

AND / OR: Used to combine search conditions. "Norge AND kultur" will show results containing both words, while "Norge OR kultur" will show results containing at least one of the words.

Filtering by Material Type: After searching, you can use the filtering tools on the left side to narrow down results by type (books, newspapers, images), language, year, and more.

To improve your access to the digital collection, go to “Logg in”, “Opprett ny bruker” fill in the registration form and confirm your email. Log in to your new account and apply for 8 hours access. You may need a Norwegian IP-address.

Leveraging MyHeritage for Norwegian Genealogy

Information about how to use MyHeritage is available in a large number of Legacy Family Tree Webinars (<https://familytreewebinars.com/webinar-library/?category=myheritage>) and at the MyHeritage Help Center (<https://www.myheritage.com/help-center>).

MyHeritage has a comprehensive collection of the following Norwegian sources:

- Parish records and censuses.
- Norwegian newspapers (OldNews.com).
- Oslo prisoner albums.
- Family trees and autosomal DNA (atDNA) database.

Links to the various records:

[Norway Church Records, 1815-1938](#)
[Norway, Baptisms, 1634-1927](#)
[Nordic Newspapers from OldNews.com™](#)
[Norway, Marriages, 1660-1926](#)
[1910 Norway Census](#)
[1900 Norway Census](#)
[1891 Norway Census](#)
[1875 Norway Census](#)
[Norway Newspapers from OldNews.com™](#)
[1865 Norway Census](#)
[Norway Burials, 1666-1927](#)
[Norway, Emigration Registers, 1867-1959](#)
[1801 Norway Census](#)
[Norway Death Registrations](#)
[1870 Norway Census](#)
[Norway, Oslo Census, 1901](#)
[Norway, Cadastres, 1886](#)
[Norway, 1875 Sailors and Seamen Census](#)
[Norway, Oslo Prisoner Albums, 1880-1923](#)

Search by:

- First name: The default setting is "Match name exactly," but keep in mind that spellings may vary. Consider alternative spellings.
- Last name: Utilize patronym or farm name when searching
- Year of birth: Allow for a reasonable range of years around the given year.
- Place: Search using the county or municipality/parish. "Place" refers to any location where a life event took place. Consider using "Place must match" as a criterion to reduce number of matches.
- Other details: These are less commonly used.

Autosomal DNA tests

MyHeritage has the largest atDNA database for Norwegians and a great collection of tools.

- Make use of the search function to find DNA matches and **individuals within the family trees.**
- Utilize:
 - "Filters" and "Sort by"
 - "Review DNA Matches" and your shared matches
 - "Theory of Family Relativity"
 - Triangulations
 - Chromosome browser
 - AutoClusters
- Other clustering tools:
 - Genetic Affairs, "Recluster MyHeritage AutoClusters"
 - Leeds Method

MyHeritage offers the most extensive collection of Norwegian family trees and the largest atDNA database for Norway. This provides a unique advantage for conducting

both traditional genealogy and genetic genealogy research within the country. It is important to note that family trees should only be used as starting points for further verification and research.

Genealogy Society of Norway and their Gravestone Database

Genealogy Society of Norway is the largest genealogy society in Norway.

<https://slektogdata.no/nb/english/about-genealogy-society-norway>

They provide information about “How to find Norwegian ancestors”.

<https://slektogdata.no/nb/start-med-slektsforskning/how-find-your-norwegian-ancestors>

Their gravestone database includes >3.4 million indexed gravestones.

<https://slektogdata.no/nb/start-med-slektsforskning/how-find-your-norwegian-ancestors>

To search the data base, none-members will have to choose:

- Name (person). You can also search for names when you only know the specific letters a name starts with
- County (fylke)
- Municipality (kommune)

Assistance Forums

Feel free to write your message in English, as most Norwegians understand and will reply in English.

Most active forums:

- Digital Archives
 - Brukernes eget forum (Userforum), 22 k members
- Facebook
 - Vi som driver slektsforskning, 20 k members
 - Norwegian Genealogy, (Focus on USA emigration), 20 k members

You could also consider getting assistance from an expert.

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