

Tracing People in the United States

Tracing people in the United States can be a lengthy and time consuming process. Many records, such as those held by the Immigration and Naturalization Service, are protected by the Privacy Act and cannot be divulged to third parties. However, the Internet has made many other resources much more freely accessible.

Search Engines

Most of the major search engines offer some sort of people search facility. Among these are: Google, All-in-One Search, Alta Vista, Yahoo! and Excite

Telephone Listings

One of the quickest and easiest ways of establishing contact with an individual is via their telephone listing. A number of these are to be found on Yahoo! However, it is worth remembering that many private individuals in the U.S. choose to be ex-directory.

Infospace: Access to over 112 million U.S. and Canadian listings of people, government offices and businesses.
<http://www.infospace.com/>

SearchBug / People Finder (includes reverse telephone and address lookup)
<http://www.searchbug.com/peoplefinder/>

Switchboard - A nation-wide listing of business and personal telephone numbers.
<http://www.switchboard.com/>

Genealogy and Vital Records

There is no central repository of birth, death and marriage records in the United States. These records are filed at state level and, in some cases, at an even more local level. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has produced *Where to Write for Vital Records*, a useful guide to these sources.
<http://www.ssa.gov/vitalstats.html>

A large collection of family history records can be found at:
<http://www.ancestry.com>

Ancestry.com's Social Security Death Index is generated from the U.S. Social Security Administration's Death Master File. It contains the records of deceased persons who possessed Social Security numbers and whose death had been reported to the SSA. In most cases a report of death was made in connection with Social Security death benefits.
<http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=3693>

Through its Family History Resources *The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints* offers advice to those undertaking family history research. There are over 2,400 Family History Centers worldwide. Here you can find census returns, wills, church records, etc for most parts of the world. In addition, you can consult the International Genealogical Index (IGI) and the Ancestral File. The IGI is a worldwide index of approximately 187 million names of deceased persons. Searches can also be made on-line through the Familysearch.com website. The Ancestral File contains genealogical data on millions of individuals from many countries, including information on names, dates and places of birth, marriage and death. Most of the information on the file concerns deceased persons.
<http://www.familysearch.org/>

Genealogy Gateway
<http://www.gengateway.com/>

Institute of Migration: Interesting for those whose ancestors came from Finland.
<http://www.migrationinstitute.fi/en/>

The Emigrant Register was established in 1989 as a service for genealogists and the descendants of Finnish Emigrants. Sources include passport records (different years in different provinces), passenger records of the Finland Steamship Company (Suomen Höyrylaiva Osakeyhtiö) and information on Finns deceased abroad.

<http://www.migrationinstitute.fi/en/genealogy/emigrantregister>

Ellis Island Immigration Lists

<http://www.ellislandrecords.org/default.asp>

Media Sources

It may be worthwhile contacting newspapers or local radio stations in the area where the missing person was last known to live.

Refdesk: Newspapers US and Worldwide

<http://www.refdesk.com/paper.html>

Humanitarian Organizations

The following organizations may be able to assist in cases of sufficiently compelling humanitarian need, and where the missing person is a close relative:

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies lists contact information and web addresses of societies worldwide. *The Salvation Army* Family Tracing Service exists for the purpose of trying to restore (or to sustain) family relationships, by locating relatives who for whatever reason have become out of touch.

<http://www.ifrc.org/>

<http://www.salvationarmyusa.org/>

Selected Internet Sites:

National Genealogical Society: <http://www.ngsgenealogy.org>

National Archives: <http://www.archives.gov/research/genealogy/index.html>

FBI: <http://www.fbi.gov>



The **American Resource Center (ARC)** provides specialized information about American government and politics, foreign policy and international relations, U. S. economy and foreign trade, the environment, history, society, and culture. The ARC is located at the Helsinki University's main library at the Kaisa talo. It is operated jointly by the Public Affairs Office of the U.S. Embassy and the University of Helsinki.

The ARC's collections are included in the HELKA-online catalog <http://helka.linneanet.fi/>

Reference service: Mon-Fri 9-17

Address: P.O. Box 53 (Fabianinkatu 30), 00014 University of Helsinki; <http://finland.usembassy.gov/arc.html>

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