



Genealogy Research Kit Checklist

The contents of any Research Kit depend entirely upon the type of research being performed and the location. We have included checklists for indoor and outdoor research. While the vast majority of research is conducted indoors, the safety aspects for outdoor research are sufficiently important to include them here. Not all items will be necessary on each trip; and on some trips, additional items may be necessary.

Indoor Research Checklist

- Proper photo identification is required nearly everywhere
- Area Maps and directions to your research site
- A cell phone is not necessary, but handy (be sure to turn to silent mode in libraries, courthouses, etc.)
- Research notebook, research notes and goals, necessary extraction forms
- Pens and pencils (Please note that many libraries and archive facilities do not allow the use of pens)
- Paper or notebook for making notes
- Change for copy and vending machines, and small denomination bills for payment of any required fees. Many smaller facilities cannot change large bills. A checkbook is an alternative for the latter, but they may only take "local" checks.
- Camera, film or digital (preferred) with plenty of extra film and batteries (Some small facilities do not have decent copy machines and a good digital camera can save you time and money)
- A lightweight tripod or a mini-tripod will hold the camera steady in low-light conditions.
- If you are interviewing someone, a small digital or tape recorder can be handy for recording notes. Don't forget extra batteries and tapes.
- Proper clothing – not only presentable, but appropriate for the setting. As many libraries and government facilities follow energy saving guidelines, dress in layers so you may add or remove clothing as necessary
- Waterless hand or diaper wipes are handy to have, as searching records can be dirty work
- Bottled water will help keep you hydrated.
- Planning to be there for some time? Consider bringing snacks or a lunch. Many facilities will not allow food or water in research or storage areas, but even if it stays in your vehicle or a locker, it is still available.

Few records in county courthouses and other facilities are stored under ideal conditions, and it won't hurt to have the following with you.

- Vinyl and white cotton gloves will help protect fragile documents and also help protect you
- A painter's "dust mask" will help protect you in dusty environments. Do not use a respirator mask unless you have approval from your physician.
- A small flashlight will help in poorly lit area such as basement storage areas.
- A sweater or jacket, regardless of weather conditions, will keep you warmer in unheated basements, which will remain a fairly constant 55° regardless of outside temperature

Outdoor Genealogical Searches are usually limited to land surveys or cemetery research. You may find these suggestions handy in either case.

- Everything in the Indoor Checklist may also be appropriate for the Outdoor Checklist
- Global Positioning System (GPS) receiver may be useful in locating a site
- Compass
- Surveyor's wheel or Measuring tape
- Reflector or convex mirror for reflecting light for photographs
- Grass clippers or scissors for removing grass from around ground level cemetery markers
- Soft brush or cloth for removing dust and loose material from markers
- Camp stool or light-weight, folding chair for when you get tired
- Personal first aid kit
- Protective clothing: long-sleeve pants and shirt protects from sun and insects; good boots protects from ankle sprains, snakes and other animals
- Hat to protect your head and neck from sunburn
- Rain gear: a compact umbrella or a raincoat since you never know when weather may change
- Sunscreen and insect repellent
- Plenty of drinking water or other liquids to stay hydrated
- If you are going to be there awhile, consider taking snacks or pack a lunch.