



## MID-ATLANTIC REGIONAL RESOURCES

*This region covers Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania*

This is a non-comprehensive overview of some record types, resources, and strategies that may be covered on the ICAPGen regional exams. Use it as a starting point to direct your studies and to compile research reference guides.

### IMPORTANT RECORD TYPES

Must Know Very Well	Good Working Knowledge
<p><b>Cemetery Records</b></p> <p><b>Census Records</b> (Federal, State, Special i.e. Military, Mortality, Agriculture, etc.)</p> <p><b>Church Records</b> (Baptism or Christening, Marriage, Death or Burial, Membership, Meeting)</p> <p><b>Court Records</b> (Civil, Criminal, Guardianship)</p> <p><b>Land and Property Records</b> (County &amp; State)</p> <p><b>Military Records</b></p> <p><b>Emigration, Immigration, and Migration</b></p> <p><b>Naturalization Records</b></p> <p><b>Probate Records</b> (Intestate &amp; Testate, Administrative, Settlements, Guardianships, etc.)</p> <p><b>Tax Records</b></p> <p><b>Vital Records</b> (Birth, Marriage, Death, &amp; Divorce)</p>	<p><b>Adoption Records</b></p> <p><b>Bible Records</b></p> <p><b>Biographies</b></p> <p><b>Business/Commerce Records</b></p> <p><b>City Directories</b></p> <p><b>Ethnic, Minority, and Native Races</b></p> <p><b>Funeral Home Records</b></p> <p><b>Histories</b> (Local, County, Family, State)</p> <p><b>Manuscript Collections</b></p> <p><b>Maps, Gazetteers and Historical Geography</b></p> <p><b>Newspapers</b></p> <p><b>Obituaries</b></p> <p><b>Periodicals</b></p> <p><b>Town Records</b></p> <p><b>Voting Records</b></p>

## LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

For the Mid-Atlantic region, some basic German language skills are required. It is important to be able to identify a German document (birth, baptismal record, marriage, or death/burial record) and be able to abstract important genealogical data such as names, parents' names, dates, places, etc., written in German.

## RESOURCES

### Repositories

Some repositories important for Mid-Atlantic genealogical research are listed. You will also want to be familiar with repositories specific to smaller local areas where you do most of your research.

- Archives & Libraries: See FamilySearch Research Wiki [https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Main\\_Page](https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Main_Page) Search terms [Name of Country] Archives and Libraries.
  - State Archives
    - Baltimore City Archives <https://baltimorecityhistory.net/>
    - Delaware Public Archives, <https://archives.delaware.gov/>
    - District of Columbia Archives <https://os.dc.gov/service/district-columbia-archives>
    - Maryland State Archives, <https://msa.maryland.gov/>
    - New Jersey State Archives, <https://nj.gov/state/archives/index.html>
    - New York Municipal Archives <https://on.nyc.gov/2R1Xury>
    - New York State Archives <http://www.archives.nysed.gov/>
    - Pennsylvania State Archives <https://www.phmc.pa.gov/archives/Pages/default.aspx>
  - Libraries (public, private, and university)
    - Daughters of the American Revolution Library (DAR), <https://www.dar.org/>
    - Library of Congress, <https://loc.gov/>
    - National Archives <https://www.archives.gov/>
    - New Jersey: Rutgers University Libraries <https://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/>
    - New York State Library <https://www.nysl.nysed.gov/genealogy/>
    - New York Public Library in New York City <https://www.nypl.org/about/divisions/milstein/genealogy>
  - For more for each state, search the FamilySearch Research Wiki article "United States Archives and Libraries" [https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/United\\_States\\_Archives\\_and\\_L](https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/United_States_Archives_and_L)

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## ibraries

- Courthouses (county-level, state, and U.S. District)  
Genealogically relevant courthouses in the Mid-Atlantic region are typically county-level. During a state's early history, many more significant matters came under the state supreme court. You will need to be familiar with the Surrogate's Court, Prothonotary, and Orphan's Court, among other courts.
- Genealogical and historical societies (state, regional, county, and local)
  - Delaware Genealogical Society, <https://delgensoc.org/>
  - Maryland Genealogical Society, <https://mdgensoc.org/>
  - Genealogical Society of New Jersey, <https://www.gsnj.org/>
  - New York Genealogical & Biographical Society  
<https://www.newyorkfamilyhistory.org/>
  - New York Historical Society <https://www.nyhistory.org/library>
  - Association of Public Historians of New York State (APHNYS)  
<https://www.aphnys.org>
  - New England Historic Genealogical Society's American Ancestors, <https://www.americanancestors.org/> (includes large New York collection)
  - Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania, <https://genpa.org/>
  - Historical Society of Pennsylvania <https://hsp.org/>

## **Websites**

Many repositories have websites that include record indexes and/or images. Volunteer groups and individuals also place useful content online. The following are good starting points to find useful websites.

- Cyndi's List <http://www.cyndislist.com/> categories for each of the states
- Facebook genealogy pages for the region, use the search field to locate specific groups
- FamilySearch Research Wiki articles for your region  
[https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Main\\_Page](https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Main_Page)
- The Family History Guide at <https://www.thefhgguide.com/>
- USGenWeb Project <http://www.usgenweb.org/>
- USGenWeb Archives <http://www.usgwarchives.net/> (select state of interest from home page.)
- Internet Archive at <https://archive.org>
- State Departments of Health
- Random Acts of Genealogical Kindness (RAOGK) <https://raogk.org/>
- Your favorite search engine

The following is a brief and non-comprehensive list of important region-specific websites.

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- New York: The Capital District Genealogical Society <https://cnygs.org>
- New York: Central New York Genealogical Society <https://cnygs.org>
- New York: The Western New York Genealogical Society <https://www.wnygs.org>
- New York: Fulton History, online newspapers <https://fultonhistory.com/>
- Maryland State Archives, online land records <https://mdlandrec.net>
- Maryland State Archives, Vital Records Indexing Project  
<https://vitalrec.msa.maryland.gov/>
- New Jersey State Archives - Early Land Records Database  
<https://www.njlandrecords.org/>

### Finding aids

Finding aids listing the sources that repositories hold is often available online, but not always. Knowledge of such collections not listed online can often be obtained through local experience, visits to repositories, and conversations with local experts. Sites like Cyndi's List, FamilySearch Wiki, and local genealogical societies are good places to learn where records are held.

### Book-length research guides

It is recommended that you study some guides on topics such as genealogical research, analysis, writing, and record types. Whether you are an expert or a beginner, reading research guides for your states, repositories, record types, and topics of interest, will help advance your region-specific knowledge. General guides are so plentiful that any list could quickly go out-of-date and would risk overlooking some. The following guides are examples helpful for all regions. New York: *New York Family History Research Guide and Gazetteer*. rev. ed. New York: New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, 2017.

- New York: French, John Homer. *Gazetteer of the State of New York...* Syracuse: Persall Smith, 1860. Online access at <https://archive.org>
- New York: Spafford, Horatio Gates. *A Gazetteer of the State of New York*. Albany: H. C. Southwick, 1813. Online access at <https://archive.org>
- *New York State Towns, Villages, and Cities: A Guide to Genealogical Sources*, by Gordon Remington, published by the New England Historical Genealogical Society.
- Pennsylvania: Kay Haviland Freilich. *NGS Research in the States Series: Pennsylvania*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Arlington, Virginia: National Genealogical Society, 2016.
- Pennsylvania has a published series of volumes, "The Pennsylvania Archives." It contains documents of all kinds pertaining to the colonial period. It is digitized and is a free, name-searchable collection at <https://www.fold3.com/publication/450/us-pennsylvania-archives-1660-1780>
- Sunny Morton and Harold Henderson's book *How to Find Your Family in U.S. Church Records* is a wonderful resource for learning about each denomination. It includes their history, affiliated churches, what types of records each denomination created, and where to find the records.
- *The Researcher's Guide to American Genealogy*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Genealogical Publishing Co.

- *Becoming an Excellent Genealogist: Essays on Professional Research Skills*. ICAPGen, 2012.
- *Mastering Genealogical Proof*. National Genealogical Society, 2015.
- *Mastering Genealogical Documentation*, Thomas W Jones, 2017.
- Delaware: Doherty, Thomas P. *Delaware Genealogical Research Guide*. 4th ed. Wilmington: Delaware Genealogical Society, 2002.
- District of Columbia: Wesley E Pippenger, *DC Ancestors A Guide to Records of the District of Columbia*
- Maryland: Peden, Henry C., and Mary Keysor Meyer. *Guide to Genealogical Research in Maryland*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 2001.
- New Jersey: Claire Keenan Agthe. NGS Research in the States Series: New Jersey. Arlington, Virginia: National Genealogical Society, 2009.
- New Jersey has published a series of volumes called “The New Jersey Archives.” It contains documents of all kinds pertaining to the colonial period. It is name-searchable at *Ancestry.com* <https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/2175/>
- Inc., 2017.
- *Historical Records Survey Project*, Works Progress Administration (WPA), available at New York Genealogical and Biographical Society

For more see:

- FamilySearch Research Wiki [https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Main\\_Page](https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Main_Page) and search “[name of state] for Further Reading.”
- Ask genealogists in your community or on social media for additional recommendations.

Periodicals

- New York: *The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record (The NYG&B Record)*
- New York: *The New York Researcher*
- Maryland: *Maryland Historical Magazine*

Flier-length research guides

Flier-length research guides for your area may be available from many organizations, in series such as the following.

- Family Tree Magazine's State Research Guides <https://store.familytreemagazine.com/> various series on states (\$)
- Legacy Family Tree's Legacy QuickGuide™ <https://legacy.familytreewebinars.com/legacy-quickguides-c13.php> series on states (\$)

## STRATEGIES

### SPECIFIC FOR MID-ATLANTIC RESEARCH

- Compare the results of all federal and state censuses. New Jersey and New York

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have important state census collections. Genealogically valuable New York state censuses include 1855, 1865, 1875, 1892, 1905, 1915, and 1925. For New Jersey, these include 1855, 1865, 1885, 1895, 1905, and 1915.

- Know the date vital statistics were first recorded for each state in the region and the laws that affected their recording. for example: In the state of Delaware, statewide registration of births began in 1861 but was discontinued in 1863. Statewide registration was resumed in 1881 and was generally complied with by 1921.
- The Mid-Atlantic states were state-land states. Understand what that means. Know the repositories where original land grant records are held.
- These states were part of the original 13 colonies. Be familiar with who controlled the colonies before statehood, and what types of records would have been created there.
- Important genealogical records in the Mid-Atlantic region may be generated at the town level. One resource for New York town research is *New York State Towns, Villages, and Cities: A Guide to Genealogical Sources*, by Gordon Remington, published by the New England Historical Genealogical Society.
- New Jersey was separated into East and West Jersey for some records. This pertains mostly to original land grants. The land records created by the East and West Jersey proprietors were kept separately until very recently.
- New York is often separated into regions, which may have genealogical records and research methods for those specific regions. (Western New York, Finger Lakes, Southern Tier, Central New York, North County, Mohawk Valley, Capital District, Hudson Valley, New York City, Long Island). See the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society for more specifics for each region.
- Pennsylvania often describes its regions in terms of rivers and valleys. Be familiar with sources using those titles in your research.
- Learn the jurisdictions for the records of each state in different time periods. (State, County, Town, and City)
- Realize that shifting boundaries in the Mid-Atlantic region may mean that records might be located outside of a state's boundaries. For example, records for a New Jersey ancestor might be located in Pennsylvania or New York record sets; records for a Delaware ancestor might be located in Maryland or Pennsylvania records, etc.
- Town minutes can contain early vital records and can be found on major websites and in genealogical periodicals. Town records in this region were more likely to contain town business and minutes, but sometimes vital information was included.
- New York vital records might be found in Kinship Books <https://kinshipny.com>
- Know religious and ethnic populations
- Religious records are very important for research in this region. To locate religious records, find the denominations where the ancestor lived. Check local churches,

archives, libraries, and private collections. Many early religious records have been published in periodicals. Other collections can be found using Archive GRID and National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections.

- There are significant early populations of Dutch or German settlers.
  - New York City was previously known as New Amsterdam.
  - Pennsylvania is known for its “Pennsylvania Dutch” population.
  - Significant minority religions include Amish, Mennonite, and Dunkard in Pennsylvania.
  - There were major immigrations of several ethnicities into the ports of New York and Philadelphia.
  - Ethnic churches, societies, newspapers, and other resources--often in the community's mother tongue--are plentiful in the Mid-Atlantic region.

### FOR GENERAL RESEARCH

In addition to the strategies specific to this region discussed above the strategies below apply to all regions.

- Search all applicable census records to find complete families.
- Use original records, when possible, created at the time of the event. These might be found at various jurisdictional levels (such as town, county, state/province, federal/national).
- Understand your family in a historical context, including wars and jurisdictional boundary changes.
- If indirect evidence is used, assemble it correctly to support your conclusions. If needed use the FamilySearch Research Wiki article, “United States Record Finder” and the table is labeled “Record Finder Table for the United States.” [https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/United\\_States\\_Record\\_Finder](https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/United_States_Record_Finder) for further research suggestions to locate other records and evidence that might aid your research and form conclusions.
- Evaluate each record. Resolve any conflicting information. Correlate findings.
- Substitute records might be used when there is a lack of records or record loss. An event might be recorded in multiple ways. For example, a marriage might be recorded civilly, by the church, or in a newspaper. Each should be checked.
- Source each event in each person’s life. Capture the information about each source to facilitate proper citation when writing the report.
- Keep a research log of all records searched, including any searches for which nothing was found.
- Verify generational links.
- Understand applicable economics, religion, ethnicity, prejudices, and laws. For example: Know the availability of records for major religious denominations in each state.

- Watch for people with the same name (e.g. parents with the same name on a census or other record). Consider all variants of spelling for the name along with ways a name could be misspelled when searching indexes and online resources. See FamilySearch Research Wiki article, “Name Variations in United States Indexes and Records” [https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/United\\_States\\_Record\\_Finder](https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/United_States_Record_Finder) for suggestions.

**NOTE:** The ICAPGen exams are open book, including the Internet, paper, and/or digital Personal Reference Guides. Guides may be compiled using a cloud account such as Dropbox, Google Drive, OneDrive, etc. Bring all digital Personal Reference Guide materials to the test on a USB drive. Test administrators and proctors will upload the candidate's Personal Reference Guide to the facility computer. They will delete the guide from the testing computer at the end of the test session. Digital Personal Reference Guides cannot be accessed through cloud accounts during the test.