

Entering Data Correctly [and consistently] will:

- Lead to greater success in on-line research
- Reduce duplication from 80% to 4%
- Make sharing data easier, reducing the need to merge and clean up files

Names

Given Names

- The given names are the individual's legal first and middle name as they appear on a birth certificate, baptismal record, or other legal document filed with a public or religious institution. They also includes legal Irish nicknames.
- Do NOT abbreviate names – spell them out entirely!
- Use Initials only when the name is unknown and follow each initial with a period.
- Do NOT include aliases, alternate spellings, occupations, descriptions or titles in the Given Name Field.
- Do NOT include any portion of the surname in the Given Name Field.
- Do NOT use the word 'unknown' in the given name field. If you don't know the name leave it blank.

Examples: Margaret Ann, William James, Benjamin A., W. Patrick, J.P.

The use of the words Formerly and Or

It was common practice when we were in the paper and pencil age to use 'formerly' and 'or' between different spellings of a name. This practice is no longer used. Instead we use the AKA field on our family history software.

AKA's

Use the AKA [also known as] field to input:

- Alternate spellings
- Pseudonyms
- Nicknames that are NOT legal names
- Pen Names
- Stage names
- Misspellings

What Language to Use?

- Enter names using the language your ancestor used
- Enter the translated English version of the name in the AKA field.
- You can enter Latin names in the AKA fields as well

Use of Special Symbols in the NAME fields

- You CAN use hyphens and apostrophes in the given name or surname fields IF they are part of the legal name.
- Do NOT use italics, single quotation marks (' '), braces { }, brackets [], question marks?, or parentheses () in the name fields.
- Do NOT use an equal sign (=) for a French Dits.

Nicknames

There are 3 types of nicknames:

- Replacements for a given name, including given names that have been shortened and or affectionate pet names. Enter these in the AKA field WITHOUT quotation marks.
- Descriptive names (Erick the Red, Richard the Lionhearted, etc.). Enter these in the AKA field WITHOUT quotation marks.
- Legal nicknames such as Irish legal nicknames. Enter these in the Given Name field in double quotes (“ ”). Example: Joseph Adam “Joe Paul”.

Unknown Names

- Do NOT enter *unknown*, leave what you don't know blank!
- The use of *daughter of* or *son of* followed by the parent's name is acceptable if that is how your ancestor is described in the source materials.
- Do NOT enter *boy*, *baby*, *child*, *infant*, *junior*, *N.N.*, *Stillborn*, etc. in the name field
- *Miss* may be used only if followed by her maiden surname.
- *Ms* is NEVER used.
- *Mrs.* may only be used for a widow in combination with her widow's (i.e. married) name.

Unusual Names

For boys named Sue and girls named Lee, enter their name in the given name field then use an event/fact tag called *Namesake* to document the unusual naming and to clarify that you have not made a mistake on the name.

Childrens Names

- When there are multiple children with the same name in the same family group use (1), (2), (3) in the Title Suffix field. This will ensure that these children are not accidently merged.
- Enter I, II, III, Junior, Senior in the Title Suffix field.

Childrens status'

- Terms such as:Adopted, Biological, Foster, Illegitimate, Sealing, Stepdaughter, Stepson, Stillborn, Twin, Unmarried, Ward, Possible, Probable should be entered in the status field in your genealogical software records.

Surnames

A surname is an inherited name used by male members of a familial line and their unmarried children.

- Enter the individuals legal last name or family name in the surname field.
- Female children should be recorded with their maiden name.
- Do NOT enter surnames in all capital letters. Allow you genealogy software to convert the surname to all caps in reports, etc.
- Include multiple surnames in the surname field.
- Patronymic names derived from the father or mother are entered in the Surname field.

French Dits

Also known as *soubriquet*, these are usually an additional name used to distinguish between families with the same surname in the same locale. For example with the name Jarreti Fremouw dit Noir, the surname should be entered as Fremouw dit Noir. Never substitute an = sign for the dit.

Titles and Offices

Use the Prefix field to input titles and offices in the following order:

1. A child's place in the family.
2. Military Officer titles (only highest rank achieved*) including knights.
3. Peerage titles (only highest title achieved*).
4. Religious titles (only highest title achieved*)

* lower level military, peerage and religious titles should be entered in a 'title' event/fact.

Civil titles are entered as 'Occupation' event/facts.

Dates

Date Format

- Enter dates in the following format: dd mmm yyyy (ex. 05 Oct 2007).

Missing Dates

- If you are MISSING a death date the following rules apply:
 - Write **Deceased** in the death date field if you know the person is dead and it is within 110 years of today's date
 - Write **Infant** in the death date field if the deceased was a child under 3 years old.
 - Write **Child** in the death date field if the deceased was a child between 3-8 years old.
 - Leave the death date BLANK in all other cases where you don't know the death date.

Dating Systems

- Dating systems: A.D. is automatically assumed so you must input C.E., B.C., B.C.E., or A.H if you are using one of those dating systems.

Other Dating Options

- Other dating options allowed:
 - **From** and **to** dates (From 1827 to 1829)
 - **Before** and **After** (Bef 1911 or Aft 1930)
 - **Calculated** dates (Cal 4 Sep 1832)
 - **About** (Abt 1677) About replaces the word Circa in modern genealogy.
 - **Between** (Bet 19 May 2000 and 14 Jul 2009)

Entering Seasons

- For Spring 1850 use: Bet Mar 1850 and May 1850
- For Summer 1850 use: Bet Jun 1850 and Aug 1850
- For Fall 1850 use: Bet Sep 1850 and Nov 1850
- For Winter 1850 use: Bet Dec 1850 and Feb 1851

Entries for Alternate Marriage Dates

- For Banns enter: **Banns** dd mmm yyyy in the marriage date field
- For a License date enter: **Lic** dd mmm yyyy in the marriage date field
- For an Intention date enter: **Int** dd mmm yyyy in the marriage date field
- For dispensations, settlements and marriage contracts enter: **Abt** dd mmm yyyy in the marriage date field
- For a divorce date enter: **Div** dd mmm yyyy in the marriage date field

For Dates based on Significant or Catastrophic Events

Enter: Born 5 years after the shipwreck in the Birth date field or Died 5 years after the great earthquake in the death date field.

Geographic Locations

Jurisdictional Place Names

- Use at least 3 levels of jurisdiction with a comma between jurisdictions.
- Do NOT abbreviate place names.
- Enter the place name from the smallest jurisdiction to the largest.
- States and Provinces must be followed by the country name.
- **Of**, **Possibly** and **Probably** indicate there is a question for further research. These are OK to use BUT you MUST find a definitive answer.
- Always enter the place name as it was called on the day the event took place.
- If the place name has changed and you want to reflect that change enter the place as:
Mt. Vernon, Snohomish, Washington, United States, now, Mt. Vernon, Skagit, Washington, United States or , , New Haven Colony, British American Colonies, now, , Connecticut, United States

Non-Jurisdictional Place Names

- Avoid using addresses, zip codes, names of nursing homes, prisons, hospitals, colleges and plot numbers of tombstones in the place name field.

Bodies of Water

- Examples when using bodies of water for a location reference:
 - Pacific Ocean
 - At sea
 - Great Salt Lake
 - Lake Washington, near Medina, King, Washington, United States

Event Tags and Research Tags

Event tags and Research tags are used to record specific events in your ancestors's life or research decisions you have made about an event. These tags have recently been standardized for use by family history researchers to minimize duplication, ease in sharing and in merging files. The approved sets are now:

Event tags

Accomplishment	Crusade	Military	Religion
Achievement (Coat of Arms)	Education	Mission	Residence
Adoption	Emigration (from)	Namesake	Retirement
AKA	Finances	Nationality	Slavery
Baptism	Honors	Naturalization	Social Security Number
Biography	Immigration (to)	Occupation	Sports
Birth	Inquisition	Office	Surname
Burial	Kinship	Physical	Titles
Census	Living	Politics	War
Clan	Marriage	Probate	Will
Condition	Medical	Property	
Court	Membership	Punishment	

Research Tags

Abeyance	Alt Baptism	Alt Birth	Alt Burial
Alt Death	Alt Marriage	Assumption	Challenged
Conclusion	Conflict	Disproven	Error
Investigate			