

Finding Maiden Names in Your Tree:

Two of the toughest challenges in research in my genealogical research pursuits are 1) working around the missing 1890 U.S. census records and 2) not knowing the maiden names of female ancestors. For the second problem, [this article from Family Tree Advice](#) provides six handy tips for finding maiden names, from searching BMD certificates to finding clues in Social Security applications. You can find more resources for maiden name research in The Family History Guide's [the Vault](#) and ([See all tips.](#))



Persistence is a talent that genealogists need to develop as they meet “Brick Walls” frequently in other words, never give up on “Brick Walls” because efforts eventually will pay off even without primary dividends being found if you don’t get all of the answers when you want it. Taking the first step is not only the essential step but moving forward with subsequent efforts/steps is the vital factor for long term success. Because one of those hints could eventually help you uncover that elusive maiden name. Below are examples of where you might find the maiden names.

- Vital records. Birth, marriage, and death records are the natural place to find a woman's maiden name. ...
- The records of siblings. ...
- Church records. ...
- First and Middle Names. ...
- Probate Records. ...
- Other Court Records. ...
- Land Records. ...
- Obituaries.

Motivation can be found by finding other published web posts on the subject needing tips. Consider this posting entitled: [Finding Maiden Names at https://www.ancestry.com/c/family-history-learning-hub/maiden-names](https://www.ancestry.com/c/family-history-learning-hub/maiden-names) that contains insightful hints and references with additional related articles as well.

Closing Comments

The best place to locate a woman’s maiden name is on a marriage record (both civil and religious). These records include licenses, banns, bonds and consent affidavits. A Bann is an announcement of an intended marriage usually made in church on three successive Sundays. Prior to the 20th century, grooms were required to sign a bond—a document to ensure that there was no reason, moral or legal, for the couple not to marry. Typically, the father or brother of the bride signed as surety on the bond. A consent affidavit was usually signed by a parent or guardian (usually the father) in cases where the bride or groom was under the minimum legal age for marriage. Note the names of the witnesses, as these are often people associated with both the bride and groom’s families. Perhaps there will be a notation that the husband and wife were from the same town, or that your ancestor may have likely married someone who lived within thirty miles of where he/she lived. Finally, do not assume that a person had only one marriage, especially when the vital records are sparse or missing.

In the U.S., marriage records are usually found at the county or town clerks’ offices, but sometimes records are found in church offices, state offices of vital records or boards of health. [Consult VitalRec.com](#) for information on marriage records for each state which can be very helpful.

