

# GETTING THE MOST OUT OF JEWISHGEN.ORG

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## SOME OF THE MANY RESOURCES OF JEWISHGEN.ORG

- ∞ JewishGen FAQs & JewishGen InfoFiles, esp. Eastern European FAQ
- ∞ JewishGen Discussion List and SIG Discussion Lists
- ∞ Town Finder (Communities Database)
- ∞ JewishGen Family Finder (JGFF)
- ∞ KehilaLinks
- ∞ SIG Pages
- ∞ ViewMate
- ∞ JewishGen Online Worldwide Burial Registry (JOWBR)
- ∞ Yizkor Books & Holocaust Databases
- ∞ Jewish Records in the Family History Library (FHL)
- ∞ The Family Tree of the Jewish People (FTJP)
- ∞ The Given Names Databases (GND)

## JEWISHGEN FAQ & INFOFILES

[www.jewishgen.org/InfoFiles/faq.html](http://www.jewishgen.org/InfoFiles/faq.html)

Your best source of information about all of the resources reviewed today & much more.

[www.jewishgen.org/InfoFiles/](http://www.jewishgen.org/InfoFiles/)

Your best source of information about eastern European history, the history of each country, and also the overall history of each region.

And all sorts of other valuable information—it's useful to browse through the entire index at the top of the page, and over time worth checking out every single link.

## JEWISH GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH IN EASTERN EUROPE (EEFAQ)

The Eastern Europe FAQ can be reached under the Genealogical Techniques submenu of the JewishGen InfoFile page, or by going to it directly:

[www.jewishgen.org/InfoFiles/eefaq.html](http://www.jewishgen.org/InfoFiles/eefaq.html)

It's worth reading the extensive Introduction, especially the section on "Records on Microfilm at the LDS Family History Library," which explains how to identify and access the Jewish records that have been filmed by the Family History Library.

The "Countries" section has information for each country that covers many topics:

- ∞ border changes for the past 200 years
- ∞ record-keeping including where vital records are kept
- ∞ address of country's main archives
- ∞ books and significant articles about the country
- ∞ FHL microfilm reference numbers
- ∞ Special Interest Groups (SIGs), KehilaLink sites, other web sites for the country

→ Information about the main cities and the borders over various time periods can be used to determine possible current locations of vital and other records.

## JEWISHGEN DISCUSSION GROUP & SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP (SIG) LISTS

There is one main JewishGen Discussion List and about 30 SIG discussion lists that cover regional information and some special topics.

You can access them by selecting “Discussion Groups” under the Research tab, or directly at [www.jewishgen.org/ListManager/members\\_add.asp](http://www.jewishgen.org/ListManager/members_add.asp).

When you subscribe to any discussion list, you can choose either Digest or Index—Digest sends you all messages in one email, Index sends them to you one at a time.

→ Selecting Index to get messages one at a time makes it easier to read and respond to specific messages.

You can search the Discussion Group and the SIG lists. In both archives, you can search for any word or word combination in a message, and you can search within specified date ranges.

All messages posted to the Discussion Group since September 1993 have been archived. All messages posted to the SIG mailing lists since July 1998 have been archived.

To search either one, you can access them here: [www.jewishgen.org/databases/](http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/) or at:

[www.jewishgen.org/databases/archive.htm](http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/archive.htm)

[www.jewishgen.org/databases/sigarchive.htm](http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/sigarchive.htm)

## TOWN FINDER (AKA COMMUNITIES DATABASE)

[www.jewishgen.org/Communities/Search.asp](http://www.jewishgen.org/Communities/Search.asp)

As the sovereignty of a town changes over the years, the civil divisions that it “belongs” within change. These civil divisions include town, (sub-district,) district, province, and country.

In the Russian Empire, these civil divisions corresponded to town, uyez or uedz, gubernia, and country. Use the EEFAQ to learn about the changing civil geography of your towns and regions.

When you’re looking for your ancestral towns, use these strategies:

- ∞ Learn how your ancestors’ town names would have been spelled in the old country and in the time period they left from.
- ∞ Use the JewishGen Town Finder.
- ∞ Use “Sounds Like” when you search.

Sometimes, you’ll find many towns that could be a match to your town. It’s important to make sure you have enough information to pick the “right” town—don’t jump to conclusions. When you have more than one possible match, use these strategies:

- ∞ Research to confirm which of several possibilities.
- ∞ Check out proximity to other known towns, if you have that information.
- ∞ Ask on the JewishGen Discussion List with a clear and full query.

Once you’ve found the right town name, ...

- ∞ Use the JewishGen Town Finder again to start learning about the town on the town’s Locality Page.
- ∞ Use the KehilaLinks page for your town, if it exists, to learn more.
- ∞ And, put your names and towns into the JewishGen Family Finder (JGFF).

## JEWISHGEN FAMILY FINDER (JGFF)

[www.jewishgen.org/jgff](http://www.jewishgen.org/jgff)

Search for other people who are researching your surname and town.

List your family surnames and towns for other people to search for:

- ∞ An entry consists of one surname associated with one town within one country.
- ∞ *You must use the name of the locality as it is known today.*
- ∞ Use the Town Finder to determine the modern name of the locality as it is used by the country today.

You may search the JGFF by surname, town, or both. There are four ways to search—the bottom of the search page explains what each kind of match means.

## KEHILALINKS (FORMERLY SHTETLINKS)

[kehilalinks.jewishgen.org](http://kehilalinks.jewishgen.org)

Every town Locality Page has a link at the top of the page to a KehilaLinks site for the town. You can also find a particular KehilaLink site from the main KehilaLinks page.

Each town's KehilaLink pages are maintained by an individual JewishGen volunteer who has "adopted" the town—usually because he or she has ancestral links to the town. Every page has basic geographical and civil/historical data for its town; most pages have abundant additional information, including photos, links, stories, ....

## SIG PAGES

[www.jewishgen.org/JewishGen/sigs.htm](http://www.jewishgen.org/JewishGen/sigs.htm)

Most Special Interest Groups (SIGs) are focused on a geographic region of origin, some are devoted to various special topics.

Regional SIGs are the major source of finding, accessing, translating, and digitizing new records that are regularly added to the JewishGen databases. SIGs are the best place to learn about what records are available for your towns, beyond those on JewishGen.

→ You can also join a SIG project—contribute money and/or volunteer time—to help continue to access and translate records for your town.

## VIEWMATE

[www.jewishgen.org/ViewMate/](http://www.jewishgen.org/ViewMate/)

Submit photos and scans and post on the discussion lists asking people to view them. The vast international network of JewishGen members may help solve your puzzle.

- ∞ Submit scanned photos for identification of people, places, artifacts, etc.
- ∞ Submit scanned documents for analysis or translation.

See instructions at [www.jewishgen.org/ViewMate/topost.asp](http://www.jewishgen.org/ViewMate/topost.asp).

## JEWISHGEN ONLINE WORLDWIDE BURIAL REGISTRY (JOWBR)

[www.jewishgen.org/databases/Cemetery/](http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/Cemetery/)

A database of over two million names and additional information, from cemeteries and burial records around the world. This is a constantly growing resource as more cemeteries are added to the database all the time.

## YIZKOR BOOKS & HOLOCAUST DATABASES

[www.jewishgen.org/databases/Holocaust/](http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/Holocaust/)

*JewishGen Holocaust Database.* Contains more than 2.7 million entries, from more than 190 databases, about Holocaust victims and survivors, including concentration camp death lists, deportee lists, transport survivor and refugee lists, partisans lists, claims lists, work cards, passports, ...

[www.jewishgen.org/databases/yizkor/](http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/yizkor/)

*JewishGen Yizkor Book Necrology Database.* Index names of victims from the necrologies (lists of Holocaust martyrs) in the Yizkor books in the Yizkor Book Translation Project. Transliterated from Yiddish and Hebrew—usually best searched by soundex, but there are a variety of other search options as well.

[www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/database.html](http://www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/database.html)

Lists all known Yizkor books; use this to find a Yizkor book for your town.

You can search by exact or Soundex for your town.

- ∞ Lists libraries that have those books, plus WorldCat, with call numbers.
- ∞ Also has links to translations on JewishGen from the Yizkor Book Translation Project.

## JEWISH RECORDS IN THE FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY (FHL)

The FHL has large collections of genealogical records, including Jewish records starting at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. These microfilmed records are available at Family History Centers and at many major archives and libraries.

The EEFAQ summarizes for each country what is available, *with links to inventories.*

The JewishGen InfoFile FAQ has a good discussion with more general and country-specific information: [www.jewishgen.org/InfoFiles/faq.html#FHC](http://www.jewishgen.org/InfoFiles/faq.html#FHC), Section 13 “LDS (Mormon) Family History Centers.” To access FHL microfilms:

- ∞ Find the record set you want in an index somewhere (in an online database, in a book, in a message on JewishGen, ....)
- ∞ Or, search for a record set by place name (locality) in the FHL online catalog.  
[familysearch.org/catalog/search](http://familysearch.org/catalog/search)
- ∞ Use the FHL online site to order the film and designate where you want it sent.
- ∞ Go to the designed center to view your film.

## THE FAMILY TREE OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE

[www.jewishgen.org/gedcom/](http://www.jewishgen.org/gedcom/)

Centralized collection of Jewish family trees, coordinated with trees on [MyHeritage.com](http://MyHeritage.com). You can upload your own tree, and search others.