

Genealogy Research in Arizona



Most unique genealogical features:

- There are 21 Indian reservations in Arizona.
- Explored 1540; few settlers until 1840.
- Early records in Spain, Mexico, New Mexico.
- U.S. territory after Mexican War 1846-1848.
- 1853 Gadsden Purchase added land south of the Gila River for Butterfield Overland Mail and Southern Pacific Railroad routes.

Arizona Birth Records

No birth records were kept by counties or the state before 1855.

Arizona Department of Health has indexes and images of birth records 1855 - 1939: <http://genealogy.az.gov/>
FamilySearch.org and Ancestry.com have an index of Arizona births and christenings 1909 – 1917

Birth Records

In 1855, a few counties began keeping birth records.

In 1909, the state of Arizona required counties to record *all* births in the state. In time the counties reached 100% compliance.

Obtain non-certified copies of birth records from **most County Health Departments** or from the **Arizona Department of Health Services**: <http://genealogy.az.gov/>

Obtain certified (legal) copies of birth certificates from the **Arizona Department of Health Services, Vital Records**: Phone: 602-364-1300 or <http://www.azdhs.gov/vital-records>

The websites of the county and state offices give ordering information and legal restrictions.

Other Records that may record or refer to a person's birth

- Church records
- Military records
- Obituary
- Funeral Home/Cemetery records
- Bible records
- Censuses
- Social Security Applications

Arizona Marriage Records

Online Indexes

FamilySearch.org and *Ancestry.com* both have indexes of Arizona marriages for certain years.

The *Western States Marriage Index* - some Arizona marriages before and after 1900 -

<http://abish.byui.edu/specialCollections/westernStates/Search.cfm>

Marriages 1864 to the Present

An 1864 Arizona territorial law required County Recorders to keep marriage records.

From 1891 to 1912, Clerks of the Probate Court issued marriage licenses.

These records are held at the county Superior Court or at the Arizona State Archives.

Order a copy of the marriage application and/or certificate from **the Clerk of the Superior Court** of the county where the marriage took place.

Check with the specific county Superior Court office for year restrictions on obtaining copies.

Gretna Greens: When an eloping Arizona couple's marriage is not in their home county, search for it in alternate places like Las Vegas or Reno, Nevada, or Yuma, Arizona.

Arizona Death Records

Online Indexes

FamilySearch.org and *Ancestry.com* have indexes/images of Arizona death records for various years.

Arizona Department of Health has indexes/ images of death records 1870 – 1964: <http://genealogy.az.gov>

Records

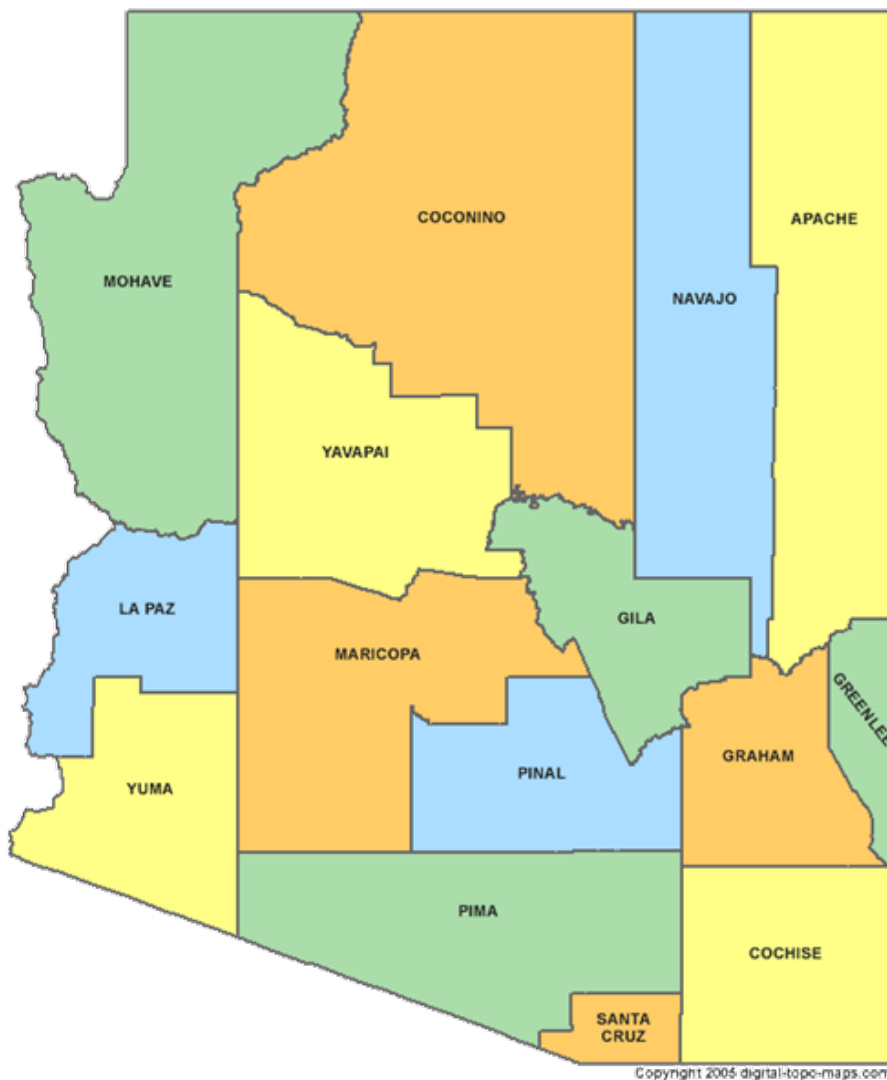
Arizona death records were created as early as 1844 in the counties.

State law required the recording of death certificates in 1909.

Obtain copies of death records from the **local county health departments**.

Obtain copies of death records **dated 1844 through the present year** from the **Arizona Department of Health Services**. The office websites give ordering instructions and forms.

Arizona Counties:



The Atlas of Historical County

Boundaries – Interactive maps and text covering the historical boundaries, names, organization, and attachments of every county, extinct county and unsuccessful county proposal from the creation of the first county through December 31, 2000. -

<http://publications.newberry.org/ahcbp/index.html>

Arizona Migration Routes: Colorado River • Little Colorado River • Gila River • Beale Wagon Road • Butterfield Overland Mail • Honeymoon Trail • Juan Bautista de Anza Trail • Old Spanish Trail • Route 66 • Atlantic and Pacific Railroad • Santa Fe Railway • Southern Pacific Railroad • Texas and Pacific Railway

Colonial Land Grants

In the late 1600's, Spain was the first country to authorize land grants in what is now Arizona. Spain first granted land to mission governors for the building of missions. The Spanish governor made a peace agreement with the indigenous Apache tribes in which the Apache lived in "peace camps" and Spain supplied the Apache with beef, blankets and guns.

Then Spain granted land to more settlers who set up ranches and mining operations.

After Mexico wrested ownership of the land from Spain in 1821, Mexico authorized more land grants to settlers. However, Mexico could not afford to continue supplying the Apache with food and supplies, so the

Apache resumed raiding ranches for food. By the time American settlers arrived in the area in the 1850's, earlier land grants had been abandoned.
Surviving records of Spanish Land Grants are stored in the Arizona General Land Office.

Libraries and Archives

The following archives, libraries, and societies in Arizona have collections or services to help genealogical researchers:

Arizona Historical Society - museum, heritage center, library and archives

Arizona State Library, Archives and Public Records, Genealogy Collection

Arizona State University, Archives and Special Collections –<https://www.asu.edu/lib/archives/>

Family History Society of Arizona

Southern Arizona Genealogy Society

University of Arizona Libraries

West Valley Genealogical Society and Library

Arizona Genealogy Research Websites

- Look online for the *GenWeb* or *Genealogy Trails* of any county in which your ancestors lived.
- Find links to genealogical websites for many states and counties on *Ancestor Hunt* and *Cyndi's List*

Arizona Birth and Death Certificates –print or download images of birth certificates 1855 to 1943 and death certificates 1870 to 1968 - <http://genealogy.az.gov/>

Arizona Memory Project – maps, historical newspapers, oral histories - <http://azmemory.azlibrary.gov/digital>

Arizona Obituary Archive - transcriptions of newspaper obituaries - <http://obits.arizonagravestones.org/>

Digital Arizona Library – access to Arizona memory project, search historical newspapers, maps - <https://www.azlibrary.gov/dazl>

Historical Prison Register - Alphabetical name list of Arizona inmates received prior to 1972 - <https://corrections.az.gov/historical-prison-register-a>

Immigrant Ships Transcribers Guild - Over 12,000 Passenger Lists in 13 “Volumes” (databases)

Inmate Datasearch - searchable database of information relating to inmates interred from 1985 to the present – <https://corrections.az.gov/public-resources/inmate-datasearch/using-inmate-datasearch>

Online County Histories - <http://www.learnwebskills.com/family/countyhistories1.htm#il>

Public Libraries in Arizona – links to their websites, many have genealogy collections - www.publiclibraries.com/arizona.htm

Western States Marriage Index – over 900,000 pre-1900 marriage records in Arizona, Idaho and Nevada counties, some records into the 1930's or later

<http://abish.byui.edu/specialcollections/westernstates/search.cfm>

Arizona African American Research

AfricaMap – track the slave trade with historical overlays and geographical data - <http://worldmap.harvard.edu/africamap/>

African Ancestry - DNA testing of maternal and paternal lineages of African descent - specific countries and specific ethnic groups of origin - uses database of over 30,000 indigenous African DNA samples - <https://africanancestry.com/>

International African American Museum - African American funeral programs, obituaries, marriage records, photos, historical documents and family histories – military records of the U.S. Colored Troops are currently being digitized - <https://cfh.iaamuseum.org/records/>

Last Seen: Finding Family After Slavery - search thousands of “Information Wanted” advertisements taken out by former slaves in all states searching for family members lost by sale, flight, or enlistment – the collection currently includes newspapers from 1853 to 1911 - <http://www.informationwanted.org/>

Slave Voyages - the *Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database* documents vessels along the Atlantic slave routes from 1514 to 1866; *Intra-American Slave Trade Database* documents vessels traveling between the Atlantic and Pacific ports ranging from the United States to Brazil; the *African Names Database* gives names, ages, possible origins of slaves liberated from captured slave ships between 1808 and 1862 - <https://www.slavevoyages.org/>

Arizona Cemetery Research

Arizona Gravestones.org – name search of burials in Arizona – <http://arizonagravestones.org/>

Historic Cemeteries of Arizona – listing of cemeteries in Arizona –

<http://www.azhistcemeteries.org/AZCems.htm>

TEMPE, AZ: **Double Butte Cemetery** – alphabetical list of names and other headstone information, tables of burials by section – location of unmarked graves - <http://www.fhsa.org/butteCemetery.phtml>

Arizona Military Research

Grand Army of the Republic Records Project – developing database - histories of posts, reports of officers and members if available, search by state - <http://suvchw.org/garrecords/>

Arizona Native American Research

Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona - information about current Native American tribes located in state of Arizona - http://itcaonline.com/?page_id=8

Native American Tribes of Arizona - <http://www.native-languages.org/arizona.htm>

Information on these pages is compiled from information in:

Family Tree Magazine

The Weekly Genealogist, NEHGS;

Eastman Online Genealogy Newsletter;

The Genealogy Newsline