

Beginning Slovak Genealogy Research

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Overview

- How to identify your ancestor's original name and town/village of origin
- A brief history of each country and how it impacts genealogy
- Finding key information in vital, census and immigration records
- How to utilize FamilySearch and the Family History Library
- Tips for contacting possible relatives and writing to the Slovak archives
- Strategies for overcoming the most common pitfalls and problems

Beginning Your Research

1. Determine immigrant's original name and hometown

- Check home and family sources and talk to relatives.
- Take a DNA test/analyze results and contact matches.
- Be flexible and open to alternate spellings, languages, alphabets, etc.
- Anticipate/expect misspellings or confusion with names, dates, places.
- Need to obtain the exact name of town or village of origin.
- Always verify information (whether from online or traditional sources).

2. Pinpoint the ancestral town or village

- Google the name of the town or village. Does it have a website?
- Check atlases, maps, and gazetteers. Historical geography may not be the same as current geography. For Slovak Villages: *Nazvy obci Slovenskej Republiky (Names of Villages, Slovak Republic)* Milan Majtan. Check WorldCat for library copies.
- Search Facebook for town and village pages.
- Use FAN club technique (Friends, Associates, Neighbors).

3. Locate records in Slovakia

- FamilySearch.org (free); MyHeritage.com and Ancestry.com (subscription).
- Dedicated archival databases or country-specific websites.

4. Obtain non-digitized documents from appropriate archive, church, civil office

- Perform a Google search.
- FamilySearch Wiki (browse by country, look for Archives & Libraries link).

5. Hire a professional researcher for “hard to get” records and/or translation services

- Consult the Czechoslovak Genealogy Society International’s website for a list.
- Check with the Association for Professional Genealogists.
- Ask for recommendations from colleagues/other researchers.

Key Records to Research in North America

- Home and family sources
- Census records (1790—1940)
- City directories
- Immigration/Emigration lists
- Naturalization Records (“First Papers; Petitions)
- Vital records/Social Security Death Index & SS-5 (subject to new restrictions)
- Church records (registers, histories, anniversary books)
- Cemetery tombstones and burial records; Funeral Home/Obituaries
- Military (pension and WWI and WW2 draft registrations)
- Land/Probate/Court records
- School and work records
- Fraternal organization records
- Ethnic newspapers

Key Information to Research in Europe

- Civil Registration
- Church books and registers
- Census records (for Slovakia look under Hungary)
- Landowner records
- Military records (Austrian military; Slovakia look under Hungary)
- Nobility and tax lists

Tips for Accessing Records

Some Slovak records are available in the digitized collections on FamilySearch. You must sign up for a free FamilySearch account. Some records have restrictions placed on them by the partnering archive/repository and you can only view them from a Family History Library/Center or partner computer. Others may be available on microfilm from the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah (access by visiting the library).

Slovakia: Archives and Records

- *Štátne archívy* (Slovak National Archives)
- Regional (7): Banská Bystrica, Bratislava, Bytča, Košice, Levoča, Nitra, Prešov
- City archives; Military archives; Church archives; Church Parish offices
- University and Public Libraries/Historical and Genealogical Societies
- No searchable online records yet in Slovak archives
- Church and civil records (check privacy laws milestone is right now year 1907-present)
- Border changes/government may impact the format and language of records

Major Genealogy Websites/Databases (\$ = subscription website)

- Ancestry.com <https://www.ancestry.com> (\$)
- Castle Garden <http://www.castlegarden.org>
- Ellis Island <https://www.statueofliberty.org>
- FamilySearch <https://www.familysearch.org>; Wiki <https://wiki.familysearch.org>
- FindMyPast <https://www.findmypast.com> (\$)
- Fold3 <https://www.fold3.com> (\$)
- GenealogyBank <https://www.genealogybank.com> (\$)
- MyHeritage <https://www.myheritage.com> (\$)
- National Archives and Records Administration <https://www.archives.gov>
- One-Step Web Pages (Steve Morse) <https://stevemorse.org>
- Research Guides <https://www.researchguides.net>
- USCIS (US Citizenship & Immigration) <https://www.uscis.gov>

Slovak Websites

- CentroConsult <http://www.centroconsult.sk/genealogy/resources.html>
- Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International (CGSI) <https://cgsi.org>
- Czechoslovak Society of Arts & Sciences (SVU) <https://www.svu2000.org>
- Dictionary portal of the Institute of Linguistics <https://slovník.juls.savba.sk>
- Genealogy Slovakia <http://www.cisarik.com>
- National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library <https://www.ncsml.org>
- Our Slovakia/Slovak Pride Database <http://www.our-slovakia.com>
- Slovak Ancestry Research Services <https://www.slovak-ancestry.com>
- Slovak Institute <http://www.slovakinstitute.com>
- Slovak Genealogy Research Strategies <http://www.iabsi.com/gen/public>
- Štátne archívy <https://www.minv.sk/?statne-archivy>

Miscellaneous

- Association for Professional Genealogists <https://www.apgen.org>
- Austro-Hungarian Military Records <http://ahmilitary.blogspot.com>
- Balch Institute (Historical Society of Pennsylvania) <https://www.portal.hsp.org>
- Carpatho-Rusyn Society <https://c-rs.org>
- Cyndi's List: Czech Republic and Slovakia <https://www.cyndislist.com/czech>
- East European Genealogical Society (EEGS) <https://eegsociety.org/Home.aspx>

- FEEFHS <https://feefhs.org>
- Genealogy on Facebook <https://socialmediagenealogy.com>
- Google Earth <https://www.google.com/earth>
- Google Translate <https://translate.google.com>
- Hungaricana <https://hungaricana.hu/en>
- Hungary Exchange <https://www.hungaryexchange.com>
- Immigrant History Research Center <https://cla.umn.edu/ihr>
- Jewishgen.org <https://www.jewishgen.org>
- Radix Genealogical Research in Hungary <http://www.bogardi.com/gen>
- Surname Navigator site <https://www.geneaservice.nl/navigator>
- The Carpatho-Rusyns of Pennsylvania <https://rusynsofpa.blogspot.com>
- WorldCat <https://www.worldcat.org>

Additional Resources

- *The Family Tree Polish, Czech & Slovak Genealogy Guide* by Lisa A. Alzo (F&W Media)
<https://amzn.to/2jSx2pN>
- *Tracing Eastern European Ancestors, Internet Genealogy Special issue*
<http://www.internet-genealogy.com>
- *Legacy Family Tree Quick Guide Slovak Genealogy*
<https://www.lisaalzo.com/publications/other-writings>
- Courses: Research, Write, Connect – Online Genealogy Courses
<https://www.researchwriteconnect.com>