



# 10 TIPS to Boost Your Genealogy Research and Writing Productivity

Lisa A. Alzo shares expert tips from top genealogy educators

**A**RE YOU LOOKING TO IMPROVE YOUR GENEALOGY RESEARCH skills or jumpstart a family history writing project? I asked some of my favorite genealogy educators to join me in offering advice for searching online databases and sharing stories. Whether you have just started your ancestral journey, or consider yourself a seasoned professional, follow these tips to expand your research skills and improve writing productivity.

**2** **Make an appointment with your ancestors.** Unable to find time to write that family history? Try scheduling blocks of 15 minutes per day to write (this adds up to over 1-1/2 hours per week), and then make sure keep that appointment. Set a timer or an alarm on your phone or computer and stop when the 15 minutes are up.

– Lisa A. Alzo

**3** **Utilize city and other directories.** Directories aren't just for CITIES. Look for rural directories (usually by county) or occupational, educational, or organizational directories. There are more available than you might think. FIND THEM ALL.

– Diana Crisman Smith

**4** **Track ancestors through time.** Build a timeline for each person you are researching. It will help you see missing information, identify records to peruse, and help bust through brick walls!

– Cheri Passey

**5** **Expand your searches.** Periodically search for ancestor names using different search engines such as Google, Bing, Yandex. Only a fraction of the internet is indexed, and each search

**1** **Follow your free trial finds.** If you don't keep a subscription to one of the commercial giants (Ancestry, FamilySearch, Findmypast, or MyHeritage) past the free trial, you will still be able to access your tree, but you will not be able to view most of the record images later on. (If you're using the Library edition, you won't be able to attach record discoveries to a tree, even if you have an account.) Download or print the record images if you are using the Library edition or don't plan to commit past the two-week free trial! – Sunny Jane Morton.

