

# Preparing for Research Trip

Compiled by Sandra M Barnes

## Items to print

- **Directions:** Include directions in some form such as online map, written, etc. Include your basic destinations and your “if I have time” destinations.
- **Hours of operation:** Call each site you intend to visit including archives, courthouses and libraries. *Do not rely on websites!*
- **Policies and procedures:** Make sure you know if you can bring your own scanner or even a camera into an archive and what their policies are regarding usage.
- **Confirmation numbers:** For air travel, car rental and accommodations.
- **Emergency information:** Phone numbers for police, ambulance, hospital, etc. Have the address and phone number for an urgent care facility nearby. Also print information of a local office supply store or a pharmacy in case you need batteries, disposable cameras, etc.
- **Research information:** Print out any reports, family trees and charts from your genealogy research database that you will need to consult on your trip.
- **Blank forms:** Blank copies of your research log, family group sheets and family trees.
- **Contacts:** List names and addresses of relatives or other genealogy researchers in the area.
- **Favorites and bookmarks:** If you are not taking your own laptop or tablet computer with you, make sure you have access to all the favorite websites you will need for research.
- **Accounts and passwords:** Print a list of all your accounts and passwords you’ll need. Keep this in a safe place!
- **ICE – In Case of Emergency:** A card or piece of paper with your emergency contact information in case something happens to you. Also list any allergies for medical personnel. Check out mobile apps that keep this information.

## Technology

- **Flash drives:** One or more USB flash drives to store research information. Also, have one flash drive with just the Printed Materials listed above. **Tip:** also include a text file on each drive named “Contact Info” and list your name, phone number and email in case you leave the drive at a library or you lose it!
- **Cloud storage:** Make sure you’ve set up one or more cloud computing accounts such as Dropbox and that you’ve also downloaded the app to a smartphone or mobile device. You should be able to use a computer at a library or archive to access these files.
- **Computer:** A tablet computer or laptop. Make sure you pack the necessary chargers and peripherals.
- **Cameras and recorders:** Either digital devices or a smartphone that can accomplish the task. Use these devices not just to record your trip but also to scan documents and other items during research.
- **Smartphone or cell phone:** Take your personal phone and purchase insurance in case it is lost or stolen on your trip. Also consider a cheap disposable phone for \$20 or less that you can purchase at a drug store or office supply store.
- **Global Positioning System (GPS):** Most smartphones already have GPS included, but take a standalone device if desired. Remember not to leave it on display in your car when parked since it will attract thieves!
- **Mobile scanner:** Make sure you have a way to scan original documents and photos—especially if you are visiting relatives. Keep in mind that you may never visit this area again, so your scans should be high quality and kept in a safe place.

## Miscellaneous

- **Batteries:** Take rechargeable batteries (and the charger!) or purchase the various sizes of batteries you will need.
- **Change:** Coins for photocopiers and parking meters.
- **Power strip:** Purchase a mini power strip so you can charge multiple devices. This is also a great way to make new friends!
- **Office supplies:** Highlighters, pens, folders, magnifiers and the like.
- **First aid kit:** Include specific items depending on your type of trip; e.g. cemetery research could result in sunburn or bug bites.
- **Food:** Pack your favorite snack foods and beverages.
- **Clothes:** Include clothing appropriate to the weather forecast and pack an umbrella. Also pack one set of dressy or semi-dressy clothes for last minute invites!
- **Thank you gifts:** Hopefully you'll meet many helpful people along your trip. Pack small thank you gifts for those people plus family members, interview subjects and helpful staff. **Tip:** a small plastic bag filled with candy and your business card is a great idea!

## Resources

View the recording of Flip-pal's free webinar, *Family History Trippin'* to help you learn how to evaluate your travel habits and then build a travel plan to ensure an enjoyable and productive genealogy-related trip. This webinar also covers apps and websites you should know, as well as how to handle those pesky emergencies or changes in plans! Visit our Webinar page to view this and other videos.

We've created a list of travel-related resources over at Pinterest! Check out our *Family History Trippin'* board at <http://pinterest.com/flippal/family-history-trippin/>.

***Editor's note:*** Genealogy expert [Thomas MacEntee](#) shares his secrets on what to pack for a genealogy research trip.]

<http://flip-pal.com/what-to-pack/>

# Websites with Genealogy Travel Tips

- [genealogy.about.com/od/research\\_trips/](http://genealogy.about.com/od/research_trips/)
- [www.archives.com/experts/.../a-trip-to-bountiful-genealogy-research.htm](http://www.archives.com/experts/.../a-trip-to-bountiful-genealogy-research.htm)
- [www.familytreemagazine.com](http://www.familytreemagazine.com) › Issue › December-2013
- [learn.mocavo.com/tips-and-tricks/5-tips-for-a-genealogy-research-trip](http://learn.mocavo.com/tips-and-tricks/5-tips-for-a-genealogy-research-trip)
- [petergreenberg.com/2012/07/.../travel-tip-preparing-for-genealogy-trave...](http://petergreenberg.com/2012/07/.../travel-tip-preparing-for-genealogy-trave...)
- [ww.pinterest.com/geneabloggers/genealogy-research-trip/](http://ww.pinterest.com/geneabloggers/genealogy-research-trip/)
- [www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~genepool/slc.htm](http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~genepool/slc.htm)