# Finding Indiana Records

In the realm of finding records in Indiana, the concept of one-stop shopping does not apply. Indiana is fortunate to have numerous libraries, agencies, and organizations that have information helpful to genealogy research. This wealth of resources can create a maze as to where to find the information you need. Below is a tip sheet to help you get started. It includes websites, contacts, and free online databases. By no means does it include all of the helpful resources available; however, it can serve as a starting point to guide you through the maze.

## Vital Records

Births and deaths were not officially recorded in Indiana until 1882. Other sources such as census records, church records, cemetery records and will records may be helpful in identifying earlier birth and death dates.

### Birth Records

Birth records in the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) Vital Records office begin with October 1907. Prior to October 1907, records of birth are filed with the local health department in the county where the birth occurred.

### Death Records

Death records in the ISDH Vital Records office begin with 1900. Prior to 1900, records of death are filed with the local health department in the county where the death occurred.

**Vital Records Department**
Indiana State Department of Health
2 North Meridian Street
Indianapolis, IN 46204
(317) 233-2700

Many libraries have birth and death indexes to several Indiana counties. INGenWeb provides a directory of libraries with genealogy information:
http://ingenweb.net/ingen_state.htm

Index to Indiana County Vital Records Offices includes contact information for county health offices, circuit court, dates of coverage and costs: http://www.vitalrec.com/in.html

### Marriage Records

Marriage records are available from the Clerks of the Circuit Court in the county where the marriage was granted. The ISDH only has an Index to marriages since 1958.

*Indiana State Library Marriage Record Indexes:*
http://www.in.gov/library/databases.htm
This searchable database includes spouse's name, county, date, and other remarks.

## Cemetery Records

*Indiana State Library Cemetery Locator Database*:
http://www.in.gov/library/databases.htm
Searchable by county, this database provides the names of every cemetery for which ISL has either tombstone inscriptions or location. The database does not include the names of people buried in the cemeteries.
*Note:* In 1939, a joint WPA/American Legion project was initiated to identify the burial places of all veterans in Indiana.  The project was conducted in 51 of Indiana's 92 counties. The ISL has the microfilmed **Indiana Veterans' Graves Registration.**  The Indiana State Archives has the original card files.

## Land Records
*Indiana State Archives Land Office Database*:  http://www.indianadigitalarchives.org
Indiana State Archives holds field notes and original plats made by federal surveyors and land office tract books recording individual purchases from the federal land office. Of the six federal land offices in Indiana, the tract book records of three, Ft. Wayne, Vincennes, and LaPorte-Winamac, are online. Patrons can search abbreviated versions of these and can contact the Archives for the full record.
*Note:*  All subsequent private transactions and plat maps are held by the county recorder.

## Naturalization Records
*IN State Archives Naturalization Database*: http://www.indianadigitalarchives.org
Naturalization was a multi-step process. First, you declared your intent to naturalize, then you petitioned for naturalization, and lastly, you were issued a certificate or a court order granting citizenship.  The first two steps involved the submission of specific documents -- declarations of intent and petitions. The State Archives maintains these records for some counties, with some records searchable.

Up until 1907, courts were required to record in their order books all the individuals to whom the court granted citizenship. Before 1907, court order books are all that we have to determine whether an individual was granted citizenship.   Fortunately, there is a name index for most naturalization orders granted by Indiana courts from the 1820s to 1907: An Index to Indiana Naturalization Records Found in Various Order Books of the 92 Indiana Counties Local Courts prior to 1907. The Archives, however, does not have county order books. Indiana law stipulates that county courts must maintain their own court order books. In order to obtain copies of an individual's court order, you will need to write directly to the Clerk of the Circuit Court in the county that granted citizenship (your request should include the exact citation found in the above mentioned index).

## Military Records
*National Archives:*  www.archives.gov
Compiled military service records, individual pension records, and bounty land records, many can now be ordered online or by mail.  Some are also searchable on their website.

*Indiana State Archives*: http://www.indianadigitalarchives.org
Online state military records from the Mexican War, Civil War, and the National Guard.

*Indiana State Library World War II Servicemen Database*:
http://www.in.gov/library/databases.htm
An index of Indianapolis newspapers (News, Star, and Times) for notices of casualties, missing military personnel, prisoners, and decorations of Indiana servicemen and women.

## Census Records
Several online databases include digitized census records: http://www.census-online.com/links/IN/

## Obituaries
Newspaper Section of Indiana State Library has the largest collection of Indiana newspapers, with many available on microfilm through interlibrary loan. Website includes a listing of newspaper holdings by county and a few searchable indexes.
http://www.in.gov/library/newspapers.htm

Several public libraries and local organizations also have online databases of obituaries:
- Browning Genealogy. Evansville Indiana Obituary:  http://browning.evpl.org/
- Fort Wayne and Allen County, IN Area Obituary Index: http://www.friendsofallencounty.org/search_obits1900.php
- St. Joseph County Public Library Obituary Index: http://www.sjcpl.org/research/ccount/click.php?id=126

## Local History Sources
*IHS Local History Services:*
http://www.indianahistory.org/our-services/local-history-services/local-history-contacts
Includes contact information to county historical societies, county genealogical organizations, and county historians.

*Indiana Magazine of History:*  http://webapp1.dlib.indiana.edu/imh/
Published since 1905, the IMH is one of the nation's oldest historical journals.  Recently, IMH introduced free online access to all but the two most recent years of the publication.

## Biographical Information
*19th Century Indiana Physicians:* http://www.biblioserver.com/19centurydocs/index.php
Created by the Ruth Lilly Medical Library, IU School of Medicine, the database contains over 15,000 entries of early doctors and midwives that practiced in the state.

*Indiana Artists:*  http://friendsofallencounty.org/search_artists.php
More than 1,000 entries compiled from the "Indiana Artists" clipping folder of the Indiana Collection Vertical File (which no longer exists).

*Allen County Public Library Surname File:*
http://www.genealogycenter.info/search_gensurnames.php
Lists other researchers searching same surname w/ contact information

## Church Records
*Earlham College Archives:* Society of Friends Archives
http://legacy.earlham.edu/library/content/friends/index.html

*DePauw University Archives*: United Methodist Church Archives
http://www.depauw.edu/library/archives/resources/forchurch.asp

*Hanover College Archives:* Presbyterian Archives Collections
 http://library.hanover.edu/presbyterian.html

*Franklin College Archives:* Indiana American Baptist Collection
http://www.franklincollege.edu/academics/hamilton-library

## Digital Image Collections
*Indiana Memory:*  http://www.in.gov/memories/
A statewide collaborative effort to provide a gateway to the wealth of primary sources in Indiana libraries, archives, museums, and other cultural institutions.

*Indiana Historical Society:*
http://www.indianahistory.org/our-collections/digital-image-collections
A growing collection of over 42,000 images of sites and events throughout Indiana.

*IUPUI Digital Collection:* http://www.ulib.iupui.edu/digitalscholarship
Site includes a variety of databases including historic Indiana atlases and maps, War of 1812 Collection, and Indianapolis city directories.

*Wabash Valley Visions and Voices:* http://visions.indstate.edu/
Focuses on the Wabash Valley region, includes yearbooks, maps, and court records.


# Other Indiana Sites of Interest

*INSPIRE*:  http://www.inspire.net
*INSPIRE* is Indiana's Virtual Library on the Internet.  It provides access to a collection of commercial databases including biographical, health, and business information.  It includes full-text access to thousands of recent newspapers, magazines, and journals.

*Indiana Landmarks*:  http://www.historiclandmarks.org/
Indiana Landmarks helps to preserve and restore unique and irreplaceable historic buildings, neighborhoods and commercial districts as viable ingredients of modern life.

***Looking for more online resources?***
The ISL Genealogy Division includes a list of several genealogy databases, indexes and resources by county:  http://www.in.gov/library/3126.htm