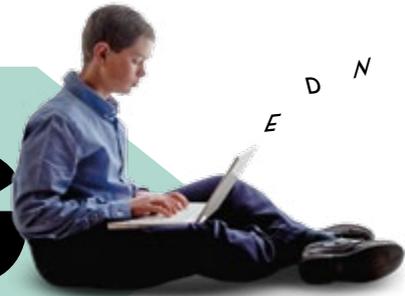


GETTING INTO

# INDEXING

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Church Magazines



*Think you're too young for family history? A few minutes a day can uncover names of many people waiting to receive temple ordinances.*

**Y**ou may have heard people use the word *indexing* in connection with family history and wondered what it was. FamilySearch indexing lets you type names from old records into a database that people worldwide can use to find their ancestors. The names you index generally won't come from your own family line but from scanned documents that include census records, birth certificates, marriage certificates, military registrations, and more.

Indexing lets everyone help one another with family history. Today, you may enter in the name of an ancestor of someone living in Australia, and tomorrow a person living in England may type in the name of an ancestor you and your family are looking for. As

we work together to enter these names into the FamilySearch database, we'll each have a greater chance of finding information about our own ancestors and be able to help take family names to the temple.

So, why should *you* participate in indexing? Here are eight great reasons!

## WHY?

### **1 Because these aren't just names; they're people.**

Look at the census record at right, which is an example of a record that would show up in the FamilySearch indexing software. It's easy to think of the document as just a long list of names of people who lived in the 1940s. But that list is not just a collection of names—those names represent individual sons and daughters of God. They are His children, and He wants them to enjoy the same temple blessings that you can. Each time you type a name into the FamilySearch indexing application, you're helping bring one person closer to his or her temple covenants.



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY ROBERT CASEY; CENSUS RECORD: SAMPLE—NOT ACTUAL RECORD

## 2 *Because it feels great.*

Typing names into a database may not sound very exciting. But this isn't your typical data entry—this work is filled with the Spirit of Elijah. The Lord promised that Elijah would return and turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to the fathers (see Malachi 4:5–6). As you do this work, you'll be able to feel the Spirit of Elijah (which is the Holy Ghost). It will bring greater peace, joy, and purpose into your life because it's a work with eternal importance.

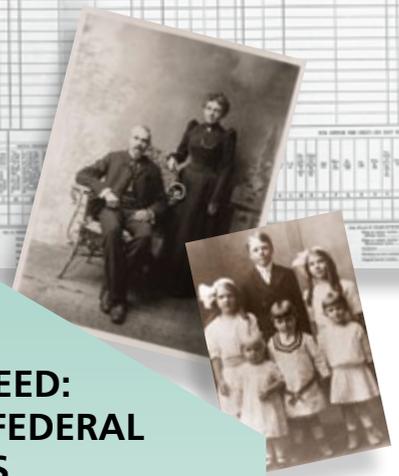
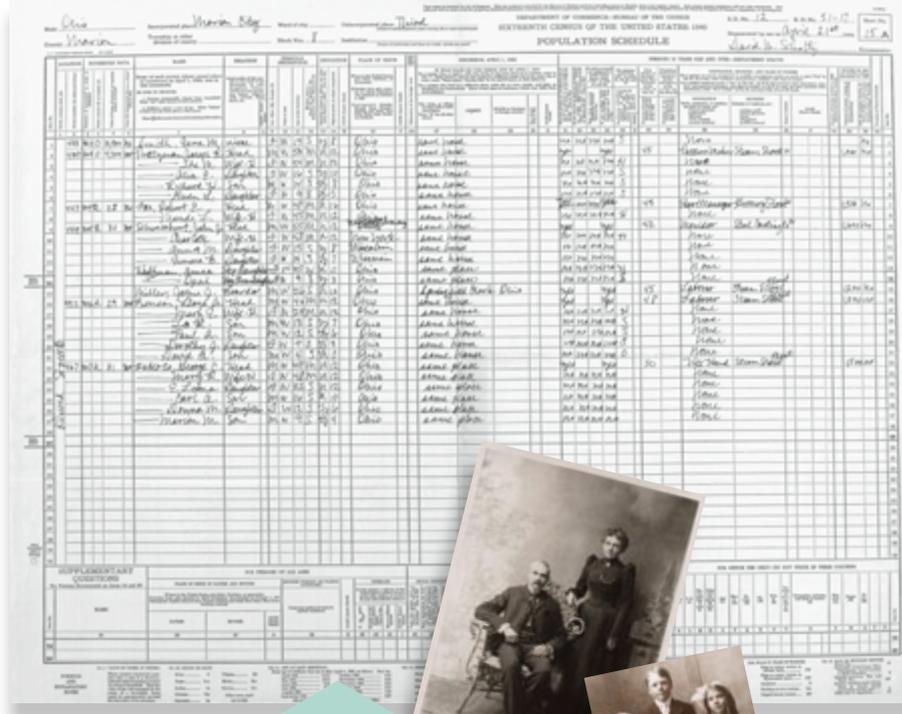
## 3 *Because you're a perfect fit.*

FamilySearch indexing is based around the computer. Can you think of anyone who is skilled at using the computer, is already online frequently, types quickly, and knows the way around today's technologies? It sounds like you (and your friends) have just what it takes for indexing. And you don't even need to be a member of the Church to index.

## 4 *Because it fits your schedule.*

You may wonder how you can fit indexing into your life, but it's easy. Since you don't have to complete an entire project in one sitting, you could work on it just five minutes at a time, perhaps while you're waiting for dinner or before you log on to a social networking site. Five extra minutes browsing the web may not make a big difference in your day, but five minutes spent indexing can bring the Spirit into your life and bless the lives of others for eternity.

*This is an example of what a 1940 U.S. Federal Census record could look like.*



**AN URGENT NEED:  
THE 1940 U.S. FEDERAL CENSUS**

**O**n April 2, 2012, the FamilySearch indexing organization began work on the 1940 United States Census—a collection of over 130 million names! They need us to index in order to meet a goal to publish the records by the next general conference. As we work together, we can make it happen! Will you help?

Go online to [lds.org/go/521](http://lds.org/go/521) to watch a video tutorial about using the FamilySearch indexing application. Then head to [indexing.familysearch.org](http://indexing.familysearch.org) to download the program and get started. (You should get an LDS Account for this, which requires you to find out your membership record number from your ward or branch clerk.) Then you can try FamilySearch indexing for yourself and see what a difference it makes in your life!



## HOW DOES INDEXING WORK?

**H**ere's how the names you type into the FamilySearch indexing software end up in the FamilySearch database and can later be taken to the temple.

1. A record is scanned and prepared for the FamilySearch indexing program. You can download this program for free at [indexing.familysearch.org](https://indexing.familysearch.org).
2. You download a batch of records and enter the names and information from the records by typing what you see. At the same time, another person is working on the same batch. That way, if one of you makes a mistake, there's a backup.
3. A third person, called an arbitrator, clears up any information where you and the other person working on the batch typed something different.
4. The names and data are added to the FamilySearch database, where everyone throughout the world can quickly search for their ancestors.
5. Someone finds the information about their ancestors in FamilySearch.
6. A person performs ordinances for their ancestors in the temple.

## 5 *Because it's not just for older generations.*

Do you think that family history work is only for your grandparents and that you'll be better suited for this work when you're older? Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, in speaking to youth, has said, "The time is now" ("The Time Is Now," [lds.org/fhy](https://www.lds.org/fhy)). Young men and young women all around the world have found that indexing is a great project for youth. In fact, you may find that it's a perfect service experience for your priesthood quorum or Young Women class or even for Personal Progress or Duty to God experiences.

## 6 *Because technologies have been invented for this work.*

Have you ever thought about how this generation constantly receives new technologies when people in the past lived for centuries without our modern means of communication? Well, it's no coincidence. Multiple prophets and apostles have testified that today's technologies have been invented to help God's work move forward (for example, see [lds.org/go/52K](https://www.lds.org/go/52K)). And FamilySearch indexing is one of those ways. Heavenly Father has given us technologies to help bring His children sacred covenants—and He has given you a special responsibility to help that happen as you prepare names for temple work!

## 7 **Because it protects you from the influence of Satan.**

Today's world is filled with temptation, so we need to fortify ourselves to stand strong. Elder Bednar has testified that family history work is one way to bring that strength and to protect us from the world. He said, "The Spirit of Elijah is the Holy Ghost. The Spirit of Elijah will influence anyone who is involved in this work. That, for a young person in the wickedness of the world in which we live today, is one of the greatest safeguards against the temptations of the adversary. The Spirit of Elijah will not only bless you, it will protect you" ("The Time Is Now," [lds.org/fhy](http://lds.org/fhy)).

## 8 **Because prophets have invited you to do so.**

Many prophets have talked about doing this work. In the October 2011 general conference, Elder Bednar extended a specific invitation to youth to participate (see the quote at right). Have you acted on his invitation and experienced the blessings he promised? If not, today is a great day to start! **NE**

### AN APOSTOLIC INVITATION



"I now invite the attention of the young women, young men, and children of the rising generation as I emphasize the importance of the Spirit of Elijah in your lives today. . . .

"Many of you may think family history work is to be performed primarily by older people. But I know of no age limit described in the scriptures or guidelines announced by Church leaders restricting this important service to mature adults. . . .

"It is no coincidence that FamilySearch and other tools have come forth at a time when young people are so familiar with a wide range of information and communication technologies. Your fingers have been trained to text and tweet to accelerate and advance the work of the Lord—not just to communicate quickly with your friends. The skills and aptitude evident among many young people today are a preparation to contribute to the work of salvation.

"I invite the young people of the Church to learn about and experience the Spirit of Elijah. I encourage you to study, to search out your ancestors, and to prepare yourselves to perform proxy baptisms in the house of the Lord for your kindred dead (see D&C 124:28–36). And I urge you to help other people identify their family histories.

"As you respond in faith to this invitation, your hearts shall turn to the fathers. The promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob will be implanted in your hearts. Your patriarchal blessing, with its declaration of lineage, will link you to these fathers and be more meaningful to you. Your love and gratitude for your ancestors will increase. Your testimony of and conversion to the Savior will become deep and abiding. And I promise you will be protected against the intensifying influence of the adversary. As you participate in and love this holy work, you will be safeguarded in your youth and throughout your lives.

". . . Any young person can do what I am suggesting, using the modules available at [lds.org/familyhistoryyouth](http://lds.org/familyhistoryyouth)."

**Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles,  
"The Hearts of the Children Shall Turn,"  
Ensign, Nov. 2011, 26–27.**

