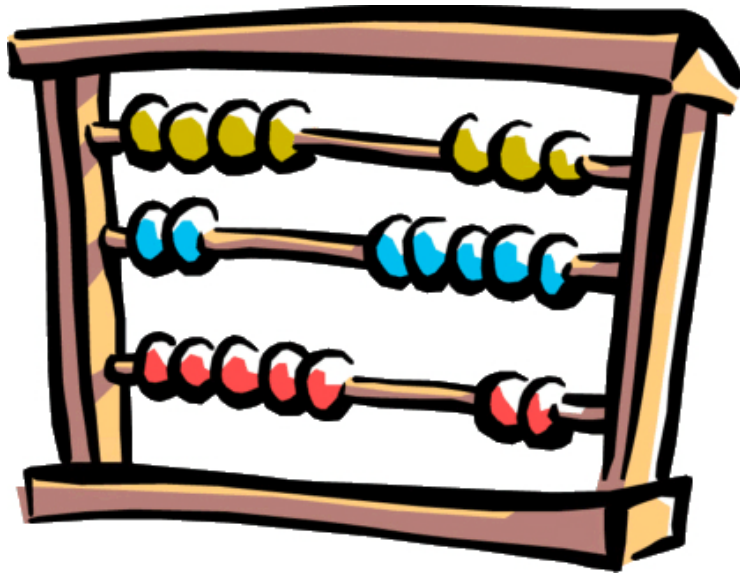


The Jewish Genealogical Society of Great Britain



1911 Census for Jewish Genealogy



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1911 Census for Jewish Genealogy

How to find your ancestors in the 1911 Census of England and Wales

What is the 1911 Census and where is it?

The 1911 census is a record of everyone who lived in England and Wales on the night of 2 April 1911. It provides a unique snapshot of the lives of your ancestors. The 1911 census for Scotland was taken on the same night, but is not yet available.

The 1911 census can be found at www.1911census.co.uk and www.findmypast.co.uk. The first website was launched in early 2009 and is a “pay as you go” website where credits can be purchased. It includes images and transcription data, but some sensitive data is being held back until 3 January 2012, after which all data will be available. Access to the 1911 census on Find My Past can be through purchase of credits or annual subscription. The 1911 census is not available through any other provider at present.

How do I search the 1911 census?

Register for access to the census at www.1911census.co.uk or through the www.findmypast.co.uk website. Once registered on the 1911 website, you can search the census through a standard or an advanced search form. The searches can be done using exact spelling, variant spelling (soundex) and use of wildcards. To help with a search, say if there are a lot of people with the same name, it may be necessary for you to enter additional information on the form, such as year of birth, county of residence, relationship to head, occupation, place of birth and so on. Always try to keep information down to the minimum, as ‘less is more’.

Soundex Searches

The system used by the 1911 census is not always helpful for Eastern European or Jewish names. One way of finding alternative spelling of names to input is to go to a website such as Avotaynu’s Consolidated Jewish Surname Index at www.avotaynu.com/csi/csi-home.htm and put in the known spelling of the surname. You will then see lists of possible alternative sound-alike names that you can use in your search, which may turn up elusive relatives.

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Place searches can also be made. For a place search, a street name must be entered in all cases. There are additional fields to enter the County, residential place (i.e. the house number), registration districts and census references. The place search helps particularly with finding out information about neighbours of your ancestors.

When using the 1911 census website, there is no charge for searching the census. However, you must purchase credits or use vouchers to view transcribed schedules or scans of original schedules. The prices and number of credits required to view schedules is displayed on the website. Vouchers can be purchased through a large number of local stockists, which include local libraries and archives in the UK and throughout the world. Details of stockists can be found on the 1911 Census website under “About vouchers” in the “help and advice” section.

What information is available?

Information on individuals and families is available both as typed transcripts of census returns and scanned copies of the original household and institution schedules. The census schedules were completed by the head of each household, if possible. So you should be able to find your ancestors' names set down exactly as they spelt them, and not as written by an enumerator who in the past would often use phonetic spellings. The return will also have been signed by the head of household. However, in many cases the enumerator still helped complete the form.

As well as the names of individual residents, the census also recorded how long people had been married for, how many children had been born alive and how many were still living or had died. The census schedules also include the following information – name and surname; relationship to head of household; gender and age; particulars as to marriage; profession or occupation; birthplace; and nationality. Infirmary is also a heading but this information will not be available until 2012. Other information not available until 2012 will include information about family relationships, which would usually have been kept secret, and information about very young children who were born in prison.

What's special about 1911 census for Jewish genealogy?

The 1911 census return was the first to require information about Nationality. It required that the nationality of every person born in a foreign country was written down on the form. For each person it had to be noted if they were a Naturalised British Citizen, giving the year of their Naturalisation, or if they were still a foreign national what their nationality was, i.e. French, German, or Russian.

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In some cases the name of the town or city of birth abroad has been given by the head of household, despite there being no requirement to state this.

How to find ancestors in the 1911 Census of England and Wales

The information found on any census can lead you on to many other areas of family history research from births, marriages and deaths, through immigration records to other censuses. The 1911 census, like all other censuses, is just one of many tools that genealogists use to find ancestors. The census should help you to spread your search wider and to pick up more information.

Births Marriages and Deaths

UK BMDs -The birth, marriage and death (BMD) information that can be obtained from the 1911 census (ages, length of marriage, deaths of children) will allow you to access further details of these events, particularly if they happened in the UK. For any BMD events in the UK, the first place to look is in the relevant General Registrar Office (GRO) Index to find your ancestors. The GRO index can be accessed at the National Archives in Kew, London, and on various websites such as www.findmypast.co.uk ; www.bmdindex.co.uk/; www.thegenealogist.co.uk/, familyrelatives.com; and Ancestry.co.uk. All of these are pay per view or subscription sites. There is also FreeBMD at <http://freebmd.rootsweb.com/>, where large portions of the GRO indexes have been transcribed, and which is of course free to use.

Other sources for UK-based events include newspaper archives and in particular the **Jewish Chronicle** archives at www.thejc.com/. Many families made newspaper announcements of births, marriages and deaths in the Jewish Chronicle and often the announcements included details of members of the extended family.

Marriage records also exist in the UK in the form of United Synagogue Marriage Authorisations, some of which have been transcribed by JGSGB and are available through our website. Other Marriage Authorisations can be obtained directly from the United Synagogue. Records for other synagogues can be found in a variety of places. More detailed information about obtaining marriage records is available on the JGSGB website www.jsgsb.org.uk/engmarr.shtml. Sometimes there will have only have been a religious ceremony performed, so the only records available will be those of the synagogue or the marriage document given to the Bride called a Ketubah. A relevant Ketubah may have survived and be in family papers.

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Burial and cemetery records are invaluable sources of information. The records for many Jewish cemeteries have been transcribed and can be found on a number of websites. There are burial records in the **JewishGen Online Worldwide Burial Registry (JOWBR)** at www.jewishgen.org for both the UK and elsewhere in the world. JGSGB has transcribed records for the Cheshunt and Enfield cemeteries and the **United Synagogue** has a searchable database of burials at its cemeteries www.theus.org.uk/support_services/find_your_family/burial_records/.

Wills can be obtained through the Probate Registry at the Principal Registry of the Family Division. If a will was made, a copy should be obtained to see what family information it contains. Details of how to research probate records can be found at www.hmcourts-service.gov.uk/cms/1226.htm.

BMDs Abroad - Access to BMD information in other countries varies considerably in terms of location of records, access restrictions, start date of official record keeping, etc. It is impossible to go into detail here of how to find such records, so it is advisable that you consult the **JGSGB guides** covering Europe for advice in searching out records. You should also make use of the extensive databases on websites such as JewishGen (including JOWBR and the JRI Poland databases) and also at records transcribed by the Latter Day Saints Church on the IGI www.familysearch.org/eng/default.asp.

Naturalisation

If naturalised there will probably be a record at the National Archives that can be accessed. To find out if the record of naturalisation exists go to www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/catalogue/search.asp. Enter the name of the naturalised individual in the search box. The results of the search will be displayed. If the record exists, you can arrange to visit the National Archives at Kew in person or order a copy of the documents.

Immigration

There are several websites providing access to immigration records for the UK including details of **Passengers Arriving in the UK 1878-1960** on the National Archives website www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/searchthearchives/migration.htm. Records for arrivals from Eastern Europe do not tend to exist. The main records cover travel to and from places like North America, South America, South Africa and Australia.

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Shipping lists for onward immigration should also be consulted, as many people were only transiting the UK. Try starting at www.ancestorsonboard.com/. **Poor Jews Temporary Shelter** records are also worth researching, as many families went through the Shelter on entry to the UK. The main data base can be found at <http://chrysalis.its.uct.ac.za/shelter/shelter.htm>

Other

Schooling is an important source of further information and some archives have the original school enrolment registers, though not all have survived. To find out where the relevant register may be held you should search the **Access to Archives** website - www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/a2a/advanced-search.aspx?tab=1. The A2A website provides details of many other document holdings across England and Wales.

Other Censuses should be consulted if your ancestors had been in the UK for more than 10 years. Start with the 1901 census and work backwards. Previous censuses may provide information about children or adults who had died before 1911.

BMD Search Tips

Ages – the 1911 census was taken early in year so someone age 10 may well be born in 1900 rather than 1901, so check both years for Births in the GRO index. Adult ages are prone to error: people were often unable to remember exactly how old they were or deliberately exaggerated by under or overstating their age. A wider year range may be needed to find the right person.

Year of marriage - The 1911 census gives, for the first time how long people were married for. Again the years stated may be subject to inaccuracy, particularly if children were born before the marriage took place and people did not want that fact made known. So searches may need to be made after the date of the first birth (in some cases considerably more years later).

Further help?

If you have any questions about the contents of this document, or if you have further unanswered questions, please contact education@jgsqb.org.uk Thank you.

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