

Where to Find Online City Directories

City and business directories are available online from all over the U.S. and Canada, and are what I consider another important (and underutilized) set of information that can assist you in advancing your family history and genealogy research.

Where can you find online city directories?

The [Internet Archive](#) has a sizable number of free directories available. Just enter “city directory” with the quotes in the search box and depress the “Go” button. At the time of the publication of this guide there are 3,639 results. You obviously would wish to refine the search by entering your city of interest, but it tells you that there are a lot of city directories available to you.

[Don's List](#) has a nice collection of directories and is free and browsable. There are also international directories available.

[Fold3](#) has over 2 million pages in their City Directory collection. It is a subscription site.

[Ancestry.com](#) has a large collection of directories that do have an index, so that a surname or complete name can be entered and one can find an ancestor in the results provided. The page where the person's name exists is made available and all one needs to do is scan through the image to find the subject person. Ancestry requires a subscription.

[Distant Cousin](#) (now defunct) also had a search and browse capability for city directories which is free. You might see this site come up in lists of city directory websites. It is now available with a MyHeritage subscription.

[Hathitrust](#) and [Google Books](#) have a large number of directories that are available for you to search and browse. In particular, Hathitrust has many from the 19th Century.

[MyHeritage](#) has recently been adding a large amount to its online city directory collection. It is available via a subscription.

[FindMyPast](#) also has directories of many varieties available via subscription, and is a very good source of not only the U.S. and Canada, but also the UK, Ireland, and Australia and New Zealand.

England and Wales trade directories are available for free at the University of Leicester [Historical Directories](#) project. It has browsing and search capability.

[Cyndi's List](#) has a long list of smaller collections of directories online provided by local libraries and historical societies. Definitely worth looking at the free resources as well as those listed that are available via subscription sites.

Miriam Robbins has accumulated a number of links to city directories, which she has made available at [Online Historical Directories](#).

And... [The Ancestor Hunt](#) now has links to 23,650 free online city directories from the U.S. and Canada.