

BIG CITY RESEARCH IN GERMANY



Overview of Record Sets

Resource	Location
<p>City Directories (Adreßbücher)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address and occasionally church jurisdiction Organized by surname and street (street helps find FAN) 	<p>FamilySearch.org: Search in the Catalog under the name of the city and then "Directories."</p> <p>GenWiki - CompGen: Adreßbücher (in yellow header) → look for "diese Liste" under the interaktiv Karte.</p> <p>Zentral- und Landesbibliothek Berlin: https://digital.zlb.de/viewer/berliner-adressbuecher/ → Berlin Address Directories 1799-1970</p>
<p>Residential Records (Melderegister)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initially only foreigners were registered, but eventually native residents were also 	<p>FamilySearch.org: Search in the catalog under the name of the city then "population" or "residents." They could also mistakenly be in a category such as "naturalization and citizenship" or "voter lists."</p>

included. Existed in all states by the early 1800s. Many places have earlier records.

Archives: You may have to contact the city or state archive and request that they search their residential records on your behalf. There will likely be fees involved. You may be able to search their catalog online to determine what is available before reaching out.

City office: You may need more recent records, in which case you might need to directly contact the registry office. German cities and towns each have a website called "nameofcity.de." Ex: hamburg.de.

Standesamt.com: Can assist in locating the civil registry office. Does not include all smaller places.

Berlin: You can fill out their request form and make an inquiry. There are fees whether or not the search is successful, and there are a lot of missing records in this collection. Here is the link: <https://landesarchiv-berlin.de/die-einwohnermeldekartei-von-berlin>

Civil Registration

- Started in all of the German Empire in 1876. Some places may have older records, especially if annexed by the French in 1798-1815, but this is usually just a few years.
- Records are sent to the archives and are accessible to the general public when births are 110 years old, marriages are 80 years old, and deaths are 30 years old.

Ancestry.com: Search → Card Catalog → Title "city's name"

These will also likely come up in a general search for the person, as long as the city's name is included for one event. You can check in the card catalog to see if Ancestry has any collections for the city in question.

FamilySearch.org: Search → Catalog → type in city's name → Civil Registration

Archives: Sometimes it can be tricky to determine which archive you need to contact. If you find a collection on Ancestry or FamilySearch and find a record that is outside of the collection's scope, you can check the citation information to determine which archive the collection came from.

Standesamt.com: Can assist in locating the civil registry office if records have not yet been sent to the archive. Only certain individuals will be able to obtain records still held in the civil registry office. Does not include all places, but accessing the city's website "nameofplace.de" should help you to find it.

by Sonja Hoeke-Nishimoto. Search → Catalog → Berlin, Brandenburg, Preußen, Germany → Church Directories <https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/464844?availability=Family%20History%20Library>

Church Records (Kirchenbücher)

- This is our happy place, the "bread and butter" of German research.

FamilySearch.org (Any denomination): Search → Catalog → Type in name of city → Church Records → Search listings for the name of the church you need

Archion.de (Evangelical only, \$): Suche → Type name of city into "Ort" → Suchen (Great for Berlin!)

Matricula Online (Catholic only): <https://data.matricula-online.eu/en/> → Magnifying glass icon → Type name of city in "Place" → Search

- It can be very helpful to know the diocese name in case there is more than one location by this name. You don't want to think your search was failed only to learn you looked in the wrong state.

Hamburg: Most Hamburg church records are only available at the archive, but they will search and send copies for a fee.

Other sources include census records, land and property records, voter lists, military records, etc. Anything that helps you find your ancestors is a good source.

FamilySearch.org: There are many additional record types in the FamilySearch catalog. If you do not find what you are looking for with the standard method, search through any collection that might apply to your ancestor. If they lived in the same place for a long time, maybe they owned it. Check out property records.

The Archive: Each city may have a separate archive for its records or they may be found in the state archive. If you've tried all these things and come up empty or need an additional source to help you get one step further, search the archive catalog or send them an inquiry. They may be able to advise you on next steps or in-house collections. Archives usually have fees for their research, so make sure you are aware and willing to pay for their invaluable assistance.

Books You Might Want

- German Residential Records For Genealogists* by Roger Minert
https://www.familyrootspublishing.com/store/product_view.php?id=3526

- *German Census Records 1816-1916: The When, Where, and How of a Valuable Genealogical Resource* by Roger Minert https://www.familyrootspublishing.com/store/product_view.php?id=3142