Once you begin collecting information you need to organize it or:

- You'll waste time searching through stacks of papers at home,
- You won't remember which sources you've searched,
- You will not be able to cite sources thus contributing to "genie-mythology"
- You will become overwhelmed and
- You'll never see your dining room table again.

Commonly used genealogical *filing systems* include:

- **By Surname** - All papers for an indivdual surname are filed together.
- **By Couple or Family** - All papers related to a husband and wife or family unit are filed together.
- **By Family Line** - All papers related to a specific family line are filed together. Many genealogists begin by starting with four such ancestral lines - one for each of their grandparents.
- **By Event** - All papers related to a specific event type (i.e. birth, marriage, census, etc.) are filed together.

Commonly used *file types* include:

File Cabinets and File Folders

Binders

Computers- used by most researchers with one of the other two options as a backup.

What is an Ahnentafel?:

From a German word meaning "ancestor table," an ahnentafel is an ancestor based numbering system. An excellent choice for presenting a lot of information in a compact format.

An ahnentafel is basically a list of all known ancestors of a specific individual. Ahnentafel charts use a strict numbering scheme which makes it easy to see, at a glance, how a specific ancestor is related to the root individual. They also include the full name, and dates and places of birth, marriage and death for each listed individual (when known).

How to Read an Ahnentafel:

The key to reading an ahnentafel is to understand its numbering system. Basically, you double any individual's number to get his/her father's number, and double a person's number and add one to get his/her mother's number. On your ahnentafel chart, you would be number 1. Your father, would then be number 2 (your number * 2 -> 1*2=2), and your mother, number 3 (1*2+1=3). Other than the starting person, males always have even numbers and women the odd numbers.

What Does an Ahnentafel Chart Look Like?:

To look at it visually, here is the layout of a typical ahnentafel chart, with the mathmatical numbering system illustrated:

1. person
2. father (1*2)
3. mother (1*2+1)
4. paternal grandfather (2*2)
5. paternal grandmother (2*2+1)
6. maternal grandfather (4*2)
7. maternal grandmother (4*2+1)
8. paternal grandfather's father - great grandfather (4*2)
9. paternal grandfather's mother - great grandmother (4*2+1)
10. paternal grandmother's father - great grandfather (5*2)
11. paternal grandmother's mother - great grandmother (5*2+1)
12. maternal grandfather's father - great grandfather (6*2)
13. maternal grandfather's mother - great grandmother (6*2+1)
14. maternal grandmother's father - great grandfather (7*2)
15. maternal grandmother's mother - great grandmother (7*2+1)

You may notice that the numbers used here are exactly the same as you're used to seeing in a pedigree chart. It is just presented in a more condensed, list format. Unlike the brief example shown here, a true ahnentafel will list each individual's full name, and dates and places of birth, marriage and death (if known).

NGSQ Numbering

What is the NGSQ Numbering System?:

Developed by the National Genealogical Society, this genealogical numbering system has a lot in common with the Register System. One major difference is that the NGSQ numbering system assigns numbers to all children in each family, whether or not they have documented descendants. It is the standard for genealogies published in the *National Genealogical Society Quarterly* (NGSQ), for which it is named, as well as many other genealogical publications.

How to Read an NGSQ Report:

The NGSQ system, or modified register system, varies from the Register System in that each individual is assigned a number regardless of whether the line is subsequently carried on (whether or not they had children). The individuals who do have descendants are further indicated by the addiion of a plus sign (+) in front of their number.

What Does the NGSQ Numbering System Look Like?:

To look at it visually, here is the layout of a simplified NGSQ report:

Descendants of George Herbert Walker Bush

1. George Herbert Walker Bush, 41st President of the U.S., was born 12 June 1924 in Milton, Massachusetts. He married Barbara Pierce 06 January 1945 in Rye, New York, daughter of Marvin Pierce and Pauline Robinson. She was born 08 June 1925 in Rye, New York.

Children of George Bush and Barbara Pierce:

  + 2. George Walker Bush, b. 06 July 1946, New Haven, Connecticut
3. John (Jeb) Ellis Bush, b. 11 February 1953, Midland, Midland County, Texas

4. Neil Mallon Bush
5. Marvin Bush
6. Robin Bush
7. Dorothy Bush

Second Generation:

2. George Walker Bush (George Herbert Walker[1]), 43rd President of the U.S., was born 06 July 1946 in New Haven, Connecticut. He married Laura Welch 1977 in Midland, Texas.

Children of George Walker Bush and Laura Welch:

  8. Barbara Bush, b. 1981
9. Jenna Bush, b. 1981