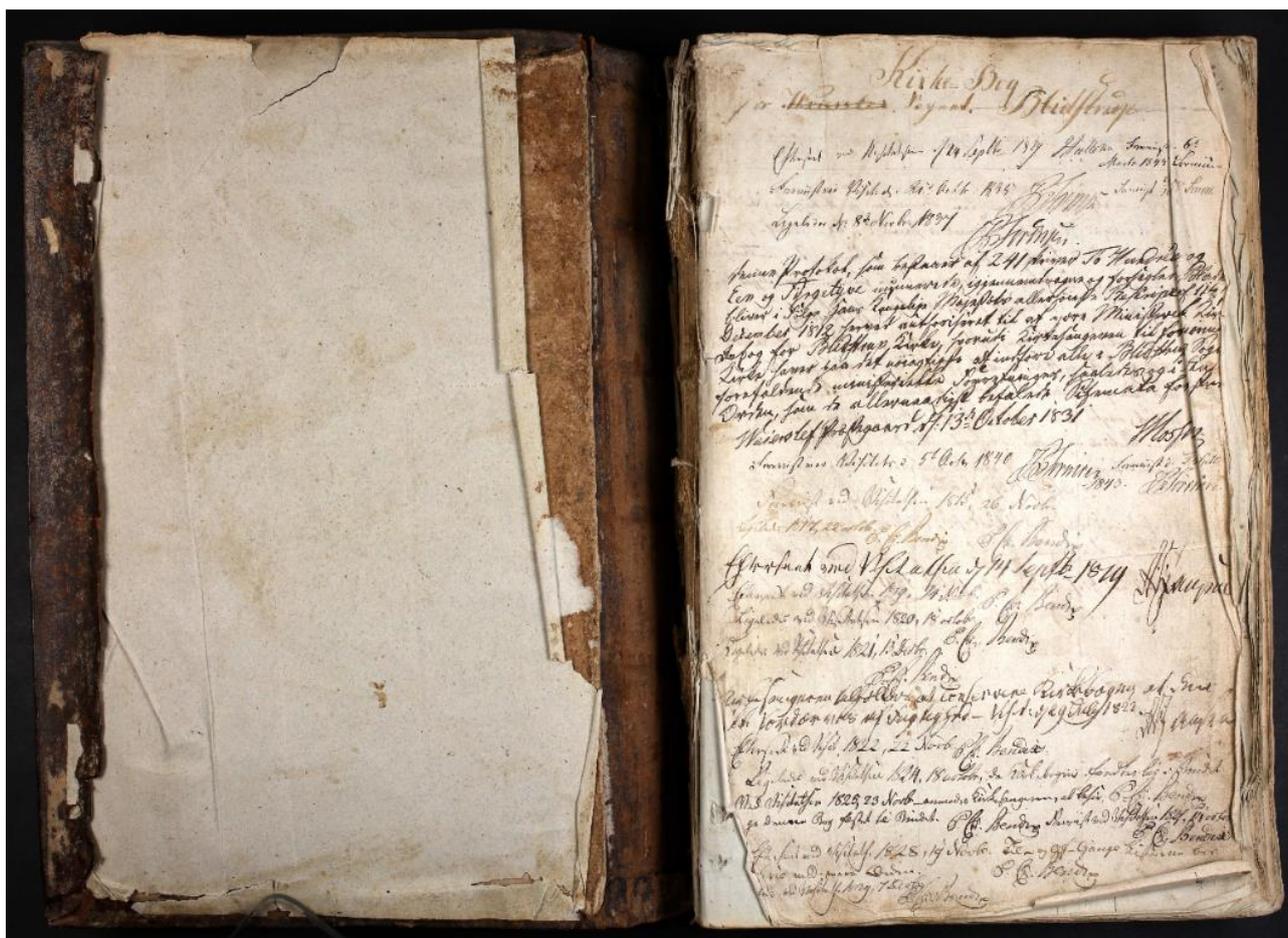


# Introduction to Genealogy Research in Denmark



By

**Kirsten Sanders**



## Table of contents

Introduction .....	3
Available Danish Sources .....	4
Censuses .....	4
Parish Registers .....	4
The Old Parish Registers (up till 1812) .....	5
The Newer Parish Registers (1812 =>) .....	6
Births .....	7
Confirmations .....	7
Marriages .....	7
Burials .....	8
Arrivals and Departures .....	8
Unwed Mothers and Illegitimate Children .....	8
Copenhagen .....	9
Place Names .....	9
Naming Traditions in Denmark .....	10
Patronyms .....	11
Surnames .....	11
Nicknames .....	11
Given Names .....	11
Census Searching .....	12
Danish Characters, æ, ø, and å .....	12
Danishfamilysearch.com .....	12
Danish Demographic Database (Dansk Demografisk Database) .....	12
Familysearch.org .....	13
MyHeritage.com .....	14
Tips .....	14
Searching the Parish Registers .....	14
Ancestry.com .....	14
Looking-up in the Parish Registers .....	15
Kontraministerialbog (1812/1814 – 1979) .....	16
Enesteministerialbog ( => 1812/1814) .....	17
Hovedministerialbog (1812/1814 – 1891) .....	17
Kontraministerialbog (1812/1814 – 1891) .....	18
Familysearch.org .....	20
Migration Records .....	20
Ellis Island .....	20
The Danish Emigration Records .....	21
DNA .....	22
Help .....	22
Danish-English Word List .....	23
Keyword Index .....	26

## Introduction

It is a well-known fact that there has been a constant emigration from Denmark to the rest of the world, beginning in the mid 1800's and culminating around 1890-1900.

All the settlers in the new world brought memories and pictures and scraps of information about their former life and family with them, but these bits and pieces have to be verified, if you want to use them for genealogical purposes.

Very often fanciful stories were made up to explain circumstances or make the dreary story of your life more interesting, but you have to verify these stories, before you add them to the story of your heritage.

One of the really difficult parts is that these immigrants very often anglicized their names, so John Johnson would most likely be Jens Jensen in Denmark.

And it is not enough to say that you are looking for a Petersen, born abt. 1860 in Copenhagen – that would be like looking for a needle in a haystack, or even worse.

On one count you are extremely lucky: All data is freely obtainable at the Danish websites!

This booklet will guide you through the different obstacles and hopefully help you discover much more about your Danish ancestors.

## Searching for Ancestors

The first brick wall to break through is to find one correct Danish record. This requires

- a) a correctly (or semi-correctly) spelled name
- b) the name of a hometown or -parish
- c) date of birth (approximate)

plus, possibly

- d) name of spouse
- e) name and age of children
- f) name of parents
- g) name of siblings
- h) any other information pertaining to the person in question and his or her family

The first three (a, b, and c) make it possible to identify one or several relevant persons, while the last five are necessary in order to verify, which of the possible candidates is the correct one.

## Available Danish Sources

All sources in Denmark are available free of charge. For many years a whole army of volunteers have been transcribing<sup>1</sup> or indexing<sup>2</sup> the Danish records, starting with the censuses, then continuing with parish registers (also known as church books or Kirkebøger), death certificates, specific registrations of inhabitants in Copenhagen, etc. Their work has only been made possible because the Danish National Archives have produced microfilms and scans of all these documents, and today volunteers are working hard to scan even more documents, at the moment producing more than 1 million scans every year.

And we still have lots of volunteers transcribing and indexing all the scanned records.

## Censuses

The censuses were made in each parish in February (until 1921) or in November (1925, 1930, 1940). Up until the mid 1800's the school teacher or the parish executive officer carried out this job.

There are transcribed, searchable Danish censuses from the following years:

1787, 1801, 1834, 1840. These contain the following data,

Bygdens eller Stedernes Navne med Indførsel af Gaarde, Huse o. s. v.	Kataloget af Familierne i hver Gaard og hvert Hus.	Samtlige Personers Navne i hver Gaard, hvert Hus, hver Familie.	Enhver Persones Alder, det levende Børns-Mærke eller Ægteskab.	Øst, Ugift, Giftmand eller Enke.	Personernes Titel, Embede, Forretning, Gaardsværk, Hæningsbetj., Stilling i Familien eller hvad de leve af.
--	--	---	--	----------------------------------	---

Name of village or house	No. of household	Each person's name in every farm, house and family	Age	Married, unmarried widow(er)	Each person's title, trade, occupation, position in the family
--------------------------	------------------	--	-----	------------------------------	--

and from 1845, 1850, 1860, 1870, 1880, 1890, 1901, containing the same data as above PLUS place of birth and faith. From 1850 you can also see, if a person was divorced.

1906 contains the above PLUS date of birth. It is being transcribed in Denmark at the moment.

1911, 1916, 1921, 1925, and 1930: The contents are identical to 1906, except 1916 where place of birth is omitted. In the 1930 census you also get information on the year of marriage and number of children.

1940: Contents identical to 1930, but including date of marriage.

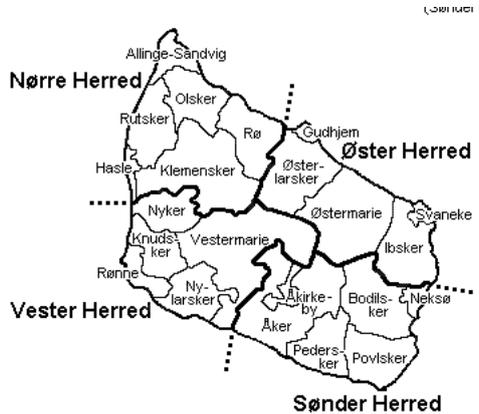
## Parish Registers

The first parish registers were started in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, but more commonly you will find them from abt. 1650, when the vicars were obliged under law to keep registers of the religious ceremonies that were carried out.

<sup>1</sup> Every bit of information in each registration is transcribed and thereby made searchable.

<sup>2</sup> The name and date pertaining to the ceremony of the principal character is registered and made searchable.

The registers were local books, written by the vicar in each individual parish, so you need to acquaint yourself with Denmark's administrative structure. You will find a map here:



2 The districts in the county of Bornholm



1 The counties in Denmark

<https://www.slaegt.dk/kilder/genveje-til-hjaelpesider/amtskort2/amtskort/>.

Denmark is divided into counties (amter), and each county consists of several districts/hundreds (herreder), which again consist of multiple parishes (sogne).

When you click on a county, a new map opens, showing just this county with its districts/hundreds and parishes.

## The Old Parish Registers

The old parish registers contain information on all religious ceremonies, i.e. baptisms, confirmations, weddings, and burials. In these registers you will therefore, as a rule-of-thumb, not find the exact date of birth or death, as these were not religiously important. Furthermore, in these old registers you will find information on "churching" (the re-introduction of a woman to the congregation for the first time after giving birth, normally 6 weeks after the childbirth), on "absolution" (forgiving unwed mothers their sin, and the man for having impregnated her, in Danish called "stå åbenbar skrifte" = public confession).

The design of the parish registers in the period up until 1812 varies from parish to parish.

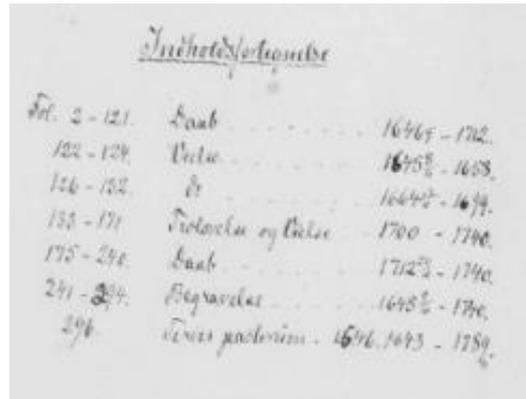
The vicar could choose to register everything chronologically, or within each year note the different ceremonies in separate columns, or they would try to split up the register and enter each type of ceremony consecutively. If you look at the first pages of the parish register you will often find an index telling you how the specific book is kept.

In these parish registers the vicars rarely used normal dates for the various ceremonies. Instead they referred to the church year calendar, so you have to become familiar with terms like Quasimodogenity or Trinity Sunday. This website will help you transform the ecclesiastical holidays into normal dates: <https://youronlineroots.com/helligdager.php>. Just enter the calendar year and find the correct Latin name. (The website mentions that it is the Julian calendar used in Norway, but the dates are the same in Denmark.)

In the oldest parish registers, up until about 1750, you will find that women are almost non-existent, she is just “her husband’s wife”. When registering a birth, it says “Easter Sunday farmer Hans Pedersen’s child, Peder, baptized”; no mention of the mother’s name. When she is buried, it says “Trinity Sunday farmer Hans Pedersen’s wife buried, 36 years old”. The only time her name is registered, is at the marriage.

The registers are written in old Gothic handwriting and therefore not easy to decipher. But do not despair. Help is at hand here: <https://forum.slaegt.dk/index.php/board,4.0.html>. You have to register in order to use the Forum, but it is free. And there is a short introduction here: <https://forum.slaegt.dk/index.php/topic,169.0.html>.

If you are lucky and there is an index, please note that the page numbers stated are not actually “page numbers”, but folio numbers. One folio covers two pages, i.e. folio 2 (a and b) are pages 3 and 4. The folio number (if legible) is found in the upper right corner of the right-hand-side page.



3 Index in an old parish register

- Daab = Births
- Vielse = Marriages
- Trolovelse og Vielse = Betrothals and marriages
- Begravelser = Burials
- Series pastorum = List of vicars

The vicar only kept one parish register, so if there was a fire in the vicarage the register was lost. Or perhaps it was kept in a damp space or was half eaten by mice and rats. Therefore, you will find that not all parish registers are available.

### The Newer Parish Registers

After 1812 the parish registers were standardized, and they were kept in duplicate, never to be kept under the same roof, so after this date all parish registers are preserved. The books are publicly available up until abt. 1960 on various websites (see below).

In the parish registers after 1812 you will find information on the religious ceremonies: baptisms (male/female), confirmations (male/female), marriages, and burials (male/female) in this order. Furthermore – for a limited period – arrivals (tilgang) and departures (afgang) to and from the parish. The latter contain information on the persons arriving or departing (name, age, where they came from, who they are going to serve). The information on arrivals and departures primarily pertains to servants and farmhands and their families.

Født				Kvindekøn.				
No.	Fødselsaar og Datum.	Hvor født? (Paa Landet: Byen, Sognet og Herredet. Har Gaarden eller Huset været særegt Navn, her det anden. I Kjøbstad: Kjøbstaden og tilhørende Sognek, hvis der i Byen er mere end i Sognek, samt derhos altid Gaden og Husnummeret.)	Barnets fulde Navn.	Forældrens fulde Navn efter Forvinding af Døde- eller i alt Fald Vidsnattens eller ved Eftersyn i Kirkebogen; dens Stilling og Bopæl; samt for Moderens Vedkommende Angivelse af hendes Alder med det Gyldte Aar. (Barnets ægte Fødsel saa skilt ikkennetret ved Vidsnattens eller Eftersyn i Kirkebogen.)	Dødsdage.	Hvornår der har foretaget Daabshandlingen, og om den er foretaget i Kirken eller hjemme. Ved Hjemmedaab anføres tilhørende Datoen for Foranstaltningen i Kirken.	Paddrens fulde Navn, Stilling og Bopæl.	Anmærkninger. (Her anføres blandt andet, hvad der vedkommer Bestemelsen af Barnets Fødselsstedet.)

No.	Birth year & date	Place of birth	Full name of the child	Parents’ full names, occupation and residence, age of mother	Date of baptism	Vicar’s name place of baptism	Full name, occupation and address of witnesses	Notes
-----	-------------------	----------------	------------------------	--	-----------------	-------------------------------	--	-------

## Births

Births are normally registered chronologically, but often you will find that children born for instance at a hospital in one of the larger cities is registered “out of order” in the parish where the parents live. These children are registered in their home parish with a No. “0”, because the child is only counted in the parish where it is born, i.e. the hospital’s parish.

Take care to note the names of the witnesses. These are very often closely related to the parents, e.g. sister or brother, uncle or aunt, or perhaps grandparents, or even an older sister or brother!

Children born out of wedlock are registered as “uægte” (illegitimate). See section later “Unwed mothers”.

Sometimes there appear to be two dates for date of baptism, because especially in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, children were often baptized at home shortly after their birth, and then at a later time presented to the congregation in the church where their baptism was confirmed. This practice was due to the high mortality rate among young children. The parents wanted the child to go to heaven, should it die suddenly, and this required having been baptized.

## Confirmations

One of the results of the Reformation in 1736 was the initiation of confirmations.

Aar 1836		Confirmerede		Piger.		
No.	Confirmandens Navn og Opholdssted.	Forældrenes eller Indbønderes, Plejeforældrenes Navn og Bopæl.	Confirmandens Alder, efter Dag og Tid, udsigt til Bedrøvel.	Om, angaaende Kundskab og Dybsind.	Aar og af hvem vaccineret.	Hvor anført i det almindelige Jesuiterregister.
No.	Name and residence	Name and residence of parents or employer or foster parents	Age and date of birth	Evaluation of knowledge and behavior	When vaccinated (against smallpox) and by whom	Reference

In the beginning the children could be any age up to 18 years old, but the normal age would be 14-15 years. A few were only 13, but that required special permission from the bishop.

All children were confirmed, because this was a prerequisite in order to get a servant’s conduct book (skudsmålsgang), which you had to bring with you to all of your future employers.

The information concerning the smallpox vaccination can be used as a very good indication of whether you have got the right person in a family relationship, because this piece of information is also noted at the marriage registration, so you can do a cross check.

## Marriages (Copulerede)

Copulerede.		Copulerede.					
Nr.	Guttemens Navn, Alder, Haandtering og Opholdssted.	Pudentens Navn, Alder, Haandtering og Opholdssted.	Hvem Forlovere etc.	Døstidspunktet.	Den Brides er forrettet i Kirken eller hjemme og i hvilke Kirkes Besøllings-Tid.	Hvor anført i det almindelige Jesuiterregister.	Bemærkninger.
1	<i>Anders Jørgen Pedersen, 24 Aar, Bredgade, København.</i>	<i>Signe Hansen, 24 Aar, Bredgade, København.</i>	<i>Johannes Jørgensen, Jørgen Møller.</i>	<i>17. Decbr. 1836.</i>	<i>St. Nicolai Kirke.</i>	<i>St. Nicolai Kirke.</i>	<i>St. Nicolai Kirke.</i>

No.	Groom’s name, age, profession and residence	Bride’s name, age, profession and residence	Names of best men/witnesses	Date of marriage	Place of marriage	Ref.	Notes (vaccination dates and by whom)
-----	---	---	-----------------------------	------------------	-------------------	------	---------------------------------------

In the more recent parish registers, you will also see the dates for the bans.

Very often you can see from the status indication for both bride and groom, whether they have been married before. If it says “Ungkarl” (bachelor) and “Pige” (maiden/girl), they were single. If it says “Enkemand” and “Enke” (widow(er)), then you should look for the deceased husband/wife, who has probably died within the last year (considering the normal 6 month’s mourning period).

Marriage almost always took place in the parish, where the girl was born, so that gives you a good chance to find her birth in the records, and her family in the censuses of the same parish.

The residence of the groom is not necessarily the place where he was born, but just where he is residing at the time of the marriage.

If you don’t know when the parents were married, look at the age of the oldest child (remember the +/- 2 years) and start working your way backwards from that point in time. And remember that the first child is sometimes born just one day after the wedding.

## Burials

Døde				Aandkjen.			
No.	Dødsdagen.	Begravelsesdagen.	Den Dødes Navn og Titelv.	Den Dødes Stand, Høveling og Opholdsst.	Alder.	Ref.	Årsag til Dødsfaldet.
1811	29 Maj	1 Jun	Anders Jensen	Ungkarl i Aandkjen	80 Aar		

No. Date of death Date of burial Full name of the deceased Civil status, occupation Age Ref. Notes – could be cause of residence, place of birth death father’s or if illegitimate mother’s name

Burial registrations sometimes contain a wealth of information, i.e. occupation, name of spouse, latest residence, date and place of birth, name of parents and perhaps even cause of death.

However, the deaths are always the most difficult ones to find. Did she die at 35 or at 95?

Try to follow the family in the censuses and note when either husband or wife is suddenly noted as widow(er). If husband and wife suddenly both disappear from the parish, it is not certain that they have died. Take a look at their children in the censuses. Maybe either one or both parents are now living with a grown child’s family as pensioners (aftægtsmand/aftægtskone).

## Arrivals and Departures

This information was registered starting abt. 1814-1830 and ending 1854 (towns) or 1873 (rural areas). However, you will find that the lists were not always kept by the vicar despite his obligation to do so, or some people may seem to have been left out.

If they are there, the lists can give you valuable information as to the whereabouts of unmarried persons in particular, who went from one employer to the next at “skiftedag” (the day on which servants/hired hands used to change jobs, i.e. 1<sup>st</sup> May and 1<sup>st</sup> November).

## Unwed Mothers and Illegitimate Children

At the birth of an illegitimate child in the period 1812-1870 you will find information in the “Notes”-column stating where the mother was living 10 months prior to the birth (because this was the parish responsible for supporting the child if the mother couldn’t do so and the father was not found). Equipped with this

piece of information – and the name of the person that the mother named as the alleged father – you can go to the arrival and departure lists mentioned above and find the mother’s name, and hopefully also the alleged father’s name and follow both of them to the parish where they were born.

## Copenhagen

You will find that very often all you know is that the person came from Copenhagen. And perhaps you don’t even have the exact date of birth. This makes it extremely difficult to find him or her, because Copenhagen consists of multiple parishes, and you have to work your way through each parish in order to – perhaps – find your ancestor.

He or she might have been living in Copenhagen for just a few years, but was actually born elsewhere in Denmark.

And precisely at the prime time of emigration, the censuses from Copenhagen have severe gaps. Only a few censuses from 1870 have been transcribed, so they are not directly searchable.



5 Map of Parishes in Inner Copenhagen

1	Betlehem
2	Blågård
3	Brorson
4	Fredens
5	Helligkors
6	Helligånd
7	Nazaret
8	Simeon
9	Sankt Andreas
14+84	Christiansborg
16	David
17	Frederik
18	Frihavn
19	Garrison
20	Hans Egede
22	Rosenvænget
23	Sankt Jakob
24	Sankt Paul
26	Østenvold
27	Aldersro
28	Anna
29	Kildevæld
31	Samuel
33	Sankt Stefan
41	Nathanael
49	Apostel
50	Elias
53	Gethsemane
56	Maria
58	Sankt Matthæus
68	Sankt Lukas
69	Sankt Markus
70	Sankt Thomas
126	Kapernaum

4 List of Parishes in Inner Copenhagen

## Place Names

In order to research your family in Denmark, it is essential that you have identified the place where they came from. You must know the name of a place (town or village), a parish or at least the county. You will often find these pieces of information in the naturalization certificates of your ancestor, or perhaps you have his birth certificate, marriage certificate or other documentation to that effect. Even photos or letters may contain valuable information – names and dates written on the back of the photos or mentioned in the letters!

The information might also be found in the immigration records from Ellis Island.

Once you have the name of a “place” it is time to establish whether this is in fact a parish, and whether it is the correct parish, because very often a “place” is not necessarily a “parish”, and in Denmark there are numerous places and parishes with identical name all over the country. Good websites to find these different places are <http://salldata.dk/sted/> or <http://www.krabsen.dk/stednavnebase/>.

In order to find your ancestor, you might have to look through several different censuses and parish registers before you find the correct place.

## Naming Traditions in Denmark

## Surnames

### Patronyms

In the oldest parish registers a child was just baptized with a given name, e.g. Hans or Hans Peder. However, as the local variety of given names was limited, it was difficult to distinguish between 2, 3, or 4 Hans'es, so they were distinguished by indicating who their father was, e.g., Hans Christen's son, or Hans Christensen, likewise Marie Christen's datter (daughter) or Marie Christensdatter.

The consequence of this naming tradition was that Hans Christensen's son, Peder, would become Peder Hansen, i.e. the son of Hans, and his daughter, Ane, would become Ane Hansdatter.

### Nicknames

Simultaneously with using the patronyms people could also be distinguished by adding a nickname to their name, e.g. an indication of their occupation, a personal characteristic, or the place where they were born or still living, and sometimes this nickname could cling to the family for generations. A nickname could also be an indication of the origin of the person, e.g. Svensk (Swede).

By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the tradition of patronymics was finally abandoned, and roughly at the same time women adopted their husband's surname when they married.

The patronymic surnames did not apply to nobility and from abt. 1750, nor to the upper classes such as vicars, doctors and the like.

When studying the parish registers and censuses you will often find that the same person is mentioned by different names at different ceremonies, i.e. Hans Pedersen at the birth of his first child, Hans Smed (blacksmith) at the second birth, Hans Persen at the third birth, and Hans Pedersen Søndergaard (living at the farm of Søndergaard) at his burial.

### Given names

In Denmark there has been a very strong tradition for a particular naming pattern, prevalent until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, namely as follows.

The first son was named after the father's father.

The second son was named after the mother's father.

The first daughter was named after the mother's mother.

The second daughter was named after the father's mother.

Example: Married couple Hans Pedersen and Ane Hansdatter

Father's parents: Peder Nielsen and Margrethe Svendsdatter

Mother's parents: Jens Sørensen and Marie Olsdatter

1<sup>st</sup> son: Peder (Hansen)

2<sup>nd</sup> son: Jens (Hansen)

1<sup>st</sup> daughter: Marie (Hansdatter)

2<sup>nd</sup> daughter: Margrethe (Hansdatter)

If the given name of father's AND mother's father is the same, e.g. Niels, then there will be two sons by the name of Niels in the family!

If a child died, then the next child of the same gender would be named after the deceased sibling.

If the father died while the mother was pregnant, then the child would be named after him if at all possible.

If the husband or wife died, the widow(er) would normally remarry within a year (a household could not survive unless there were two adults to sustain the family and take care of the daily chores), and the first child of the relevant gender would then be named after the deceased parent.

## Abbreviations

Both in the parish records and in the censuses you will come across name abbreviations. Typically “d” for daughter, i.e. Maren Hansd., and “s” for son, i.e. Hans Peders. One of the more curious abbreviations is Xten for Christen. The X symbolizes the cross of Christ, and this is also the reason why you write Xmas.

## Census Searching

When searching the census records you must take the following issues into consideration:

- a) Names are spelled as they were heard by the registrar, and there were no fixed spelling rules as such for names. This means, that Lars/Laurs/Laurits/Lauritz/Las could be the same person, so use a lot of imagination AND wildcards when searching for a person.  
Wildcards are “\_” (underscore) which replaces one character and “%” which replaces 2 or more characters.
- b) Age is registered as it is remembered by the head of the household, so add at least +/- 2 years to the presumed birth year. Remember that the registrar could make errors, too.
- c) Women are always (almost) registered by their maiden name until the 1890 census. In fact, until then women did not adopt their husband’s surname.

## Danish Characters, æ, ø, and å.

When using a keyboard without the Danish characters æ, ø, and å you can type these characters by using a combination of the [Alt] key and one of the following numbers: æ = 230, Æ= 198, ø= 248, Ø= 216, å = 229, and Å = 197.

## Danishfamilysearch.com

This website: <https://www.danishfamilysearch.com/search/> is good and it includes the censuses from 1787 through 1880 plus some censuses in the period 1890-1906. You have to register as a user to get the full benefit from the website, but it is free.

An advantage of using this website is that a lot of volunteers have transcribed or indexed a number of parish registers, and when you do a search here, the search results will show all data available on the website. Another advantage is that you can search all of Denmark, i.e. you don’t have to fill in county or parish if you don’t know it. But be aware that many people will have had the exact same name.

One disadvantage is that there is no phonetic search, so you have to be good at using wildcards or trying alternative spellings.

**County**    
**Hundred**    
**Parish**    
**Place Name**    
**Street Name**    
**Lot Number**    
**Source year** From  To    
**First Name**   Exactly as written   
**Last Name**   Exactly as written   
**Sex**    
**Born Year** From  To    
**Born Place Name**    
**Business Type**

County: Should be filled in  
Hundred/district: not necessary to fill in

Parish: Choose the right parish

Place name: Don't use this when searching

Street name og Lot number: Don't use

Source year: If you get too many results, limit your search here

First Name: Fill in – use wildcards if necessary, see below

Last Name: Same as above, First Name

Sex: Don't use. Sometimes registered incorrectly

Born Year: See above, Census searching, b)

Born Place Name: Don't use

Business Type: Don't use

6 Danishfamilysearch.com

If you cannot find your ancestor in the parish where you thought he or she should be, you can start searching in the whole county or country, but that is only relevant if the name is very unusual.

### Danish Demographic Database (Dansk Demografisk Database)

Another place to search is the official Danish website: [http://ddd.dda.dk/dddform\\_uk.asp](http://ddd.dda.dk/dddform_uk.asp). This website only searches censuses and it includes the censuses 1787 until 1880 plus some censuses in the period 1890-1906, but as there are volunteers transcribing here, too, the contents vary from danishfamilysearch.com mentioned above.

The search parameters are slightly different, see below:

## Search for individuals

Search result at the bottom of this page

### Household information:

County

District  Parish

KIPno  Place name

County: Must be selected

District: Can be selected (same as hundred above)

Parish: Can be selected

KIPno and Place name: Don't use

### Individual Information:

Name

Occupation

Position in household

Birth place

Select range or add specific age

Year of birth (calculated):  Interval:

Sex

Census year

NB! set both fields. Standard is: All censuses

Sort by

and sort by

Name: Fill in (remember to choose from drop-down). Use wildcards if necessary

Occupation, Position in household and Birth place: Don't use

Select age: only relevant if you are searching one census year

Year of birth: Fill in. Remember to use the interval

Sex (gender): Don't use

Census year: Make no restrictions here to start with. Can be used, if you get many results

Consider using these if you get many results

Remember to click Submit, otherwise nothing happens.

7 Danish Demographic Database

If you find it difficult to find a person, it is a good idea to search all available websites.

### Familysearch.org

At the LDS website, <https://www.familysearch.org/search/>, it is possible to search all Danish censuses from 1787 until 1930 free of charge. All you have to do is to create a profile and log in, in order to perform searches.

You can restrict your search to Denmark, or you can search the whole world. Perhaps you get lucky, if your search uncovers the same person in both your own country and in Denmark.

One advantage of using Familysearch.org is that it searches censuses and indexed parish registers at the same time, but it may be necessary to restrict your search, as you are liable to get an overwhelming number of results.

Another advantage is that it uses phonetic searching, so you do not necessarily need to use wildcards or need to know the exact spelling.

8 Familysearch.org

## MyHeritage.com

Finally, this website should be mentioned, because they have indexed all the new censuses up to and including the 1940 census. However, it is not a free website. You have to buy an annual subscription in order to see the search results.

### Tips

When searching for persons in the censuses, you may sometimes get confused because the name of the husband or wife is suddenly “wrong”. But it may not be wrong at all. Perhaps it is just a new spouse because the other one died. Check if the children appear to be the same – if their ages fit roughly, and then start looking for a death and a new marriage. A lot of women died during childbirth, and there was no cure if you got an infection and subsequent blood poisoning. Scarletina, measles, influenza whooping cough and other illnesses and epidemics ravaged through towns and villages at regular intervals!

## Searching the Parish Registers

Just recently Ancestry.com has indexed all Danish parish registers for the period 1812-1892. These data are available at their website, <https://www.ancestry.com/>, but you have to be a member in order to gain access to the results. At a later date it will become possible to search these parish registers at the free Danish website, [https://ddd.dda.dk/dddkiip/find\\_kirkebog.asp](https://ddd.dda.dk/dddkiip/find_kirkebog.asp).

A number of parish registers have been indexed in Denmark and by the LDS church, so it is always worthwhile trying to search for your ancestors here: <https://www.danishfamilysearch.com/search/> and here: <https://www.familysearch.org/en/>.

## Ancestry.com

If you have access to Ancestry.com, choose Denmark, Church Records: <https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/61607/>.

**i** **These records are in Danish**  
For best results, you should search using Danish words and location spellings.

**Search**  Match all terms exactly

**First & Middle Name(s)**  **Last Name**

Birth **Day**  **Month**  **Year**  **Location**

Any Event

**Add family member:** [Father](#) [Mother](#) [Spouse](#) [Child](#)

	<b>First &amp; Middle Name(s)</b>	<b>Last Name</b>
Father	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Mother	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Spouse	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Child	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

**Keyword**

e.g. pilot or "Flying Tigers" ▼

**Event Type**

**Gender**

**Search** [Clear search](#)

9 Ancestry.com

Fill in these fields

If you know the precise date of birth, fill it in, otherwise just the year.

If you get too many results you can limit these by filling in some of these fields

Don't use

You can limit the search to births or deaths, etc.

Gender, normally not necessary to select

## Research in the Parish Registers

If you want to find the exact information on your ancestors you must dig into the parish registers. As mentioned above there are a number of parish registers that have been transcribed or indexed, but in general you need to get accustomed to using the parish registers.

The main website for accessing the parish registers is the Danish National Archives: <https://www.sa.dk/ao-soegesider/en/geo/geo-collection/5>.

As mentioned above (Place Names) you need to know the name of the parish where the ceremony took place

Kirkebøger fra hele landet

**County**

**Archive**

**Contents**

If you know the name of the parish don't use this field

Archive = Parish. Start writing the name of the parish and choose the right one.

10 [www.sa.dk](http://www.sa.dk) - choose parish

Once you have chosen a parish, you will be presented with the following choices (can be more complex)

#### County

#### Archive

#### Contents

- ⊕ Enestemisterialbog (1645 - 1814)
- ⊕ Hovedministerialbog (1814 - 1891)
- ⊕ Kontraministerialbog (1814 - 2003)
- ⊕ Kontraministerialbog (1814 - 2003) **Ny Scanning i farver - indtil 1892**

11 Choice within the frame of each parish

1. Enestemisterialbog are the parish register(s) prior to 1812/1814.
2. Hovedministerialbog are the parish registers kept by the vicar for a period of time (here 1814-1891)
3. Kontraministerialbog are the parish registers kept by the parish clerk for a period of time (here 1814-2003). Should be a copy of the Hovedministerialbog, but there can be deviations.  
All the above are in black & white.
4. Kontraministerialbog are as described above, but they only include books up to and including 1891.  
They are scanned in colour and generally in an absolutely superior quality. These are the registers photographed and subsequently indexed by Ancestry.  
So if you need to look at registers in the period 1812/1814-1891 do choose this alternative.

When you click the plus in front of each headline you get a lot of choices. Note the abbreviations mentioned under Re 3:

### Re 3 – Kontraministerialbog 1812/1814-1979

Even though the headline says “Kontraministerialbog (1914-2003)” it does not cover this entire timespan. Births, marriages and confirmations stop in 1960, whereas burials continue a bit further, typically until about 1970 for most parishes.

- ⊖ Kontraministerialbog (1814 - 2003)
    - 1814 FKVD - 1826 FKVD
    - 1826 FKVDJTA - 1835 FKVDJTA
    - 1835 FKVDJTA - 1854 FKVDJTA
    - 1852 FKVDTA - 1887 FKVDTA
    - 1881 F - 1892 F
    - 1887 KVD - 1892 KVD
    - 1892 FKVD - 1900 FKVD
    - 1901 FKVD - 1916 FKVD
    - 1916 FKVD - 1935 FKVD
    - 1936 FKVD - 1957 FKVD
    - 1958 FKVD - 1979 FKVD
- F = Births  
K = Confirmations  
V = Marriages  
D = Deaths  
J = Comparison Register (not mentioned above, as it is generally not useful, since it was very sparsely kept)  
T = Arrivals  
A = Departures

12 Kontraministerialbog - choices

The year intervals and the abbreviations will make it possible for you to choose the right parish register.

Now you just have to peruse the pages, until you find your ancestor.

## Re 1 – Enestemisterialbog

### Contents

See abbreviations above.

#### ☉ Enestemisterialbog (1645 - 1814)

[1645 FVD - 1740 FVD](#)

[1736 FKVD - 1814 FKVD](#)

Only a few of these parish registers have been indexed.

*13 Enestemisterialbog - choices*

## Re 2 – Hovedministerialbog

#### ☉ Hovedministerialbog (1814 - 1891)

[1814 FKVDTA - 1825 FKVDTA](#)

[1826 FKVDJTA - 1841 FKVDJTA](#)

[1841 FKVDJTA - 1868 FKVDJTA](#)

[1850 F - 1884 F](#)

[1861 VD - 1891 VD](#)

[1868 K - 1891 K](#)

[1885 F - 1891 F](#)

See abbreviations above.

The contents here are the same (more or less) as 3). Typically, the scans of the Hovedministerialbog are not as good as the Kontraministerialbog. But since the registers are written by two different persons the contents can vary slightly. Sometimes a registration is missing in one register but is remembered in the other.

*14 Hovedministerialbog - choices*

## Re 4 – Kontraministerialbog (1814-2003) New Scanning in Colours – until 1891

The heading is very misleading. The contents are Kontraministerialbog 1814-1891, and it contains the new colour scans performed by Ancestry.com. The scans are generally very good.

When you click the + you will discover a very different setup and presentation of the data. However, once you get used to it, it is actually very easy to navigate.

Døde kvinder: Deceased females

Døde Mænd: Deceased males

Fødte kvinder: Newborn females

Fødte mænd: Newborn males

Jævnførsler: Cross-references

Konfirmerede kvinder: Confirmed females

Konfirmerede mænd: Confirmed males

Til- og afgangslister: Arrivals and departures

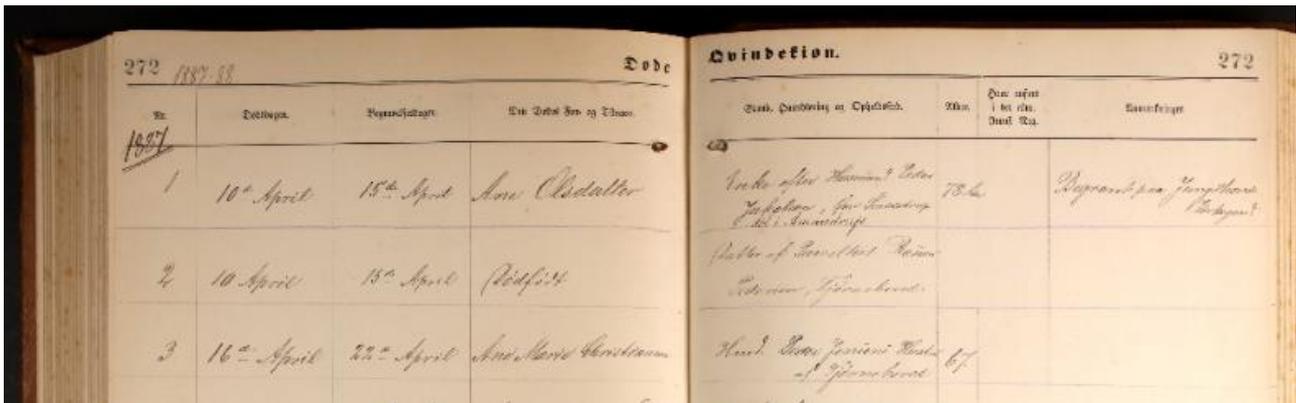
Viede: Marriages

### ● Kontraministerialbog (1814 - 2003) Ny Scanning i farver - indtil 1892

Døde kvinder 1814 - Døde kvinder 1825  
 Døde kvinder 1826 - Døde kvinder 1834  
 Døde kvinder 1835 - Døde kvinder 1853  
 Døde kvinder 1854 - Døde kvinder 1887  
 Døde kvinder 1887 - Døde kvinder 1891  
 Døde mænd 1814 - Døde mænd 1825  
 Døde mænd 1826 - Døde mænd 1834  
 Døde mænd 1835 - Døde mænd 1853  
 Døde mænd 1854 - Døde mænd 1887  
 Døde mænd 1887 - Døde mænd 1891  
 Fødte kvinder 1814 - Fødte kvinder 1825  
 Fødte kvinder 1826 - Fødte kvinder 1834  
 Fødte kvinder 1835 - Fødte kvinder 1852  
 Fødte kvinder 1852 - Fødte kvinder 1881  
 Fødte kvinder 1881 - Fødte kvinder 1891  
 Fødte mænd 1814 - Fødte mænd 1825  
 Fødte mænd 1826 - Fødte mænd 1834  
 Fødte mænd 1835 - Fødte mænd 1852  
 Fødte mænd 1852 - Fødte mænd 1881  
 Fødte mænd 1881 - Fødte mænd 1891  
 Jævnførsler 1826 - Jævnførsler 1834  
 Jævnførsler 1835 - Jævnførsler 1853  
 Konfirmerede kvinder 1815 - Konfirmerede kvinder 1825  
 Konfirmerede kvinder 1826 - Konfirmerede kvinder 1834  
 Konfirmerede kvinder 1835 - Konfirmerede kvinder 1853  
 Konfirmerede kvinder 1854 - Konfirmerede kvinder 1886  
 Konfirmerede kvinder 1887 - Konfirmerede kvinder 1891  
 Konfirmerede mænd 1815 - Konfirmerede mænd 1825  
 Konfirmerede mænd 1826 - Konfirmerede mænd 1834  
 Konfirmerede mænd 1835 - Konfirmerede mænd 1853  
 Konfirmerede mænd 1854 - Konfirmerede mænd 1886  
 Konfirmerede mænd 1887 - Konfirmerede mænd 1891  
 Til og afgangslister 1826 - Til og afgangslister 1833  
 Til og afgangslister 1835 - Til og afgangslister 1851  
 Til og afgangslister 1852 - Til og afgangslister 1870  
 Viede 1814 - Viede 1825  
 Viede 1826 - Viede 1834  
 Viede 1835 - Viede 1853  
 Viede 1854 - Viede 1887  
 Viede 1887 - Viede 1891

*15 Kontraministerialbog - choices - colour scans*

When you click one of the lines, you will be presented with a (colour) scan of the relevant parish register, where you can read through the information registered. Use the normal Windows facilities to zoom in, etc.



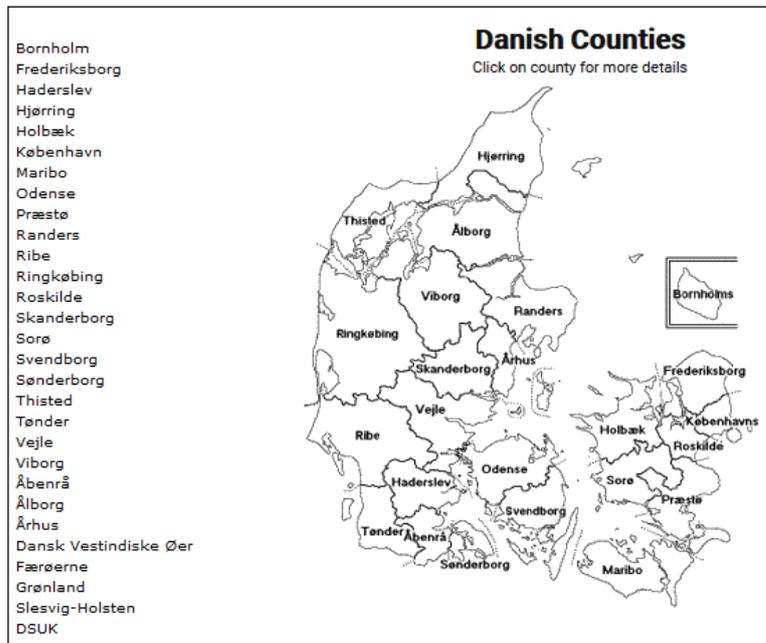
15 Dead women 1887, Allerslev Parish

It is also possible to find the parish registers at other websites, e.g. <https://www.danishfamilysearch.com/>. The approach and presentation are slightly different, but the contents are exactly the same.

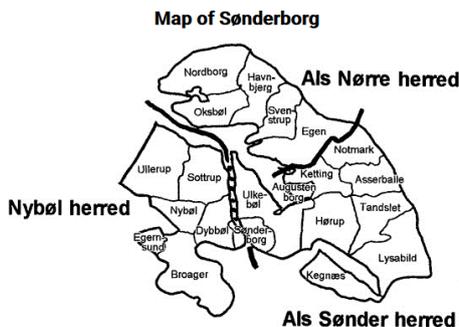
Here you can use the map to navigate to the correct county, and once you have clicked there, you get a new map, where you can choose the correct parish. (The illustration is the smallest county in Denmark with just a handful of parishes!

Now you can click on the name of the parish or on the map, and you will then be presented with the various possibilities for parish registers, equivalent to [www.sa.dk](http://www.sa.dk), but presented in a different manner.

They each have their advantages. Try them out and use the one you like better.



16 Danish counties



**Parish and Hundreds in Sønderborg**  
**3 Hundreds:**  
 Als Nørrø Als Sønder Nybøl  
**21 Parishes:**  
 Asserballe Augustenborg Broager Dybbøl Egen Egeånsund  
 Hamblet Hørup Kegnæs Kelling Lysabild Nordborg  
 Nørre Als Nybøl Oksbøl Sottrup Svenstrup Sønderborg  
 Tandslø Ullkebel Ullerup

17 Districts and parishes in Sønderborg County

## Familysearch.org

At Familysearch.org it is possible to search the historical records for Denmark here:

<https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/list/?fcs=placeId%3A1927025%2CrecordType%3AVITAL&ec=region%3AEUROPE%2CplaceId%3A1927025%2CrecordType%3AVITAL>.

The contents here are slightly different from the contents of the National Danish Archives, as the LDS Church has scanned a vast number of Danish archives that are now available to their registered users, such as civil marriages. It is free to use familysearch.org, but you need to register and create a log-in name and password.

The smart thing to do here is to use their normal search, mentioned above, which will search all available data, and you can limit it to searches in Denmark only, so as not to get too many results.

## Immigration and Emigration Records

### Ellis Island

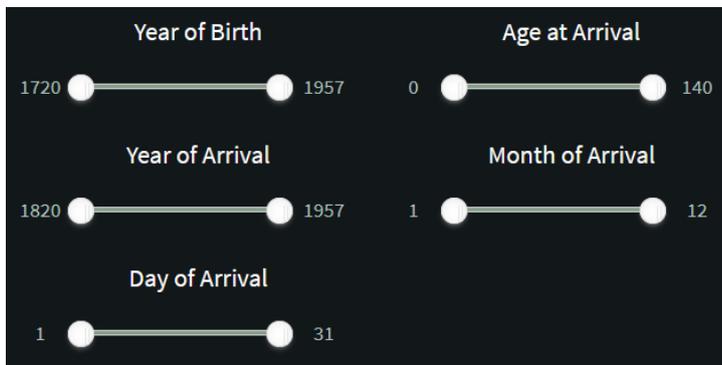
There are two main websites where you can search for immigration information. One is the Ellis Island website which comprises passenger records from 1820 until 1957, almost 65 million immigrants, passengers, and crew members who came through Ellis Island and the Port of New York, <https://www.libertyellisfoundation.org/>. The search is easier, if you register as a user and it is free of charge. The search page is here: <https://www.libertyellisfoundation.org/passenger>, and it is a good idea to use the wizard. However, be aware that you cannot use the Danish æ, ø and å.

First name: less is better as the passengers very often just used initials.

Last name: two letters is enough and it need not be the first two letters

The wizard gives the following possibilities:

These are good if you get many results



Year of Birth: 1720 — 1957

Age at Arrival: 0 — 140

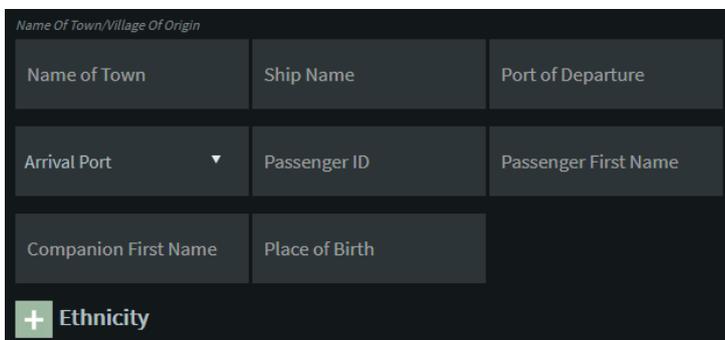
Year of Arrival: 1820 — 1957

Month of Arrival: 1 — 12

Day of Arrival: 1 — 31

Year of Birth is really useful, because this is almost always a known fact.

Year of Arrival can be useful to limit the number of results, because normally you have a fairly good idea of the time span of arrival.



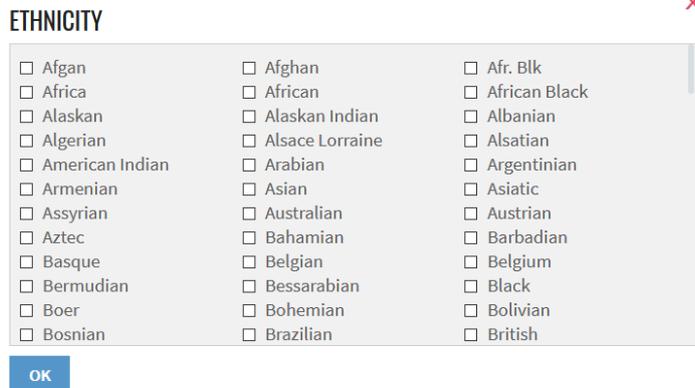
Name Of Town/Village Of Origin

Name of Town	Ship Name	Port of Departure
Arrival Port ▼	Passenger ID	Passenger First Name
Companion First Name	Place of Birth	

**+ Ethnicity**

This one is normally not very useful, except for the + at the end of the wizard “Ethnicity”.

Click the + and you will be presented with the following picture.



**ETHNICITY** ✕

<input type="checkbox"/> Afgan	<input type="checkbox"/> Afghan	<input type="checkbox"/> Afr. Blk
<input type="checkbox"/> Africa	<input type="checkbox"/> African	<input type="checkbox"/> African Black
<input type="checkbox"/> Alaskan	<input type="checkbox"/> Alaskan Indian	<input type="checkbox"/> Albanian
<input type="checkbox"/> Algerian	<input type="checkbox"/> Alsace Lorraine	<input type="checkbox"/> Alsatian
<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian	<input type="checkbox"/> Arabian	<input type="checkbox"/> Argentinian
<input type="checkbox"/> Armenian	<input type="checkbox"/> Asian	<input type="checkbox"/> Asiatic
<input type="checkbox"/> Assyrian	<input type="checkbox"/> Australian	<input type="checkbox"/> Austrian
<input type="checkbox"/> Aztec	<input type="checkbox"/> Bahamian	<input type="checkbox"/> Barbadian
<input type="checkbox"/> Basque	<input type="checkbox"/> Belgian	<input type="checkbox"/> Belgium
<input type="checkbox"/> Bermudian	<input type="checkbox"/> Bessarabian	<input type="checkbox"/> Black
<input type="checkbox"/> Boer	<input type="checkbox"/> Bohemian	<input type="checkbox"/> Bolivian
<input type="checkbox"/> Bosnian	<input type="checkbox"/> Brazilian	<input type="checkbox"/> British

**OK**

Now you have to use the little grey bar in the right-hand corner in order to slide down to the ethnicity you need, in this case Danish, which you will find in the middle column.

After all these efforts click OK and “Results”, and hopefully you will find what you were looking for.

## The Danish Emigration Records

The other website is The Danish Emigration Records which covers the period 1869 until 1908, <http://www.udvanderarkivet.dk/udvanderprotokollerne/>.

Navn:	<input type="text"/>	(eks.: <i>Hansen, Anton</i> )
Stilling:	<input type="text"/>	(eks.: <i>Smed</i> )
Alder:	<input type="text"/>	
Sidste oph.sted:	<input type="text"/>	(eks.: <i>Randers</i> )
Sogn:	<input type="text"/>	(eks.: <i>Randers</i> )
Amt:	<input type="text"/>	(eks.: <i>Randers</i> )
Bestemmelsessted:	<input type="text"/>	(eks.: <i>Chicago</i> )
Stat:	<input type="text"/>	(eks.: <i>Iowa</i> )
Land:	<input type="text"/>	(eks.: <i>USA</i> )
Kontrakt nr.:	<input type="text"/>	(eks.: <i>4586</i> )
Forevisningsdato:	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	(eks.: <i>1892 og 9 (september 1892)</i> )
<input type="button" value="Start søgning"/> <input type="button" value="Nulstil"/>		

Fill in with “surname” comma “given name”.

The other fields can be filled in if you get too many results, but normally the name will give you the result you are looking for.

## Vejle-listerne

There are separate lists for about 4000 people emigrating via Vejle. These lists are available here: [https://www.ddd.dda.dk/vejlelister/soeg\\_udvandrede.asp](https://www.ddd.dda.dk/vejlelister/soeg_udvandrede.asp).

## Mormon Migration 1873-1894

These are not yet included in the Danish Emigration Records, but can be found here: <https://saintsbysea.lib.byu.edu/>.

## DNA

Today DNA is increasingly used as a means of facilitating your genealogical research. However, it is not a miracle remedy. Most particularly it cannot be used as an indication of your ethnicity, although the DNA companies pretend to deliver just that.

A DNA test can support your manual researches and sometimes help to solve family mysteries, i.e. for adopted children or unknown fathers.

Danes primarily use MyHeritage and FamilyTreeDNA, so if you have tested with for instance Ancestry it would make sense to upload your results to both MyHeritage and FamilyTreeDNA. Also, by all means do not forget to upload a gedcom-file with all available genealogical data. Otherwise your matches will have no chance of identifying any common ancestors.

## Help

**Do not despair. Help is close at hand.**

A general piece of advice: Always be as specific as possible. State all known facts, names, dates, places, and be very clear in stating what you are looking for. And remember to say thank you afterwards.

The following websites and facebook groups all understand English and will help you as best they can with your Danish genealogy questions:

<https://forum.slaegt.dk/index.php/board,2.0.html>: searching for missing relatives.

<https://forum.slaegt.dk/index.php/board,4.0.html>: help to decipher illegible texts.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/7373772221/>: Every type of genealogy question can be raised here.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/819871211472888/>: Specific questions pertaining to DNA.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/DanishGenealogy/>: A group where you can share your stories and get help as well.

## Danish-English Word List – Occupations

The following list comprises the more common occupations in the years 1700-1800.

This website: <https://ordnet.dk/ddo/forside> will help you with a more detailed description of an occupation, and then you can google a translation.

Otherwise you will have to ask in one of the Facebook groups. Many of the occupations are not in use any more, but we can help you find a description of what was done.

Aftægtsmand/-kone/ -folk	Pensioner, accommodation and support provided by the new owner of a farm – often for its former owner, especially by a son for his father/parents
Almisselem	Person living on charity
Arbejdsmand	Labourer
Artillerist	Artilleryman, gunner
Bager	Baker
Betjent	Policeman
Blikkenslager	Plumber
Boelsmand	Small-holder, small farmer
Bonde	Farmer, peasant
Bryggeriarbejder	Brewery hand
Brændevinsbrænder	Distiller
Buntmager	Furrier
Bødker	Cooper
Daglejer	Day labourer
Degn, lærer	Parish clerk, teacher
Dragon	Dragoon
Elektriker	Electrician
Fattigforsørgelse	Supported by public authorities / poor relief fund
Feldbereder	Skin dresser
Fisker	Fisherman
Formue	Living off his own capital
Forsørges af det offentlige / fattigkassen	Supported by public authorities / poor relief fund
Færgemand	Ferryman
Fæster/gaardfæster	Copyholder, tenant
Gaardbeboer	Farmer
Gaardejer	Farm owner
Gaardmand	Farmer

Gartner	Gardener
Garver	Tanner
Glarmester	Glazier
Glaspuster	Glassblower
Graver	Sexton, grave digger
Grovsmed	Blacksmith
Guldsmed	Goldsmith
Hjilmager/Hjuler	Wheelwright
Husarbejde	Domestic work
Husmand	Small-holder
Hyrde	Shepherd
Hørbereder	Flax worker
Hørsvinger	Flax breaker
Håndgering	Needle worker
Inderste	Cottager, agricultural labourer, residing on a farm not his own
Indsidder	Cottager, agricultural labourer, residing on a farm not his own
Jordbruger	Farmer, agriculturist
Jordemoder/Gjordemoder	Midwife
Knipler	Lace-maker
Kromand	Innkeeper
Krovært	Innkeeper
Købmand	Grocer
Landarbejder	Farm worker
Landbruger	Farmer
Lem/Almisselem	Person living on charity
Lærer	Teacher
Maler	(House) painter
Medhjælper	Assistant, helper
Mejerist	Dairyman
Murer	Bricklayer, mason
Møller	Miller
Parcellist	Small-holder
Pension	Pensioner
Pottemager	Potter
Præst	Vicar
Rebslager	Ropemaker
Rokkedrejer	Turner
Røgter	Cattlemán
Sadelmager	(Harness) saddler
Selvejer	Freeholder, owner
Skemager	Spoon maker
Skomager	Shoemaker
Skovfoged	Forester
Skovhugger	Lumberman, wood cutter
Skovrider	Forest supervisor
Skrædder, Herre- /Dame-	Tailor, men's or women's clothes
Slagter	Butcher
Smed	Smith

Snedker	Joiner, carpenter
Soldat	Soldier
Spinder	Spinner
Strikker	Knitter
Stryger	Ironer
Støberiarbejder	Foundry worker
Sukkerarbejder	Sugar mill worker
Syerske	Needlewoman
Tjenestefolk	Farm hand
Tjenestekarl	Farm hand
Tjenestepige	Domestic help or farm hand
Træskomager	Clog maker
Tyende	Farm hand
Tøffelmager	Clog maker
Tømrer	Carpenter
Urmager	Clock maker, watch maker
Vasker	Washer
Værtshusholder	Innkeeper
Væver	Weaver

## Keyword Index

10 month's day (illegitimate children) 8

Abbreviations 10, 17

Absolutions 5

Adopted children 22

Alleged father 9

Ancestry.com 14, 15, 22

Arrivals 6, 8, 9

Bachelors 8

Banns 7

Baptism at home 7

Baptism, presentation to the congregation 7

Birth Dates 5

Birth certificates 9

Births 6, 7

Brick wall 3

Burials 8

Calendar, church year 5

Cause of death 8

Censuses 4, 11

Churchings 5

Confirmations 7

Copenhagen 9

Counties 5, 9

Danish characters, æ, ø, and å 11

Danish Demographic Database 12

Danish National Archives 4, 15

Danishfamilysearch.com 11, 14, 19

Ddd.dda.dk 12, 14

Death Dates 5

Denmark, administrative map 5  
Departures 6, 8,  
Districts 5  
DNA 22  
Ellis Island 9, 20  
Emigration 3, 9, 21, 22  
Enesteministerialbog 16, 17  
Ethnicity 21, 22  
Facebook 22  
Familysearch.org 13, 14, 20  
FamilyTreeDNA 22  
Folio 6  
Forum, help 6  
Gedcom 22  
Girls 8  
Given names 10  
Gothic handwriting 6  
Help 22  
Hovedministerialbog 16, 17  
Illegitimate children 7, 8  
Index, parish registers 5, 6  
Kontraministerialbog 16, 18  
Marriages 7, 8  
Maps 5, 19  
Migration records 20  
Missing parish registers 6  
Mormor Migration 22  
MyHeritage.com 14, 22  
Naming traditions 9, 10  
National Danish Archives 4, 15

Naturalization certificates 9

Nicknames 10

Occupation 8, 10, 23

Origin 10

Parishes 5, 9

Parish Registers 4, 15

Patronyms 10

Pensioners 8

Photos 9

Place names 9, 16

Searching, censuses 11

Servants conduct book 7

Skiftedag 8

Skudsmålsbog 7

Smallpox vaccination 7

Sources 4

Spouses, dead 14

Surnames 10, 11

Unwed mothers 7, 8

Vejle-listerne 22

Volunteers 4

Weddings 7, 8

Widow(er) 8, 11

Wildcards 11

Witnesses 7

Women 6

Æ, Ø, Å 11, 20