

Immigrant Family History Questions  
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1. What is your English (American) first name and surname?
2. What is your Hebrew or Yiddish name? After whom were you named?
3. Is your family's present surname different from the one used in Europe?
  - a. If so, what was your old surname and what is your new surname?
  - b. When and why did your surname change?
4. What did you do for a living in Europe? (if applicable)
5. What did you do (or do you do) for a living in this country?
6. When and where were you born?
7. When and where were you married?
  - a. What is the name of your husband (wife)?
  - b. When you finish interviewing a husband, ask the wife the same questions which you asked him.
  - c. If the person you are interviewing has been married before, get the name of the ex-husband (wife).
8. If you are interviewing someone about a person who has died, ask where and when the person died.
  - a. From what did the person die?
  - b. Where is the person buried, and what is his/her yahrzeit date?
9. Immigration Information (if applicable)
  - a. From what port did you leave Europe?
  - b. At what port did you arrive in the U.S.? (Canada)
  - c. What was the name of the ship which you took to the U.S.? (Canada)
  - d. What was the date on which you arrived in the U.S.? (Canada)
    - 1 How long did it take you to get here? (Canada)
    - 2 What kind of ship did you take? In what section of the ship did you travel?

- 3 What are your memories of the boat trip?
  - 4 What was the trip to reach the boat like? How far did you have to travel?
  - e. With whom did you come to the U.S.? (Canada)
  - f. Why did you leave Europe?
  - g. In what town did you settle in the U.S.? (Canada) Why did you choose this town?
10. Citizenship Information (if applicable)
- a. On what date did you become a citizen?
  - b. In what city and in what court?
- I I. What is your father's name? What is your mother's name?
1. What is their hebrew name?
12. If the person you are interviewing is a blood relation, you should ask the following information about the person's mother and father, the person's brothers and sisters and the person's children:
- a. English Name
  - b.** Hebrew, Yiddish Name
  - c. Namesake
  - d. Occupation
  - e. Birthdate, place
  - f. Marriage date, place
  - g. Spouse Information:           Name, Occupation, Birthdate, place. Parents' Names, Death date/place (if applicable)
  - h. Death date/place (if applicable)
  - i. Immigration and Citizenship Information (if applicable)
13. What are your memories of your parents (grandparents)?
- a. What did they look like? What kind of people were they?
  - b. If the person you are interviewing came from Europe:
    - 1 What did the house of your parents (grandparents) in Europe look like?

- 2 What did the store of your parents (grandparents in Europe look like?
- 3 What are your memories of your childhood in Europe?
  - a What are your memories of going to school in Europe?
  - b What did you do in your free time?
  - c Did your family celebrate Shabbat in Europe? If so, what was a Shabbat dinner like in your house?
  - d Did your family attend synagogue in Europe? If so, what was a synagogue service like?
- 4\* What are your memories of your first years in the U.S.?
  - a Did you like it here?
  - b Did you have any special problems or difficulties adjusting?
  - c Describe the apartment/house in which you first lived.

14. Optional topics

- a. Military Service
- b. Synagogue Membership
- c. Other organization memberships (Masons, trade union, etc.)
- d. Education in U.S. - W here, when and what field of study
- e. Residences in U.S. - the various addresses at which a person lived and the years during which he lived at each address

\*For more information, go to the website of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Illinois at [www.jewishgen.org/jgsi/](http://www.jewishgen.org/jgsi/)