Upload Your Family Tree to FamilySearch with Total Control

This video is a result of a blog post I saw on FamilySearch. So, I thought I would create a video to demonstrate how this works.

FamilySearch is and will always be free to use. For years, FamilySearch users have complained about other people changing their ancestor's information in the one worldwide collaborative FamilySearch tree. So, when I saw this article about having total control over your own tree, I had to investigate. Using this method, you can preserve your family history without anyone changing it.

As it turns out, this process is a way of uploading your family tree as a separate genealogy and not necessarily adding to the collaborative tree, but you can add people from this upload one at a time. This process allows you to upload your family tree and preserve it on FamilySearch forever, untouched (except by you, if you choose).

In the video I demonstrated two different trees as an experiment to see if the images and documents would transfer from Ancestry and then I did one from MyHeritage. See the video for the results.

This is a simple transfer of data from one service to another. We will do this transfer of data using an industry standard Gedcom file.

What is a Gedcom File?

A Gedcom file is a simple data transfer file. It does not (usually) contain any documents, but in some cases it does. Typically, it only contains the common data fields., such as birth, death, marriage, in some cases your note fields. Every service imports data a little differently.

A Gedcom file is a .ged file (like a zip file). No need to open the file. This is the file you will upload to FamilySearch.org.

Before Uploading a Gedcom File You Must Download One

Before you can upload a Gedcom file to Familysearch.org, you must first download a Gedcom file from the current location of your Family Tree. Below are brief download instructions from the various online services. Software is not covered here, but if you are using something like Family Tree Maker or others, you can export a Gedcom file in a similar manner as discussed below.

GenealogyTV.org   YouTube.com/GenealogyTV

Download a Gedcom from Ancestry

To download a gedcom file from ancestry.com...

- Login to your account, go to the "Tree" tab at the top of the screen and drop down to "Create & Manage Trees."
- Select the "Tree Settings" in the right-hand column for the tree that you wish to export.
- In the right-hand panel, scroll down until you see "Manage Your Tree." Click on "Export Tree" and it will begin generating a Gedcom file.
- Download the Gedcom file to a location that you will remember. You can click the download button and it will go likely into your downloads folder. Alternatively, you can right click and select "save target as..." and save it to your desktop or other location of your choice.
- Once saved, you are ready to upload to FamilySearch.org. Jump to that section for more instructions.

Download a Gedcom from MyHeritage

- Login to your account at MyHeritage.com, go to the "Family Tree" tab at the top of the screen and drop down to "Manage Trees."
- Select the "Export to GEDCOM" in the right-hand column for the tree that you wish to export.
- The next page allows for two choices... to export personal photos and export the family tree album. Check the boxes if you wish to export these photos.
- Click begin the export and save this file for the upload to FamilySearch.

Download a Gedcom from FindMyPast

- Login to your account at Findmypast.com, go to the "Family Tree" tab at the top of the screen and drop down to "View All Trees."
- Select the down arrow in the right column that says "Export Tree" when you hover over it. Click the down arrow to generate the Gedcom file.
- Once the file is generated (may take a few minutes), click the "Download Tree" link on the right side. Alternatively, you can right-click and "Save as" to a location of your choice.
- Chrome users may see the download on the bottom left of the window. Click the right side "Show all" button to open your download location.
- You are now ready to upload this file to FamilySearch. Skip ahead to that section.

Download a Gedcom from WikiTree

- Login to your account at WikiTree.com, go to the "My WikiTree" tab at the top of the screen and drop down to "GEDCOMs."
- On this screen there is a "Download a GEDCOM" button on the top of the screen.
- Read through the privacy warnings, click "I understand."
- There are two options. Read and choose the option that is right for you. Click Export Gedcom.
- You will see a green box that says "Your Gedcom has been created: XXXX.ged."

- Right-Click over the file name and choose "save as" and put in the location where you can find it again.
- You are now ready to upload this file to FamilySearch. Skip ahead to that section.

How to Upload a Gedcom (Family Tree) to FamilySearch

First you need to know that this upload is not the same as the world collaborative tree at FamilySearch. This is a separate genealogy hosted on FamilySearch. It is searchable from the Search tab, then Genealogies, on FamilySearch, thus making it valuable to researchers.

- Sign into your [FamilySearch](#) account. If you do not have one, it is free and easy to start one.
- To upload a Gedcom once you are signed in, click **Search**.
- Drop down to **Genealogies**.
- Scroll down past the search fields to **What are Genealogies?**
- On the right side click "**Submit your Tree**."
- Click "**Upload Gedcom File**."
- Click **Choose File** and find the GEDCOM file on your computer.
- Enter a **tree name**.
- In the Description field, tell others about your tree and where it came from.
- Click **Upload**.

By uploading a Gedcom to FamilySearch as a genealogy file, you are also preserving your version of the family tree. No one else can change it, but you can remove it if you choose.

Can You Download a Gedcom *from* FamilySearch?

I get this question a lot, so before you ask, can you download a Gedcom from FamilySearch? Not exactly. You can sync your family tree software with FamilySearch and thus connecting a limited version of the tree to your software. Software programs that sync in various ways, go to the [FamilySearch Solutions Gallery](#) > Family Tree Management, and explore the different software programs. Be sure to click through to see which programs download and or upload changes to FamilySearch, not all do. Use the filters to narrow your choices.