Genealogy Software for the Macintosh
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For many years good genealogy software was only available for Windows PC computers. However, now there are several reasonably good programs that are written for the Mac. In addition, with the latest Macintosh computers that use the Intel processor, it is fairly easy to now run your favorite Windows programs on your Mac. Another approach is to use programs that run in a web environment and they can work on any computer with a web browser.

Commercial Mac Programs

- Reunion ($90)
- iFamily for Leopard ($30)
- My Blood ($60)
- Mac Family Tree ($49)
- GEDitCOM II ($65)
- Heredis ($69)
- Genealogy Pro ($20)
- Osk ($28)

Free Mac Programs

- Gramps
- PAWriter II
- GenealogyJ (Java)

For older PowerPC Macs

with OS 10.4 or later
- Reunion
- iFamily
- MyBlood
- Mac Family Tree
- GEDitCOM II
- PAWriter II
- Osk
- GEDitCOM
- PAWriter

Windows Genealogy Programs using Microsoft VirtualPC or GuestPC

Running Windows Genealogy Programs on a Mac

There are several ways to run Windows software on the latest Mac computers.

1. Setup Dual Booting by using Bootcamp which comes with your Mac and install Windows onto a Windows partition of the hard drive. However, with Bootcamp you can only run Windows or Mac software when you start the computer. You can't easily switch back and forth.
2. Use virtual software programs such as VMWare Fusion ($80), Parallels ($80) or Virtual Box (free) and you can then run your Windows ($89 - $199) in a Mac Window. After Windows
is installed you can run any Windows software and easily switch to Mac/Windows with the click of the mouse.

Both these options require that you have a copy of Windows. Another option is Crossover ($39) that allows you to run Windows software without needing a copy of Windows. However, this does not work with many Windows genealogy programs, the operation is not optimal, but it is an option.

Choosing the best software

There are many factors that are considered for determining the software that will work best for you. Some of the criteria can be based on fundamental performance and objective criteria, but more likely the decision might be influenced by how you feel subjectively about the software.

Bill Mumford did a very good analysis of 22 genealogy programs using the basis from Elizabeth Shown Mills that there are three groups of researchers: Family Tree Climbers, Traditional Genealogists and Generational Historians. He commented, “Every one of the 22 programs evaluated using this list have been successful in retaining a base of supporters and so must be considered suitable for any researcher at the Family Tree Climber level. Whether they are suitable for the more advanced researcher is a decision the individual must make. For example, several programs provide little or no support for the Planning process. If the researcher has a personal research procedure this would then present no problems. You will note that currently no program meets all the requirements for the Generational Historian. As a result these people must resort to additional software to fill these gaps.”


Which factors are the most important for choosing a genealogy program will be influenced by personal preference. They might include the following:

1. Easy of use – Pedigree-Chronology-Descendant-family-index views, Location assistance, Handle large data sets, Open multiple databases, Bug free
2. Data Entry & Sourcing – Auto Date Format, Rate Sources, Master source list, Source templates, Privacy Option, Repository list, Location database, Spell check, Standardized location assistance, Customized entries
3. Multimedia – Assign source to media, Identify person in group photo, Link or embed media
4. Research Planning – To Do list & reminders, Individual & location tasks, Progress tracking, links
5. Maps - Migration display, Integration with location entries
6. Web Creation – Multiple styles, Integrate pictures
7. Reports & charts – Pedigree, Family Group, Descendants, Footnotes, DNA, Wall charts
8. LDS support – All ordinances & temples, Temple name preparation, Submit in batches
9. Integration with New Family Search – Certified
10. GEDCOM Import/Export – Standard and extended, Unicode
11. Tools – Automatic age display, Relationship calculator, Statistics, Finding errors, Renumber individuals, Flags, Soundex converter, Search for individuals/marriages, unlinked trees check
12. Matching/Merging – Manual merge, “Not the same” flag, Automatic merge, Undo
13. Historical Information – Timelines from around the world, create timelines
14. Internet – Built-in Web Browser, Research sites suggestions & access,
15. Help & Documentation – Manual, Blank census & questionnaire forms, video tutorials
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Mac Programs Evaluated

1. Reunion 9.0b  http://www.leisterpro.com/
2. iFamily for Leopard 2.511  http://www.ifamilyforleopard.com/
4. GRAMPS 3.1.2-1 (3.2)  http://gramps-project.org/
5. MacFamilyTree 5.7.3  http://www.synium.de/products/macfamilytree
6. GEDitCOM II 1.4  http://www.geditcom.com/
7. PAWriter II v.91  http://www.lanopalera.net/index.html
8. Heredis Mac X.2 10.2.6  http://www.myheredis.com/
9. Genealogy Pro 2.2  http://www.genealogypro.net/

Windows Software

1. Legacy Family Tree  http://www.legacyfamilytree.com/
2. Family Tree Maker  http://www.familytreemaker.com/
4. Ancestral Quest  http://www.ancquest.com
5. PAF 5.2  http://www.familysearch.org/eng/paf/pafonline.asp

To Run Windows Software

- Bootcamp (Free) but requires rebooting
- VMWare Fusion ($80)
- Parallels ($80)
- Virtual Box (Free)
  - Requires ⌘ to switch mouse control
  - Only Standard Windows aspect ratio (horizontal)
  - No access to Mac harddrive
  - Other than these minor annoyances, it works well
Mac Genealogy Software Reviews

2010 Mac Genealogy Software Review Product Comparisons

1. Reunion 9.05 - Review
2. MacFamilyTree 5.6.8 - Review
3. iFamily 2.5 - Review
4. Heredis Mac X.2 - Review
5. Genealogy Pro 2.2 - Review
6. Osk 4.71 - Review

Available Reviews by Products

1. Reunion
   1. Reunion 9.05 – TopTen Reviews
   2. Reunion 9.04 – MacWorld
   3. Reunion 9 for Mac – Familytreemagazine
   4. Reunion 9 – Macgasm
   5. Reunion – No1Reviews
   6. Reunion 9 – Consumersearch
   7. Reunion – AlternativeTo
   8. Reunion – GenSoftReviews(21) 4.34/5

2. iFamily
   1. iFamily 2.5 – TopTen Reviews
   2. iFamily for Tiger 2.2 – MacWorld
   3. iFamily for Leopard – GenSoftReviews(6) 3.88/5

3. My Blood
   1. MyBlood 1.0 – Versiontracker
   2. MyBlood – GenSoftReviews(1) 3.00/5

4. MacFamilyTree
   1. MacFamilyTree 5.6.8 – TopTen Reviews
   2. MacFamilyTree 5.7.3 – MacGenealogy
   3. Mac Family Tree – No1Reviews
   4. MacFamilyTree 4.4 – MacWorld
   5. MacFamilyTree – AlternativeTo
   6. MacFamilyTree – GenSoftReviews(7) 4.65/5

5. GEDitCOMII
   1. GEDitCOM II 1.4 Build 1 – MacGenealogy
   2. GEDitCOM – GenSoftReviews(1) 5.00/5

6. Heredis
   1. Heredis Mac X.2 – TopTen Reviews
   2. Heredis Mac X.2 – Familytreemagazine
   3. Heredis 10.2 – MacWorld
7. Osk
   1. Osk 4.71 – TopTen Reviews

8. Genealogy Pro
   1. Genealogy Pro 2.2 – TopTen Reviews

9. PAWriter II
   1. Personal Ancestry Writer II 69 – MacWorld
   2. Personal Ancestry Writer II – GenSoftReviews(2) 4.64/5

10. GRAMPS
    1. GRAMPS – No1Review
    2. GRAMPS – AlternativeTo
    3. GRAMPS – GenSoftReviews(12) 4.00/5

One Method to install the latest version of GRAMPS on the Mac.

1) Install the MacPorts.app from http://www.macports.org/
2) In a Terminal, type: sudo port selfupdate
3) In a Terminal, type: sudo port install gramps

Then, (un)fortunately, you have GRAMPS, but not as a nice Icon to click on, but as an application that uses the X11.app, so you also have to do:

4) Start the X11.app (in /Applications/Utilities)
5) Click in the Menu "Applications/Customize" and create an entry that calls 'GRAMPS'

Then you can either start the X11.app and after that start gramps from the menu, or start GRAMPS from any terminal window, and X11 will transparently load before GRAMPS fires up.

My Recommendations

1. iFamily for Leopard
2. MyBlood
3. GRAMPS
4. * GEDitCOM II
Family Search Certification Plans

GEDitCOM II
“It is on my list of possible options.” - John Nairn (Feb 10, 2010)

Reunion
“We are a member of the Developer's Network and it is our plan to support the new FamilySearch. However, as with all new technology, it is a work in development and may take some time to implement.” - Deb Stuller (Feb 10, 2010)

MyBlood
“We'll probably release FamilySearch functionality after the summer.” Geert Jardoul (Apr 28, 2010)

MacFamilyTree
“wait for version 6, available this summer” - MacFamilyTree Support (Apr 28, 2010)