



# How to...

**WOW!**

There are about 1.5 billion grandparents worldwide, and the number is projected to increase to 2.1 billion by 2050.



## Discover your family history

Feel closer to family—and learn more about who you are—by looking at the past.

Your family history is the story of the people in your family who came before you. That includes your parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. Knowing your family history can help you feel more connected to your family, and research suggests it also gives you a stronger sense of identity and well-being. Here's how you can start learning about your ancestry.

### Talk to your family

Start by asking relatives if you can speak with them about your family's history. You can ask them if you can record them on audio or video, or you can take written notes. To get the conversation going, ask a few questions about their life growing up (see the ideas in the box at right). You can also ask them to name some of the biggest world events or inventions of their lifetime and what they remember about how those developments affected your family.

### Look at old photos together

Peeking at old photo albums or framed photos can unlock memories and conversations. Ask relatives if they have any old photos they can

share with you. Look at them together, and ask them to share what they remember about the day the photo was taken, such as what the occasion was and who was there. Another idea is to look at old recipe cards, which can bring forth memories about cooking and baking traditions. You might even want to re-create some family recipes together.

### Build a family tree

Ask a parent or grandparent to help you fill out a family tree. At the bottom of the tree will be you and any siblings. Above you will be your parents, and above them, their parents (your grandparents). See how far back you can go in your family tree, making branches for your great- or even great-great grandparents. Add aunts and uncles and their children as well.

### Keep memories safe

You can make a memory box or a scrapbook that includes photos of your family, your family tree, and what you've learned about your history. Later, you can look back on the history you've collected and save it for future generations to enjoy.



Talk about family photos.

### Interview questions



Find out more about a family member's past by trying these conversation starters.

- When you were a child, what was your favorite toy or game?
- Did you have or want any pets?
- What was your favorite food?
- What subject did you like best in school?
- What did you enjoy doing most when you were my age?
- Where did you live as a child?
- What's the funniest family story you can remember?
- Who were the oldest family members you can recall? What do you remember about them?