

Before We Begin



The Belarus SIG, established in 1998, promotes Jewish genealogy research in Grodno, Minsk, Mogilev and Vitebsk Gubernias as well as the Lida and Vileika uyezds (districts) of Vilna Gubernia.

Where Once We Walked

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JewishGen Belarus Special Interest Group Frequently Asked Questions

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The Home Page Toolbar Navigation tab is a Tour of the new Belarus SIG Website.

All visitors come to the Belarus SIG site for information. Whether you enter out of curiosity or to find records, navigating the 500,000 records and 800 pages needs a tour guide!

If you are just getting started on any SIG site, it means that you want to find records in the old country. Most immigrants came to the new country following family members, neighbors (landsmen), or shtetl murmurs of "*Die goldeneh medinah*". Manifests after 1906 usually show the name of a relative and address in the old country (someone left behind) and the name of a sponsor at a U.S. destination (someone meeting the passenger).

Would you travel without a map?

A Basic list of names, relationships, dates and places is the genealogical road map to working in a foreign country database, archives or with a hired researcher. This can be a paper and pencil Outline Descendent Tree, a rudimentary chart or a family tree.

Would you knock on every door?

Imagine going to a Country or a county or a city or a street without an address. At least an idea of where and when is important. Knowing what record sources exist for your Region is a major guide. Revision Lists, like U.S. census lists, were taken in certain years in the Pale of Russia: roughly 1811, 1816, 1834, 1850 and 1858. Keeping potential sources in mind, creating a family timeline is another tool you might want to consider.

We will ask these questions: What are the Records? Where are the Records? What are your Surnames? What are your towns? What years are you searching?

Hopefully, we will help you find your answers.

➔ Make a rough list — your surnames, your towns and some dates

