

Italian-American Family History Starter Kit

One afternoon, one likely ancestor, one likely place, and the next record to verify.

Write what you know, mark what is uncertain, and keep the source for every claim.

1

Ask a relative

- ☐ Record full names, nicknames, and pronunciations.
- ☐ Ask about towns, parishes, jobs, and migration stories.
- ☐ Write who shared each memory and when.

2

Build a U.S. timeline

- ☐ List approximate birth, marriage, and death dates.
- ☐ Check census, vital, obituary, church, and cemetery records.
- ☐ Save each record image, citation, and URL.

3

Trace the journey

- ☐ Compare passenger or border records with your timeline.
- ☐ Note last residence, destination, age, and companions.
- ☐ Try spelling variants; do not assume a name was changed at entry.

4

Find the comune

- ☐ Seek the exact Italian comune, not only a region.
- ☐ Search available civil and parish records by place and date.
- ☐ Treat a name match as a lead until other details agree.

My first research session

Person or family I am tracing

Likely U.S. place and date

One record I will look for next

Relative to ask / date

Possible Italian comune or clue

A story is a valuable lead, not proof. Keep original spellings and label uncertain connections as hypotheses.

Research log

Write down what you searched, including searches that found nothing. This prevents repeating work and makes your conclusions easier to check.

Date	Person + place	Record / source	Result + next step

If you get stuck

Compare dates, relatives, and places before attaching a record to a person. Search variant spellings, then look for another independent record.

Reliable starting points

U.S. National Archives: genealogy records

<https://www.archives.gov/research/genealogy/start-research>

Italian State Archives: Portale Antenati

<https://antenati.cultura.gov.it/>

FamilySearch: Italy research guide

<https://www.familysearch.org/en/help/helpcenter/italy>

Educational resource only. Record availability varies by place and period. This kit does not establish ancestry or citizenship eligibility.