

Keepsake

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Family History Book Template

Chapter prompts, archive fields, and a clear build plan

Pair this template with the [Family History Book Guide](#), [Family History Research Questions](#), and the [Cultural Heritage Story Workbook](#).

Before You Start

- Project focus: family branch, place, migration arc, or life story
- Working title:
- Editor or lead archivist:
- Intended readers:
- Target completion date:

Core Book Structure

1. Opening portrait

- Who is this book about?
- What one image or scene opens the story well?
- What time period anchors the first chapter?

2. Timeline spine

- Birth years / major dates
- Moves, migrations, or school/work transitions
- Family structure changes
- Historical events that shaped daily life

3. Chapter planner

Use any chapters that fit your project.

- Origins and ancestry

- Childhood home and neighborhood
- Work and craft
- Love, marriage, or partnership
- Parenting and caregiving
- Migration or displacement
- Faith, rituals, and traditions
- Food, music, and daily life
- Hard years and turning points
- Values, lessons, and legacy

For each chapter, note:

- Story goal:
- Interview source:
- Photos or artifacts needed:
- Dates, places, and names to verify:

Story Capture Prompts

- What scene explains this person's character fastest?
- Which object carries the strongest memory?
- What phrase or saying belongs in the book word for word?
- What detail would a future grandchild not know without this chapter?
- What context must sit beside the story so it still makes sense in ten years?

Archive Fields

Record these for every story, photo, or quote:

- Contributor name
- Relationship to the story
- Approximate date or age
- Place
- Source type: interview, diary, photo, letter, memory
- Permission notes

Photo and Artifact Spread Ideas

- Family tree or branch map
- Migration map

- Recipe spread with story notes
- Work tools or heirlooms page
- Quote collage from multiple relatives
- Then vs now photo pairing

Editing Checklist

- Every chapter has one clear purpose
- Names, dates, and places are consistent
- Captions explain why each photo matters
- Quotes are attributed to a real source
- Repeated stories are merged instead of duplicated
- Each chapter ends with a line that helps the reader carry it forward

Final Review

- What chapter still feels thin?
- Which relative should review for fact-checking?
- Which stories are private and should stay out of the final print version?
- What would make this book feel unmistakably like this family?

Notes

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