

# A Comparison of Ancestry and MyHeritage For Swedish/American Research

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## Record coverage

- **Swedish church books:**
  - **Ancestry:** Offers a large collection of Swedish church books, especially for the 1800s and early 1900s. Many birth, marriage, and death records are indexed and searchable. Household records are partially indexed, but all books — including moving in/out — records can be browsed by county, parish, and type. This makes it possible to explore even unindexed material once you know the location.
  - **MyHeritage:** Has a large collection of indexed Swedish church records, with a strong focus on household examinations books. However, it does not offer structured parish-by-parish browsing, so it's not possible to directly access specific record books by location.
- **Emigration Records from the Swedish Church Books:**
  - **Ancestry:** Several record sets, including indexed *utflyttning* (moving-out) records embedded within the Swedish church books. These indexes typically show the emigrant's date and parish of birth, parish of residence and departure, and year of emigration. They are often the key to identifying the emigrant's exact place of origin, making it possible to continue research directly in Swedish parish records.
  - **MyHeritage:** Does not offer a searchable, indexed collection of moving-out records from the Swedish church books, nor does it appear to hold the collections *Swedish Emigration Records, 1783-1951* or *Sweden, Emigration Registers, 1869-1948* which are available in Ancestry.
- **Arrivals, Passenger Lists, and Other Emigration Records:**
  - **Ancestry:** Offers a wide range of arrival and emigration records, including well-indexed U.S. passenger lists and key European departure records from ports like Gothenburg, Hamburg, and Liverpool. Most indexed records link directly to the original image, and in many cases, Ancestry will cross-link these records to relevant Swedish church entries, which then appear as hints on matching individuals in your tree.
  - **MyHeritage:** Includes many of the same U.S. and European passenger list collections, but indexing is less consistent, and some records may link only to transcriptions rather than full images. Smaller ports and certain departure lists may also be missing or harder to search.

- **Swedish-American Church Records:**

- **Ancestry:** Hosts several dedicated collections of Swedish-American church records, drawn from both Lutheran and Mission/Covenant congregations. These include digitized membership lists, which are often the most valuable for identifying place of origin. While not all records are indexed, and locating a specific person may depend on knowing the congregation or browsing manually, the sheer number of digitized Swedish-American records makes this a uniquely rich resource.
  - **MyHeritage:** Includes some Swedish-American church records, but coverage is limited and not organized as dedicated collections. Records are harder to locate and often mixed within broader Lutheran datasets.
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## Shared Research from Member Trees

- **Ancestry:** Ancestry hosts a vast number of public family trees, many built by U.S.–based researchers tracing Swedish immigrant lines. This wealth of member research often shows up as tree-based hints, which can help identify connections or origins without starting from scratch. Users can also message tree owners directly, including those with private trees. In addition, Ancestry integrates tree data from Geneanet, providing access to additional user-contributed research from across Europe within its search and hint system.
  - **My Heritage:** MyHeritage supports both public and private trees, with strong international participation and many Swedish users. While valuable member research exists, it is less concentrated on Swedish-American connections and member trees are more likely to require permission for full access, even for logged-in users. MyHeritage integrates tree data from both FamilySearch and Geni.
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## Research Tools & Interface

- **Ancestry:** The interface is flexible, intuitive, and well suited to working with uncertain or partial information — a common challenge in Swedish-American research. Hints and record suggestions are tightly integrated, and it's easy to move between different record types, refine searches, and follow up on new leads.
  - **MyHeritage:** Offers useful tools like Smart Matches and Record Matches, but the interface is more segmented and less flexible. Searches often require more manual refinement, and relevant records may be harder to surface quickly when working across countries.
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## \$ Subscription Requirements

- **Ancestry:** U.S. residents need a **World Explorer** subscription to access Swedish records, but monthly plans are available and easy to cancel. Your tree remains accessible after cancellation, though records and images are hidden. Documents can be downloaded manually for long-term access or for uploading to your main tree. A free 14-day trial is also available.
- **MyHeritage:** Full access to Swedish and U.S. records requires the **Complete** plan, which includes both historical records and Record Matches. Subscriptions are billed annually, but significant discounts are often available. There is also a free 14-day trial.

## i Tips for Further Research

- **Free Access to Church Records**

Sweden's [National Archives](#) (Riksarkivet / SVAR) offers free digital images of many church books. This is a good option if you want to cancel your Ancestry subscription at some point but continue researching Swedish ancestors. However, it is browse-only and you must know the parish or parishes where your ancestor lived.
  - **Free Research Tools**

[FamilySearch](#) provides access to many Swedish church books, along with an excellent Research Wiki explaining parishes, record types, and tips for reading old handwriting. A good place to learn and experiment before paying for other sites.
  - **Additional Resources**

The [Swedish Genealogical Society of Minnesota](#) maintains a useful collection of links to various research sites, databases, and other tools for Swedish genealogy.
  - **Subscription based**

[ArkivDigital](#) is widely considered the gold standard for Swedish genealogy. In addition to high-quality color images of church records — including household examination books, births, marriages, and deaths — it offers access to a wide range of other historical sources, such as military rolls, tax records, estate inventories, and name-indexed census records up to 1960. For researchers who want the fullest possible view of their Swedish ancestors, ArkivDigital provides the most comprehensive collection available in one place. The subscription is on the pricier side, but it is available month to month.
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## Record Holdings – Sources

This guide is based on official information from Ancestry and MyHeritage about their Swedish and U.S. record collections. Below are selected links summarizing key coverage areas. Collections are sorted by record count, not alphabetically.

- **Swedish Record Holdings**

- Ancestry: <https://dub.sh/ancestry-swedish-records>
- MyHeritage: <https://dub.sh/myheritage-swedish-records>

- **Europe Emigration & Passenger Lists**

- Ancestry: <https://dub.sh/ancestry-emigration>
- MyHeritage: <https://dub.sh/myheritage-emigration>

- **USA & Canada Immigration**

- Ancestry: <https://dub.sh/ancestry-usa-immigration>
- MyHeritage: <https://dub.sh/myheritage-immigration>

- **Swedish/American Church Records**

- Lutheran: <https://dub.sh/lutheran-church>
- Covenant: <https://dub.sh/covenant-church>