German Address Books

Germany "How to" Guide, Beginner Level: Instruction

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OBJECTIVE

This guide will teach you how to find church parishes for people living in cities by using German address books.

INTRODUCTION

Address books are an important resource in genealogical research. One major way that address books are useful is they can help determine an ancestor's parish in a large city. Some cities, such as Berlin, have dozens of parishes. Once we know the address of a person, the address/parish section of the book or a city map can help identify which parishes are nearby.

Although some German address books started as early as the 1700s, for many places they start in the early 1800s, and became widespread in the latter part of the 1800s. A typical entry includes the surname, given name or initial, occupation, and address. Address books are not a listing of every resident of a city but are rather a listing of households. Women are sometimes listed, but usually only if they are professionals or the heads of the household themselves. Sometimes, widows are not listed with their first names, but as simply 'widow.'

Many address books have a section which lists all streets alphabetically, with residents listed by address. Some even list the parish the street belonged to. (To see an example of this, follow the instructions under FamilySearch below.) If yours does not, or you are using CompGen or Ancestry indexes, you will have to find the address (or at least the street) on a map, and then find the nearest churches. The most effective way to do this is by using an online map website.

You may want to examine the following "How to" Guide before continuing:
[Inserting Special Characters](#)

HOW TO

There are numerous websites to find address books. This guide will focus on the three major website containing address books.

CompGen

At CompGen.de, there are approximately 468 indexed address books, including a total of nearly 4.4 million names. To access this collection, follow these directions:

1. Go to this site: http://meta.genealogy.net
2. In the yellow navigation bar at the top, click on **Addressbooks**. If the website is in German, click on **Adressbücher**.

3. You will see four search boxes. You can fill in any number of the boxes. The search must be done using diacritics (ä, ö, ü, or ß). For example, a search for Juengling or Jungling will not result in any hits, but Jüngling will result in several dozen. Let's do a search together.
4. In the last name box, fill in **Jüngling**. In the Given name box, fill in **Karl**. Then click **Start Search**. If you need help inserting the special character ü, complete the "How to" Guide [Inserting Special Characters](#).
5. You should see the results page with six results, four of which are for Karl Jüngling. The occupation of the all four results is Schneider or Schneidergeschäft; three of the entries are fir the city of Worms (1918, 1927, and 1933), living at Hochheimer Straße 9. These three are likely the same person. The fourth entry is a different person. Above the results is displayed a map highlighting the cities from the results list.
6. Click the entry for Karl Jüngling living in Worms in 1918. The information about this person will be no more than what is in the index, but you will also see this:

Place	Worms
	• Show all entries for this place
	• More about this place in Genealogical Gazetteer GOV
Source	Adreßbuch der Stadt Worms 1918, page 99
	• Show all entries of this book
	• Information about this book

By clicking on **Show all entries for this place** or **Show all entries of this book**, you can see all people listed in that place and book. If you click on **Information about this book**, you come to the book's page. If you click on **Digitalisat**, you will see a list of the sections of the book, all of which are part of the digitized version of the book.

Ancestry

Ancestry has many address books, all which have been indexed. You must have an account or be in the Family History Library or a family history center to use Ancestry. To access Ancestry's main German address book collection, follow these directions:

1. Go to Ancestry, found at www.ancestry.com.
2. In the navigation bar, click on **Search**, then click on **Card Catalog**.
3. In the Title box, type **Germany and surrounding areas**, then click on **Search**.
4. Click on **Germany and Surrounding Areas, Address Books, 1815-1974 (in German)**.
5. You will now see the search boxes. Your search can be as broad or as narrow as you'd like. Ancestry's search engine is flexible—a search for Jungling, Jüngling, or Juengling will produce the same number of results. Let's do a search together.
6. Type in **Karl Jüngling**. There are 782 results.
7. Click the back button to return to the search page. Now, let's limit the search to a specific place. In the Lived in box, type **Worms**. Select the place **Worms, Rhineland-Palatinate, Germany**, then click on **Search**.
8. You should see the same number of results, with the one result for Worms at the top of the

list. Click on the entry for Worms.
9. The result is for 1910, which was not included in the CompGen database. His occupation, *Schneider*, is the same, but the address if different. It is likely that he is the same person as in the Compgen search example. You can also view the original image by clicking on **View**.

FamilySearch

FamilySearch has microfilmed and digitized many address books, but they are not available in searchable indexes. They must be browsed. To find address books, follow these directions:
1. Go to FamilySearch, found at www.familysearch.org. You must have an account and be signed in. Additionally, some address books may have restrictions for viewing (which may include being in a family history center or being a member of a supporting organization).
2. Click on **Search**, then from the drop-down menu, click on **Catalog**. The FamilySearch Catalog is based on location. Let's do a search together for Friedrich Albert, who lived in Magdeburg in 1857.
3. In the Place box, type **Magdeburg**. Several options will appear; select the entry **Germany, Preußen, Sachsen, Magdeburg**. Click on **Search**.
4. From the list of record types, click on the record type for **Directories**.
5. There are seven results. It is best practice to look at each result to see which years each directory group covers. In this example, select the entry **Adress- und Geschäfts-Handbuch von Magdeburg**.
6. This specific group contains dozens of years on 91 microfilms. Scroll through the list until you find the year 1857. Click on the **camera icon** to the right. If there is a key above the camera, you are either not logged in, or there is a restriction based on account type or access location.
7. This digitized address book contains 424 images. Page through until you see the *Inhalts-Verzeichniß*, or contents page (image 14).
8. There are two sections of particular interest. The first is the listing of people with their addresses, found in section I – *Wohnungs=Anzeiger von Magdeburg und der Friedrichstadt 1-99*. The second is the listing of streets with their parishes. Found in section II – *Nachweis sämmtlicher Straßen Magdeburgs 100-157*.
9. Friedrich Albert is found in section I, pages 1-99. This section is alphabetical by surname. Browse through until you find him. He is found on page 1 (image 15). His address is Fürstenstraße 13.
10. Now, look for the second section, which begins on page 101 (image 65) to find Fürstenstraße. This listing of street names is also alphabetical. Fürstenstraße is found on page 113 (image 73). Immediately under the street name the parish to which it belongs will be given in parentheses. Fürstenstraße is in the parish of St. Johannis. If the street belongs to more than one parish, the house numbers will be divided to reflect the parish to which they belong. By knowing the parish, the records for that parish can then be searched.

ACTIVITY

Now, test your skills you have learned in this "How to" Guide. The Activity is a way to check your knowledge and let you know you've mastered the Guide! [Click here](#) to try out the Activity.