



German Research: Mecklenburg Censuses

Germany “How to” Guide, Intermediate Level: Instruction

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OBJECTIVE

This guide will introduce the Mecklenburg censuses available for research and explain how to locate them online.

Specifically, this guide will teach you to:

- Understand the history of censuses in Mecklenburg.
- Find Mecklenburg-Schwerin censuses.
- Locate a specific person in a Mecklenburg-Schwerin census.

INTRODUCTION

The area today known as Mecklenburg-Vorpommern has been split into duchies and grand duchies multiple times.

In 1621, an area known as Mecklenburg was divided into the duchies of Mecklenburg-Schwerin and Mecklenburg-Güstrow. Each duchy was under the political power of a duke from the House of Mecklenburg and his family. In 1695, however, the Güstrow family line died out; after many disputes and various claims on the duchy, the Treaty of Hamburg re-drew the lines of Mecklenburg. A small part of the previous duchy of Mecklenburg-Güstrow was absorbed by Mecklenburg-Schwerin, but most of the duchy was given to Adolphus Frederick and became known as Mecklenburg-Strelitz.

In 1815, the duchies of Mecklenburg-Schwerin and Mecklenburg-Strelitz were both raised to grand duchies by the Congress of Vienna and became part of the German Confederation (a union of 39 states that was dissolved in 1866; in 1871, after dissolution and rejoining, the confederation became the German Empire).

The two Mecklenburgs kept their grand duchy status until 1918, and in 1934 they merged into a single Mecklenburg entity. A few years later, in 1945, Mecklenburg merged with Vorpommern (Western Pomerania) and became a state known as Mecklenburg-Vorpommern; the name was changed to Mecklenburg just two years later, but the geopolitical area kept Vorpommern. In 1952, Mecklenburg split into three areas: Rostock, Schwerin, and Neubrandenburg, and it remained split until 1990, when it was once again unified under the name Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, the name by which the state is known today.

At the time when both Mecklenburg-Schwerin and Mecklenburg-Strelitz were grand duchies, Mecklenburg-Schwerin was 4.5 times geographically larger than Mecklenburg-Strelitz and had 5.35 times the population. Most censuses conducted in Mecklenburg-Strelitz were statistical and

are not of genealogical value, and those that are available are from the 1600s. As such, the focus of this guide will be on Mecklenburg-Schwerin censuses.

You may want to examine the following before continuing:

- Consult the [German Script Tutorial](#) “How to” Guide to learn about and practice reading the old German script
- Watch the [Old German Script](#) video series on the *FamilySearch* Learning Center to gain a foundation for reading the old German script.
- Consult the [Fraktur](#) “How to” Guide to learn about and practice reading the old German typeset.
- Refer to [Mecklenburg-Schwerin and Mecklenburg-Strelitz Gazetteer](#), a *FamilySearch* Wiki page, to determine (1) whether your location is in Mecklenburg-Schwerin or in Mecklenburg-Strelitz and (2) a microfilm on which the place is found in a census.
- Consult [Meyer’s Gazetteer Online: Meyersgaz.org](#), a “How to” Guide, to learn how to locate the parish of your town of interest.

Locating Mecklenburg Censuses

The table below lists the availability of the Mecklenburg-Schwerin censuses on three main genealogical websites and shows which are not available on those sites. Included in these are a few censuses from the 1600s; some of these are for Mecklenburg-Schwerin and some are for Mecklenburg-Strelitz (see the “On *FamilySearch*” below heading for details).

	<i>FamilySearch</i>	<i>Ancestry</i>	<i>MyHeritage</i>	Not Online
1633	✓			
1634	✓			
1677	✓			
1689	✓			
1819	✓	✓		
1826–1868				✓
1848				✓
1851				✓
1860				✓
1866				✓
1867	✓	✓	✓	

1871				✓
1875				✓
1880				✓
1885				✓
1890	✓	✓	✓	
1895				✓
1900	✓	✓	✓	
1905				✓
1910				✓
1916				✓
1919		✓		
1939	✓		✓	

The 1867 Mecklenburg-Schwerin census contains *Bevölkerungstabellen* (lists of heads of households, with headcounts for everyone else), *Zählunglisten* (household lists), and *Nachtragslisten* (list of temporarily absent individuals).

The 1890 and 1900 censuses contain *Zählkarten* (individual person cards) and *Namenslisten/Haushaltungslisten* (household lists).

The 1919 census contains *Haushaltungslisten* (household lists) and *Orts-Zählbezirk Listen* (lists of heads of households).

The 1939 census is focused on non-German minorities, especially Jews.

On FamilySearch

Five Mecklenburg-Schwerin censuses from the 19th and 20th centuries can be found on *FamilySearch*: 1819, 1867, 1890, 1900, and 1939.

Mecklenburg censuses (some covering Mecklenburg-Schwerin, others covering Mecklenburg-Strelitz) are also available on *FamilySearch* for the years 1633, 1634, 1677, and 1689.

- Go to [FamilySearch.org](https://www.familysearch.org)
- Hover the mouse over the **Search** heading (or click on it) and click on **Catalog**.
- In the **Place** search box, type in “Mecklenburg.” Select the “Germany, Mecklenburg” option from the dropdown box, and click **Search**.
- At this point, click on the **Census** heading; this will bring up the *FamilySearch* census holdings for Mecklenburg.

- Select the census year you wish to look at. If you select the **Personen Specificationes in den Domänial-Ämtern 1633-1689** collection, you will see a list of the specific counties that are contained in each census year (1633, 1634, 1677, and 1689).
 - If your county of interest is listed in the census year you need, scroll to the bottom of the page and click on the **camera icon** to the far right of the collection name (Volkszählungslisten 1633-1634, 1677, 1689) and browse the images.
- For practice, on the Mecklenburg censuses page, click on the **1890 census heading**.
- For the 1890 census, you will want to select the **Volkszählung am 1. December 1890** collection.
 - For some of the years, there are multiple collections/listings. If the one you choose is only available as microfilm, return to the **Census** heading. Then select a different listing for the same census year.
 - Some census years are available through the FHL only as microfilm, while others are available at *FamilySearch* as digital images—some of those images are only browsable, while others are also searchable.
- On the 1890 census page, under the **Notes** heading, click on the word “**here**” (in the red sentence).
 - Since this collection is searchable, you can search for a name from the page it brings you to. For now, search for **Anna Langmann**.
 - Two results show up; to view one of the results click on the **name** or the **indexed information** (the background will turn green when you hover the mouse over it)
 - Alternatively, click on the **document icon** (off to the far right). This will take you to a page containing the index and a small image.
 - Click on a different **name listed in the Household** to view the indexed information for that person.
 - Click on the image to view the original record.
 - You can also click on the **camera icon** (next to the document icon). This will bring up the image, with the index at the bottom of the screen.
 - To close the image again, click on the **small x** in the top right-hand corner.
- To browse the images, instead of clicking on the red word “here,” scroll down on the 1890 census page and click on **Browse through 96,982 images**.
 - Select the place of residence; as an example, choose **Sternberg**.

- You can now select **Namenslisten** (household lists) or **Zählkarten** (individual person cards). For practice, select **69. Zählkarten, weiblich** (female).
 - Each Zählkarte (individual person cards) contains the name, gender, birth date, birth place, religion, marital status, occupation, citizenship, and residence of the person the card is identifying.
 - The very top of a Zählkarte looks like this:






- Listed is the place the person was residing when the census was taken (in this case, Sternberg, census district number 18).
 - Also listed is the reference to where the person is listed in a Namensliste (household list)—in this case, the individual is person number 1 on the Namensliste number 13.
- Zoom out by clicking on the **eight-square icon** (to the far left).
- At the top of the page, click on the blue **Sternberg** (i.e., the place name). This time, select one of the **Namenslisten**. This will take you to the household lists.
- Knowing that the individual is person number 4 on the Namensliste number 13, find the Namensliste number 13 by browsing through the images and looking for the correct number near the top of the page.
 - The numbering starts over multiple times, so look through the images until you find the card with a matching name and number.
 - Browse the images using the **back-and-forth arrows** or by changing the **image number** (at the top of the image, off to the left) and clicking **Enter**.
 - If you do not find your person in the selected Namensliste, click on the blue **Sternberg** (or other location name) once again and look in the other Namensliste.
- If the residence is known, on the Mecklenburg censuses page select the **Volkszählung am 1. December 1890** collection.
 - Scroll down to **Film/Digital Notes**. Find the correct location using **CTRL+F**.

- Off to the far right, click on the **magnifying glass** to search for names, click on the **camera** to browse the images, or take note of the FHL **Film number** (if you don't have access to the images digitally, you can visit the Family History Library and look up the microfilm).

On Ancestry

Five Mecklenburg-Schwerin censuses can be found on *Ancestry*: 1819, 1867, 1890, 1900, and 1919.

- Go to [Ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com) (or, if you are in a family history center, to [AncestryInstitution.com](https://www.ancestryinstitution.com))
- At the top of the page, click on the **Search** heading and select **Card Catalog** (second-to-last in the list).
- In the left-hand column under **Filter by Collection**, click on the first listing: **Census & Voter Lists**.
- In the left-hand column under **Filter by Location**, click on **Europe**, then **Germany**, then **Mecklenburg-Vorpommern**. (Remember that Mecklenburg-Vorpommern contains the olden-day Mecklenburg-Schwerin and Mecklenburg-Strelitz.)
- At this point, you will see the five Mecklenburg-Schwerin censuses available on *Ancestry*: 1919, 1890, 1900, 1819, and 1867 (in that order).
 - The address books for Mecklenburg-Schwerin and Mecklenburg-Strelitz are also listed. (To view the register of names, click on the collection and then click on the last listing in the Table of Contents off to the right: **Namenregister zum Güteradressbuch von Mecklenburg-Schwerin und-Strelitz**.)
- Select the census year you wish to look at and search for your person of interest. For now, click on the **1819 census** heading (second-to-last in the list).
- On the 1819 census page, you can either search for a name or browse the images.
 - For practice, search for the last name **Metzger**. Christian Metzger is listed, with his indexed birth date and birthplace.
 - To view the full index, click on **View Record** (to the left of his name). From there, you can also click on the small image to view the full image.
 - Indexes generally do not list all the information in the record. As such, you should look at the original record whenever possible.
 - In this case, the index lists Christian Metzger's birth location (Brahlstorf), but it does not list his baptismal parish (Vellahn) and his length of residence in the town of Quassel (two years); all of this additional information can be gleaned from the image.
 - To view the image without first looking at the full index, click on the **magnifying glass and document icon** (to the right of the indexed information, under the **View Image** heading).

- With the image open, you can still see the record index by clicking on the **arrow and bar icon**  (the second icon at the far right of the image). Then click on the **Detail** heading.
 - Alternatively, you can click on the **two-silhouette icon**  at the very bottom of the screen. This will bring up the index of the entire page, not just of the person of interest.
- To instead browse the images, on the 1819 census page click on the **District dropdown box** (near the top of the page at the far right).
 - Choose a location; for practice, choose **Ritteramt Wittenburg**.
 - Under the new **Town/Location** heading that shows up under the **District dropdown box**, select **Quassel**. This will take you directly to the first page of the census records for the town of Quassel.
 - To browse, click on the **back-and-forth arrows** (one on the far right and the other on the far left) to move one image at a time.
 - Alternatively, change the image number at the bottom of the screen and click **Enter** to go to the chosen image number.
 - You can also click on the **film strip** at the bottom of the screen and then use the **back-and-forth arrows** in the film strip to move back and forth. Click on an **image** to view the enlarged version.
 - To view the indexed information while browsing, click on the **two-silhouette icon**  at the very bottom of the screen. This will bring up the index of the entire page.

On MyHeritage

Four Mecklenburg-Schwerin censuses can be found on *MyHeritage*: 1867, 1890, 1900, and 1939.

- Go to [MyHeritage.com](https://www.myheritage.com)
- In the right-hand column under **Categories**, click on **Browse Collection Catalog**.
- In the left-hand column, click on **Census & Voter Lists** (the first option under **All Collections**).
- In the search bar off to the right (near the top of the page), type in **Germany** and hit **Enter**.
 - Another option is to select **Europe** (under **Refine by location** in the left-hand column) and then **Refine further** (this will show up in a lighter gray right underneath the **Europe** heading). A white box will show up, listing various European countries. Select **Germany**.

- If you filter out the collections in this manner, however, the 1939 census will not show up.
- At this point, you will see the four Mecklenburg-Schwerin censuses available on *MyHeritage*: 1900, 1939, 1867, and 1890 (in that order).
 - The 1574–1902 citizen lists for Minden, Westfalen, show up as well, but this area is not included in either Mecklenburg region.
- Select the census year you wish to look at. You can do so by clicking on either the census title or the image next to it. For now, click on the **1867 census** heading.
- Opening the census collection will take you to a search page, where you can search for your person of interest. For now, search for **Anna Haase**.
- When you click **Search**, you will see all the results for your search. In this case, there are two: an Anna Haase born in 1813 and another born in 1844. We want the first listing (the one born in 1813). Click on the name **Anna Haase** or on the **record image**.
- You will now see the full index of the selected record. If you scroll down, you will also see a picture of the original census record.
- To view and save the image, do one of the following:
 - Click on “Image displayed by FamilySearch” (directly under the image). This takes you to the image on the *FamilySearch* website. There, you can zoom in and out to better view the record. From the *FamilySearch* page, you can also click **Download** (in the top right-hand corner) to save a copy.
 - With the mouse on the image, right-click on the mouse and select **Save image as**. Then type in the desired title and select the location you would like to save it on (on your computer or USB stick). Click **Save**. This will save the image as a JPEG in your chosen location.
 - With the mouse on the image, right-click on the mouse and select **Open image in new tab**. Then click on the newly opened tab to view the image. From there, you can zoom in and out or right-click and save the image.

Censuses Taken But Not Available (At Least Not Online)

The following censuses are not available on *FamilySearch*, *Ancestry*, or *MyHeritage*:

Mecklenburg-Schwerin conducted censuses every year from 1826 to 1868. It may be possible to acquire records from these censuses by writing to the archive of your town of interest.

Mecklenburg-Strelitz conducted censuses in 1848, 1851, 1860, and 1866. Copies can be acquired from the *Stadtarchiv Neustrelitz* (State Archive of Neustrelitz in Mecklenburg-Strelitz).

Under the German Empire, both Mecklenburgs conducted censuses in 1871 (statistics were collected, after which the census records are believed to have been destroyed), every five years from 1875 to 1910 (only the 1890 and 1900 census have been located), and 1916 (this census was taken to organize the dividing up of available food, so likely only statistics were kept).

Further information

- Refer to [Germany, Mecklenburg-Schwerin Censuses - FamilySearch Historical Records](#), a *FamilySearch* Wiki article, for sample Mecklenburg-Schwerin census images and suggestions for further research.
- Watch [German Census Records 1816-1916](#), a webinar about censuses conducted in various locations in Germany, and read the webinar's [accompanying handout](#).
- Refer to the [German Census](#) Wiki page for links to all German censuses.
- Read the “Mecklenburg-Schwerin” and “Mecklenburg-Strelitz” chapters in the book *German Census Records 1816–1916: The When, Where, and How of A Valuable Genealogical Resource* (in the FHL under call number 943 X27m) by Roger P. Minert.