

Researching the History of Your Missoula City/County Home

1. First, it's helpful to know your property's **Geocode** and its **legal description**. If you don't know this information, visit <https://svc.mt.gov/msl/cadastral/> to search for the property by Owner Name or Address.

Write your Geocode here: ____ - _____ - ____ - ____ - ____ - ____ - _____

Write (or copy and paste) the legal description in the space below.

You could stop here, take this information to the Missoula County Clerk and Recorder, and ask them to provide you with the "Chain of Title" for the property. But where's the fun in that? To do the research yourself, go on to Step 2.

2. Visit Missoula County's website: <https://www.missoulacounty.gov/> Scroll to the "What do you need?" section of the page and click the box labeled "Find county records."
3. Click "Property Records"
4. Click "Documents and Surveys"
5. Click "Doc" in the menu at the top of the page, then click "By Name" (searching by name seems to return the best results).
6. A search bar appears (see below). In the "Both" box (third box), type the *current owner's name*, last name first with no punctuation (e.g., SMITH MARY). Click Go.



Document Search (By Grantor/Grantee/Both Name)

Grantor | Grantee | Both

Go

7. Look at the results list to find the **warranty deed** with the current owner as listed as the grantee. Click the link for the pdf version of the warranty deed. Ensure this deed is for the correct property by verifying the Geocode and legal description.

Write the Grantor's name here: _____

This is the first link in your chain of title. Congratulations!

8. Now you'll start researching grantors (sellers) and grantees (buyers) backward through time. *The grantor in the most recent transaction becomes the grantee in the previous transaction*, and so on. It will be helpful to organize the information into a chart as you go (see next page for a chart).
9. Return to the "Document Search (By Grantor/Grantee/Both Name)" search bar. Enter the name of the grantor from Step 7 into the "Grantor" box (first box) in the search field.

10. Again, examine the results list to find the relevant **warranty deed**. Ensure this deed is for the correct property by verifying the Geocode and legal description.
11. Record the name of the Grantor for this transaction in the chart below.
12. Continue searching as in steps 8-11 until you locate the original conveyance. At this point, you're done! **You have researched the full chain of title for your property!**

CHAIN OF TITLE CHART			
Date of transaction	Book & Page No.	Grantor	Grantee
			Current Owner

Other house history resources:

- Sanborn Map Collection – Available for free through the Library of Congress website: <https://www.loc.gov/collections/sanborn-maps/>. These detailed maps were originally used to underwrite fire insurance policies. They provide a fascinating look at how communities have changed over time.
- City Directories – Print versions are available at MPL. Digitized versions are available through your own *Ancestry* subscription or through *Ancestry Library Edition* (free to use at MPL). Look up an address to find out who lived there at different times.