



Growing a JGS: STARTING A LIBRARY

Deborah Long, [Triangle Jewish Genealogical Society](https://www.jgscv.org) (2015) Revised 2022

Having a JGS library of materials is a great membership benefit. However, acquiring those materials and making them available to members can require some organizational effort.

Your society may want to set aside funds to acquire library materials. Sometimes, a JGS can start its collection by asking members to donate books and journals as well as other resources.

Some JGSes have either a permanent and/ or traveling library. Look at the Jewish Genealogy Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County as an example: <https://www.jgscv.org>. Look under the “library” tab.

Some tips:

- Assign a chapter member the task of acquiring materials including searching for materials in used bookstores, on eBay, by advertising on various websites such as JewishGen.
- Assign a chapter member to keep track of materials that are lent to members. This can be done the old-fashioned way using index cards.
- Acquire a rolling cart so that your members can see the collection of materials more easily. These carts can be found on Craig’s List, on occasion.
- If your local library or JCC will permit, perhaps some shelves dedicated to Jewish genealogy can be arranged.
- A local Church of the Latter-Day Saints may have library space it is willing to share.
- Let used bookstores know that you are interested in genealogy books. Sometimes one of the store’s volunteers will let you know when materials become available.
- Keep an eye on JewishGen.org Discussion Group. Sometimes members indicate that they are giving away suitable publications.

For more information on starting and managing a library, contact Michelle Sandler, IAJGS Library Liaison at librarian@iajgs.org. Below are instructions to get you started that Michelle has written on creating a library.

- [*How to Build a Jewish Genealogy Library from Scratch*](#)
- [*Critical Books for a Jewish Genealogy Library*](#)
- [*LC and Dewey for Genealogy*](#)
- [*LCSH for Genealogy*](#)