Get Started

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In Genealogy "Stuff Changes"

The Belarus SIG invites those new to genealogy and those with lots of experience to try out the new website. The Get Started section has the Basics. A genealogical reminder: there is always something new! There are always new ways to fill in data, break open a dead end, make new contacts and find new resources.
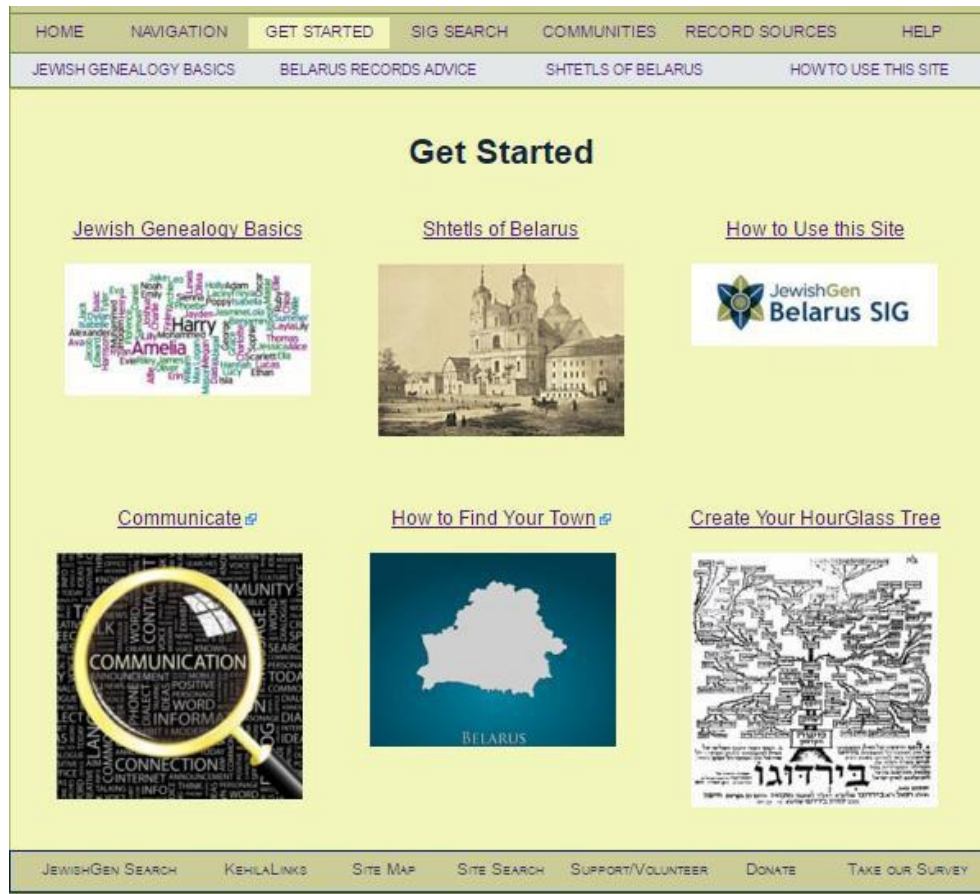
Skill Building Exercise #21: Check the Basics

My father, when asked where his parents came from, said "Visivishok—but they laughed when they said it" so he did not believe Visiviskok was a real place. He said "it's between Minsk and Pinsk", and then he laughed. So after 35 years, I still have no idea where it was his parents came from!

➡ If you have my dilemma, open How to Use this Site and read this answer. A JewishGen FAQ by Mel Comisarow has these suggestions on how to find your fugitive shtetl.

➡ Check the links in the Get Started section which will take you to familiar places and to some that may give you new ideas. Make sure you are signed up for ways to communicate with others (JGFF and discussion groups).

JewishGen Genealogy Basics	Get Ready to Use this Site	How to Use this Site

Skill Building Exercise #22: Get Started

➡ The Get Started section includes hints, guides and links as you make progress on your family history. These hints and guides are all geared to help you get ready to use the Belarus SIG website. Get Started covers all the important preparation aspects of finding, documenting and re-creating a report on the life of your ancestors.

➡ Open the Get Started link and notice you now have a second tool bar.

➡ Use paper and pencil or a two-column table Check Sheet using Word to make note of where you are in the basic genealogy research process. What do you know and what do you still have to find out?

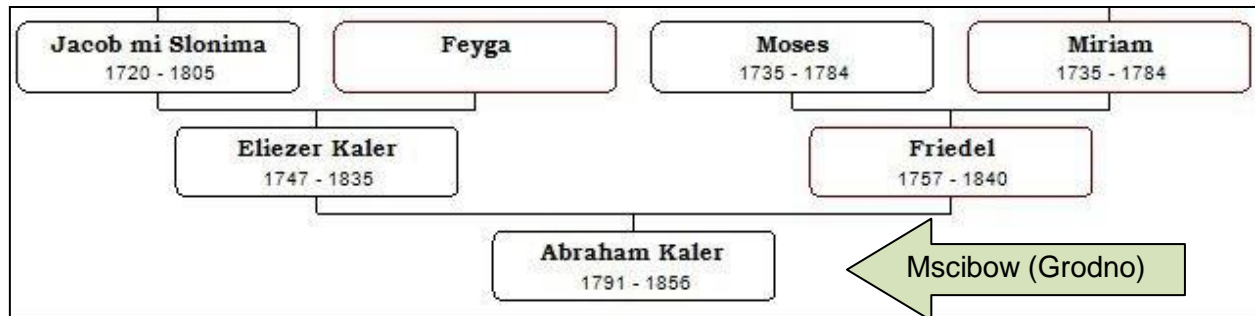**Skill Building Exercise #23: Questions for your check list**

➡ **Click on Jewish Genealogy Basics** Do you know the surnames and Towns and are your names and towns in JGFF up to date?

➡ Do you belong to the Belarus SIG list serve or the JewishGen Discussion Group?

➡ Do you belong to a SIG Project?

➡ Are you familiar with JewishGen-erosity?

➡ Click **How to Use this Site** to check on how to improve your research progress.

➡ Click **Frequently Asked Questions.** Do you want to understand what you can do on the Belarus SIG site? Do you want to know more about the Belarus SIG group?

The Get Started Check Sheet

I have a vague idea where my family came from	☐
I know the name of the town	☐
I do not know the original surname	☐
I know the American surname and the name on the manifest	☐
I do not know how to search the archived Discussion List and SIG List messages	☐
When I go to JewishGen I get lost	☐
I have information from older family members	☐
My family did not talk about the old country	☐
I have visited the JewishGen Infofiles	☐
I am familiar with the JewishGen FAQ	☐
I know where my family is buried	☐
I have a picture of the headstone for my ancestors that were buried in the U.S.	☐
I cannot find the passenger records for my ancestors	☐
My ancestors came to the United States before 1906 and I can't find their towns	☐
I wish I could find the Declaration of Intent or the Naturalization for my immigrant ancestors	☐
I have no idea if my ancestors had social security	☐
I have never seen a social security application	☐
I have seen a map of the District or town where I think my ancestors lived	☐
I wish I knew the original given names of my immigrant ancestors	☐
I belong to a local Jewish Genealogical Society	☐
I subscribe to a genealogical database program, blog or online magazine	☐

Grow Your Tree

The preparation section helps you to find and focus on the essential information you need to find records for your ancestors in Belarus. The names and dates you have may not match the records you find through the JewishGen and Belarus SIG databases.

| Jacob mi Slonima 1720 - 1805 | Feyga | Moses 1735 - 1784 | Miriam 1735 - 1784 |

Eliezer Kaler 1747 - 1835

Friedel 1757 - 1840

Abraham Kaler 1791 - 1856

◁ Mscibow (Grodno)

Skill Building Exercise #24: Create an Hourglass Tree

➡ The easiest way to do this is with paper and pencil. Since you are going to use your hourglass chart as a guide when you search the Belarus SIG, the chart does not have to be a formal pedigree chart. What you want is the following information if possible:

➡ Names, dates and places

➡ The original surname

➡ The Yiddish or Hebrew given name

➡ The place of last residence

➡ Relatives' and parents' names

Headstones carry information important about given names and dates. A burial society (landsmanshaften) can give important information about places.

ר שלמה חיים בכ'ר שמעון

reb (Mr.) Shloma Haim ben r' Shimeon d 1934 at 75 years (b 1859)

האשה היקרה מרת
אסתר דבורה בת ר' איטשע
גפטרה ביום ד' לחודש סיון

Mrs Ester Devorah daughter of reb Uristze (Belarusian variant of Urie)