



Infinite Family Tree Explorer

User Manual and FAQ

version 2.0 (1st revision) — September 2021 — ArkluZ Software — arkluz.com

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1. Introduction

Infinite Family Tree Explorer is an application for laying out, exploring, printing and exporting exhaustive family tree charts from existing genealogical databases. It does **not** provide any mean to create or modify a database, and should be used as a **complement** to your favorite genealogy website or application.

The charts use an exclusive layout algorithm that allows a compact representation of an unlimited number of generations, with no restriction on the amount of information displayed for each person, combined with an integrated timeline.

In addition, colored flags can be used to highlight persons meeting flexible criteria, e.g. those born in different countries, those who lost both parents in childhood, those who married more than twice, or those who died in their 20s during wartime.

2. Importing Data

You should first export your database from your favorite genealogy website or application, using the GEDCOM format. *Infinite Family Tree Explorer* supports standard GEDCOM character sets (encodings): Unicode (UTF-8 or UTF-16), ANSEL and US-ASCII. Always choose Unicode when possible, and preferably UTF-8.

Then use the *File* ▶ *Import GEDCOM File...* menu to import your data to an empty *Infinite Family Tree Explorer* document.

If your database designates a root person, or some bookmarked persons, they should appear in the *root person* popup menu of the *tree layout* inspector pane. In the other case, see [Defining the Root Person](#).

If you are not yet familiar with the application, first follow our “Queen Victoria” tutorial from the *help* menu.

3. Updating Data

After having added or modified data in your database using your favorite genealogy website or application, export it again, then reimport it to an existing *Infinite Family Tree Explorer* document using the *file* ▶ *re-import GEDCOM File...* menu. This preserves your formatting, and updates the data.

4. Tree Types

A family tree can either display the ancestors, or the descendants, of a given person — the *root person*. *Infinite Family Tree Explorer* is focused on long trees: it can cope with hundreds or thousands of persons spanning dozens of generations. To that end, it uses a very compact layout, while being able to display a lot of information for each person.

The *tree type* is defined in the *tree layout* inspector pane.

4.a. Descending Trees

Descending trees display the *root person* at the top left of the document, followed vertically by his spouses (or the persons with whom he had children). Each spouse is immediately followed by the children of the couple, indented horizontally. Each child is itself followed by his spouses and children, and so on. A black dot on the tree represents a direct descendant of the *root person*, and a white dot (connected by a dashed line, in case there is a big age difference between spouses) represents the spouse of a direct descendant.

4.b. Ascending Trees

There are two variants of ascending trees: *fork*, and *stem*.

With the *fork* layout, the *root person* is displayed at the middle left of the document; his father (see below: [Branch Ordering](#)) is displayed above, indented horizontally, and his mother is displayed below, also indented, and this pattern is repeated for each generation. The main issue with this layout is that a husband and his wife are never displayed side by side, and this can be confusing for large trees.

With the *stem* layout, the father and the mother are grouped together, one above the other (see below: [Branch Ordering](#)); then the father’s parents (and their ancestry) is displayed above him, and the mother’s parents (and their ancestry) below her. This is much easier to read, especially when the marriage information is also displayed.

5. Branch Ordering (Ascending Trees Only)

Traditionally, a person's father is displayed above him, and his mother is displayed below him; or when using the *stem* tree type, the father is displayed immediately above the mother, both of them being displayed either above their child for a man, or below for a woman. This layout (*father's branch first*) is fine when the tree is well balanced, i.e. when the depth and thickness of the two parents' branches are about the same, for most of the persons in the tree. However, in some cases, one parent's branch is usually much longer than the other's, and this can lead to very tortuous trees, with long branches going up and down. The demo tree (Queen Victoria) exhibits this in quite a moderate way. This also happens frequently when using *collapse all but the selected persons* (see [branch collapsing](#)). In this situation, it is recommended to use the *order by branch thickness* ordering. When doing so, the thickest branch (the one containing the largest number of persons) is displayed alternatively above or below the other branch, so the tree remains harmonious. When using the *smart* branch ordering, the father's branch is displayed above the mother's as long as the tree is well balanced, then portions of the tree may switch to *order by branch thickness* ordering.

6. Generation Depth

If *limit generation depth* is checked, then deep trees are truncated to a given generation, so you can focus on the nearest ancestors or descendants of the *root person*. Note that you can also double-click on a person to collapse a whole branch, if you want to focus on other branches.

7. Page and Document Layout

Infinite Family Tree Explorer is page-oriented, as it is designed to print charts, or to export pages to PDF files. The document width is the width of the paper size, and the document height is a multiple of the height of the paper size. A light dotted line materializes page bounds. To display or print wider charts, use the *file* ▶ *page setup* dialog: toggle the page orientation to *landscape* (horizontal) instead of *portrait*; or reduce the page scale to something like 80% or 60% (this scale can also be changed directly using a slider in the inspector); or choose a larger paper size (e.g. A3). For even wider charts, choose *two printer pages* document width in the *tree layout* inspector pane. And if you do not intend to print, choose *do not paginate*, or *fit window width*, then the document width and height adjust freely.

Once you have defined the page size, use the *vertical spacing* and *horizontal spacing* sliders to adjust the number of pages used, and to make best usage of the width and height of your document.

Choose the base font to use, from the *tree layout* inspector pane. Some variations of style and size are automatically applied (but can be customized) to differentiate first, middle and last names, and other information.

Use the *view* ▶ *actual paper size* menu to view the document at the size it will be printed, independently of your screen resolution, or of the chosen page setup scale. Use *view* ▶ *normal size* to display it at 100% scale, i.e. the text is displayed using the font size you actually specified. Use *view* ▶ *zoom to fit width* to fill your screen useful width with the document.

To add a title to your chart, enable *show header* in the *header and footer* inspector pane. The header can contain rich text, and you can even drag and drop or paste some images. You can also enable page numbering in the page footer.

8. Navigation

8.a. Defining the *Root Person*

Type parts of the first name, middle name and last name (and optionally year of birth) in the *root person* search field (*tree layout* inspector pane), then select a matching person in the popup menu. This changes the base person, whose ancestors or descendants are displayed in the chart.

8.b. Searching and Highlighting Some Persons

Type parts of the first name, middle name and last name in the *highlight* search field (*tree layout* inspector pane). This highlights all the matching persons in the chart. Use the popup menu below to select one of the found persons, and to make it appear in the middle of the window. Use the magnifying glass popup menu to search in all displayed text, instead of searching the names only; or to search persons to whom a label is assigned.

8.c. Opening Subtrees

Right-click a person to choose him as the *root person* in a new document window, either in a new descending or ascending tree.

9. Relationship Highlighting

Select multiple persons to highlight the path between them, in the current tree. Click in the document background to deselect all.

10. Branch Collapsing

Double-click on a person (or use the contextual menu, i.e. right-click) to collapse or expand a whole branch, if you want to focus on some given branches. A collapsed branch is shown with a black + in place of the black dot.

Select one or multiple persons, then choose *collapse all but the selected persons* in the contextual menu, to collapse every branch that contains none of the selected persons; this displays a compact tree that focuses on the relationship between these persons (relatively to the *root person*; they may have a closer relationship relatively to some other *root person*).

11. Exporting and Copying

Use the *file* ▶ *export* ▶ *export PDF document* menu to export to a paginated PDF file.

Use the *file* ▶ *export* ▶ *export as vector / raster image* menu to export to an unpaginated image file, i.e. an image that you can import into another application, or convert to some other format.

Use the *edit* ▶ *copy*, or *copy as raster image* menu to copy a vectorial (PDF) or pixel (PNG) image that you can paste into other applications.

Use the *edit* ▶ *copy as text* menu to copy a rich text version of the document (without the tree lines nor the timeline, but with a tabulated structure).

12. Configuring Displayed Information

Infinite Family Tree Explorer provides a high level of customization of the information displayed for each person, and for each family.

12.a. Persons Description

In the *persons description and family events* inspector pane, define which fields you want to display for each person. For some fields, a popover (click the > button) lets you fine tune what to display.

Person name: alternative names are displayed between [braces].

Notes: if you display notes (for persons, or events), you can also include *private notes* from the *dates, places and notes* inspector pane.

Events and facts: an abbreviation or an emoji indicates the type of event or fact.

Media indicator: an icon shows if some images or other media are associated to a person.

Labels: A colored * shows the labels assigned to a person.

Other family members (ascending tree): for each person, this shows the number of siblings (same two parents) and birth order among them, and optionally their name and dates, as well as the name of the other spouses (including the number of children they gave, and optionally their name and dates).

12.b. Marriage and Family Events

To display information for marriages, divorces and partnerships, use the *persons description and family events* inspector pane. For descending trees, they are displayed immediately above each spouse; for ascending *fork* trees, immediately above the child; and for ascending *stem* trees, between the two parents.

12.c. Strings Customization

The tree may contain some predefined strings, symbols or emojis that do not match your language or your taste. Use the *customize strings* popup menu in the *persons description and family events* inspector pane to edit them in TextEdit. Left strings are keys that **must not** be changed, and right strings can be customized (please preserve any %@ or %ld token). Save the strings file in TextEdit in order for changes to be applied.

12.d. Date Formats

In the *dates, places and notes* inspector pane, define how imported dates should be parsed, when they do not conform to the GEDCOM format. Then choose how to display them.

12.e. Places Formatting

In the *dates, places and notes* inspector pane, define how you want places to be displayed. For example, if most of your family comes from two countries, type these country names in the *list of local countries* field, separated by a comma. Then you can omit the country name for places in those countries, and only display the country name for places in other countries. This makes your chart much more readable.

12.f. Colors

In the *colors* inspector pane, you can color the first name to show the person's gender.

You can also color the last name (of the spouse, for a descending tree) to indicate the conjugal status, and change the display color of the information for each type of event.

13. Timelines (Bar Charts)

An extraordinarily powerful and unique feature of *Infinite Family Tree Explorer* is the timeline representation. It combines the traditional family tree chart with a graphical timeline; this allows to immediately visualize at what age each person got married, had children and sometimes suffered their loss, lost his own parents, then died. Or to see the difference in age between spouses, and the number of children they had. And even to see the persons that were alive during some historic period, and how old they were at that time.

In the timeline inspector pane, enable *draw timeline*. Instead of using a constant horizontal offset between two generations, the offset is proportional to the difference in age between a parent and a child (and between a child and its spouse, in a descending tree). When the year of birth of either the parent or the child (or both) is unknown, then the *default generation* is used.

This means that if the year of birth is known for every person in the tree, then the x-coordinate of each person is directly calculated from his birth. However, if some persons have an unknown year of birth, they are placed arbitrarily; then all the persons on their branch are positioned relatively to this arbitrary position (even when their own year of birth is known). A lighter color is used for all the persons on these branches. Example for an ascending tree: if someone was born in 1900, his father and grandfather an unknown year, and his grandmother in 1865, then the father is positioned as if he was born 30 years before his son (i.e. in 1870), then both grandparents as if they were born 30 years before the father (i.e. in 1840). Then all the grandmother's branch is shifted 25 years to the past.

A bar is displayed to graphically represent the period each person lived. Alternating grayish bands indicate the decades of that person. Note that for an ascending tree, the time axis is flipped: time flows towards the left. Some marks are drawn inside each bar for family events that occurred during the person's life:

- long marks indicate the person's marriages (green), divorces (orange) and the death of his current spouse (red)
- short middle marks indicate the birth of a child (blue for a boy, pink for a girl)
- short lower marks indicate the death of a child (when it occurred during this parent's lifetime)
- short upper marks indicate the death of the person's parents (blue for his father, pink for his mother)

A tooltip shows the date of each event, as well as the age of the person at that time, and the age of the involved parent, spouse or child at that time.

To see historic periods, enable *highlight years of interest*, and type a year, or a range of years, on each line, followed by its description (which is displayed on the time scale). A light-orange stripe marks each period on the chart.

14. Filters

Another extraordinarily powerful and unique feature of *Infinite Family Tree Explorer* is the ability to flag persons with various colored symbols or labels, depending whether they meet some criteria you specify.

You can play with some predefined filters in the Queen Victoria document, to illustrate things you can do with this feature.

14.a. Automatic Geographic Filters

One very useful kind of filter is geographic filters: they let you add some colored labels to persons for whom some events (birth, death...) have occurred in specific geographic areas. You can configure this manually with high precision, but you can start with automatically-generated filters.

In the *filters* inspector pane, click *automatic filters*; check the events you consider meaningful in this context, then select the countries, or maybe the states or the towns you want to flag (use the disclosure triangles to reveal them). We recommend choosing no more than half a dozen places, this way you will immediately see the branches that are associated with these areas.

You can manually modify an automatically generated filter, for example if you want to group multiple states as larger areas like North, West, etc, or just to choose more adequate colors to use for each country.

14.b. Filters

In the *filters* inspector pane, create a new filter using the + button, at the bottom of the filters list, or duplicate an existing filter using the *duplicate* button.

Choose a predefined symbol, or type a specific label or emoji to use when the filter is applied, and choose a color. Some placeholders can also be added to the label, see below.

Select one or multiple event types in the *any of these events* popup menu. Press the option key to select a single event type (and deselect the previously selected ones), or the shift key to select them all (except *child death* and *parent death*, which are usually not meaningful when you want to create a geographic filter).

Specify how many times some of these events should have occurred during a person's life for the filter to apply. Type ≥ 1 (or > 1 , or leave the field empty) for at least once; **1** for exactly once; **0** for never; ≤ 5 or < 5 for no more than 5, **1-5** for at least once and no more than 5.

You may specify the age range of the person should have at the date the events occurred, or a range of calendar years.

For event types that are associated with a description (e.g. *occupation*, or *religious affiliation*), you may specify one or multiple strings to search for (one string per line). Use a larger multi-line text field by clicking the > button when you have more than 2 lines to enter.

Finally, use the *in any of these areas* popup menu to only apply the filter when the events occurred in one of the specified geographic areas. Press the option key to select a single area, when you want to uncheck the previously selected ones.

If you add a placeholder to the label field, the placeholder will be replaced by the actual value. *{occurrences}* is the number of events matching the filter; *{year}* is the year of each event matching the filter; *{age}* is the age of the person at the date of each event; *{description}* is the description of each event (e.g. the person's profession, or his religion...).

For example, you can assign a red flag for persons who were born, got married, had a child, lived, worked or died in a specific region, and a blue flag for another region. Or you can flag persons who have lost both parents before turning 10, or persons who had more than 10 children.

Filters are evaluated from top to bottom in the list, so persons matching multiple filters get multiple labels, in this order. Reorder filters by dragging them in the list.

14.c. Geographic Areas

An area can be defined as a list of cities, regions, states, or countries (the proposed fields depend on the place format used in your database). Type one item per line; if needed, use a larger field by clicking the > button.

Be careful! All defined fields count. If your area specifies both *country = USA* and *city = Paris* or *Orléans* (on two lines), then filters using this area could be applied to Paris, Texas, or to New Orleans, but not to the French towns.

14.d. String Criteria and Regular Expressions

Normally, each line specified in *contains any of the strings (as full words)* is searched in the event description (for *filters*) or in the specified field of the event's location (for *areas*): the filter is applied if the target **contains** at least one of the lines.

A variety of criteria let you construct very precise and flexible filters: you can specify whether you want the searched string(s) to be found anywhere in the target string, or only at its beginning or ending; or possibly being part of a longer word, etc. You can search for empty fields, or for fields that contain none of the specified values.

For really very complex searches, you can even use regular expressions. We highly suggest using websites like regex101.com to test regular expressions before using them.

For example, if the field *place* contains a city name followed by postal code, a regular expression like `750\d\d$` lets you find all cities whose postal code is a 5-digit number starting with `750`.

15. Implexes

Large trees sometimes contain many duplicate branches, because it is not rare that people marry a distant cousin. In some families (like Queen Victoria's), this happens quite frequently, causing some long branches to appear 2, 4, 8, 16 times or more. This makes family trees difficult to read, and *Infinite Family Tree Explorer* handles this gracefully.

In the *implexes* inspector pane, enable *automatically collapse duplicate branches*. This keeps visible only the first instance of a duplicate branch. If you manually expand such a collapsed branch, the previously expanded instance is collapsed.

When enabled in the *implexes* inspector pane, implexes (i.e. duplicate persons) are highlighted, and a dotted line is drawn to connect to other instances of these persons (the dotted line is omitted when there are too many implexes, like in the complete Queen Victoria's tree; in this case, it is only be displayed when you select an implex person)

16. Frequently Asked Questions

How do I add or modify some persons?

You don't. See [Introduction](#) and [Updating Data](#).

How do I make wider charts?

See [Page And Document Layout](#).

Why are some dates wrong?

Try changing the *date parsing* format; see [Date Format](#).

Why can't I import correctly my GEDCOM file?

Prefer the Unicode (UTF-8 or UTF-16) character set (encoding) when exporting your data. Then, make sure to define the [Root Person](#) after you have imported your database; if the database can't be imported correctly, please contact us from the *help* menu, and send us a sample GEDCOM file exhibiting the problem.

Why is a watermark drawn?

Why the heck are some names scrambled (permuted letters)?

If you have not yet made the in-app purchase (from the *Infinite Family Tree Explorer* menu), a watermark appears, and some names are randomly scrambled (some letters are permuted), as soon as the tree contains too many persons, or if you enable [timelines](#), or if some [implex](#) persons are visible. Disable the latter two features from the *timeline* and *implexes* inspector panes, so the watermark won't be drawn. Or use the [generation depth](#) slider, or [collapse some branches](#), to reduce the number of persons displayed.

If you already made the in-app purchase, you may need to *restore purchases* from the *Infinite Family Tree Explorer* ▶ *purchase Infinite Family Tree Explorer...* menu; or if this does not work, quit the application, move it to the Finder Bin, and download it again from the Mac App Store.

Where has the inspector window gone?

If the inspector window is not visible anymore, use the *window* ▶ *inspector* menu item (or the command-I keyboard shortcut).

I wish that ...

Please contact us from the *help* menu, and let us know what you would wish to have in the next version of *Infinite Family Tree Explorer*!