Tips and Tricks for Searching the Online City Directories

Online City Directories: https://box2.nmtvault.com/Hennepin2/

> Edina: 1941-1977 (incomplete)
> Hopkins: 1942-1977 (incomplete)
> Minneapolis: 1859-1950 (only published in even years in 1940s)
> St. Louis Park: 1933-1977 (incomplete)

City directories allow users to find former city residents, their occupations, places of employment and spouses. Local businesses are also listed by name and subject category. The directories can also be searched by address for those researching house or building history.

(Example from the 1925 Minneapolis City Directory)

Use the "Simple Search" tab for searching across all directories:

I. General Tips

- Searches are not case-sensitive. You can enter your search terms in all capital, mixed case, or all lower case letters.
- **Your search string must exactly match the text as it appears in the city directory.**
- You may use wildcard characters like * to substitute for any number of characters or ? to substitute for a single unknown character. For example you could type "Peter*" as a search term, which would return "Peter, Peters, Peterson, Petersen, Petersburg, Peterman, etc.". Using the ? in a search term like "Pe?erson" would return "Peterson, Pederson". You cannot however use the * or ? as the first character of a search.
- Boolean search terms like AND, OR, NOT, HAS cannot be used in searches unless part of the phrase you are searching.
- Quotation marks (") cannot be used in searches to search for a phrase. The search already defaults to phrase searching.

- City directories for additional cities will be added over time. Deselect unwanted cities to help narrow your results. Currently city directories only include Minneapolis and St. Louis Park.

II. Searching Addresses
Your search string must exactly match the text as it appears in the city directory.

Common Abbreviations

    Avenue   Use: Av
                    NOT: Ave, Ave., Avenue
                    Example: *3224 44th Av* (NOT: 3224 44th Ave. S)

    Street   Use: [leave blank]
                    NOT: St, St., Street
                    Example: *1130 Adams* (NOT: 1130 Adams St. NE)

    Numbers   1st, 2d, 3d, 4th (Note: second and third do not have an 'n'. This applies to streets like 43d, 52d, etc.)

Resident Types
'b', 'r' and 'h' precede addresses to indicate the resident type. These abbreviations change meaning through the years. In early directories, 'r' means *resident* and 'b' means *boarder*. In later directories, 'r' means *roomer/renter* and 'h' means *homeowner/householder.* Check the abbreviations guide (see next page for instructions) if unsure.

NOTE: Occasionally, particularly in the 1930s and 1940s, the type of residence will immediately precede the address number, without a space. In these instances, the address will not appear in your searches unless you type an 'h' or 'r' before the address.

    Example: Search "*h4521 Oakland*" (searching just *4521 Oakland* (built in 1932) will not return results for 1934, 1936, 1937, 1939, or 1942).

III. Searching People

Your search string must exactly match the text as it appears in the city directory.

People can be challenging to search because most directories do not list the first and last name in sequence. Usually all names following the first person on the page or column with the last name will use " in place of repeating the last name.

Hendrickson Henry r4433 Beard av S
" Henry orderly Parkview Sanatorium
" Henry A meats 1827 E Lake r4242 21st av S
" Henry E r3857 36th av S
" Henry E (Cath R) formn Link Belt Supply Co h2627 Buchanan
" Henry N (Lorraine) prs opr Dayton Rogers Mfg Co h3545 Emerson av S apt A
" Henry N (Gina N) prof Augsburg Seminary h 620 21st av S
" Herbert clk Waterman-Waterbury Co r St Paul
" Hugo M hlpr Dale Tile Co r2013 S 9th
" Hulda N hsekpr 3145 Colfax av S
" Hylgard L (Dora K) cheesemkr h3710 E Minnehaha pkwy
" Ida C (wid John) r4357 Park av
" Ivan tchr Federated Teachers' Service Corp r2 E Lake

Hendrickson
" Paul H tchr Boys' Vocational High Sch h4433 Beard av S
" Pauline B Mrs janitor NW Bell Tel Co r2629 Hayes
" Philip H (Liala J) formn h5436 Aldrich av S
" Ralph E driver O W Berg r3102 N 3d
" Ralph L clk Wm Bros Boiler & Mfg Co r Robbinsdale
" Richd lab r1508 Monroe
" Robt USA r1508 Monroe
" Robt H hlpr r3210 Newton av N
" Robt L H hlpr r1706 Taylor
" Roofing Co (Jalmer E Hendrickson) 814 W Lake
" Roy H (Emily B) sta mgr Co-Operative Services Inc h4445 31st av S
" Rudolph H (Alda M) bkpr John Morrell & Co h2534 37th av S

In the above example, "Hendrickson Henry" is listed first, followed by all the other people with the last name Hendrickson: Henry, Herbert, Hugo, Hulda, Hylgard, etc.

In order to search for someone like Ivan Hendrickson, you would need to first find the listings for all the Hendricksons (keyword search: "Hendrickson"), then browse through alphabetically until you reach the name you're seeking.

Searching for Women

Finding women can be even more challenging. Women are often only listed as spouses in parenthesis beside their husband's name. In early city directories, through the 1920s, spouses were not listed at all. Women will often be listed by name if they held an occupation or were widowed.
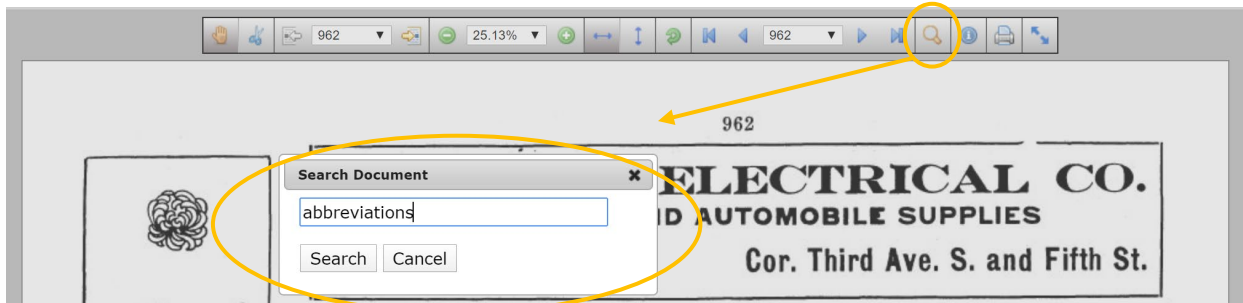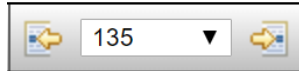
IV. City Directory Abbreviations (Minneapolis only)

Abbreviations are used for names, job titles, businesses, street directions, and type of resident (boarder/renter or resident/homeowner).

Use the magnifying glass icon to search within each directory, as abbreviations can change from year to year. Type "abbreviations" then click search. Use the previous and next hit arrows until you reach the page of abbreviations.

(Previous and next hit: When arrows are yellow, more hits for your search term(s) exist in the directory.)

ABBREVIATIONS

Alex—Alexander
Benj—Benjamin
Chas—Charles
Edw—Edward
Fredk—Frederick
Geo—George
Gust {Gustaf, Gustav, Gustave
Robt—Robert
Thos—Thomas
Wm—William
acct—accountant
adv—advertisement or advertising
agt—agent
appr—apprentice
assn—association
asst—assistant
attdt—attendant
atty—attorney
av—avenue
b—boards
bartndr—bartender
bet—between
bkbndr—bookbinder
bkpr—bookkeeper
blksmith—blacksmith
bldg—building
blk—block
brklyr—bricklayer
boul—boulevard
cabtmkr—cabinet-maker
carp—carpenter
cashr—cashier
civ eng—civil engineer
clk—clerk

clnr—cleaner
colr—collector
commr—commissioner
comn—commission
comp—compositor
cond—conductor
conf—confectioner
contg—contracting
contr—contractor
cor—corner
ct—court
ctr—cutter
dep—deputy
dept—department
draftsman—draughtsman
E—east
elec—electrician
elev—elevator
eng—engineer
engr—engraver
exp—express
expman—expressman
e s—east side
frt—freight
ftr—fitter
gen—general
hlpr—helper
ins—insurance
insptr—inspector
kpr—keeper
lab—laborer
L M—Lake Minnetonka
lithogr—lithographer
mach—machinist
mech—mechanic

messr—messenger
mkr—maker
mnfr—manufacturer
mngr—manager
N—north
N E—northeast
nr—near
n s—north side
n w—northwest
opp—opposite
opr—operator
photogr—photographer
phys—physician
pk—park
pkr—packer
pl—place
P O—Postoffice
pres—president
prin—principal
prof—professor
propr—proprietor
pub—publisher
purch agt—purchasing agent
r—residence
rd—road
real est—real estate
rep—representative
repr—repairer
rms—rooms
Ry M S—railway mail service
Rev—reverend
S—south
S E—southeast
s s—south side
s w—southwest

salsn—salesman
salswn—saleswoman
seams—seamstress
sec—secretary
sergt—sergeant
solr—solicitor
stenogr—stenographer
stereotr—stereotyper
stdt—student
supt—superintendent
swbdman—switchboardman
tchr—teacher
tel—telegraph or telephone
ter—terrace
tmstr—teamster
tndr—tender
trav agt—traveling agent
treas—treasurer
U S A—United States Army
U S M—United States Marines
U S N—United States Navy
Univ—University
upholstr—upholsterer
vet surg—veterinary surgeon
W—west
Washn—Washington
whol—wholesale
whseman—warehouseman
wid—widow

The word "street" is always understood

(Abbreviations from the 1919 Minneapolis City Directory. The meanings may change in other years.)