

Family Tree Maker 2019

Step by Step Guide: Importing and Exporting GEDCOM files

This guide demonstrates how to import data from another genealogical software program into FTM, and how to do the reverse and export data from FTM to another program. This is done using the GEDCOM file format (see the lecture *Genealogical Software* for more about this format).

Importing and exporting GEDCOM files

Importing into FTM

The following instructions apply to exporting from an older version of the program Legacy Family Tree (just as an example).

Exporting a GEDCOM file from Legacy 7.5:

1. Choose “Export to” then “GEDCOM File” from the File dropdown menu. The GEDCOM Export window appears.



2. In the “Produce file for:” box, select the type of GEDCOM you want to produce from the combo box. In this instance, choose “GEDCOM 5.5.1 Only”.
3. Click the Record Selection button to specify if you are exporting All Records in the Entire Family File or some smaller subset.

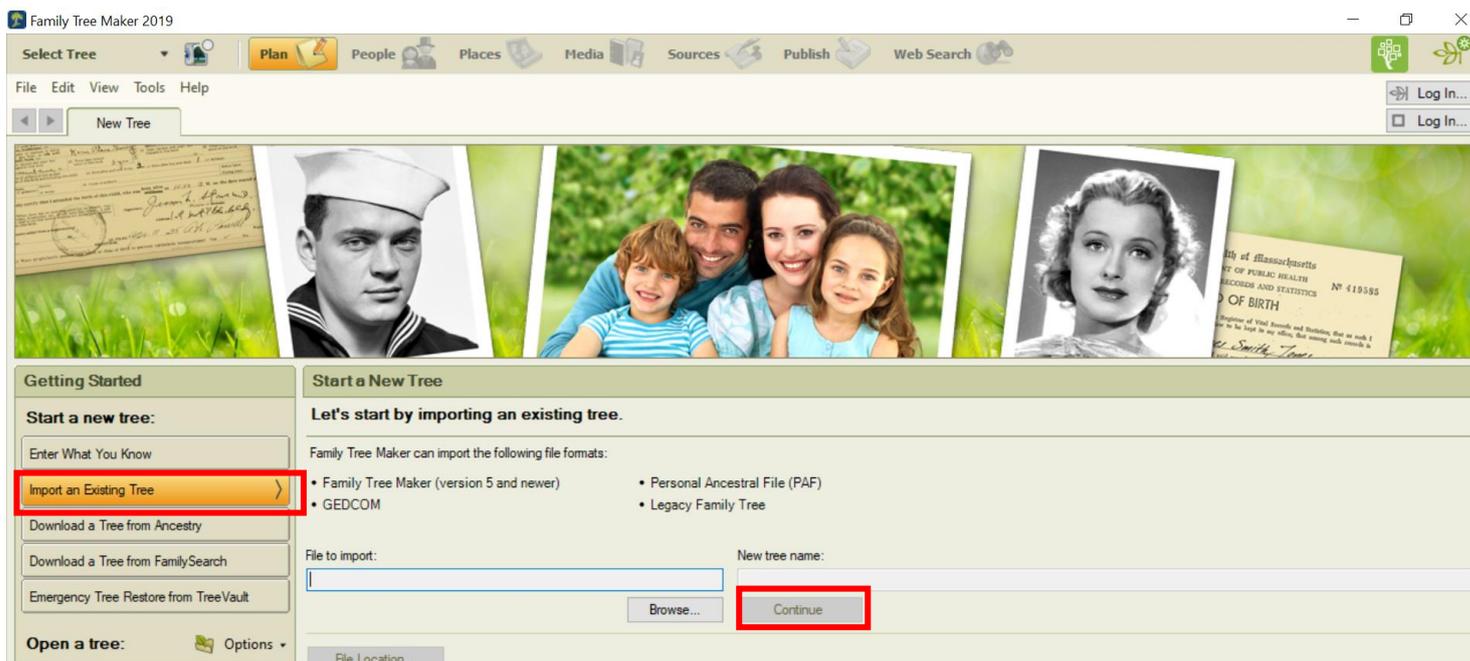
- When you are ready to export, click the “Select File Name and START EXPORT” button (top right of the GEDCOM export window). Legacy prompts you for a file name and location, and then creates the GEDCOM file for you.

See the Legacy Help feature for further guidance on creating GEDCOM files available at <https://legacyfamilytree.com/Learn2UseLegacy.asp> .

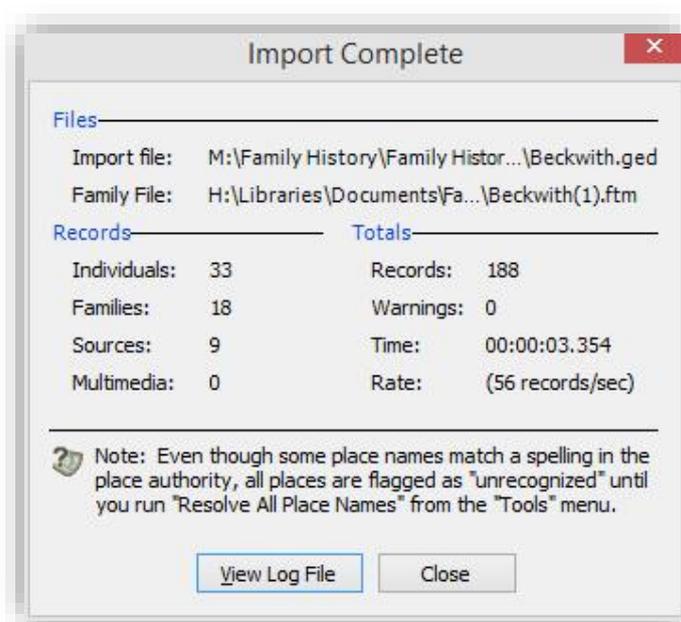
Other programs may do things slightly differently, but most follow the same principles and have an export option. Note that Family Historian uses the GEDCOM file format and in theory no export is necessary. However, it does have an option to export a GEDCOM file for use in FTM to correct several anomalies in how FTM handles GEDCOM. See the Family Historian help files.

Importing a GEDCOM file into FTM

- Open Family Tree Maker in the Plan workspace and New Tree tab.
- With the Import an Existing Tree button selected, find the file you want to import using the Browse button. Note that FTM as well as GEDCOM will directly import from a number of formats including PAF, Legacy Family Tree and previous FTM versions (back to version 5) without the need to convert to GEDCOM first.



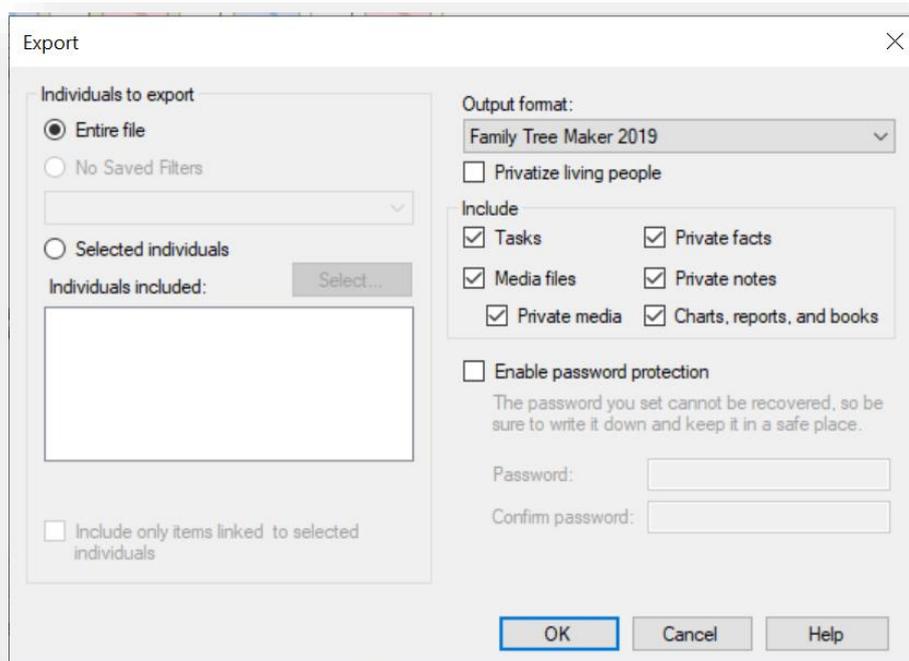
- Click on Continue.
- When the import process has been completed, the following information box will be displayed on your screen:



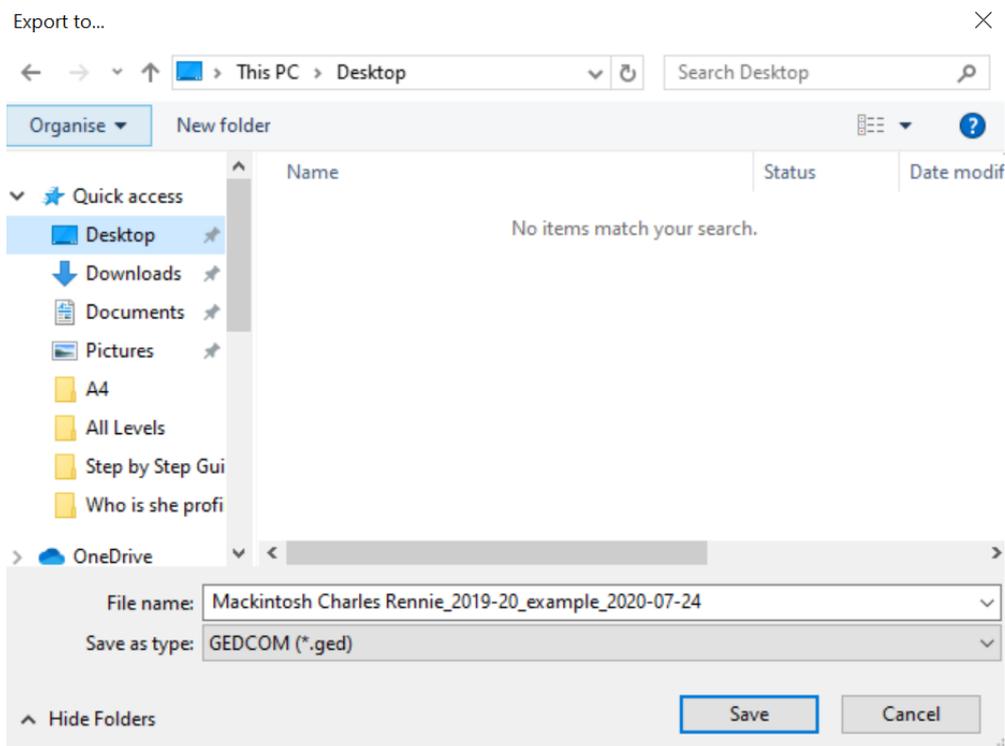
5. Any reported errors and/or warnings will refer to data which does not meet the GEDCOM standard (as interpreted by FTM) and may include for example, dates which were not entered correctly in the original file. Even if no errors or warnings were received, the data must be checked.
6. You can then open up the imported tree and check the data to see if everything appears as you'd expect.

Exporting from FTM

1. From the File drop down menu (in any workspace), select "Export." The Export window will appear:



2. Click on the drop down 'Output format' box and change this option to 'GEDCOM', and choose either "Entire file" or "Selected individuals." If the latter, you will be taken to a new window to select which individuals you want. Click on OK.
3. The Export to GEDCOM window now appears, requiring a selection of destination and character set. Select "Other" as the destination. ANSI is usually adequate for the character set, although if your FTM file has special characters (such as umlauts) UTF-8 may give a better result (although not all genealogy software supports this).
4. Click "OK." A new window will appear suggesting a file name and place to save the file. Change the details if necessary then click on save.



A confirmation window should announce that the export was successful.

5. Even if no errors or warnings were received, the data should be checked in the target genealogy software by importing the GEDCOM file you've just created.
6. To upload this GEDCOM file as part of a course work submission, go to the place on your computer where you told FTM to save the GEDCOM file (in the example above, this is being saved on the desktop). Find the file which corresponds with the filename you chose (the type of file will be GED file) and upload this to the MyPlace submission space.



Problems to look out for

Although in theory GEDCOM 5.5 is a standard file format, different software packages may handle it differently. Above all, it cannot be assumed that the transfer has worked perfectly. Data must be checked to ensure that it is correct.

Particular problems that might be encountered are long text fields being truncated, date formats not understood, custom facts ignored, special characters not recognised, and sources omitted. Attached media files can also be problematic. Some of these issues can be resolved by repeating the import or export process with different options selected. Some may require manual intervention in the GEDCOM file using a text editor (requires experience and knowledge of the file structure). However, in some cases it may not be possible to resolve issues.

TIP! If you ever need to work with two software programs (for example one to record data, the other to produce a particular report), test the transfer at an early stage!