

I just want to find an old friend, can you help?

by Noah W - Thursday, May 10, 2007

<https://www.searchbug.com/info/i-just-want-to-find-an-old-friend-can-you-help/>



One of the most common questions we are asked involves finding old friends, or old boyfriends or girlfriends, old neighbors, previous spouses, high school friends, and the list goes on and on.

Many people want to know if we can search for people for free. I wish we could, but we are in a business that has to earn a profit to stay in business. Yeah, it's a vicious cycle. There is really no such thing a thorough free people search.

The business of finding people is really a three-tier industry.

- The 1st Tier in the "people search" business are the Free People Search websites like Superpages or Switchboard or Zabasearch. These sites really only give you the free stuff they find for free. Heck, they are all in business also.

Most of what they provide for free people can search by using the white pages, yellow pages, or any other search engine or web directories.

And, if you try a [free people search](#) on these websites and they can't find your information they send you to the 2nd Tier in the industry "most likely a sponsored link".

- The 2nd Tier of the people search business (also known as information brokers) are the sponsored links or website that requires a fee to purchase the information they find from a private database. Some of these websites may own or house their own databases. Most of the data is purchased from various companies that compile public records from magazine subscriptions to county records (and many others). Most of the companies selling public data get it from similar sources. There is not much difference other than the way the information is presented. We can recommend access to this [online public database](#) that offers a free preliminary search. There is a nominal charge for the address information but discounts up to 50% for various subscription levels.
- The 3rd Tier in the people search business is the private investigators. That is where

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[searchbug.com](https://www.searchbug.com) shines. Basically, if you can't find who you are looking for in free public records like the white pages or a similar site and you've tried the pay for public databases access and still can't find who you're looking for, then it's time to hire a professional. A private investigator typically has access to specialized databases and resources that would cost you thousands of dollars per month. They are specifically trained to navigate these specialized systems. Many investigators only charge a minimal fee or nothing at all if they can't locate your subject, while others charge an hourly rate like an attorney and you pay for their time regardless of the outcome.

When you use [bestpeoplesearch.com](https://www.bestpeoplesearch.com) to help you with the search you don't have to worry about hourly rates or surprising fees. All the fees are clearly listed on each order page.

The investigators are industry professionals and contracted by our firm on your behalf. We simply handle the web order, payment and customer service and your investigator will work for you to find the information you requested.

Whether you want to reconnect with an old friend, check out the background of a new one, or even find someone to collect a debt [bestpeoplesearch.com](https://www.bestpeoplesearch.com) can help.

Here are a few recommendations if you are trying to find someone and have their correct full name:

A [basic search by name](#) lets you search just by the person's name. If it's a common name you should have some additional information to help your investigator such as a DOB, or a previous address (even if the old address is 10 or 15 years old it may still help).

An [Active Utility Search](#) will help you find the address where someone has active utilities in their name. This is useful if the person is not trying to "skip" out on a debt. If you're looking for a friend or old acquaintance, this is a good search. If they are living someplace where utilities are included this might not be the best search.

A [Guaranteed Current Address Search](#) is our most popular professional search. This search is requested the most by law offices, collection agencies, and process servers. This is an in-depth 4-week long investigation.

We get asked dozens of questions every day from our [contact us](#) page. We often hear the same questions several times a week.

Many of the answers to basic questions about trying to find someone can be found in our [FAQ help](#) pages. If you have a question that is not listed or need help, please use our [contact us form](#) or call us during customer service phone hours M - F, 8:30 am - 4 pm PT.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Noah Wieder is CEO of SearchBug, Inc. and the founder of [Best People Search](#). SearchBug.com offers [Free People Search](#) and Company Finder as well as Data Scrubbing Services. [Bestpeoplesearch.com](https://www.bestpeoplesearch.com) is a private investigator portal and Information Retrieval Services web site where investigators offer searches to businesses and individuals with specific search needs.

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