

## Creating a New Tree

Family Tree Maker makes it easy to create new trees whether you're a first-time user or you have family files you've worked on for years. You have two options for creating new trees:

- **Enter what you know.** If this is your first time working on a family tree, you'll want to use this option. Enter a few brief facts about yourself and your parents, and you're done.
- **Import a tree from an existing file.** If you already have a file you've created or received from another family member, you can import it. You can import files from previous versions of Family Tree Maker, GEDCOM (GEnealogical Data COmmunications format) files, FamilySearch™ Personal Ancestral File (PAF), *Legacy Family Tree*, and *The Master Genealogist*.

## How Many Trees Should I Create?

When most beginners create a family history tree, their first question is, "Should I create one large, all-inclusive file or several small files, one for each family?" The truth is, there is no right answer. Here are some things to consider as you decide how you want to organize your trees.

The advantages to having one large tree are pretty simple. One computer file is easier to keep track of than many files—one file to enter your information in, one file to back up, one file to share. You also won't have to duplicate your efforts by entering some data, sources, and media items in multiple files.

Multiple trees can be useful too. The more trees you have, the smaller the files will typically be. If you have concerns about your computer's performance or have space issues, smaller files might work best for you. Smaller files also make it easier to collaborate with other family members; you can send them only the family lines they're interested in.

Regardless of which way you choose to organize your trees initially, don't feel like you're stuck with a permanent decision. The flexible nature of Family Tree Maker lets you merge multiple files at any time; you can even export certain parts of your tree to create a brand new file.